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L04- Technology
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Integration of Technology in a Kindergarten Classroom

Introduction

I participated in the implementation of a Thanksgiving-themed lesson in Sandi Murawski's kindergarten class on November 19, 2002. There are 21 students in the classroom. For this lesson, we decided to structure the activities using a centers approach. After speaking with Ms. Murawski, we realized that the students would not be able to stay in any one place for any length of time. Additionally, it was apparent that a variety of activities would be needed to keep the students' attention. Each of us maintained one station and had the students rotate to the different stations in groups of four or five. Using Thanksgiving as the theme, we concentrated on five main areas, including Pilgrims, Clothing, Food, Significance, and Thanksgiving Then and Now. The centers were evenly spaced throughout the classroom. The lesson on Significance was taught using the large television and computer equipment at the front of the classroom, while the Clothing center was clustered around the 3 student computers connected to the Internet. The lesson on the Pilgrims was completed using a laptop computer. Finally, the Food and Then and Now lessons were taught at two separate student tables in the classroom. I lead the center focusing on Thanksgiving Then and Now. Each activity lasted approximately fifteen minutes.

Objectives/Understanding Goals

This lesson collectively focused on SOL K.1, which states, "The student will recognize that history describes events and people of other times and places by (b)

identifying the people and events honored by the holidays of Thanksgiving Day.” Each of the activities that were implemented added an additional component to this broader understanding goal. The main objective of the project can be stated accordingly: Given a set of learning activities, the student will be able to identify the primary components of the Thanksgiving celebration.

Materials

Each activity in this project required a different set of materials. The learning activity that I was responsible for, Thanksgiving Then and Now, required two hula hoops (to visually represent a Venn Diagram); flashcards made using clipart found on the Internet of items associated with the first Thanksgiving, Thanksgiving now, or both; and a computer-generated paper Venn Diagram and a set of clipart pictures for each student. The individual activity also required the use of scissors, to cut out each of the pictures, and glue, to affix them to the Venn Diagram.

Description

- First I gave a brief introduction of the activity that we would be completing, telling students that the lesson would focus on the things that were the same and things that were different about the first Thanksgiving and the Thanksgiving that we celebrate today.
- Then I had the students join me on the carpet, where I had set up the hula hoops, one overlapping the other. I placed a sign indicating the first Thanksgiving (1621) over the hoop on the left, another indicating present day Thanksgiving (2002) on the right, and a sign for both (1621 and 2002) above the overlapping area of the hoops.
- As a group, we discussed the various pictures that I had selected. I had students take turns saying what item was on the picture and then placing it in the appropriate section of the Venn Diagram. The clipart pictures included: Pilgrims, a Native American, bonnet, Pilgrim hat, Mayflower, corn, turkey, leaves (representing autumn), a modern dad carving a turkey, television, football, and a piece of pie.

- After the students placed all of the flashcards in the Venn Diagram, they went back to their seats to complete the paper version of the Venn Diagram. The students cut out the clipart pictures and glued them to the appropriate sections of the Venn Diagram.

Evaluation Procedure

For my individual activity, the individually completed Venn Diagram served as one form of assessment. However, the hula-hoop Venn Diagram remained on the floor while the students completed their own work and many of the students used the larger Venn Diagram to check their own work. To assess the overall performance of the students after completing all five of the centers, Ms. Murawski gathered the students on the floor and asked them specific questions about each of the activities. Some of the questions that she asked were: What was one type of material that the Pilgrims used to make clothes? (Response: cotton), What was the name of the important Native American who attended the first Thanksgiving and could speak English? (Response: Squanto), What was the name of the boat that the Pilgrims rode to America? (Response: Mayflower), Name one thing from the first Thanksgiving/our Thanksgiving/both (Response: pilgrims, television, corn), and Name two foods that the Pilgrims and Native Americans ate at the first Thanksgiving (Response: butter, turkey).