Teacher Work Sample

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February 11, 2018

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Learning Context

School district: Cache County School District

Name of school: Greenville Elementary School

Title 1 school? No

Demographics of school:

Total K-12: 560
Female: 303
Male: 257
American Indian: 3
African American/Black: 5
Asian: 11
Hispanic: 78
Multiple Race: 19
Pacific Islander: 3
White: 441
Economically Disadvantaged: 215
Disabilities: 76
English Language Learners: 31

Description of school climate:

As a student teacher, I have felt a very positive climate in the school. The school’s motto is: Greenville Dragons are Safe, Respectful, Responsible and Ready to Learn. That seems to be very evident in most of the students. Currently, the school serves children from grades Kindergarten through Sixth. Sixth grade, prior to this year, hadn’t been in the elementary school. The school has been through many changes since they opened in 1994. The primary focus and goal of these changes has been to help the students to succeed.

The current principal of Greenville Elementary is currently on his ninth year at the school. He is very familiar with the students, teachers, faculty and climate of the school. He definitely has a passion for what he is doing. In those nine years of him being at Greenville, he has done very beneficial things for the school. He has helped them go through several changes and adjustments. He has very positive interactions with the students, teachers, and the faculty.

During my time at Greenville Elementary, I have seen a great deal of parent involvement. This seems to reoccur each year. The PTA is very involved in activities for the
school. Each month, they create a newsletter that is put onto the school’s website. Parents’ and students are able to stay informed on what is currently happening in the school. They seem to have great success in all they do.

Overall, I feel that the school’s physical environment is very positive. The school is all one level. There are three main hallways in the school, making it very easy to navigate. Each hallway has two grade levels (with a few exceptions). The hallway that I spend most of my time in is occupied by second and third grade. The hallway across from us is kindergarten and first grade. The other hallway has the older grades, 4th-6th. All of the classrooms have large windows along one of the walls. This provides natural light for the classrooms, which is very beneficial. Each teacher’s classroom decorations are quite different from each other. However, all serve a purpose. They are very inviting and contribute to the students’ success and learning. The hallways are lined with students work. Each class displays a specific project that they’ve been working on recently.

The academic environment is also positive. The teachers are tremendous. They have a passion for teaching, and they care so deeply for their students. They want to see each child succeed. I also have observed that each grade levels’ team seem to work really well together. It’s a very team-oriented environment. Along with the general education teachers, the teachers in the specialized areas do an excellent job. This includes special education, speech, reading, and occupational therapy. They communicate well with the general education teachers, always ensuring they are on the same page.

**Grade level:** Second grade

**Learning environment:**

**Attendance:**

As a general rule, the class had high attendance each day. There were a few rare occasions where students would miss more than one consecutive day of school due to illness. A bug went around the class for a couple weeks, and there were quite a few students absent. During that time, many students would also get checked out mid-day. We do have one student who is tardy almost every day. My cooperating teacher has talked to her mom, and it seemed to help for a while. However, she eventually began being tardy again.

We do have one student, in particular, who has missed a lot of school. She moved to the school a few months ago. In that period of time, she will miss a few consecutive days for what seems like each month. Just recently, she missed four days in a row. This is very difficult for her, and as a result, she gets behind. She is missing a lot of information that is necessary for her success. It’s very difficult because her mom seems that this isn’t a problem. She recognizes that she misses a lot of school, but hasn’t taken much action to change the situation.

**Classroom Management Plan:**

My mentor teacher, Mrs. Sara Coleman, utilizes a token economy to aid in her classroom management. She calls it classroom money. When students are behaving well and meeting expectations, they can earn a dollar from Mrs. Coleman. However, when students are
not behaving, they owe a dollar to Mrs. Coleman. She will hand out the classroom money sporadically throughout the day to various students based on their behavior. They save their classroom money up until they earn twenty dollars. They can then exchange this money for a classroom pass. These passes allow the students to have access to something they wouldn’t normally for an entire day. Examples would include: bringing a stuffed animal, sitting by a friend, having access to the iPad, playing with blocks, etc.

Another aspect of her classroom management plan is something called “Give me 5”. When the majority of the class is not giving Mrs. Coleman the attention and engagement that she needs, she will call out “Give me 5”. Students are then expected to count aloud together from five all the way to one. If they are successful at the conclusion of the count down, and have their eyes on the teacher, they are then given a point on the board. When they get five points, they then earn a letter. There is a saying on the board that the students can earn like “earn a party”. The letters are all flipped over so the students don’t know what the reward is. Each time they get five points, a new letter is flipped over. When all of the letters are flipped over, they then get the reward (like a class party).

I really like the way that the class is managed. I think it’s extremely important to keep the climate positive, whenever possible. Rather than focusing on the students’ misbehavior, she chooses to point out the positive behavior. This seems to be very effective for the students. Although I don’t think extrinsic motivators should be used all the time, I can see how they are effectively used in the class.

Seating arrangement:

The desks in the classroom are re-arranged at the beginning of each month. Currently, they are in rows of 7, and there are 3 rows. The seating chart requires much thought and effort. Students are placed very thoughtfully in their seating arrangements. Throughout the school year, adjustments are made. Students who struggle with behavior issues are currently in all separate corners of the classroom. If these students sit together, they tend to feed off of each other’s misbehavior and become very disruptive. This has seemed to be a very effective seating arrangement. The only time there is a slight change in the seating arrangements are when students decide to buy the “sit by a friend” pass. These changes only occur for the day, and then they are moved back to their original spot at the conclusion of the day.

Level of student engagement in learning and level of safety for learning:

Student engagement seems to be high in the class. Mrs. Coleman and I use “give me 5” to get their attention when we need students attention promptly. It’s important for students to move around when needed. We make sure to give students brain breaks and allow them to move around, especially in the afternoon. We also have students move from different parts of the classroom fairly often. When they read together as partners, they can move around to different parts of the classroom. When we read aloud our class book, they move to the rug. Students are also free to move around to a computer, as they need to take their accelerated reader quizzes. Often times throughout the day, we have the students echo what we just said. This allows for the students to verbalize what was said, and make sure they understand.

