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Alphabet Soup: Using Children's Literature Databases to Plan Lessons on Letters of the Alphabet

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Alphabet Soup: Using Children's Literature Databases to Plan Lessons on Letters of the Alphabet

Your students will choose a letter of the alphabet, find a children's book related to that letter, and write a brief lesson plan using the book.

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NUTRITION INFORMATION

This recipe is intended for undergraduate Early Childhood Education Majors. Students will learn how to use children's literature databases to choose appropriate books for classroom instruction.

COOKING TIME

Cooking time for this recipe is 75 minutes. Serves twenty-six education students, ideally.

ACRL INFORMATION DIETARY STANDARDS ADDRESSED

Standard One: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4.

Standard Two: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5.

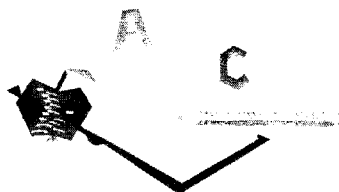
Standard Three: 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7.

Standard Four: 4.1, 4.2, 4.3.

Standard Five: 5.1, 5.2, 5.3.

MAIN COOKING TECHNIQUE

Discovery Learning



MAIN INGREDIENTS

- Instructor's computer with LCD projector
- Enough computers for each student in the class
- Large soup pot and ladle
- Stencil-cut letters of the alphabet
- Lesson plan template handout
- Cat puppet (optional)

PREPARATION

Using stencils, trace and cut letters of the alphabet out of card stock. Copy lesson plan template handouts for students. Prepare for *Bad Kitty* book talk. (*Bad Kitty* is the story of a cat that behaves badly when it finds out there isn't any food in the house.)

THE INSTRUCTION SESSION

1. Introduction

- Read *Bad Kitty* by Nick Bruel (New Milford, Conn: Roaring Brook Press, 2005) and drop stencil-cut letters into the soup pot as you come to each letter in the story.
- If using a cat puppet, allow the puppet to add the letters and stir the soup with the ladle.



Photograph by Doug Shumar, artist/illustrator, Indiana University of PA, dashumar@iup.edu

2. Teacher Talk

- Students will locate two children's literature databases (i.e. Children's Literature Comprehensive Database and NovelList K-8) on the library Web site.

- Students will learn how to search for books on letters of the alphabet by watching a brief demonstration.
- After the demonstration, students will receive the lesson plan template and choose letters from the soup pot.

3. Discovery learning and guided practice

- Using the children’s literature databases, each student will find a book that teaches his/her letter. (Discovery learning and guided practice occur here, since students will discover features of the database, such as book reviews, reading levels, author links, book talks, curriculum connections, etc., and ask the librarian questions when they don’t understand or need clarification.)
- When each student has settled on a book, he/she will write the title and author on his/her stencil-cut letter and design a lesson plan that incorporates the book using the lesson plan template handout.
- Students will drop their stencil-cut letters (with the title and author of a children’s book written on them) into the soup pot when they have completed their lesson plans.

4. Assessment

- The librarian will randomly choose letters from the soup pot and

ask the students to give brief summaries of their lesson plans to the class.

- Students will be asked to stress which database features were most helpful to them as they designed their lessons.

ALLERGY WARNINGS

Before presenting this lesson to early childhood education majors, make sure that students have already had some experience writing lesson plans. Design the lesson plan template handout to meet the lesson plan guidelines set forth by your university’s college of education.

CHEF’S NOTE

Follow-up Librarian Activity: The librarian could use the students’ stencil-cut letters to create a list of alphabet books or even a booklet of alphabet lesson plans to distribute to the class for future use.

Sample Lesson Plan Format:

1. HEADING
2. RATIONALE AND BACKGROUND
3. LESSON OBJECTIVES
4. LIST OF MATERIALS/RESOURCES
5. PROCEDURES
 - a) Introduction and Motivation
 - b) Lesson Body
 - c) Lesson Closure
6. EVALUATION
 - a) Student Assessment
 - b) Self-Evaluation

Lesson Plan Template

I chose the following book to incorporate into my lesson on the letter _____.
(Please cite the book in APA Style below.)

I used the following children’s literature database(s) to find my book and plan my lesson:

- _____ Children’s Literature Comprehensive Database
- _____ Novelist K-8

The feature(s) in this/these database(s) that was/were most helpful to me:

My lesson plan follows: