

K-3 SPED Bread Pre-Interview

Interviewer: Why did you choose to teach this lesson?

Teacher: This lesson is part of a bigger unit that we're studying. We're looking at living things so we have our language arts. We have our math. We have science. So within that, we've come to the point where we are now going to put into play what we've learnt from our science experience, which is yeast. Now we are going to bake some bread.

Interviewer: What are the learning outcomes for this lesson and how are they related to the larger sequence?

Teacher: I look at my students, because they're so diverse and they have so many different needs. I look at this lesson in that there is not one learning outcome. I have many learning outcomes. For some of my students it may mean, to have them sit for a period of time and focus. For another student, it may be that he can learn that yeast ... The reactions, the chemical reactions and the yeast, will make the bread rise. I look at the lesson as targeting the individual needs of my students and then them benefiting from some element of the lesson.

Interviewer: Does that fit within larger IEP goals for individuals and a set of ...

Teacher: Absolutely. Each child has their IEP goals. One child, it may be developing language. Within this lesson, we do a lot of language. We have a lot of words that we've learned. We expand our list of ... Our bank of words. For another student, that IEP goal may be sitting quietly within the group, listening. Another student may be raising their hand when they have a question. For my lessons, it's not one goal, it's many goals and really targeting what that student needs and making accommodations so that they can reach those goals.

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Interviewer: How would you describe the lesson as meaningful, useful or relevant, to a student's lives?

Teacher: I think in this case, the children are excited because they eat bread everyday, but they don't really know ... Where does it come from and what happens? What is this food that I'm eating mean? Now, they can look at this and they can understand, "Oh, somebody made this. Maybe I can make this. How is it made?" Really, it's about motivating and engaging the children. That's how they're going to learn. If I were to bake bread, bring it in and said, "This is it," it has no meaning. But when they participate, they will remember that this is how it works and this is what they're learning. By actually being involved in the process, they will remember what they've learned.

Interviewer: What are the big questions you're using to drive student discussion?

Teacher: For my children, it's always challenging. Some of my children are nonverbal. You'll see

that some of my children have difficulty focusing. I don't look at one question. I look at many little questions. When I am teaching a lesson, I need to be constantly assessing and looking. Is this child engaged? If not, I'll put out a question. How does this work? What does this mean? You'll see it during the lesson. At the same time, if I'm looking at language and we have our words that we're using for this lesson, then I'll ask some students that I know have particular challenges in reading. If I see that they can't read that word, then I'll ask them to ... I'll bring it down and ask them to ... Give me the letter sound and we'll break it down. I'm constantly breaking down into smaller questions, trying to get those children to participate, feel successful and feel accepted in the classroom environment. That way they're going to be more successful feeling comfortable.

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Interviewer: How are you planning to check for understanding and assess student outcomes?

Teacher: That's ongoing. From the beginning of the lesson to the end of the school day, I'm constantly assessing. Seeing if the child understands. If they don't understand, I've got to go back and I've got to change that. I've got to say, "Okay, what can I do to help them understand?" Or, I'm constantly assessing to see, if I ask a child to read a short CBC word and I see that they don't know the word, then I have to break it down. Give me the letter sound. If I see that they don't know the letter sound, I have to break it down again and give them choices. I'm constantly assessing my teaching, not only whether they understand me, but I also have to assess whether or not I'm presenting it properly. Therefore, if I'm not presenting it in a way that they understand, I need to change that.

Interviewer: How do you plan to manage student behavior throughout the lesson, starting with expectations?

Teacher: From the beginning of the school year, I set rules. I set ground rules. We have our routines and many of the children adhere to those routines and rules. Student behavior is never an issue. It's never an issue with a child that has been in a classroom for let's say a period of time of a few weeks. They understand this is what we do, this is how the ... There are no surprises. I try to model appropriate behaviors. The other children who have been in the class for a longer period of time, know how to model behaviors. We learn from each other. There really is no student behavior challenges.