



Grade 4 Library - Introducing the Dewey Decimal Classification

(Submitted by Celia Martinez Anglada, 2017, while serving as Teacher at International School of Havana, Cuba)

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| Tool(s) used: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems Mapping |
| Purpose of using tool: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generating Questions • Guiding Discussion <p>Overview:</p> <p>I selected Systems Mapping. The purpose was to encourage students to understand that this library system known as Dewey Decimal is a set of interrelated and interacting elements. This tool develops learning and higher order thinking, promotes both, speculation and imagination through questions. According to Irving Sigel, a pioneer in the study of children's intellectual development: "Questions create the challenges that make us learn". So, using this tool, students were invited to think and begin the organization of their ideas, discuss, ask and answer questions in order to learn and reflect upon the correct order and association of the Dewey System groups.</p> |
| Context of lesson/case study: | Library Lesson |
| Participants (# and description): | 8 students/Grade 4 (9 and 10 years old) |
| Topic, Theme, or Key Understanding of unit/project: | Introducing the 10 main categories used in the Dewey Decimal Classification System for non-fiction bookshelf arrangement. |
| Length of unit/project: | Approximately 2 weeks |
| Resources/materials & setting required: | Cards, pictures, markers, scissors, posters, glue, Dewey Decimal Game sheets and books |

Lesson Plan/Description of the Project:

I decided to use Systems Mapping in this particular library lesson (Introducing Dewey Decimal System). In my opinion, it is the appropriate one to initiate both, individual and collective thinking in response to the new information they had to learn. The students worked in groups of 4. They were given different parts to make up the system. This way they interchanged ideas, questions and comments.

1. The first team got the numbers and pictures from 000-900 to put them in the right order.
2. The second team was given 10 cards with questions that they had to put in the correct order.
3. Cards were given to both teams to match the paragraphs with the right questions.
4. Once they had finished, one member of each team was in charge of explaining the results of what they had done and pasting all the information in the poster. The other members of the team, explained their choices and answer questions too.

Reflection

Plusses (Things that went well):

All the students were involved and participated actively. A multi-sensory approach was used so as to meet students multiple intelligence, i.e. pictures, written cards, posters, and even pantomime to support some





students who are in English as a Second Language. I consider that this tool enhanced the student learning due to the fact that it allowed them to see “the big picture”, (i.e. The Dewey System). By seeing the whole picture, the students were also able to think of new possibilities that they had not come up previously in spite of their best efforts, and they suggested some other learning activities to help their peers understand and apply the Dewey Decimal System such as puzzles, role play and dramatizations.

Challenges (Things I would change):

Next time before starting the activities and to avoid conflicts, I will point out the fact that they must respect peers’ comments. In addition to this, I will use rubrics to allow students to assess both, behaviour and participation. Last but not least, I would introduce the lesson, telling the students that in today’s class; they will learn “not only to see ‘the trees’ but also learn to see the forest for the trees” (Systems Thinking).

Suggestions for other practitioners and educators:

I used this tool because I think that teaching Dewey Decimal System may be intense and notoriously difficult for students. This tool and the learning activities designed focus on how each group of the Dewey system interacts with the other to be part of the system. As it was suggested by the students, appealing activities such as role play and dramatizations can also be used not only to enhance the quality of the lesson, but also to motivate students and engage them in this essential topic to understand the organization of a library.

Evidence and Resources:



