

TASK 1: PLANNING COMMENTARY

Respond to the prompts below (**no more than 9 single-spaced pages, including prompts**) by typing your responses within the brackets. Do not delete or alter the prompts. Pages exceeding the maximum will not be scored.

1. Central Focus

- a. Describe the central focus and purpose of the content you will teach in the learning segment.

[The central focus is for students to convey that there are many types of plants; they are living things and have certain needs. In order to develop understanding and comprehend these things, the children will need to learn new vocabulary. They will be challenged to consider themselves as researchers and partly responsible for their own acquisition of knowledge. I will purposefully present this content around the central focus by practicing the 5E's of learning science. This involves how I gear learning experiences with; engagement, explanation, exploration, elaboration, and evaluation.]

- b. Describe how the standards and learning objectives for your learning segment support children's

- active and multimodal learning
- language and literacy development in an interdisciplinary context

[Due to the fact that I will gear all of these lessons with a Reggio Emilia approach to learning in mind, multiple opportunities for engagement in multi-modal learning will occur. Considering the Reggio Emilia approach, I will view the students as researchers who are capable of producing meaningful work by collaborating with their peers and receiving guidance from me. During the first lesson, I will explore the students' knowledge about whether or not a plant is a living thing. They will be actively engaged in discussion during collaborative work and whole-class "brainstorming" segments. As students stand during whole group instruction, I will teach them a song to remember three reasons that show we know plants are living. This is an aural and kinesthetic activity to engage all students, but especially those within my placement who have difficulty sitting still. Various visual representations of material will help all students, but specifically benefit the ELL student who will often need additional accommodations.

I have crafted lessons to weave literacy concepts within science experiences. Additionally, I have created lessons that combine science experiences that contain interdisciplinary segments involving literature, musical and visual arts, logical sequencing akin to mathematics, and collaborative learning groups which require the social science concepts of respectful discussion practices. In lessons three, four, and five, I utilize two different literary strategies to bolster comprehension of texts and build familiarity with new vocabulary across disciplines. The students will learn that acquiring more vocabulary will not only help them read more challenging books as their reading levels progress, but also help them use new vocabulary in order to explain what they want to say.

The two types of strategies I will use are: "Concept Sorts" and "Jigsaw". Both strategies require the formation of cooperative learning groups. Based on research, I arranged these groups with a balance of ability levels instead of only similar ability levels. Maheady (1997) referred to grouping as one of the alterable instructional factors that "can powerfully influence positively or negatively the levels of individual student engagement and hence academic progress." Furthermore, Kunsch, Jitendra, & Sood, (2007) state that, "Peer tutoring works best when students of different ability levels work together."

I chose to use a “concept sort” to teach important words from the book, Planting the Wild Garden, by K. Galbraith, which related to our science lesson. During this process, students are given a large chart paper with a “closed sort” of three categories which I have pre-designated. These are: “places plants grow”, “how seeds travel”, and “foods from plants”. After whole-group modeling of the process, the five groups are given an envelope of mixed-up words to categorize. They go to designated areas and are advised not to rush through and work individually, but to explain their reasoning as they try to arrange these words in different categories. This kind of instruction is supported by Dr. D. W. Moore, whose research shows that “rich and varied language experiences” along with “content-rich, collaborative tasks lead to consistent vocabulary growth”.

Another way that I have linked literacy development into interdisciplinary learning is through a “jigsaw” process. This process requires small groups of students to become the “expert groups” on one aspect of a larger topic. The large topic we worked on is “plants” and I organized five expert groups on the topics of; trees, cactus/succulents, fruits/vegetables, carnivorous plants, and flowers. The strategy is that the expert groups will read grade-level text and work collaboratively to identify important information to share back with their “home (small) group”. In the spirit of Reggio Emilia, this one topic could be explored for months. However, I will designate the whole class as the “home group” to save some time in sharing information at the end of five lessons. This type of “jigsaw” lesson requires much planning and organizing to ascertain various books on all group topics. After I gather a five totes full of topic-related books in Lesson 3, I will identify which book fits best for each student based on reading levels. After an “open-sort” task from the third lesson, the students need to summarize what they are learning. I will mark questions or sentence starters on post-it so that students can have some guidance on collecting information. I will guide their research and comprehension as I monitor groups, before they make a presentation in lesson five.]

- c. Explain how your plans build on each other to support children’s language and literacy development through active and multimodal learning.