Each morning, we have a specified time to focus on students individual learning needs. As a grade level, we split the students into groups for Tier II based on their needs. The students
who are high academically come into our classroom for reading, and the others go to the
various second grade teachers’ classrooms for 30 minutes. Students are able to receive the extra
support that they need. This allows us to work with small groups of students or on an individual
basis. As we work with students individually, the rest of the class independently works.

Classroom participation is something that the students are excited about. As a general
rule, most of them want to participate. They enjoy sharing their work to their peers, and sharing
their ideas. They are very encouraging to each other.

**Subject matter of lessons:** Writing/Science

**Total number of students:** During my student teaching block, there were 21 students in the
class. Prior to me coming to the class, there were 22 students. However, one student moved to
another school a week before my arrival.

**Students with Special Needs:**

**Students with IEPs:**

We have two students in the class currently on IEPs. Student A goes to resource each
day to receive the extra support and help that he needs. He is autistic, and has many
behavioral/social challenges. His reading is low, along with his capabilities in math. Both of these
areas are encompassed in his IEP’s. He has been in resource since kindergarten.

Student B has also qualified for an IEP. After a long and difficult process, he was finally
placed into resource in December of 2017. He has been receiving this additional support for two
months now. There have been significant improvements academically since this change has
occurred. He functions very well, but is lower than grade level in each area of the curriculum. He
goes to resource each day both in the morning and the afternoon. He also has an IEP for both
math and reading, because he is low in both areas.

**Students who receive speech/language services:**

There are two students who receive speech services: Boston and Lacey. They have
difficulty making the correct sounds with their corresponding letters. They receive additional
help from our speech therapist at Greenville Elementary. This occurs two times a week for 30
minutes.

**English language learners:**

We have two English language learners in the class. When I found out student 1 was in
ELL, I was very surprised. She can speak English very well. Her dad speaks English very well.
However, her mom speaks their native language at home. She attempted to test out of it last
school year, and missed the cut off by one point. We are confident that when she is tested
again, she will be able to test out of needing it. Student 2 that is in the ELL class seems to need
the additional help more than student 1. As a general rule, however, I feel that I am able to
communicate effectively with both students. They understand what is being said, and comprehend what they are reading as well.

**Gifted and talented:**

There aren’t any students who are quite to the gifted and talented level. However, we do have four students that are well above grade level. They read at about a 4th grade level or higher. They understand what they’re taught in every subject. When general instruction (tier 1) is being taught in the class, they seem to get very bored. They don’t seem to be challenged enough. However, there are times that they are given differentiated work/assignments and that seems to challenge them more. It’s at more of an appropriate level for them.

**Other special needs:**

We do have one student who has asthma. He carries an inhaler with him, and has used it a handful of times this school year. However, it doesn’t seem to occur often when he needs to use it. Another student in our class has celiac disease. She’s been diagnosed, and her body can’t tolerate gluten. She receives accommodations with her meals at lunch. My teacher also accommodates to her needs whenever candy is rewarded or given in the classroom.

**Students’ prior knowledge for these lessons:**

The students have had exposure to penguins during the school year. Currently, we are reading the book *Mr. Popper’s Penguins*. The main character is a penguin that gets sent to a family’s home from Antarctica. Because of this book, they’ve learned some of the behaviors and traits of penguins. However, they haven’t had any specific lessons or instruction besides our class book. Their knowledge currently is just the basics. They also haven’t conducted an experiment during this school year.

**Students’ background and interest for these lessons:**

I would say that the majority of the class has interest in penguins, due to us reading the book *Mr. Popper’s Penguins* as a class. They are very interested in animals, and penguins to be specific this year. They have a basic understanding of penguins, and what type of climate that is suitable for them. I knew this would be a very engaging lesson for them. I’ve recognized that majority of the day is spend reading, next to math. Science isn’t taught very frequently in the classroom. Science is an important subject that I feel is getting overlooked in the class.

**How did your knowledge of these students and assessment of their prior knowledge inform your lesson planning?**

Understanding what prior knowledge the students had about penguins allowed for me to make lessons that will be engaging for them. I tried to avoid repetitive things that they had learned previously. I wanted them to learn and discover new and additional information to add to their previous knowledge. I made sure to include vocabulary that they hadn’t previously been
exposed to. I created many opportunities for them to draw upon their own knowledge, and to have very inquiry based lessons.

**Focus Students**

**Description of student 1- Ken**

**Prior learning:**

He came into second grade with a much lower level of understanding than is expected at this age. He has struggled since kindergarten with reading and math. He hasn’t had to repeat a grade level, but rather, seems to just be behind each year. He is progressing at a much slower rate than his peers.

**Academic ability:**

Ken isn’t able to comprehend a lot of what is being taught. It takes him a longer amount of time to process new information. He gets very distracted by students around him, and has a difficulty focusing. This is definitely a contributing factor to him being behind academically. He reads below grade level, but has improved since the beginning of the year. He hasn’t been admitted to special education because my mentor teacher doesn’t believe he will qualify. He does go to a tier 2 reading group each day for about 40 minutes. That has seemed to help improve his ability to sound out words and use phonics.

**Personal background:**

Ken doesn’t come from a very supportive home life. His parents are divorced, and it leaves his single parent with a lot to take on. His mother is very busy with work. Due to this, he isn’t getting the additional support aside from school that he needs. He doesn’t read on a daily basis like is advised, especially for him being significantly below grade level. His mother has expressed her desire to help him, but seems to be overwhelmed currently. Despite what may not be happening at home, Ken has a very positive attitude at school. He is constantly trying to put his best efforts forward, despite being behind.

**Other relevant characteristics:**

Although Ken faces difficulties in the classroom, he is a very positive and happy student. Like I said before, he often gets distracted. However, when he is able to focus, he gets his work done. He makes friends very easily, due to his personality. He wants to be socially involved in school. He seems to not get discouraged very easily. He is able to face the challenges that he is presented each day at school.

**Influence of all of these characteristics on your teaching:**

This student’s needs effect the way that I deliver my teaching to him, in particular. First off, I know when he is getting distracted. When this happens, I allow him to move to another place in the room where he is more secluded. This allows for him to rid of distractions and focus on his work. As I am monitoring the room, I always make an effort to see that he is caught up with us, and answer any questions he might have. I will often sit by him, and help him stay on task and finish his assignment. I also have found that non-verbal cues are particularly beneficial for me with Ken. I can quickly see if he understands, or if he needs additional support.
Description of student 2 - Bill

Prior learning:
Bill seems to excel in school overall. He came into second grade reading at a higher level than is expected. He has been exceeding expectations of the core curriculum for second grade. Because he has been excelling since Kindergarten, he is ahead academically speaking in comparison to the majority of the class.

Academic ability:
Bill is very successful academically. First off, he has the ability to focus during the school day. He rarely, if ever, is distracted. Because most of the curriculum isn’t very challenging for him, he contributes and adds a lot of knowledge to the class. He really enjoys learning, and having the ability to be successful in all aspects of the classroom. His reading level is above grade level. It’s not the highest in the class, but it is at a third grade level. Often, I feel that he isn’t challenged enough. Most of the time, he grasps concepts at a rapid rate. Due to this ability, he often finishes very quickly.

Personal background:
Bill is a very happy person. From the first day walking into the classroom, I noticed that. There have been days where I have seen him a little down, but that is very rare. I knew right from the beginning that he was very high academically in the class, and I feel that often times they’re forgotten. Due to this, I made a special effort to acknowledge him and talk to him. His parents are very supportive at home. They read with him each day, which has contributed to a lot of his success. They are very involved in his success in school, and they actively do all they can to help him with his homework each day.

Other relevant characteristics:
This student’s loves to challenge himself. Like I stated previously, often times he doesn’t feel very challenged with particular assignments. However, whenever he is given a challenge that allows him to have a higher level of thinking, he gets excited. He thrives on being able to have a challenge, and pushing himself. He is very patient to wait during instruction when he has completed his work, and is ahead of the class. He also has a very kind heart. He wants to help those around him to succeed. He is very kind to his peers, and helps them whenever it’s appropriate to do so.

Influence of all of these characteristics on your teaching:
Because Bill loves to help others, I provided opportunities in this unit for him to help his peers. There was a great deal of group work, and he thrived on being given that opportunity. He took it upon himself to help his teammates/peers. This is a great opportunity for not only those he is helping, but himself as well. It’s a win-win in my perspective.

Aside from being able to help others, I also provided opportunities for him to be challenged in the lessons. I gave him the option of finding additional information and facts, aside from what was required in the lessons. I also allowed for him to share his knowledge with his neighbors when questions were asked, which he thrives on.
Lesson Plans

Lesson Plan 1:

Lesson Title: A Penguin’s Habitat  
Subject and grade level: Science, second grade  
Approximate time: 30-35 minutes

Rationale for methods:  
In my science methods course, we learned the importance of students learning through inquiry. It’s important for students to be involved in the process of their learning. I am implementing this method through this lesson. Students will be able to discover on their own the answer to the posed questions. The students will learn through discovery.

I also learned in my language arts methods course how important it is to integrate writing in as many lessons as possible. It allows the information learned to become more concrete. I believe that it’s extremely important to students writing success that we incorporate it whenever we can. I feel that it is very appropriate to include in this particular lesson.

Content Standards  
Science 2.4.1- Tell how external features affect an animals’ ability to survive in its environment.  
b. Develop, communicate, and justify an explanation as to why a habitat is or is not suitable for a specific organism.

Writing Standard 2- Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.

Academic language/vocabulary objectives  
1. Students will need to analyze their knowledge of Penguins, and what they need to survive in their habitat.  
2. Environment/habitat, equator, shelter, and coast.

Required materials, resources, and technology  
• ELMO projector (to show the map from the book Penguins!)  
• National Geographic Kids book titled Penguins! By Anne Schreiber (to reference when we discuss where penguins live)  
• Index cards or sticky notes (for the pre-assessment question, “Where do penguins live?”)  
• Pencils (for students to record their answers throughout the lesson)  
• Playful penguins worksheet & informational sheets https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Penguin-Writing-Freebie-Read-and-write-about-6-species-of-penguins-1029508 (the worksheets for them to organize their research on their penguin as a group)

Lesson Objectives  
• Students will be able to analyze their knowledge of where penguins live and record their answer, given an index card. (S2.4.1B)  
• Students need to learn 3 content specific vocabulary words for this lesson. The students will learn habitat, equator, and coast as we discuss each of these aspects in the lesson. (S2.4.1B)
• In groups, students will be able to analyze and record where their species of penguin lives, its’ food, predators and interesting facts. (W2)

**Instructional Procedures**

I will start the lesson off by posing a question to the students: “Where do penguins live?” I will have them write down their answer as a pre-test to this lesson. They’ll be given one minute to do this. As I gather them up, I will allow for students to share with their elbow partners for about 15 seconds. I’ll make sure they know that time frame before hand. After they’ve had a chance to share, I will let them share out where they think penguins live. I will refer to the map that’s provided in the book *Penguins!* I will first point out the Equator. “Students, here is the word equator. Echo me, equator. What is the equator? Let’s read together what it says here: An imaginary line halfway between the North and South Poles.” I will then make sure to point out the equator on the map. I will also point out the South Pole. All penguins live between the equator and the South Pole.

