

## Night Unit Plan Reflective Essay

### **Date of Experience: Fall 2010 Semester**

### **Description of Experience:**

While creating a Unit plan for the text *Night* by Elie Wiesel I was able to reflect on the research and the educational articles and texts I had read in order to create the unit. In order to complete this assignment for my Teaching of Composition in Middle Schools course I had to research and use at least 3 relevant sources. I had to analyze each source and explain how it reflected in my unit plan. Through this I was able to see the importance of research and reflection throughout my teaching.

### **Wisconsin Teacher Standard Alignment:**

This artifact aligns with Standard 1: Teachers know how to teach. *The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.*

This artifact alignment is accurate because I was able to use a variety of research and tools to create a strong, comprehensive unit and then reflect on what I had made. I read current articles and did website research to see how students learn best through writing and reading comprehension with a non-fictional historical text. Through studying a variety of teaching techniques I chose which ones best fit me and what I am comfortable with as a teacher. I also chose the ones that I felt would reach a broad range of students. Teachers who know how to teach are able to not only put time and research into planning a unit; they also understand the importance of reflecting on that unit which is one of the most important aspects of teaching.

Reflection says so much about a teacher. Through constant reflections you are able to grow and develop your lessons and learn from your mistakes. My reflection for this assignment was strictly based off of making the assignment. Next quarter, when I teach this unit, I will again reflect on the teaching aspect of this unit. There may be things that work wonderfully that I will want to continue doing and there will also be things that will fail miserably that I will want to change. Reflection allows me to see which things those are. It also allows me to better see what I can do differently to improve my teaching. Teacher who know how to teach, know how to reflect.

### **This artifact further aligns with:**

Standard 7- Teachers are able to plan different kinds of lessons.

Standard 9- Teachers are able to evaluate themselves.

UW-Platteville School of Education Knowledge, Skill, Disposition Statement Alignment:

This experience aligns with KSD4.e. *Grows and Develops Professionally*. The candidate is aware of opportunities for professional development to improve content knowledge and pedagogical skill and can take an active role in assisting other educators.

Through researching a variety of current articles and texts written by teachers and professionals in the teaching field I was able to create a unit plan and reflect on that unit. This aligns with KSD.4.e Grows and Develops Professionally. I was able to build upon my prior knowledge of current teaching strategies and philosophies and grow as an educator. I became better at reflection which is a key in all areas of teaching, whether it is student teaching, first year experience, or a thirty year veteran teacher. Reflection is always key to becoming a more well-rounded educator.

I was also able to become familiar with professionals in the field of education. I now currently read their articles and advice for teachers. This has given me such a valuable resource for creating future units and it has also allowed me to use my lessons and units to help others. I plan on using this unit to collaborate with the Social Studies teacher in my school for our next semester.

Secondary Alignment: KS4.a. *Reflects on Teaching*. The candidate makes an accurate and thoughtful reflection on his/her teaching effectiveness, is aware of specific elements of his/her teaching that contributed to successful instruction, and can offer alternative teacher action to predict the future successes of alternate approaches.

### **Personal Reflection:**

#### What I learned about teaching/learning from this experience

I learned the importance of research in the teaching field. I was able to design a current, comprehensive and diverse unit because of the research and the reading I did from current texts and articles from other professionals in the field of education. I learned that in order to develop the best unit possible and stay current in the field of education is important to research and read what others in the field have to say. Through reading Margaret Soven and Joanna Hawkins among others for this unit, I was really able to broaden my teaching outlook. It could become very easy as a teacher to become repetitive with your lessons and units. But in order to be the best and continually reflect and grow reading, research, and reflection is key to being successful and reaching not only my full potential as an educator but also getting the most out of my students potential.

#### What I learned about myself as a prospective educator from this experience

I learned that as a prospective educator, I will never stop reading, researching and reflecting. The day I stop doing those things is the day that I no longer see need for improvement and in the teaching field, there is always something that you can improve upon. Reading and research opens

you up to so many new ideas and teaching strategies. Trying them and reflecting upon what actually works is the fun part. I will certainly have lessons that fail, but that's what teaching is about learning. As much as I encourage my students to read, research and reflect in my Language Arts classroom, I plan to practice what I preach.