[The initial lesson plan will guide future lesson plans to expand learning about the central focus. (The central focus is for students to convey that there are many types of plants; they are living things and have certain needs.) The use of vocabulary, syntax and discourse will prove to be essential for students when participating in whole class and small-group activities that are crafted to deepen their understanding. Initially, we will “brainstorm” a list of what students know already about what plants have, what they need, and how they grow.

Each lesson plan builds upon the last one. During all five lessons there is movement around the classroom and some sort of visual exploration of the science of plants whether it be an experiment, video, plant observation, or vocabulary exploration about scientific terms. Theorist, Howard Gardner, views intelligence in terms of how individuals process information and learning experiences. Throughout my unit, I will try to gear various aspects of the central focus with Gardner’s eight primary learner-intelligences, (verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, visual, kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and the naturalist) in mind as well. Although the “universal design for learning” assists students with specific learning needs, the practice of creating lessons with multiple means of expression and representation will be beneficial to all of my students. These multimodal experiences are demonstrated by the following:

1. My first lesson includes an exploration of how water moves through a stalk of celery along with an assessment piece involving the logical sorting of pictures to convey their knowledge of a plant’s life cycle. Students are pulled into the process of adding the food coloring, stirring, and commenting. The musical and kinesthetic learner will more readily

grasp that a plant is a living organism by participating in a song with movements about the reasons how we know it is living.

2. The second lesson will engage visual learners by a time lapse video of a growing sunflower. Not only does this introduce the parts of a plant, but it connects to the students' prior knowledge on life stages from the first lesson. Pictures from the experiment along with a display of the plant's life stage cards, will be affixed to a documentation board that will also connect the students with their ongoing learning. Other multi-modal aspects found in this lesson include the artistic creation of a flower with available labels for students to demonstrate their knowledge of plant parts and their functions. Also, during a "part 2" segment, students can use their tactile senses to touch various seeds and bulbs- making comparisons as they make visual observations. Then, using arts integration they can both draw an example and write a sentence (about a bulb versus a seed) to bolster the learning of new terms. Nobori states that, "Arts integration uses teaching practices that have been shown in brain-based research to improve comprehension and long-term retention."
3. The third lesson caters to the linguistic, logical, and interpersonal mind. In groups, the students will focus on the learning standard (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.1.5.A Sort words into categories to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent). Each of the five groups work together to explain their reasoning about how words from a "wild garden" text can be grouped into categories. This gives students the opportunity to practice their perceptions of others along with being sensitive group member emotions and motivations while accomplishing a logical and literary goal.
4. In the fourth lesson, intrapersonal ("me smart") learners can make text-to-self connections as they explore a focus topic book, video, or living plant assigned to their small group. The naturalist learner ("nature smart") will appreciate the live plant connection we make in this segment. Various artistic projects for each small group will engage students in using new scientific vocabulary as they discuss the steps in their artistic representation together. Visual learners thrive on this type of project in order to have a deeper understanding about the topic. Interpersonal learners will often be peer leaders as decisions about presentation displays come together for lesson five.
5. In the last lesson, students will be presenting their learning by an oral presentation, accompanied by a visual display board. Since this is a small-group collaboration, each student will bring to the presentation something which can individually showcase their strength.]
- d. Describe how the physical environment in which you are teaching supports the active and multimodal nature of children's learning. (If, in your view, the physical environment in which you are teaching does not adequately support the active and multimodal nature of children's learning, please describe the changes you would make.)

[One way that I will support the active and multimodal nature of children's learning in their environment, is by making sure that ample exploratory materials are gathered to display for various lessons. These explorations are examples of how students with diverse learning needs can move away from stagnant desk work, and engage in meaningful academic conversations through multi-modal segments. For instance, some materials (such as celery and food coloring) will need to be brought in for lesson one, while a vast display of materials are needed for the longer lesson number four. The fourth lesson requires the exploration of actual plants or foods from plants.

In addition, I will modify desk arrangements into cooperative groups to mirror the science small-groups that are arranged from Lesson three onward. Although some group work can be done on the floor in different sections of the classroom, having the groups seated together in a desk cluster, will ease the organization of collaborative tasks that are better suited for work at a

desk. There will be ample space in this desk formation so that kinesthetic activities can be done easily without rearrangements.