I will then ask: do all penguins live in Antarctica? The correct answer is no they do not. We are going to find out where some of the different penguins live! I will split you all into groups of about 3 people, and together you will research a penguin. I will give you a sheet that has all the information of that penguin. You will also be given a blank worksheet where you can record what you learn about your penguin. You are going to become experts! Before I do this, however, there are a few words we have to make sure we learn.

I will then introduce the word habitat to students. I will write the word on the board, and then say: “Habitat. Echo me: habitat.” The students will all chorally respond by saying the vocabulary word habitat. I’ll allow them to share with a partner what they think the definition of a habitat is. I will ask a few of them to share out their answer, so that we can come up with a definition together. A habitat is a place where a plant/animal lives. It’s where they get everything they need to survive.

*Animals need a place to live, which is a habitat. What else do they need to survive/live? Students will raise their hands and we will come to the conclusion that they also need water and food. Excellent! So we are going to learn what food penguins eat, where they live, and some more interesting facts! You will have about 7-10 minutes to gather all the information you can about your penguin. Start with their habitat and their food. There can be just one reader for the group if you choose, or you can take turns. Everyone needs to make sure that they are filling out their own worksheet. Feel free to include pictures as well if you have extra time! Any questions? Okay, I’ll walk around and I can answer any questions. Let’s go! (I will make sure that when I hand the papers out, I specify who the different groups are. There will be two groups per table. That way all of the species are covered.)*

Remind students when they have 2 minutes left, again at 1 minute, and then 30 seconds.

*Great job class! I saw you all working so hard, and we now have experts on each of the six different types of penguins. I want each group to share where their penguin lives, and also what they eat! Let’s start with the King penguin.*

I would repeat this process for each of the 6 groups, until they’ve all shared the habitat and their source of food. As they’re sharing, I will record their answers on the white board in the front of the class. When each new habitat is said, I will also make sure to point it out on the map. After all students have shared, I will ask what all of these places have in common.
We know that penguins don’t all live in Antarctica. However, there is something that all these habitats have in common. What is that? (They all live on the coast) That’s right! We know that all penguins live on the coast. What does coast mean? (Where land meets water). So we know that all penguins live near water. Why don’t you think penguins can live on land without any water surrounding them? (Because they eat fish. In order for them to catch the fish, they have to be able to swim.) Exactly! You are now all experts on penguins! Tomorrow we are going to discover more about the characteristics of penguins, and how it helps them to survive in their habitat.

Adaptions/Accommodations

Gifted Learners: I tried to give the gifted learners opportunities to answer questions others may not have known. They were also given the opportunity to really help their peers in the lesson. They were able to take responsibility and take charge of the groups that they had been assigned in. I also allowed for them to continue and include in their paper additional facts about penguins, and what they look like.

ELL’s: The setting to learn for the students was in groups. The ELL students were placed in groups where they were getting support and they were part of a team effort. I had Student 1 read the passage for his group because he is a great reader. If he came across a word that he didn’t know, his peers were able to help him.

IEP students: both of these students really struggles when it comes to reading. Because of this, I didn’t make them read for their groups. They played a different role. They were able to write and draw pictures while they listened to the information that they needed.

Assessment

Assessments are made throughout this lesson. First, there is a formal assessment at the beginning where students are able to answer the posed question. They turned them in so that I could see where their understanding was. During the group work, there was a lot of informal assessment. I monitored each group, and asked questions as they worked to monitor their understanding of the group work. Next, there is an informal evaluation as each group shares their findings.

The formal assessment concluding the lesson was the worksheet that they were all given. They were to complete the habitat and food section, and then could continue if they had the time. This provided me with evidence as to whether the students understand how to collect data from informational text.
Lesson 1 Materials:

![Penguin Activity Diagram]

**Penguin:**

- Looks Like:
- Eats:
- Cool Fact:
- Enemies:

**By:**

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**Penguin Species:**

- King
- Macaroni
- Emperor
- Gentoo
- Adélie
- Little
Emperor Penguin

HABITAT: The emperor penguin lives in the Antarctic. It will spend its entire life in the Antarctic waters and on the ice. They are never on land.

FOOD: They mostly eat Antarctic silverfish. They may also eat krill or squid.

PREDATORS: Their main enemies are orcas and leopard seals. The chicks are also prey for sea birds.

COOL FACTS:
* The females lay one large egg and then the males take care of it. The males keep the egg on their feet and cover it with their brooding pouch. The brooding pouch is loose skin covered with feathers that can cover the egg. The males will not eat anything for the 2 months when they care for the egg.
* They are the largest penguin in the world. They are about 44 inches tall.
* They can dive deeper than any other bird.

APPEARANCE: The emperor penguin has black feathers on its back. The feathers in front are white. They have a black head and black beak with an orange stripe. There are yellow patches on each side of its head. The chicks have gray feathers with a black and white face patch.
Lesson Plan 2:

Lesson Title: Why can Penguins survive in their habitat?
Subject and Grade Level: Science, second grade
Approximate time: 30-35 minutes

Rationale for methods: In my science methods course, we learned the importance of students learning through inquiry. It’s important for students to be involved in the process of their learning. I am implementing this method through this particular lesson. Students will be able to discover on their own the answer to the posed question.

Content Standards
Science 2.4.1 - Tell how external features affect an animals’ ability to survive in its environment.
b. Develop, communicate, and justify an explanation as to why a habitat is or is not suitable for a specific organism.

Academic language/vocabulary objectives
1. Students will need to analyze the characteristics of penguins, and how they can survive in their environment.
2. Vocabulary: Characteristics, adaptations, and blubber.

Required materials, resources, and technology
- Materials for experiment:
  - 2 Ziploc bags
  - Ice
  - Cold water
  - Tub/bowl
  - Crisco (2 rectangular bars, or round tub)
  - Tape
  - Paper towels (to dry their hands afterwards)
- Penguin blubber experiment worksheet (to fill out as they’re performing the experiment) [https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Penguins-1550490]
- Penguins! By Anne Schreiber (to refer to the physical characteristics of penguins)
- White board (to write the characteristics of penguins that they come up with)
- ELMO projector (to model the worksheet to the class, and to reference the book Penguins! in regards to their characteristics)
- Index cards (for the post-assessment question)
- Pencils (for the students to write/record their answers)

Lesson Objectives
- Students will be able to identify the characteristics of a penguin, and analyze how these characteristics help a penguin to survive in their habitat. (S2.4.1B)
- Students will be able to conduct a guided experiment, and determine how well blubber absorbs heat. (S2.4.1B)

Instructional Procedures
We will start the lesson by discussing the characteristics of a penguin. First off, what is a characteristic? (A quality or trait- examples for us would be feet, hair, arms, etc.). Knowing that, what are the characteristics of a penguin? I will give you time to answer this as a group. I’m giving each table a blank sheet of paper where you can write down all the characteristics that you can think of that a penguin has. Choose one person on your table to write, and the rest of you will help to answer the question. You will have about 3 minutes to do this. If you have time, you can even draw the penguin with the different characteristics and label them. Remember; don’t shout your answers because it will give it away to the other groups. When you say something, make sure we are whispering it to our teammates. Any questions? Okay, three minutes! I will make sure to remind them when they have one minute left, and then 30 seconds. One person from each group will be a spokes person, and tell two of the characteristics that they came up with. I will have them each only share two so that each group can participate and contribute. As the groups share, they will stand as a group. This will help the class to pay attention and be respectful as they are sharing. I will accept and write all answers on the board. Some main points I want to hit are:

- Webbed feet
- Layers of feathers
- Stiff flippers
- Big eyes
- Black & white coloring
- Blubber

If they come up with any characteristics that might be new vocabulary, we will make sure to discuss and define that particular characteristic. When vocabulary words come up, I will make sure that the students echo the word after I pronounce it together as a class. After we have the main characteristics, I will then ask how those characteristics help the penguin to survive. I will model a question to help them understand what I am asking. **How do webbed feet help penguins?** They now need to work with their group again and try to come up with reasons as to why the characteristics would help them survive. They’ll have 2-3 minutes to do this, and we will then come back together. Again, I will remind them when they have one minute remaining, and 30 seconds. At the conclusion of them working in their groups, they will share their findings as groups again like we did previously in the lesson. After we have discussed their thoughts, we will refer to the *Penguins!* Book. There is a section in the book about the different characteristics of penguins, and the benefits they have. We will read that section together, to solidify our understanding and make any adjustments to our thinking. Again, as we are exposed to vocabulary, we will chorally say those words as a class.

**So penguins have a layer of blubber. We are going to do an experiment with blubber, and see whether it makes us feel cold or warm. What is an experiment? Does anyone know? Allow for students to respond, and tell them that we are going to do an experiment today.**

I’ve set this experiment up at the back table. I have a bowl full of water & ice. You will be able to put both hands in at the same time- one directly in the water, the other in the bag of blubber (fat). You will then decide whether putting your hand in the blubber made it colder or warmer for you. After you’ve had a chance to experience this, you will go back to your desk and work on a worksheet that I am handing out.

Let’s go over the worksheet so you know what is expected. First off, you’re going to write what we did for the experiment. In this section, you will explain our experiment. We filled a bowl with ice water & made a blubber glove with Crisco. We put our hands in the water, and then determined which was warmer. Below this section, you can draw and describe the experiment. Be as detailed as you can.
On the backside, you get to explain and even draw pictures of how each felt. You can then write what you learned about blubber. And then, finally, you make a conclusion. What are your final words about blubber and whether it keeps your hands cold or warm? If you finish early, add colors to your drawings.

Are there any questions? Okay, I will come around with the bowl to each of your tables. As I come to you, you can put your hand in the water, and then in the blubber. You will have about 10 seconds to do this, and then I’ll move on to the next person. If I haven’t come to you yet, make sure you are working on your blubber worksheet. You can begin your drawings and explanation before I even get to you. Any questions? I will then let them begin the experiment and filling out their worksheet. While they are working, I will walk around to each table and allow two students at a time to conduct the experiment.

Give the students about 10-12 minutes to work on the experiment. I will need to assist and monitor frequently throughout this lesson. When everyone has completed their experiment worksheet, they can then share their finding with members in their table groups.

What did we discover class? If you haven’t shared what you discovered yet, share with someone on your table. You have 20 seconds, go! Who would like to tell me what you found? (My hand was warmer in the blubber than it was without). Interesting! So blubber really does keep us warm? Raise your hand if you agree. Okay, so think for a minute. Imagine being a penguin and you don’t have that layer of blubber. How would it be? Just like penguins have blubber, all animals have characteristics that help them to survive in their habitat. How are penguins able to survive in their habitat? I want you to write your answer on an index card as a conclusion to our lesson. Write as much as you can, and then I’ll come pick them up. You have about a minute.

Adaptions/Accommodations
Gifted Students- I feel that this lesson was accommodating for gifted students. They were able to add more detail to their experiment worksheet, as well as add color. The gifted students were able to include more detail than most of the other students, which I feel was very beneficial for them as well.
ELL’s- The main vocabulary words of this lesson were characteristics and blubber. I made sure that these words were repeated several times, specifically for these students. I had the whole class chorally repeat the word to help solidify it.
Students with IEP’s- With my two students on IEP’s, I made sure to follow up with them throughout the lesson. There is an aid in the classroom, and she also helped to make sure that they understood what was being asked in each question. For the student who really struggles with writing, I told him that he could draw pictures rather than writing if he wanted to for his answers. If he chose to write, I just told him to write as much as he could.

