THE EDUCATION FUND

FOR EXCELLENCE IN MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Ideas with IMPACT

SIMULATIONS

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Goals and Objectives

The purpose of a Simulation is to recreate the reality of content in a way that makes abstract concepts more concrete, and educational experiences more visceral, and therefore more memorable. The theoretical framework is based on place-based education and experiential learning such that, when students are provided practical applications of concepts and content that is presented in a way that mirrors how they might encounter it in the outside world, they make stronger connections and learn more about content than they would as abstracted representations. Students can also be pointed directly to real-world applications of content for questions of purpose. The dynamics of simulated, real-world activities increases student engagement, allows for further adaptation and extension, and can incorporate multiple intelligences and learning styles, all of which improve classroom management.

Florida Standards

In the list of applicable standards for this specific iteration of the Simulations paradigm, it should be noted that standards across disciplines are included. Depending on the degree of adaptation and extension, many more standards may be applicable.

ELA.612.F.2.4

Read grade-level texts, at the student's ability level, with accuracy, automaticity, and prosody or expression using the student's mode of communication.

ELA.6.C.5.1

Integrate diverse digital media to enhance audience engagement in oral or written tasks.

ELD.K12.ELL.LA.1

English language learners communicate information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Language Arts.

SC.68.CS-CC.1.2

Apply productivity and or multimedia tools for local and global group collaboration.

TH.68.C.3.1

Discuss how visual and aural design elements communicate environment, mood, and theme in a theatrical presentation.

Activity/Lesson Overview

For this Simulation, the "Table Reading" activity, the room's chairs will need to be arranged in a circle to simulate or mimic a conference table. Students and the teacher will be seated at the circle, and a stage directions diagram or chart will be posted, drawn, or projected on one wall (see the resources page for the diagram).

Step 1: Distribution of roles

- The teacher assigns parts of the play by asking for student volunteers. Parts can include a "sound effect" and/or "lighting" technician on a case-by-case basis.

Step 2: Mini-lesson on stage directions

- The teacher reviews and explains what stage directions are and how to recognize them in a script. Examples like entrances and exits, the setting, the sounds, and/or the movement of objects or people on stage are included in the mini-lesson.

Step 3: The Table Read

- The teacher is the "director" and reads the stage directions while the students read individual parts. In the process of the reading, the director will pause periodically to check for understanding, refer to the chart of stage directions, emphasize certain moments, directions, or lines, and when appropriate, re-read portions of the script.
- Once complete, adaptation and extension opportunities will be available to employ, such as:
  - Smaller groups repeat the process with teacher-selected student "directors."

- Portions of the scene are re-read for performance emphasis, vocal tone, delivery, etc.

- Either in-class, or in another space, the scene is re-read with blocking.

- Students perform part or all of the scene for other students, the school, in community outreach, etc.

- Students attend a live or zoom table reading of a local performance group.

- Students write, reflect, and/or comment on themes, critical questions in the script, or the experience itself.

- Students create critical reviews of the content and/or the performance.

Many of these potential adaptation/extension activities can be further extended into authentic experiences as time and resources permit.

Adaptation/Extension

The adaptation phase is arguably the most academically rich and potentially rigorous element of a Simulation activity. At this phase, depending on time, pacing, and resources, students can be asked to re-create the activity as owner/operators, they can be asked to create new content, they can be asked to present to other students or stakeholders, and/or they can levy the experience to review or improve parts, processes, and reflect or critique areas for improvement. In most cases, the highest levels of blooms taxonomy for cognitive activity will be reached simply by virtue of the extension, and here again, engaged students operating at higher cognitive levels improve both overall classroom management and overall student outcomes.

Resources

Materials needed will be physical space and movable seats, such as in a classroom or conference area, and a set of scripts, either in textbooks or small paperback consumables (if an activity extension were to include a performance students would be assigned copies that can be written in for notes, highlights, and so on). For the first phase of the simulation, the following is a possible arrangement of seating with the stage directions easily visible:

For the extension/adaptation phase, for example, small group student readings could appear in this arrangement:

Recommended readings

Kolb, D. A. (2014). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development.* Pearson Education, Inc.

McInerney, P., Smyth, J. & Down, B. (2011). 'Coming to a place near you?' The politics and possibilities of a critical pedagogy of place-based education. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education, 39*(1), 3-16.