Lastly, there will be multiple instances where students will implement the vocabulary they have learned. When writing about a certain topic such as which plant grows from a bulb versus a seed (Lesson 2, part 2), the visual representation of words, are clearly posted on the whiteboard, chart, or SmartBoard in order for students to be able to refer back to how to spell this newly acquired vocabulary- some of which can be challenging for struggling readers.]

2. Knowledge of Children to Inform Teaching

For each of the prompts below (2a–c), describe what you know about **the children in your class/group with respect to the central focus** of the learning segment.

Consider the variety of learners in your class/group who may require different strategies/support (e.g., children with IEPs or 504 plans, English language learners, children at different points in the developmental continuum, struggling readers, children who are underperforming or those with gaps in academic knowledge, and/or gifted children).

a. Children's development—What do you know about their

- social and emotional development
- cognitive and physical development
- language development for communication

[Within my classroom, the social and emotional needs vary among the students. Most students are able to sit quietly during teacher-directed segments. However, I realize that the better I can engage students in active participation during a lesson, the more likely I will be able to sufficiently manage the various behavioral needs. Furthermore, I have strived to arrange lessons around Lev Vygotsky's theory that social interaction plays a key role in the development of cognition. Reggio Emilia principals are also influenced by this theory; therefore, in trying to create learning strategies, I needed to begin to know individual child interests, skills, and motivations in order to knowledgeably place students into collaborative work groups. Some children can experience changes in after-school routines which sometimes effects behavior in subsequent classes. For instance, one girl who generally went home after school for the first half of the year, is now going to daycare and seeing less of her parents in the evenings. This leads to more tears at school and sensitivity when she feels she is having trouble grasping new concepts. In this inclusive classroom, we have one student who (not only has normal speech issues), but has a condition of blurting out sounds without his control. He is also one student who has trouble sitting still. I have found that the more kinesthetic and artistic tasks that I can weave into learning, the less behavioral issues will occur. I agree with Feeney, Moravcik, and Nolte, who explain that, "Through arts experiences, children come to: feel good about themselves as individuals, develop the ability to observe and respond sensitively, develop creativity, ...and develop a way to express feelings and ideas." It is important, especially for young children, to explore the arts because creativity should not be restricted to the most talented artists. I have observed in this classroom, and see the children display pride in what artistic work they have created to represent a concept. This excitement for learning is the fundamental social and emotional aspect that I, as a teacher, need to recognize in each student.

There are a few students who struggle with language deficits and receive individualized instruction outside of the classroom; however, with teacher guided projects, I can monitor frustration levels and make modifications to accommodate for their learning level. For instance, for my ELL student, I can ask her to show me the correct sequence of pictures in a plant life

cycle and have her orally convey those as opposed to reading or writing each word in order to let me know she has understood the concept.]

- b. Personal, cultural, and community assets—**What do you know about your children’s everyday experiences, cultural and language backgrounds and practices, and interests?**

[Within my first grade classroom, the morning is typically dedicated to language and literacy goals. One ELL student is making progress in the area of literacy, but her parents only speak Spanish at home. Routine oral phonemic awareness tasks will generally invoke participation among the whole group. Throughout various subjects, I try to help students make various text-to-self connections and choose read-aloud books involving a variety of cultural celebrations or other topics. The students consistently enjoy the read-aloud segments. Involving parents, is a way to show that everyone’s family culture is valued and important. Like many suburban schools, a “Curriculum night” was set for beginning of the school year, where parents can see the classroom, hear about learning goals, and learn helpful study tips from the teacher. Later in the year, the families are invited for a “Reading Night” in which the librarian will setup grade-level activities and give parents a way to become more invested in their child’s learning. In our first grade classroom, parents can volunteer to help on scheduled days, which helps to establish a cooperative relationship between the teacher and parents.

I try to observe what students select to read during independent (self-selected) reading. It is because of the fact that I observed a couple of students reading non-fiction books on carnivorous plants, that I chose to make “carnivorous plants” one of the “expert groups” in the last three lesson plans.]

- c. Prior learning and prerequisite skills related to language and literacy development—**What can they do and what are they learning to do related to language and literacy development? Cite evidence from your knowledge of this class/group of children.**

[My strategy for planning the unit is based on the students’ prior knowledge of basic scientific concepts. It takes into consideration the class’s language and literacy development and how I can build on ideas already covered in literacy blocks and create tasks to enhance interdisciplinary learning. One daily focus is to adhere to standard writing conventions for first graders such as the capitalization and punctuation of sentences. There are instances in lessons 2 and 4 where children need to write a complete sentence to demonstrate their understanding. I will assess the alphabetizing of some science words in this unit since the students have practiced this sorting strategy when learning their weekly spelling words.

