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EDUC 6100
Dr. Lee Montgomery
March 3rd, 2020
Week 9 – Using the Wide Angle Lens Evaluation Approach

Arrange to observe (or watch a video of) a lesson taught by a colleague volunteer (see: http://bit.ly/volume332020). Use a wide-angle lens approach (specifically Anecdotal Notes) to collect observational data during the lesson.

Teacher:	Mrs. C. Literski	Time:	2nd Period (~40 min)
Class:	8th Grade Math	Enrollment:	~20 students
Date:	February, 2020		

Beginning – Today, she is teaching her 8th graders about **volume** (per her description), and how to calculate it. She begins by recording her work on the desk, which is projected onto the board in front of the class for all to see. She has **not** noted the learning objectives for the day, though "I can" statements from a previous lesson appear on the board.

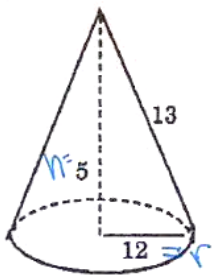
She orally introduces the lesson, and erases the past objectives. Next, having already handed out the worksheet to each student (also shown on the projector display), she checks students' previous knowledge, verifying that volume is in fact cubic units that fit within a shape. She starts with rectangular prisms (basically any box shapes). She explains how it is a simple formula: width x length x height, and walks through the basic formula with a few examples. She models it first, and then encourages a student to demonstrate the process for the entire class. Mrs. Literski does a great job answering questions, and still keeping a positive tone while talking, thus encouraging the students in their effort.

Advancing Past Knowledge – Next, she takes this concept another step, and extends this knowledge to measuring the volume of a cylinder, which is a bit trickier. However, she expertly ties the students' volume knowledge (base · height) into this new scenario. Now, the students remember how to find the area of a square, but she kindly reminds them that it is $\pi \cdot r^2$ (or, for those who may not remember, 3.14 · (radius)^2). Once they have the area of the circle, they simply multiply it times the height. She even taught the kids a catchy little song to remember how to calculate this volume: "The volume of a cylinder is πr^2 x h". She also made sure that students didn't mix this formula up with the formula for the perimeter of a circle: $2\pi r$ (both have 2s and rs and πs, so it can happen, and several students admitted as much).

She then goes through several examples, and walks the students through figuring out the parts they need (the radius, the height, etc.), and then inputs it on a calculator, and showed the students how to measure it either in terms of π or as a decimal. Then she made sure to remind the students to clarify what units they are measuring volume in, and to be precise in their answers. In this way, she worked to verify that her students didn't make silly errors.

Note: Throughout the lesson, there are a few times that she has some side conversations / tangents that are off topic, but she quickly and effectively redirects the students back to the task at hand.

Moving On to Cones – Next, Mrs. Literski again transfers student knowledge to another shape: cones. She shows students that the volume is smaller in a cone than it is for a cylinder. In fact, the volume formula for a cone is exactly $1/3^{rd}$ of the volume of a cylinder with the same height and base, or: $1/3 \cdot \pi \cdot r^2 \cdot h$). She also shars how the Pythagorean theorem could help in this case ($a^2 + b^2 = c^2$), when you may not know the height of the cone, but you do know the radius and the length from point to circle's edge (thus creating an imaginary right triangle running through the cone, as shown to the right:)



Find the volume.

Volume of Spheres – Finally, she explains how the volume of a cylinder, all things being equal, to a sphere that has the same height and radius has a similar formula too, just like the cone formula. In this case however, it is $4/3 \cdot \pi \cdot r^3$ (and she shares another verse to her song to help remind students of the formula), and then finished practicing a few problems. They also end the lecture by singing all 3 versus of the little formula song. Then, the students work on more practice problems for the remainder of class, and she assists them with that on an individual basis.

Supervisory Postobservation Outline:

Following the format described on pp 43-45 (Nolan & Hoover, 2010), and as proscribed in the assignment**:**

Outline of Questions / Goals for My Meeting with Mrs. Literski:

- ***How do you think the lesson went?***
- ***What decisions did you make in your lesson based on student responses and / or questions?***
- ***How do you think you effectively helped the students learn these new concepts and formulas for figuring out volume?***
    - I really appreciated how she would model the correct way to do it, and then let the students try it themselves, and also used guiding questions as she built on previous knowledge to help them make the connections between volumes for rectangular cubes / prisms to cylinders, cones and finally spheres
- ***What are some things you did with the students that you thought were effective?***
    - Her rapport and silliness with the students lead to thoughtful and honest discussion, and students knew they could ask questions without reproach, in a safe environment
- ***How might you improve your lesson next time? What would you do differently?***
    - Self-reflection is key, and while her lesson was good in many ways, there was room for improvement.

