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Learn About Learning

 Each year all around the world, whether an individual is a dance instructor, a basketball coach, or an academic tutor, educators embark on the task of teaching others. Although there any many different approaches to teaching, each educator has their own unique style of assuring that their students learn new material. Assuming that no individual is perfect and there is always room for improvement, educators should identify which aspects of their teaching are good and which aspects need to be improved. In order to decipher between the good and bad aspects of their teaching style, educators should constantly question their teaching techniques and incorporate different approaches to reach out to students.

Pondering all of the questioning and planning that goes into teaching, I came up with a few of my own concerns. The main goal of an educator is to organize the material, teach the material, and hope that students completely comprehend the material. Although it is important for students to grasp the material, the real concern is the way in which educators teach the material. Since there are three types of learners (auditory, visual, and kinesthetic), it is difficult for an educator to prepare lesson plans for three different types of learners. Therefore, my main concern with teaching is how I will be able to incorporate the three types of learning within my teaching in order to have a well rounded classroom.

As a student myself, I have had classes in which educators lecture the entire time, classes where diagrams were used to explain the material, and classes where educators use real life examples in order to explain the material. However, I rarely had the opportunity to experience a class that incorporated lectures (auditory), diagrams (visual), and real life examples (kinesthetic) combined. This posed a huge problem. Since I am a kinesthetic learner, which means that I learn better by applying the material to real life situations, I often received lower grades in the classes when I had auditory or visual educators. Therefore, since I would like all of my students to succeed in my class, I plan to learn ways to incorporate all three learning styles in my classroom.

While observing Mark Carlson at Armada High School, I hope to examine his teaching style, observe how the students react to his teaching, and study the ways he incorporates audio, visual, and kinesthetic learning in his classroom. Within the school year of 2009-2010, the public average for the pupil/teacher ratio in Armada High School was 22.15, as compared to the public average of 15.88 in the United States. This means that educators at Armada High school had a greater challenge teaching so many students simultaneously and ensuring that all students understood the material. Ironically, Armada High School had 28.94 total teachers with a total enrollment of 641 students, whereas the United States average was 32.06 teachers with an enrollment of 502 students. Overall, this means that on average, the United States has a better pupil/teacher ratio than Armada High School because there were fewer students assigned to more educators. This ensures that learning in the classroom is accomplished more efficiently since the educators have fewer students to explain the material to and, therefore, have more individual time with students.

Although government websites prove that the pupil/teacher ratio is better overall in the United States than in Armada High School, I feel the teachers at the high school go out of their way to ensure that all of their students feel comfortable with the material. Mark Carlson, the mathematics teacher I am observing at Armada High School, offers extra credit to students who come to the after school test reviews which motivates the students to do better on their tests and improve their grades. He also provides extra credit for students who attempt the assigned challenging homework problems, even if the students do not come up with the correct answer. Instead of caring specifically about the final answer of the problem, Carlson wants his students to understand the format of the problem. Examining the teachings, assignments, and tests that Carlson gives to his students, I have brainstormed new ideas to help me incorporate all three learning techniques in my classroom when I become an educator. After examining Carlson this semester, I will hopefully gain complete confidence in teaching my subject matter in engaging ways for all of my students.