Assessment
My assessment was done during the lesson- the experiment. The worksheet was a way for me to see how well they understood the experiment and the concepts. I was able to monitor and walk around the classroom and informally assess throughout the lesson. The other assessments were given when there was group work. They had to come up with the characteristics of the penguin, and then explain how it helps them to survive. As they worked, I began questioning the different groups and monitoring their understanding. Finally, at the conclusion of the lesson, they answered the overarching question to this unit. This allowed me to know in particular what students understand and those that need additional support.
Lesson 2 Materials:

The Blubber Glove
My Investigation Log

What We Did:

Draw and Describe the Water:

What was it like when you put your bare hand in the icy water?
What was it like when you put your hand in the icy water, with the glove on?

What we learned:

Conclusion:
Penguins stay warm because

Lesson Plan 3:

**Lesson Title:** Designing a Habitat for a Penguin & Informational Writing

**Subject and grade level:** Science and writing, second grade

**Approximate time:** This lesson will take approximately 40-45 minutes

**Rationale for methods:**

This lesson plan was created with inquiry-based learning in mind. In my science methods course, we learned the importance of students learning through inquiry. They are able to seek their own answers and make discoveries on their own. Through this inquiry-based lesson, students will be writing an informational writing in regards to what they've learned. In my language arts methods course, I learned the importance of integrating writing into as many lessons as possible. I feel that having the students write really solidifies their understanding, and they have to recall information that they've discovered in the lessons prior.

**Content standards**

Science 2.4.1- Tell how external features affect an animals’ ability to survive in its environment.

b. Develop, communicate, and justify an explanation as to why a habitat is or is not suitable for a specific organism.

Writing Standard 2- Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.

**Academic language/ vocabulary objectives**

1. Students will create their own habitat and justify their reasoning for their decision.

2. Vocabulary: survive (students will learn this word in terms of how animals can survive in their environment/habitat). They will also learn the term feature.

**Required materials, resources, and technology**

- Design a habitat worksheet (for the assessment they’ll do as a group) [https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/design-a-habitat-handout-7222062](https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/design-a-habitat-handout-7222062)
- Worksheet to write informational essay (where they record the information that they’ve learned)
- Pencils (for the students to write and record their thoughts)
- ELMO projector (to demonstrate the two worksheets for the students)
- *Penguins!* By Anne Schreiber (to refer to for vocabulary words, etc. when writing their papers)

**Lesson objectives**
• Students will be able to create their own habitat for a penguin and explain the features of it. (S2.4.1B)
• Students will be able to write about a penguin’s habitat, and how they are able to survive in their environment. (W2)

**Instructional Procedures**

To start off the lesson, I will have students recall what they learned in our last lesson. We will briefly discuss how we talked about characteristics, and specifically- blubber. Boys and girls, do you remember what we talked about yesterday in our lesson? What did we learn? I will allow for a few students to share out, and make sure that we hit the points of characteristics and blubber. Great! I’m impressed with all that you remembered. You were really paying attention yesterday! So penguins have many characteristics. We know these characteristics help them to survive in their habitat. Do we remember what a habitat is? Allow for the students to share with their elbow partner what they remember. Raise your hand if you remember what a habitat is. What is it student? That’s right, it’s a place where an animal lives. What does the animal need besides a habitat to survive? Do you remember? That’s right! They need food and water.

You get to do something fun today! So, we have become experts with penguins. Now you are going to put all of that knowledge to work. Today you get to create your own habitat for a penguin. I want you to think back of everything we’ve learned about penguins, and where they live. What do they need to survive? Make sure that your picture includes everything that they need in order to survive. Do you know what survive means? Let’s say the word together: Survive! Someone raise their hand and share what you think it means. That’s right! It means being able to stay alive. That’s our goal. We want our penguin to be able to stay alive with whatever we give them. You are going to work in your groups that you have been with the past couple days. Before we start, I want to show you the worksheet and explain it.

I will then display the worksheet with the ELMO projector in the front of the classroom.

In the box, you are going to draw your habitat. Include everything you think a penguin needs to survive. You’re going to draw it’s home. Next to your picture, you can describe the different things in your habitat. For example, if you drew them near the ocean, you can write that here. At the very bottom of the worksheet, you will write why your habitat is suitable (in other words, appropriate) for a penguin. Make sure that you’re all taking part. One of you can draw while the other writes. The other person can then share it. Are there any questions? Okay, you have about 7-8 minutes to complete this. Go ahead and begin as you get the paper.

Remind the class when there is a remaining two minutes, one minute and thirty seconds. At the conclusion of them completing this group work, they will be able to share their habitat with the other group at their table.

I am so impressed with what you all came up with! I want each group to share with the other group at your table. Find out what things you did that were the same, and things that could have been different. You have about 30 seconds to share each.

After they’ve been able to share, I would then explain how we have learned all about penguins habitats and how they survive. They are now going to write all that they have learned about penguins thus far.

When writing, we need to have an introduction to start with. Something like, “I have learned some very interesting things about penguins.” You then will have three details of penguins. What are
I am passing out a paper for you to write your paragraph. Make sure to include a title before you begin. Start off with your beginning sentence, explain three interesting facts, and then conclude. Are there any questions? Okay, you have about 10-15 minutes to complete this. After you’ve finished writing, you can draw a picture of the penguin on the front of your paper in the box provided. Also, do your best with spelling.

Adaptations/accommodations

**Gifted students**- I felt that this was an appropriate lesson for our few higher students. First off, with the group work, they were able to contribute and help their peers. This benefits both their peers, as well as themselves personally having to explain their reasoning and ideas. In addition to this, they could be as in depth as they chose to with their informational writing. They could include the new vocabulary words that we had used, and incorporate all of their previous knowledge that they chose to. I also provided them the option of coloring their pictures that they drew with their informational text writing.

**ELL’s**- All of the new vocabulary words were explained very clearly, especially for our two students who are English language learners. They were able to say the word out loud, and to hear it as well. I also provided an opportunity for them to work with a group for the first part of the lesson. This gave them additional support that they may have needed.

**Students with IEP’s**- With my two students on IEP’s, I made sure to closely monitor them as they were working. Specifically when they were doing their informational writing. I made sure to make it clear to them that they could just write as much as they could, and to do their best. I also allowed for them to include more pictures and detail in their pictures to explain what they had learned. Specifically for our one student on an IEP, he gets very frustrated with writing. I wanted to allow him this option to draw more than write.

**Assessment**

I had two different formal assessments during this lesson. The first was the group assessment where they created a habitat for a penguin. This allowed me to see how well they understood the concepts that we had discovered in the past two days. While they were working in groups, I was monitoring and informally assessing participation of all students. I made sure to take note of those students in particular who weren’t participating to the extent they should have. There was also a formal assessment at the conclusion of the lesson; the informational writing of penguins. This fulfilled the writing standard for this lesson. It was an individual assessment where I could assess their level of understanding based on the core standards. These assessments allowed for me to understand what students need additional support.
Lesson 3 Materials:
Reflections and Evaluation of Lessons, including analysis of assessment data

Analyze student learning: Student 1

Ken performed very well during this unit. Despite his challenges that he faces, he was able to put his best efforts forward. When comparing his work to other students, the quality is evidently lower. However, the other students don’t face the challenges to the extent that Ken does. He worked very hard, and did his best to stay on task during each lesson. He worked at a slower pace, but in the end he was able to accomplish each of the tasks that were set before him. I was very impressed and happy overall with his performance.

I planned the lessons with each student in mind, but particularly, the lower students like Ken. I made sure to differentiate the lessons so that they were more on his ability level. I didn’t want to overwhelm him to the point that he would shut down. Due to this, he was able to complete the minimum of what was required or asked with the assessments. He demonstrated his knowledge and understanding in regards to the subject of physical science; particularly with habitats of penguins. He demonstrated this knowledge verbally, through writing, and drawing. Although he may not have given the most accurate answers in the assessments, I was very pleased with his efforts and the knowledge that he does have. He is definitely in need of additional support, but I feel that he has a great beginning understanding of the curriculum specific content with this unit.

Because of the very hands-on experiences that were provided, Ken stayed very engaged and excited in the lessons. Because he was engaged and not bored, this helped him to stay focused which is one of his greatest challenges with whole class instruction. I knew that he would need additional support and help, so I created many opportunities for him to work with a group. He seemed to thrive off of this setting, and really enjoyed working with his peers. I feel that it helped to solidify his understanding of the concepts being taught. There were also many opportunities for partners share, where both had to contribute to what was being asked. This seemed to be very beneficial for him to be able to share his thinking, but not as intimidating as doing it in front of the whole class.

I made sure to always be aware of Ken during each lesson. As I was monitoring the room during the various assessments, I paid close attention to his work. I allowed for him to work in another part of the room with independent work, and this helped him to focus. He was able to perform well when not being surrounded in close proximity to his peers. This seemed to set him up for success. Overall, I felt that he performed very well.
Penguin:

Looks like: Black face and chin and red eyes

Eats:
- Kill
- Fish

Cool Fact:
- They Klam

Enemies:
- Orcs, Seals

Macaroni
Title: Penguins

I have learned about

Penguins. They are fast swimmers.

Most of them are

4 feet. Emperor penguins are

8 feet. They use their

flippers to get away from

their enemies. I think

penguins are cool.
The Blubber Glove
My Investigation Log

What We Did:
1. Put my hand in the ice water.
2. Put on the blubber glove and then put hand in ice water.

Draw and Describe the Water:

- Water
- Ice

What was it like when you put your bare hand in the icy water? Cold
What was it like when you put your hand in the icy water with the glove on? Warm

What we learned:
Glove is warm.

Conclusion:
Penguins stay warm because
Analyze student learning: Student 2

Bill achieved at a very high level in all three lessons of this science/writing unit. I knew that from the beginning, this would be expected. He is one of our higher students in the class academically. He performs very well, and to a higher extent than is expected in second grade. In the first lesson, he was anxious to share all of his knowledge about habitats and what animals need to survive in their environment. He was always raising his hand ready to participate in the discussions. His work was of great quality. He was given the opportunity to help his peers, and he thrived on that. He thoroughly enjoys helping others.

It was exciting and also very informational to note his progress from the first lesson to the concluding lesson. At first, we were just learning about habitats. He then was able to apply that knowledge into a scenario, and recall what he had learned and discovered. I could quickly see from his formal assessments his understanding. He provided more detail than most of the students did. I made the questions very open-ended on purpose, so that students could elaborate and include as much detail as they were able. All of his answers were correct in each of the assessments.

There were a few times during the lessons that Bill asked for clarification on the assessment. As he asked the questions, I realized many students might have the same concern. For that reason, I made sure to clarify to the whole class, rather than just answering him. He helped me to realize that there were instances where I could have provided more clear expectations. Overall, Bill excelled with this science/writing unit.
**The Blubber Glove**

**My Investigation Log**

**What We Did:**
We put our hand in icy water and then put a glove on and put it back in.

**Draw and Describe the Water:**
- The icy water was cold
- The blubber was warm
- It was fun to experience
- Blubber keeps you warm

**What was it like when you put your bare hand in the icy water?**
It felt cold

**What was it like when you put your hand in the icy water, with the glove on?**
It felt so warm

**What we learned:**
We learned that it is warm with a blubber glove on.

**Conclusion:**
Penguins stay warm because the blubber keeps them warm.
Title: Penguins

I have learned about penguins.

Penguins have blubber to keep them warm.

Baby penguins are called chicks. Penguins have a thing called a brood patch. Chicks huddle with other chicks. Chicks live with other chicks in a rookery. I think penguins are cool.
Analysis of teaching effectiveness:

To begin with, I felt that I managed my time for the lessons well. There were times that I had to make adjustments in order to not go past my given time. However, during the second lesson in particular, I felt that I needed more time. I also noticed that during my lessons, often I didn’t give enough detailed instruction. When I allowed students to work independently or in groups, they often had questions. I should have provided an opportunity for them to ask any questions before the start of any activity. I felt that often, as I walked around and monitored, I was answering questions that multiple students were asking.

