

My name is Joan Walkington. I am currently studying for my PGCE in Home Economic and have chosen 'Special Educational Needs' as my subsidiary subject. Prior to starting this course I had a little experience of working with Children who have special educational needs. This was mainly through voluntary work with children with severe learning difficulties. During my first post primary placement I worked a lot with children who have moderate learning difficulties and hope I will have the opportunity to pursue this keen interest further within my career.

The following lesson plan is a revised copy of a practical lesson that worked very well for me when working with a year 10 class that contained children with a wide range of moderate learning difficulties. If you chose to use this lesson plan I believe you and your pupils will enjoy it as much as we did.

This was a practical lesson that was linked to a theory lesson that focused on 'Cultures and Celebrations'. The main purpose of this lesson was to enhance pupils' skills and understanding required to decorate a cake using icing, in particular Christmas Cakes. However I also wanted to make the lesson enjoyable to help increase pupils' motivation and attitude towards this subject.

I used the following strategies during the lesson:

- During the lesson I worked at the table with the pupils. When I was waiting on the pupils' to catch up to the next stage I went to each pupil and assessed their progress. This also allowed me the opportunity to give each pupil a little of my time and show them 'I' was interested in them and their work.
- I positioned myself opposite the pupils whose behaviour I was concerned about so I could maintain eye contact.
- At the beginning I reinforced classroom rules, explained the format, purpose of the lesson and expectations of behaviour ('good teamwork and behaviour, to help ensure this was a fun lesson') and in return Christmas music would stay on.
- I provided an opportunity for peers to assess each other's work at the end.
- I established and maintained a positive attitude at the beginning and encouraged pupils to take pride in their work because 'we' were going to take photographs of the cakes at the end.
- All the ingredients and equipment were placed in the middle of the table to help ensure time was not wasted at the beginning.
- At the beginning of the lesson I showed pupils pictures of various decorated Christmas cakes to help them visualise the end product and help give them some ideas.
- Each pupil had their own cake, but they had to work together and share the cake decorations. Once the icing was on the cakes the pupils were free to design and decorate their cakes using the decorations available.
- There were no sit-outs during this lesson.
- The Classroom Assistant was off ill, however I had prearranged for the classroom assistant to take part in the lesson and decorate a cake as well. I found this strategy worked well during all my practical lessons as it helped to ensure the assistants did not help the pupils by simply doing the work for them.

Evaluation

Upon reflection, I believe my aims and objectives were achieved. All the pupils iced and decorated their cakes. Throughout the lesson I explained and questioned the pupils about the ingredients and methods (linking the theory to practice), and the pupils asked me questions also. I was pleased they questioned me because this showed they were interested and wanted to learn more. My main problem with Home Economics practical lessons was always the cleaning up. To help ensure this did not happen I informed the pupils that we would wrap the cakes in special paper only after all the cleaning was completed. I never saw a class work together so well before and nobody complained.

The only change I made from the original lesson plan to the one I have used is I had planned to question the pupils and spend more time discussing cake decorating. I decided to leave this because of the questions pupils had asked me and all the pupils listened to each other and me when talking. Instead I spent more time helping the pupils wrap their cakes.

Personally, the most important indicator that the lesson was successful was the pupils came to me and either told me they enjoyed the lesson or thanked me for a fun lesson. Also the rest of the day, every time I met one of the teachers or classroom assistants they informed me the pupils had told them about the lesson and it was obvious they enjoyed it. Unfortunately I did not get the opportunity to try this strategy with another class, however I still believe it would have worked well regardless of pupil ability.

Lesson Plan – Home Economics

Year: 10 SEN		No. of pupils 13		Aim: To enhance the pupils practical skills and knowledge about cake decorating by icing a Christmas cake Objectives: For pupils to decorate a mini Christmas cake using icing For pupils to enhance practical skills using icing For pupils to enhance their knowledge about working with icing To photograph all cakes iced (for display)	
Topic: Icing celebration cakes		Unit: Cultures & Celebrations			
		Date: Fri 05/12/03			
Duration: 12.00 – 1.28					
Time	Knowledge POS	Teaching Strategies and pupil experience.	Educational Themes, Literacy and numeric	Resources	Assessment (oral, practical & written)
11.45	Copy information on the whiteboard. Ensure ingredients and equipment is ready for practical lesson – icing Christmas cakes, place 4 tables together.				
12.00	Instruct pupils to line up outside the classroom in a line. Before pupils enter the classroom inform them about today’s lesson. Remind pupils about the importance of good behaviour and time constraints. Instruct them to enter the classroom and follow normal practical	Teacher instruction	EMU, listening, numeric (counting money)	Class roll, sit-out’s work	Pupils’ ability to listen and follow instructions

	<p>procedures, hands washed, bags at the back of the room, aprons on and gather around the desk. Call class roll and collect money. Give sit-outs work</p>				
12.05	<p>Gather pupils around desk. Show pupils pictures of different celebration cakes. Discuss the shape and appearance of the celebration cakes. Show pupils cake decorations. Recap format of today's lesson.</p> <p>Discuss and demonstrate the use of icing in stages. Pupils follow practical. Photograph each cake, as it is complete.</p> <p>Instruct pupils to complete washing up. Set time limit (10 minutes), and then sit at desk.</p>	<p>Class discussion, teacher explanation and instructions</p> <p>Teacher explanation, instructions class activity Pupil activity</p>	<p>EMU, listening, visual, learning, literacy (reading food labels)</p> <p>EMU, listening, visual learning, numeric (portioning)</p> <p>EMU</p>	<p>Pictures of celebration cakes, decorations</p> <p>Ingredients and equipment Camera</p>	<p>Pupils' ability to listen and follow instructions.</p> <p>Pupils' ability to follow instructions as part of a team and individually to complete task</p>
1.15	<p>Settle class show pupils two ways of wrapping their cakes for presentation</p>	<p>Teacher – pupil activity</p>	<p>Listening, verbal</p>	<p>Clear wrapping paper and ribbon</p>	<p>Pupils' ability to work as part of a team to help each other.</p>
1.25	<p>Ensure duties are completed instruct pupils to leave for lunch.</p>				<p>Pupils ability to follow instructions</p>