Students have been instructed on many concepts in phonemic awareness, from isolating phonemes, specific vowel sounds and consonant blends, to deleting phonemes, to and identifying rhyme. They are each practicing individual reading strategies from “chunking out syllables”, utilizing context clues, finding visual clues, and re-reading for fluency. They already have participated in identifying an “author’s purpose” for why a book is written and have been building a few comprehension strategies. Some strategies include: visualization, wondering, sequencing events, and the participation in a partner “Think-Pair-Share” break during a read-aloud so that important reasoning can be discussed. Some students consistently do not turn in homework logs to show reading or listening accomplishments by either self or a parent. If children are exposed to less reading experiences at home, literary tasks at school become more challenging. In my lessons three and four, the students will need to use their reading and comprehension strategies to decode text and collect information from a non-fiction book.]

3. Supporting Children’s Development and Learning

Respond to prompts 3a–c below. To support your justifications, refer to the plans and materials you included as part of Planning Task 1. In addition, **use principles from research and/or developmental theory to support your justifications.**

- a. Justify how your planned learning experiences and materials align with your understanding of the children’s development, prior learning, and personal, cultural, and community assets (from prompts 2a–c above). Be explicit about these connections and support your justification with research/developmental theory.

[In order to implement developmentally appropriate lessons for my class, I am keeping in mind my best insight about the intrinsic motivation of each student and what areas might be more challenging for each one. Because I have crafted these lessons just as Howard Gardner views intelligence, (in terms of how individuals process information and learning experiences), I am optimistic about how each student will be able to make important contributions to a group learning project. I have designed lesson three through five with collaborative tasks. From an article in the Journal of Educational Psychology, 2003, Vol. 95 No. 2, researchers, “...have recognized the powerful influence that socialization experiences with peers have on student academic motivation and achievement.

When I utilize a peer-assisted teaching strategy during lessons three through five, I will allow ample time for students to engage in academic conversations in order to produce academic gains (not only in the domain of science), but in the social, emotional domain as well. Well-known educational theorist, Vygotsky, describes “intersubjectivity”, the interactive relationship between a teacher or peer, and the child and how two people adjust with the same intent. Prairie elaborates on this point when working on projects such as science experiments, “Intersubjectivity can be accomplished when teachers work with a group, co-constructing ideas...In this process of following and reflecting children’s thoughts, teachers can take the children deeper into inquiry and sometimes, embrace hypothesis and generalization.” (Prairie, 2005, p. 122).]

All of the five lessons contain a visual representation of the concepts being taught. During lesson one, two, four, and five, visual creations are used to both deepen understanding and assess learning. Lesson three has students working with a large visual chart to move around new vocabulary words as they discuss how to best sort them into categories. During lesson one, a song is taught along with actions about how children know a plant is living, and during lesson two, a song is sung about what a plant needs. These short tunes will be sung on subsequent lessons in order to connect with prior knowledge. Using the arts as a teaching strategy has been proven very effective to deepen a child’s understanding. Theorist, John Dewey, advised against a narrow curriculum and instead commented that the problem is, “with our lack of imagination in generating leading ideas. ...We forget that facts are only data...uncompleted meanings, and unless they are rounded out into complete ideas- a work which can only be done by a free imagination of intellectual possibilities- they are as helpless as are all maimed thing things.” Because my lessons are rich in materials and varied peer-assisted learning strategies, a first grader is more likely to be engaged in this active learning verses having lessons with a heavy emphasis on teacher-directed desk work.]

- b. Describe and justify how you plan to support the varied learning needs **of all the children in your class/group, including individuals with specific learning needs.**

Consider the variety of learners in your class/group who may require different strategies/support (e.g., children with IEPs or 504 plans, English language learners, children at different points in the developmental continuum, struggling readers, and/or gifted children).

