**Learner Profile: Planning for Differentiation**

**Learning Environment:** It is now secret that the key to a successful classroom first begins with the environment the students are told to learn in. It’s really hard for students to learn when they don’t feel they are able to speak their mind and retain the information that is being taught to them. In order to achieve this goal with this particular student I am talking about her, I think I need to first make a strong connection with this student as stated in the pdf file we were provided. “Positive teacher-student relationships are rooted in trust, mutual respect and effective communication.” ( Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, 2017) I feel as though, with this student, I need to approach him in order to understand him. I need to know his likes and dislikes in order for me to plan an effective learning strategy for him. In this case, this student is primarily into sports or mainly hockey. So, I would try to incorporate this into our classroom discussions. A good example of this would be trying to make a math lesson about angles related to passing a hockey puck. This way, I take note of this students interests in order to show him how learning these lessons in school can benefit him in almost anyway that he sees fit.

**Instruction:** I find that this goes hand-in-hand with the learning environment category. I would say that this primarily focuses on the “How” we plan to make changes for the student involved. In order to make sure kids are effective in the classroom, I feel as though they need to be happy. We need to be able to let them talk and learn about things of interest to them while also relating to other concepts related to school. “When we are happy, we are more successful in our work.” (Goldberg, 2018) I know this quote is related to teaching, but it very much relates to students and their learning experiences as well. In order to achieve this goal, I would try to make a few adaptations for this student. I would first, like I stated previously, try to relate content back to his interests to show importance. I would also make projects or assignments open-ended so the students have more of a say in their learning. I would finally try my best to challenge this student as he thrives off of challenges/competition. A great example of how I could do this is to get this student to write about a topic in PE class that is of interest to them. I would challenge him by getting him to relate the topic he chose to other classes he may be taking or to new aspects or interests in his life besides hockey/sports.

**Assessment:** One huge problem that teachers may run into with this student is the lack of care for assignments and the lack of effort that may be put into them. This is not the right way to approach teaching with a student like this. “Any assessment should be fair and equitable, giving all students opportunities to make connections and demonstrate the extent of their knowledge, skills and abilities in a variety of ways.” ( Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, 2017) In order to be fair with this student, I would make a few changes to my assessment portion to benefit this student. I would still go ahead and give the student a lot of control on what they plan to do an assignment on for my previously listed PE assignment. However, I would get this student to hand it in to me in separate increments. I would get the student to hand in an outline of their assignment first, then a rough copy of the assignment, followed up by their completed final product. This has numerous benefits for both the teacher as well as the student. This helps the teacher because it will be easier for them to make sure that this student is completing tasks on time and also to make sure they are doing it to the best of their ability and on time. This benefits the student because it doesn’t burden him with having everything done with no guidance on a specific date. This allows the students to make sure their work is to the best of their ability as well as it gives them a chance to ask questions to their teacher whenever they feel they need some help.

**Resources:** I feel that this is a section that I wasn’t presented throughout my school career. It was simply “here is the information, go do your assignment”. I feel that this simply will not work with this student I wrote about. If I took this same approach with him, he would 100% zone out or not care about what I’m showing him. “Resource options should include opportunities to reinforce, enrich and extend the learning for students.” ( Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, 2017) This is such a crucial part to learning and I fell it can be effective for this student if implemented properly. Going back to teaching angles, instead of showing this student a diagram of an angle, I could pull up a video of a professional hockey player making a pass or taking a shot and work together with him on how to calculate the correct angle in order to make the right play. I feel that this strategy would be way more effective for this student and he will be far more engaged rather than just learning from a worksheet.

# References

Saskatchewan Ministry of Education. (2017). *The Adaptive Dimension*. Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/100225-The\_Adaptive\_Dimension.pdf

Goldberg, G. (2018). *Teach Like Yourself : How Authentic Teaching Transforms Our Students and Ourselves.* California : Sage Publications.

**Who’s in my Pocket?**

Throughout my life, I have had the pleasure of meeting and teaching many students whether it be through field placements or through me teaching swimming lessons in the past. There is one student I happen to be very interested in. For the purpose of the story, we are going to call this person “Tup” as I know it is the name of a character from a TV show they enjoy. Tup is a kid who is very athletically gifted in any sport they played. They have so much potential in every sport, mainly hockey. I’ve never seen someone have so much potential in a specific sport. The reason I bring this student up is because I could tell that their beliefs did not align with his peers in the classroom. I had the privilege of teaching this student some lifesaving skills in both the swimming pool as well as first aid lessons. I could easily tell that Tup was quite uninterested with what lessons I had to offer. I knew he was the same in a school setting as my mother is a teacher and she has taught him in the past. I felt obligated to help this child because I seen a lot more of my self in him when I was that age then I hoped to admit. He felt as though he didn’t need these lessons and that school and swimming lessons alike were not in his best interest. He just wanted to go to the rink to play hockey and improve on his skills there. I simply approached him to let him know that expanding his interests is not always a bad thing. Those new tools you may learn could take you a long way in both his future life as well as his hockey career.

I always wondered what became of Tup and how he came to have these beliefs. It was crazy to me because I know his parents very well. They are very strict and they push their kids to be open-minded and well-rounded in all parts of their lives. Whether that be sport, school, relationship building, the list goes on. I want to point out when I say strict, I don’t mean that they are rude or embellishing towards their kids. They just want what is best for them. One thing I do notice, however, is that Tup’s dad was a fantastic hockey player, even playing in the NHL for a short time. I believe that this is where the beliefs and motives of Tup’s attitudes come from. He wants to be just like his dad any way that he possibly can. He doesn’t want to be distracted by anything so he can be just like his dad. These actions aren’t born out of selfish means but rather he wants to make his parents proud like his dad once felt. This is a crucial piece of information to take into account as, now that we know this, we can take the appropriate actions in order to help Tup to reach his full potential!