

Intermediate Science Microbiology Materials Interview

Interviewer: Please describe the instructional materials, curriculum materials that you're using for this lesson.

Teacher: The materials used for this lesson were provided by a curriculum we bought, called [C-Pup 00:00:16], so it's the text books, and the microscopes, and the cell slides, everything was prepped already, so it's a C-Pup curriculum out of Stanford University, which I don't use only. It's a balance of curriculum, and my own thing. I'm using Google Classroom, a lot. That was probably the main sources of curriculum, the hand outs, and everything.

Interviewer: Why did you choose these materials?

Teacher: These materials are provided to us, which is nice, coming from the school I was at, before. I believe our school leader got the materials, because it's an investigation approach to science, so all the activities, and the materials that go with the activities are students diving in first, inquiry based, and then formulating their own understanding, and then going back, and reviewing these terms, like protists, and microbes, and stuff, after students have had a chance to play around, and investigate on their own.

[00:02:00] I think that was the choice behind getting the C-Pup curriculum. As far as Chromebooks, and one to ones, and Google Classroom, there's a big push for moving everything digital. I found a really good balance between Google Classroom, and using digital Google Drive, Google apps for ed, and then the actual notebook, and still having handwritten notebooks. I really believe in science being out in the field, and having the ability to take notes, and all of that. It's a constant balance that I haven't really, quite perfected between premade curriculum, technology, and then, keeping the handwriting, and the notes in the notebook.

Interviewer: What is it that you like about these materials?

Teacher: I love the notebooks. It sounds really nerdy, and weird. It's an avid strategy I learned from a long time ago, that I've just used every year, in science. It's just a really good way to get kids organized. Page numbers, and table of contents, and like I said, the ability to be out in the field, and taking notes, and data, and looking back at your data, and trying to interpret from your own handwriting, kind of thing. I have a real passion for keeping that, and not really, necessarily moving digital for that, but I see the benefits for my own sanity, using digital, and Google Drive, just having dots in locations, in one location, having students build skills that they'll actually need, that I wish I had before I went to college. Then, the C-Pup curriculum, just having materials. Any time a teacher has microscopes, or slides, makes it ... It's a huge relief to have stuff that kids can actually do science with.

Interviewer: Are there any changes you'd make to these materials?

Teacher: Yeah. It's constantly changing every year, how they're being used. I struggled with the

[00:04:00] materials in the beginning, feeling obligated to use them, because they're here, and we spent money. I'm realizing, if it doesn't make sense, don't do it, and don't feel this pressure, because, sometimes, it's a lot of set up, and it's a lot of procedural ... Going over expectations with students, it takes a lot of time. Sometimes you feel obligation to devote more time to these lessons with this curriculum, but I'm trying to find a balance of picking and choosing when to use it, and when to move quickly through things. Yeah. I don't know if that answered the question.

Interviewer: Yeah. Are there any other reasons why you make those decisions?

Teacher: To use the ...

Interviewer: Yeah. To use, or not use.

Teacher: The decision to use things in class are solely for what skills are these helping you kids develop. I think that's just always at the forefront. For me, I have taught high school, and I have done student teaching in elementary, and there's always like, "Why didn't they get this before?" For me, it's always like, "What are students really going to need to be successful in high school biology? What are they going to need to be successful in college?" While still engaging with the content in the material, so that's why I like the notebook, and Google apps for ed, because they're going to need it. They're going to need these skills now. We push them really hard, in the first semester, on just, like I said, the routines, and using them. Then, they really start to benefit from them in the second semester.

Interviewer: How would you describe these materials as meaningful and relevant to students' lives?

Teacher: Yeah. I think I answered that with just, "You're going to use this in the workforce. No matter what you do. If you're an artist, a scientist, you need to communicate well. This is the format to communicate. You're going to need to edit your writing, edit your ..." I just feel like these are the tools that are used in the real world, and their teachers are using them. I feel like they see. We live what we preach. You need to be using Google Classroom, and sending appropriate emails. We're doing the same thing. We're emailing feedback. We're hyper-linking documents and rubrics, and everything we're asking the students to do, we do ourselves. I think that helps it make more sense to them. "This is relevant. Our teachers are doing this. This is how the school functions." I think they see that, and I think they get it.

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