[In looking at each my lessons, a person can find evidence of how I used a Universal Design for Learning (an educational framework based on cognitive neuroscience where a teacher will provide multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression). I will engage students in whole class “brainstorming” and collaborative small-group discussions along with incorporating active tasks such as an experiment (lesson one), small-group assignments such as the “concept sort” in lesson three and “jigsaw” strategy, videos, and books to begin instruction on a concept containing new vocabulary. Donovan and Pascale convey research from Conklin in the book, Integrating the Arts Across Content Areas, “All students, from the most struggling to the most advanced, need to have curricula that lead to the enduring understandings, essential knowledge, and fundamental skills that are at the heart of the unit of study” (Donovan, Pascale, 2009).

By using this Universal Design for Learning, I will be able to support all students, including those with specific learning needs. A few of my students receive occupational therapy and struggle with sitting in one position- specifically when it is for an extended period of time. By changing instructional locations within the class and integrating aural, visual, and especially kinesthetic activities, I will accommodate these exceptional learners. For my ELL student, many of the assessments (such as sequentially ordering pictures of the steps in a plant’s life cycle (in lesson one)), provide an alternative means of exhibiting understanding on the topic without intense emphasis on the written word. As mentioned in 3a, my lessons are designed to integrate the arts and address the needs of each of Howard Gardner’s eight intelligence types (verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, visual, kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and the naturalist).]

- c. Describe common developmental approximations¹ or misunderstandings that pertain to the learning experiences you are planning for the children and how you plan to address them.

[Children may think that since plants are not like animals and humans, they are not alive. However, I will teach a song in lesson one and review it in lesson two in which students learn that plants are living things because they eat, breathe, and grow. Also, some students may misunderstand a plant’s independence and think that plants need things provided by people such as water and nutrients. Although many people take care of house plants indoors or gardens outdoors, children will learn from lessons four and five that there are many types of plants and they are not dependent on people for their needs. The students will make connections to the new term, “habitat”, and in lesson four, they find that plants grow perfectly fine on their own in grasslands, aquatic areas, forests, marshes, deserts, and other habitats.

4. Supporting Children’s Vocabulary Development

Respond to prompts 4a–c below by referring to children’s range of vocabulary development related to the learning segment—**What do they know, what are they struggling with, and/or what is new to them?**

- a. Identify the key vocabulary² (i.e., **developmentally appropriate** sounds, words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs) essential for children to use during the learning segment.

¹ For example, common beginning or transitional language errors or other attempts to use skills or processes just beyond a child’s current level/capability.

² Developmentally appropriate sounds, words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs that you want children to use or create to engage in the learning experience.

[Beginning with the first lesson, students will use the following vocabulary (from basic levels to more advanced levels) in their learning experience: Every-day: dig, dirt, drink, straw, seed, plant, alive, living, breathe, grow, eat, Academic: order, sequence, Content-Specific: soil, minerals, air, space, sunlight, water, roots, stems, leaves, flowers, seeds, bulbs, fruit, vegetable, habitat. I may also use what I will refer to as “million-dollar-words” which I do not expect first-graders to recall. However, during the first lesson’s science experiment, I want to inform the children about what the little tubes in the celery are called, which pull up the food coloring: (capillaries, and xylem). Also, I will describe how the plants make their food and will mention a few more “million-dollar-words” (photosynthesis and chlorophyll/chloroplasts) which will not be required of them, but they will hear them in context in the animated Read-Aloud book, The Magic School Bus gets Planted , during Lesson 2.]

- b. Identify the learning experience that provides children with opportunities to develop, practice, and/or use the key vocabulary identified in prompt 4a. (Identify the plan day/number.)

[The first learning experience (Lesson 1) will provide opportunities for students to build a new vocabulary base. Students will “brainstorm” a list of what they know already about what plants have, what they need, and how they grow. They will continue to use this vocabulary throughout the next four lessons. They will see picture cards with words to arrange in sequential order in order to represent a plant’s life cycle. They will learn a song about a plant in Lesson 1 which describes the terms they need to know to explain why it is living; it eats, breathes, and grows. During the second lesson, they will focus on the parts of a plant and in part two of that second lesson, they see actual seeds and bulbs to make real connections to those terms. There will also be live plants brought in so that further connections can be made. In Lesson 3, they physically move around fifteen words taken from the book, Planting The Wild Garden , that I write on Post-Its in order to enhance familiarity as they sort them into three categories; “Places Plants Grow”, “How Seeds Travel”, “Foods From Plants”. By focusing on this syntax, it will bolster children’s sorting skills which is a Common Core literacy standard: ELA-LITERACY.L. 1.5.A. In Learning Experience-Lesson 4, my plan is that they can start to go past the basic level of decoding the text in “expert group” topical books, and attain “critical literacy” which Owens describes as the point at which “...a reader actively interprets, analyzes, and synthesizes information, and is able to explain the content. Finally, in the last two lessons, (Lesson 4 and Lesson 5), children engage in collaborative conversations, writing, and presentation-making, and using these vocabulary words along with possible new ones that they have discovered. They will achieve that “Sense of Industry” that describes for this age, as Erikson as they become experts on their special type of plant.]

