



Professional Development Institute

Flex Course Syllabus

Best Practices for a Successful 4th – 6th Grade Classroom

PDI Course Number: 16T02

UCSD Course Number: EDUC41573

If you would like information about receiving post-baccalaureate (graduate) credit for completing this course, [please click here](#).

Course Timeline

Participants have one year to complete the course. Participants must spend a minimum of three weeks in this course.

Course Description

Are you struggling with how to motivate and manage your 4th through 6th grade students given the many challenges both students and teachers face on any given day? This online course is designed for teachers of grades four through six who are interested in exploring best practices for developing, managing, and maintaining a successful classroom. This course covers strategies for implementing comprehensive grade-level standards, while managing and organizing your time so that all content is covered. Behavioral issues, including bullying, are covered along with overall classroom management techniques that focus on positivity, engagement, and motivation. Teachers will also learn how to respond to a variety of teaching challenges, including how to effectively reach at-risk populations such as English language learners, students with special needs, and students who live in poverty. Ideas for making the most of available technology to enhance your lessons are provided. We also share suggestions for addressing a lack of classroom resources. Techniques for differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all students in our widely diverse classrooms are covered as well. Finally, ideas for efficiently and successfully working with parents and families are also shared. By the end of this course, teachers will feel better prepared to successfully manage a middle grades classroom.

Educational Outcomes

1. Teachers will have a better understanding of the Common Core State Standards and learn innovative ways to ensure all content is covered as set forth in the Standards.
2. Teachers will learn how to help students with the transition to the rigorous Standards.
3. Teachers will learn how to manage their time, organize priorities, and ensure deadlines are met.
4. Teachers will learn how to handle all types of behavioral issues and implement an effective plan for managing the classroom.
5. Teachers will learn how to combat bullying.
6. Teachers will understand how planning and being proactive will help them use their time more effectively and get the most out of their time with students.
7. Teachers will learn exciting ways to gain students' participation and interest in lessons.
8. Teachers will learn new ways to develop engaging lessons.
9. Teachers will understand how to analyze classroom and student needs and establish lesson plans accordingly.
10. Teachers will learn how to use curriculum integration strategies to help ensure all content is covered in the school year.
11. Teachers will learn how to use resources, activities, and lesson plans that integrate the use of technology.
12. Teachers will learn how to make the most out of the resources they currently have, and how to find or create resources that cost little to nothing.
13. Teachers will learn how to understand the needs of each individual student and how they can best serve students based on the information they have collected.
14. Teachers will learn how to differentiate instruction in order to effectively teach students of all levels and abilities.
15. Teachers will learn how to deal with issues pertaining specifically to students of grades four through six.
16. Teachers will better understand challenges facing students who live in poverty, and some of their unique needs.
17. Teachers will gain strategies for mainstreaming English language learners and students with special needs.
18. Teachers will learn how to determine whether or not their students have mastered the concepts being taught.
19. Teachers will learn more about the Common Core Assessments and how to best prepare students for high-stakes testing.
20. Teachers will learn how to effectively communicate with parents and encourage their involvement in the classroom and their child's learning.

Instructional Media

- Online Discussions
- Online Engagement
- Online Collaboration

- Instructor Feedback
- Instructor Interaction
- Online Resources and Websites
- Supplemental Instructional Materials
- Printable Classroom Resources

Evaluation

- Test #1 (5% of final grade)
- Test #2 (5% of final grade)
- Test #3 (5% of final grade)
- Test #4 (5% of final grade)
- Test #5 (5% of final grade)
- Autobiography and Goals for the Course (10% of final grade)
- Article/Video Reflection (15% of final grade)
- Course Collaboration/Share Ideas with the Class (10% of final grade)
- Cumulative Assignment/Project: Develop a Plan to Use Strategies from the Course to Improve the Classroom or Classroom Practices (20% of final grade)
- Culminating Practicum (20% of final grade)

Topical Outline

Unit One

- The Most Unique Factors of the 4th – 6th Grade Classroom
- The Perfect 4th – 6th Grade Classroom
- The Teacher’s Role in a Successful 4th – 6th Grade Classroom
- **Assignment #1**
Write an autobiography including information about yourself, your grade level and what you specifically hope to learn about the most effective practices for grades 4-6. Your autobiography should be a minimum of three paragraphs.
- **Test #1**

Unit Two

- The Best Time Management and Organizational Strategies
- The Best Methods for Managing Behavior
- Engaging and Motivating Every Student in Your Classroom!
- Anti-Bullying Strategies for 4th – 6th Grade Classrooms
- **Assignment #2**
As an educator, it is important to be aware of the research, studies, and professional work done in the field. In the course, you will find an article and

video that are relevant to the specific course content. Read the article and then write an essay with your thoughts.

- **Test #2**

Unit Three

- Differentiating Instruction to Meet the Needs of All Students
- Helping English Language Learners to Succeed
- Understanding and Helping Students with Special Needs
- Working with Students Who Live in Poverty
- **Assignment # 3**

Online Discussion Board Participation/Engagement: Please post a tip, strategy, or idea that specifically relates to best practices for grades 4 through 6 and will make a difference to other teachers in their own classrooms. Your assignment should be a minimum of three paragraphs and detailed enough for another teacher to easily follow. This is a great opportunity to share and collaborate with other teachers at your grade level around the country. Take time to review and respond to other postings that are relevant to your classroom population in order to gain effective ideas to use immediately in your classroom.

- **Test #3**

Unit Four

- Transitioning to the Common Core State Standards with Confidence
- Understanding and Preparing Students for the Common Core Assessments
- Strategies for Integration of Content: How to “Fit it All In”
- **Test #4**

Unit Five

- Addressing a Lack of Classroom Resources
- Making the Most of Technology
- **Test #5**

Unit Six

- Working with Parents
- Maintaining the Classroom You’ve Created
- Resources for the Successful 4th – 6th Grade Classroom
- **Assignment #4**

Using at least two of the strategies provided in the course, begin by writing about your current classroom, or what your classroom (or a classroom you have been in) was like in the past, noting any specific challenges you had. After learning many valuable strategies, you should be able to answer two of the questions below with a minimum two-paragraph response each to explain how you will use the strategies to make changes to your classroom or classroom practices. Your

final assignment should include a total of five paragraphs once complete. Keep in mind that this assignment is a cumulative project and therefore, you are expected to demonstrate the knowledge you gained from the course and your ability to apply what you have learned in a practical setting.

- **Assignment #5**

The culminating practicum is a three-step process. (1) In the first assignment, you were asked what goals you had and what you hoped to learn from the course. Think back to your original goals for this course. Write a minimum two-paragraph reflection specifically describing how what you learned can be used to help you reach those goal(s). (2) Next, write a minimum three-paragraph plan that specifically describes the ways in which you intend to implement a particular strategy you learned in this course into your own teaching situation. (3) Last, write a minimum two-paragraph reflection describing a student you have or have had in the past. Then, discuss how the strategies you learned in this course will specifically benefit that student as you put your plan into action.

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