Reflection – When one enters Mrs. Literski's room, it is noted that it is a bit eccentric. Her room has a large variety of interesting things, but despite this, she also keeps it neatly organized, despite the hodgepodge of items that are found there. While she primarily teaches math, she also hosts a game club after school, and several shelves are packed with a plethora of games that she and her students can play and engage with after they have completed their work, or during her club.

She also seems to make a habit of keeping "I can" statements / objectives on the board, for all to easily see, as I observed at the beginning of class. While being in her class is a quirky atmosphere, so is she, in a good, endearing sort of way. She is very chipper, and kind, and this endears her to her students, and assists her in teaching sometimes difficult concept.

Goals – However, an updated objective that would match the lesson for today, such as **"I can accurately measure the volume of any square, rectangular or circle shaped object"** was ***not*** found on the board, nor

did she add it until **the end of the lesson** as she briefly reviewed what they had learned. These sort of statements have been a focus of the administration, and she is obviously making an effort, but having those shown at the beginning of class, for easy reference, was one thing I think she could have done better on, so discussing that is a goal I'd have for our discussion.

My Role – My role in a supervisory role is to help Mrs. Literski with anything that she wants help with, as well as simply offering my insight and observations as a friendly courtesy to assist her in further developing her pedagogy. Thus, I would have previously held a pre-observation meeting with her, if this were an authentic observation, and we would have chatted about ideas / things that she wanted me to look for as part of the lesson, and that would have been my focus.

In this case, I observed her class without having held such a conference, but ideally that would not be the case. Having such a conference would, certainly, have had some effect on her lesson (since she would be conscientiously thinking about it, and would know that I would be too), but I think that is a good thing, as it blends with her role.

Teacher's Role – In a supervisory role, the purpose of the visit(s) and later conference is to help the teacher and coach come together and chat, plan and then implement goals and ideas for improvement, as guided by the teacher. The teacher is originally responsible for what the coach will look for and focus on, but they are also responsible for, in a collaborative effort with their coach, creating and meeting SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound) goals. The results of such meetings are not, in this case, binding, though the coach should check up on them, and if they are failing to meet their supervisory goals, then further action may need to be taken in an evaluative setting.

Evaluative Postobservation Outline:

Following the format described on pp 97-99 (Nolan & Hoover, 2010), and as proscribed in the assignment**:**

1. My goals for a supervisory post-conference (based on my observation of the lesson):

- Illustrate to Mrs. Literski the benefits of video-recording lessons, not just for students, but for evaluation & reflection of both teachers and others.
- Allow Mrs. Literski to use me as a sounding board for reflection of practice, and as a support in planning, curriculum, teaching, etc.
- Make sure that Mrs. Literski understands when I am acting in an evaluative vs. supervisory role, and my goals during both.

2. My role as a supervisor/coach in collecting, analyzing data and making decisions about instruction:

- Is to assist the observed teacher to improve their own instruction and metacognition about their teaching practices, students and student behavior, etc.
- Includes helping the teacher consider and then act on binding **SMART goals**, particularly those that I saw areas where she may have not been meeting the teaching standards of our school / district / state.
    - My suggested goals for her, if I were to focus on just two, would include the following:
        - **"I will clearly identify (and write) +1 lesson objective(s) for students to refer to daily for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year."**
        - **"I will (on a daily basis by two weeks from now) consistently refer to the aforementioned lesson objective(s) throughout the lesson, and verify through assessment (of various types) that students have met and can demonstrate competency of this objective."**

- It is also my job to ensure that her due process rights are protected, and so I will make sure that any official evaluation procedures involve not just myself, but other admins / school leaders as well, to provide a more balanced view of her teaching. I also need to ensure that she is (or any such teacher) is getting frequent visits / feedback and knows that we care, that we want them to succeed, and we are there to help and assist them, not just toss them to the proverbial wolves.
- Additionally, requiring a portfolio that encourages metacognition, and also showcases student artifacts, work and products that she has created (i.e. rubrics, finished products, etc.) will help ensure that we as admins are getting a clearer and equitable view of her teaching practices (Nolan & Hoover, p. 98, 2010).

3. Mrs. Literski's role in the process:

- Our meeting ought to facilitate a conversation about what she did well, how she might improve, and what official goals she'd like to work towards to improve her teaching abilities.
- She ought to be reflecting and considering what went right, what didn't, and how her lesson / classroom environment / attitude, etc. might improve and continually develop.
- Per my noticing that she was a bit behind the ball in posting her objectives, I would hope that she would come to the conclusion herself that she ought to work on that. If not, I'd remind her of it, and I'd encourage her to make that one of her goals going forward.

Sources:

Nolan, J., & Hoover, L. (2010). Teacher supervision and evaluation (3rd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley.