

Diversity Practicum Experience

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In this paper I will be discussing my diverse experiences in the Bismarck Public Schools and in my Cultural Diversity class (EDU 367). My experiences involved my time being an AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) tutor at Bismarck High School (BHS), a special education aide at Pioneer Elementary School, and the final cultural and diversity capstone project done in EDU 367. Each diverse experience was very different from one another and I learned many different ways I can differentiate my classroom to meet the needs of my future classroom.

For each experience there was a different demographic in which I worked. At BHS I worked with both freshman and sophomores. Both groups had students of low social economic status, students coming from single family homes, and at-risk youth. At Pioneer I worked with elementary students from kindergarten to 5<sup>th</sup> grade. This was a very diverse school with students who have mental health needs, low social economic status, special education, correctional student, students who are homeless, and much more. At Pioneer there were some students who had cognitive and physical limitations. For example, some students could only be in a classroom with so much noise for so long before he/she became frustrated and could no longer work. There was another student who was blind and always needs someone with him/her all the time. The demographic for the EDU 367 capstone project was also very diverse. we had students come from out of Bismarck to the Heritage Center for the Market Place for kids event; students ranging from 1<sup>st</sup> grade all the way to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. We had students who were from urban schools, some were low social economic status, and some special education. Even though each experience had some overlapping demographics, none of those overlapping were the same at each school or event.

Each environment had its own adaptations to help the students learn in a more beneficial way. At BHS one of the ways was during the tutorials the students would group up and make a horse shoe shape pod around a white board so one person could present a problem to the group and the other students could help lead the students to the answer without actually giving the student an answer. Allowing the students to move around their desks and regroup allowed the students to collaborate with each other and get a better understanding of what they are trying to learn. At Pioneer there were many environmental adaptations that could be offered to a student so they could perform their best. One student could use noise canceling headphones, so the room does not get too loud for the student and he/she does not get overwhelmed. Another adaptation would be flexible seating that the teacher offers. This allows the students to not be bound to one seat for the course of nine weeks or until the teacher decided to change the seating arrangement, this can be found in the appendix A. This allows the students to be more focused and have more choice in the classroom. These environmental adaptations helped the students be more successful in their classroom.

Each experience I went to had instructional adaptations for their students. At BHS the students would be given outlines of Cornell notes for them to take in each class to help them with focus note taking. They also had outlines of a TRF (Tutorial Request Form) which would help them focus in on where they are getting confused in a certain class and allows them to pin point their confusion, this can be found in appendix B. At Pioneer they would give students outlines of notes so they would not feel overwhelmed with trying to stay caught up with everyone. Another thing that I saw was two teachers team up and they would then split their classroom between advanced students, average students, and below average. half would go with one teacher and the other half the other. This allowed for the students to either be pushed if they needed to be or be


given extra help which I found to be a great for instructional adaptation. For the Heritage Center, my group had a treasure hunt activity and since there was such a wide range of ages for the students we would adapt how long our treasure hunt would be for each group and how much information we would give because the 8<sup>th</sup> graders we had could obtain more information than the 1<sup>st</sup> graders could without getting overwhelmed.

Each of my experiences was so different from each other and each school had different tricks that worked for them; which is what makes having a diverse group of students to work with so special. Having worked with so many different types of students and now having the knowledge of environmental/ instructional adaptations that work for diverse group of students is something that I can now have in my back pocket to use in my classroom one day, things such as the flexible seating or Cornell notes for the students.

Appendix A



Appendix B

 <b>Tutorial Request Form (TRF)</b> <b>Pre-Work Inquiry (Before the Tutorial)</b>					
<b>Subject:</b> Standard/Essential Ques.:			<b>Name:</b> AVID Period: Date:		
<b>Pre-work Inquiry</b> <b>/12</b>	<b>Resources</b> <b>/1</b>	<b>Collaborative Inquiry</b> <b>/2</b>	<b>Note-Taking</b> <b>/3</b>	<b>Reflection</b> <b>/7</b>	<b>Total</b> <b>/25</b>
<b>Initial/ Original Question:</b>			<b>Source, page # &amp; problem #:</b> _____		
<b>/1</b>					
<b>Key academic vocabulary/definition associated with topic/question:</b>					
1.					
2.					
<b>/2</b>					
<b>What I Know about My Question:</b>					
1.					
2.					
<b>/2</b>					
<b>Critical Thinking about Initial Question:</b>			<b>Identify General Process and Steps:</b>		
<b>/3</b>			<b>/2</b>		
<b>Question from Point of Confusion:</b>					