

María López
ECE 312
Commentary August 2022

## **Learning Experience Unit Commentary**

When you have completed your Activity Plans, you must answer these questions and submit your Commentary along with the 1) Math, 2) Social Studies and 3) Science Activity Plans. The commentary must be 2 pages long. Please leave the bold headings and answer the questions under each heading in paragraph form.

## **Learning Experience Unit Commentary**

### **Describe topic of your Learning Experience Unit**

In the classroom, we learn social/emotional skills that help us navigate through life. We learn how to get along with our peers, how to keep ourselves safe while exploring our environment, and how to nurture relationships with the people around us. There are a variety of tools to practice our fine and gross motor skills, plenty to create complete worlds from, and of course, lots of friends to help guide our communication and thinking skills. We use our words to the best of our abilities, and we learn new ones regularly. The Focus curriculum I started out with was SHAPES but decided to change it after I realized that it didn't fit into a Social Studies activity very well. In the changing of activities, I found that there are many objectives that coincide between them. My group holds 13-15 children, all of which are 3-4 years old.

### **Implementation of Activities**

I believe starting out with the social studies activity would be great because we can break the ice and share things that we experience outside of school that connect us to each other. This activity is also a very long one, therefore it may still be happening while the other planned activities are happening as well. The conversation about ourselves and what we learn about each other is one that is ever changing. The math connections will emerge as we go on with the theme. Science can be connected to many aspects of our day and the things that we talk about during that activity can be connected in all other subjects.

The math activity helps children identify shapes, patterns and allows children to make connections between the shapes and be able to create a bigger picture. This ties into the social studies plan by helping children begin to identify shapes all around them. We will see that in the things we wear, the foods we eat, the instruments we use, and even in the shoes we wear there are shapes of all kinds along with many patterns. In our science activity, we can continue to work on the fine motor skill that we practiced during the first two activities while we reach with one arm, hold, pour, pick up one pebble at a time, transfer an object from place to place, and all the while hold the container with our other hand.

### **Relationship of Activities**

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These activities all share a fundamental similarity. They all encourage children to explore the things around them and have conversations pertaining to their findings. We can ask questions about each other throughout the day about any of these topics because the children make connections from what they learn in the classroom to what they have learned outside of the classroom.

These activities all offer ample opportunity to build upon basic skills. The children expand their knowledge of the world around them and continue refining their motor skills. All the children are encouraged to use the vocabulary words that were introduced throughout the lessons to expand their communication skills, and this allows them to practice self-regulation and build on self-esteem.

These activities help grow not only my knowledge in the backgrounds of the children but also the children's knowledge of each other. We are all learning different things about each other as the days go by and I feel like these activities allow us a simpler way to encourage communication and foster relationships in the classroom. Children gain security to discuss things with expression while engaging in activities in whole groups and refine their communication during small group activities.

### **Strategies and Connections**

These activities are developmentally appropriate for the children in my class because they have the flexibility to engage and explore in their own way. Children have many ways in which to gain knowledge. With activities such as the ones I have chosen, there are limitless opportunities and benefits the children can gain to expand their development. Bringing in the teachings from Maria Montessori, Jean Piaget, Eric Erikson, and Lev Vygotsky has allowed me to make adequate connections between subject areas, activities, and the abilities the children possess and create high quality educational activities for most children.

One major benefit that I am aware of is the opportunity to stop and reflect. Often, there are moments that do not allow us time to do this. As an educator in this age group, I feel that we are often swinging between roles and being the connecting factor between home life and grade school education. We give the children time to learn to focus on things and learn skills that will help them in life. These activities are play based but also child centered and child lead. Meaning that the children ultimately decide in which direction they want to take their learning. The main benefit of being able to sit at the side and observe the children is the opportunity to take notes to reference when you are planning the next activity.

### **Assessment**

The evidence for assessments will consist of examples where the children have successfully used new words in other areas of the classroom. We can also observe the connections children make to their peers and how children interact with each other at all stages

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of the school year. Being in this setting is an adjustment naturally carried out by safe, conscious, guided activities that allow children time to choose what they want to do. In encouraging independent choice, we can teach the children to be secure in themselves.