Of my three lessons, I felt that the most successful was the second lesson. The pre-assessment seemed to be very effective, and they were participating as a group. It seemed to be a very appropriate question to pose to them- “What are the characteristics of a penguin?” I was very pleased with the answers that they came up with. Overall, the lesson was very hands on. They were able to experience and discover on their own whether or not blubber was a good insulator. There is power in being able to discover a truth on their own, rather than being told. They were very engaged in this lesson, and excited to conduct the experiment. All of the students participated, and they seemed to be more on task with this lesson than the other two. I also felt that incorporating writing into this lesson helped to solidify their knowledge. They were able to express into words the experiment, along with using academic language that we had gone over previously. The investigation worksheet seemed to be an appropriate and engaging assessment of what they’d learned.

Overall, I felt that lesson 1 wasn’t as successful as I had intended it to be. First off, I had the students work in groups. During the few weeks that I’ve been in their class, I haven’t ever seen them do group work. I don’t think they had experienced it much prior to this lesson. Due to this, I wasn’t as prepared as I should have been going into it. I should have created expectations of what group work looks like. All of the members in each group seemed to be trying to power over each other, rather than creating a team effort that was intended. However, I do feel that having each individual student fill out their own worksheet kept them on task. I also felt that this lesson posed some great challenges in regards to classroom management. It was hard to get students attention back after they were talking to partners during pair-share, or doing group work. They were very chatty while other groups presented their information. It was difficult to hear and understand each student as they were sharing. One thing I could have done differently to change this would be to have each group stand as they present. This seems to call attention to that particular group, and in hopes, the other groups will listen attentively. That’s something I would definitely change if I were to teach this lesson again. I did feel that when the students were working, they were doing a great job. There was great participation overall, and they seemed to learn what was intended.

Going into the lessons, I felt that I had appropriate accommodations for all of my learners. However, at the conclusion of each lesson, I realized that I could have done things differently for a handful of students; particularly with my focus students. My focus student who is gifted, Bill, I felt could have been more challenged. Typically, he finished with quite a bit of time left over at the conclusion of each lesson. He was definitely engaged in the lessons, but there needed to be additional tasks for him to work on as he finished early. I thought that having him add drawings and more detail to his pictures would be sufficient. It proved to me with each lesson that it wasn’t enough. In my future classroom, I would love to implement a program where students can choose from various tasks as they finish early. This is a method that we learned in level 2 of the program. I felt that this would have been very appropriate for him to keep his attention, and to continue to challenge himself. One particular extension that I could have had him do was to write an informational text. This goes along with the standard that I incorporated to the lesson; however, it’s one step further than the class had been doing. He could have created his own informational text about penguins. I think he would have really enjoyed this, and it would have kept him engaged for the remainder of the lesson. He could have worked on it each day at
the conclusion of completing his work. I definitely want to implement this idea into future lessons. It’s important to provide additional growth for students who have an understanding of what’s being taught.

Based on Ken’s performance, I realize that the group work was really effective for him. He was able to stay more focused and on task in contrast to working on his own. He gets distracted very easily, so the group setting was very beneficial for him. He has difficulty writing at times. I should have allowed for him to either verbally answer, or draw pictures for his answers. I felt that this would have kept him more on task and engaged in the activities. While he could have used my help during the entire lesson, I am only one teacher for an entire class of students. It’s difficult to try and help each student to the level that they need all at the same time.

As a whole, I really enjoyed my unit about penguins. It was a very hands on experience for the students, and very engaging. I felt that through these lessons, I was able to portray my passion for teaching. I felt very capable as I got up and taught in front of the class. However, like I’ve stated, there are adjustments that I would make for each one of the lessons that I taught. I would provide additional information and assignments for the early finishers in the class. I felt that, often times, they didn’t want to just color after they had finished. They’re ready to learn more, and it’s very evident. I also would have provided more of an opportunity for students to use the vocabulary words that we had learned. I felt that they didn’t interact with them enough. Creating some type of activity where they can practice those vocabulary words would be very beneficial and also engaging. This would be especially helpful for the English Language Learners in the class. For lesson 2 specifically, I first would have had the experiment modeled before the students conducted it. I thought because I was going around the room monitoring the ice water and blubber gloves, that it would be successful. However, I was repeating myself time and time gain. It seemed to get the other students on the table distracted and also excited when I would explain. I would have chose two students prior to doing the experiment to help me demonstrate how the experiment is conducted. It would clear up a great deal of confusion and repetitiveness. I also would have provided more instruction in regards to an experiment. I don’t think they were very familiar with the concept or idea, so I would explain it more in the future. I would explain why we conduct experiments, and the steps that we go through. I think this would have given students a more concrete background and understanding. Also, throughout the three lessons there were times that I created lists on the board while students shared group by group their findings. I realized that it’s important to limit each group to sharing maybe two components that they found. That way, each group can have a part in helping to create a list as a class. When it came to the last two groups sharing, everything they had found had been shared. You could see the disappointment when they knew they couldn’t contribute. I would definitely change that in the future. From the lesson on the third day, I realized how fun it would have been to have each student create his or her own habitat. Because it was a group assessment, I really didn’t feel that I clearly saw the understanding that each individual person had. I would do this assessment individually if I were to teach it again. It’s a very engaging and effective way to assess the students based on the core standards and objectives for the lessons.

In conclusion, I was very pleased with this unit and how engaged students were. They were very excited, and really enjoyed experiencing science hands-on. They gained a greater knowledge of the real world, and what living things need to survive. I utilized a variety of teaching methods, provided opportunities for group work, and allowed for students to further develop their writing skills. I feel very confident that this is a very beneficial unit, and I would definitely teach it again in the future to explore habitats and why animals are able to survive in their habitat.