- c. Describe how you plan to support the children (during and/or prior to the learning experience) to develop and use the key vocabulary identified in prompt 4a.

[I plan to support my students in developing a deeper understanding of new vocabulary by building on each prior lesson and constantly referring to new terms and ideas. I will find a vast amount of age-appropriate children’s literature on the scientific topic of plants and along with my Read-Alouds in Lessons One and Two. The students will do some independent reading when they are given a tote bag of books in Lesson 4 on their special group’s plant topic. They will work collaboratively to put together a presentation board for Lesson 5. We will do a review of songs that reinforce the new vocabulary obtained throughout the unit.]

5. Monitoring Children’s Learning

In response to the prompts below, refer to the assessments you will submit as part of the materials for Planning Task 1.

- a. Describe how your planned formal and informal assessments provide direct evidence to monitor children's multimodal learning **throughout** the learning segment.

[Because I will be providing opportunities for learning that address Howard Gardner's theory of a student's eight intelligences (verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, visual, kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and the naturalist), I will have many instances where I can make formal and informal assessments. I will monitor participation of the group collaboration in Lessons 3 through 5, by seeing how students are using their knowledge about plant concepts to stay on topic, and contribute to academic conversations. The assessments for lessons one and two are very visually based as they create a picture to show the order of a plant's life cycle in Lesson 1, label their artistic flower craft with the correct plant parts and their function (Lesson 2), along with drawing an example of a plant that grows from a seed versus a bulb with a corresponding sentence (Lesson 2, part 2). I will make formal assessments to see if students used capitalization and ending punctuation with their sentences. This is a basic grammar expectation since they write a "morning sentence" with feedback every day as bell work. I will make informal assessments as I make my way around to each group as they do their "concept sort" in Lesson 3, and do a more formal assessment with an electronic game, Kahoot, to obtain individual and group knowledge on plant vocabulary and concepts in Lesson 5. In addition, they will use their interdisciplinary skills to apply their alphabetizing knowledge by sorting a list of plant words in alphabetical order in Lesson 5. As I use a musical mode to teach the two songs about "living" plants and "plant needs", I will make informal observations in the earlier lessons and make informal assessments during the review in Lessons 3 and 5.]

- b. Explain how your design or adaptation of planned assessments allows children with specific needs to demonstrate their learning.

[Because I will be walking to different groups, I will see how students are collecting written information from their assigned independent reading in Lesson 3. If someone understands the concept, but is struggling with writing, I will be able to scaffold learning by talking through how to write a word or words to convey what they mean. If my ELL student cannot figure out how to organize the picture/word cards in Lesson 1, but can convey the knowledge of this sequence orally, I will be able to accept the oral accommodation for her. The same would be true for the labeling of a plant in Lesson 2. When students are preparing sentences for the presentation script in Lesson 5, I will allow and challenge my gifted Language Arts learner to write a longer passage so that they can model how to be detailed in their writing.]

Consider the variety of learners in your class/group who may require different strategies/support (e.g., all children along the continuum of development, including children with IEPs or 504 plans, English language learners, struggling readers, and/or gifted children).

[There are a variety of learners in my class who either struggle with reading, fine motor skills, have ELL assistance, or are gifted in the area of language/literacy. I plan to support them with individual conversations, and engage them in peer-tutoring. Once again, the peer-tutoring concept is important so that students can benefit from powerful socialization opportunities in order to make meaning of their world and the new concepts we introduce in this unit. Accommodations can be made for my ELL student so that knowledge can be conveyed orally if written assignments are too difficult. However, with my guidance or a peer's, she may be able to rise to higher levels of achievement in the area of literacy and language. Considering the multi-modal design of these lessons, many segments allow for movement around the classroom. This is especially important for those students with behavioral challenges in the area of sitting still. All in all, my lessons will naturally differentiate for varied learners because I will use a Universal Design for Learning.]

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