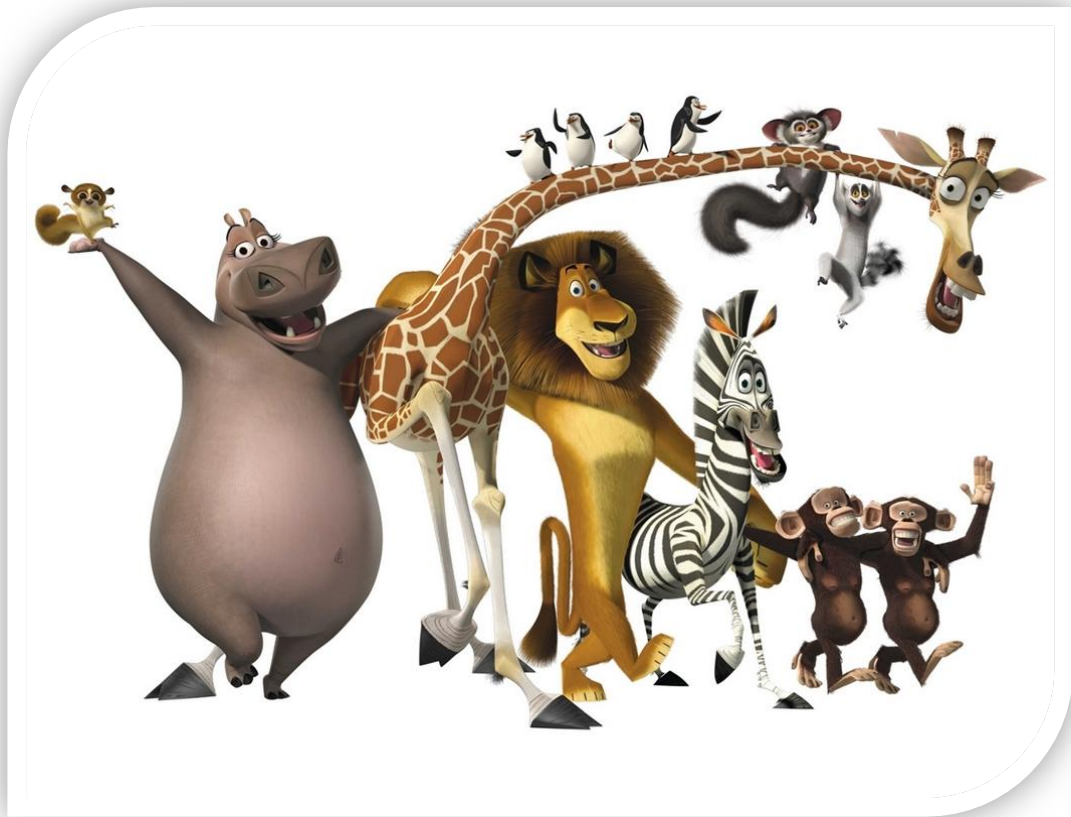


A Differentiated Unit of Work on

THE ZOO



Designed for grade 3/4 students

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TOPIC - THE ZOO

The topic I have chosen to do for my differentiated unit of work is the Zoo.



Many children have interests in animals and is a part of developing you're awareness of the different animals present in a process everyone goes through throughout their schooling years.

Rationale

This differentiated unit of work is designed for students in grades three and four and will be completed over a period of eight weeks during the school term and will include various activities that relate back to a particular topic that I have chosen which 'The Zoo'. In the first week, as an introductory lesson there will be an excursion to the zoo, then the remainder of the weeks will be spent working on activities. The unit has been developed to further explore various types of animals that are present in the zoo, expanding the children's knowledge in this particular area and has been developed using the Victorian Essential Learning Standards at level 3 and in particular focussing on general knowledge, English and some humanities (VELS, 2012) and other domains as well. (See unit aims and objectives for more details).



The main purpose of this differentiated unit of work that has been developed for the students is to attempt to better accommodate all students needs in the classroom, helping them reach their full potential. I have chosen to do 'The Zoo' as my topic because I found it a topic of interest that I like but also a topic that I thought the students would engage in and relate to.

I have selected to make use of and base my differentiated unit of work on the Makers Model because it very carefully looks at modifying the content, process, product and learning environment to best accommodate for students needs; especially those of whom are gifted. I will be incorporating the Multiple Intelligences and Blooms Taxonomy theory to better accommodate for children's needs. They will complete a contract that will allow inform them what is to be expected from the unit of work and an agreement from the child with their signature verifying their awareness and agreement of completing it. There are a number of activities that will be set out in a table in which the students will need to complete a minimum of 8. Their choices of the activities need to firstly be discussed with the teacher. Allowing the students to choose their activities allows them to choose what interest them, work at their level of ability and give them more independence in their choices.

Unit aims and objectives



General; Students will

- ✚ Develop an understanding and demonstrate their knowledge of an animal or animals that can be found in the zoo including a specific focus on one of their choice
- ✚ Present the information creatively and explore a number of different skills their presentation formats
- ✚ Demonstrate their ability of working independently, making responsible decisions and making full use of their time management
- ✚ By the end of the unit have completed a number of activities concluding in a pass and have developed a wider knowledge of the zoo, animal existence and habits

English; students will

- ✚ Develop confidence in writing a range of imaginative and informative texts
- ✚ Use a suitable vocabulary for the subject matter including nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs
- ✚ Learn to use a range of resources, including information and communicating technology to revise written work and check spelling
- ✚ Combine verbal and visual elements in the texts they produce

Humanities; students will

- ✚ Develop awareness and understanding of the effects of peoples interactions with the environment and the ways in which these affect their lives

Contract



The differentiated unit of work on 'the zoo' will function based on a contract that will allow students to be aware of what is expected of them throughout the unit. A contract is where there is an agreement between the teacher and students of what is expected and the activities that they choose to do, followed by a signature of agreement and awareness of the consequences of not completing it.

The contract will take place before the unit commences and the process that will take place is; the students will agree and sign a document made up by the teacher outlining the tasks and activities that will take place and be submitted on my the specific date outlined.

Once the activities have been outlined the student then has to select the activities that they would like to complete (Minimum of 8). Based on the activities chosen by the child, the teacher will then decide whether the activities chosen are appropriate for each child. It will be apparent to the teacher which students are further capable and therefore have higher ability levels and cognitive functioning by these students selecting the more difficult and challenging activities.



Resources

There will be a number of resources made available for students to use at school throughout their progression of their unit of work.

The resources include

- Brochures or information booklets collected from their excursion to the zoo,
- The internet; including websites, school programs etc,
- Books
- Magazines
- Newspapers
- Teachers and other students
- Posters



Methods of presentation

Students will complete all of the activities that initially chose to complete at the time of signing their contract. They will then be expected to present all of their activities in a portfolio at the completion of the unit to then be assessed. There will be a variety of different presentation formats for the students to present in such as;

- PowerPoint presentation
- Photography
- Posters/collages
- Profile
- Report
- A letter
- Brochure
- Story



Assessment

Assessment is the process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about students' learning (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2007) important in trying to monitor the progress of all students, making sure they are on track, dealing with the work and if there are any difficulties give them assistance.

There will be a variety of different assessment methods that will take place throughout the unit for a clear determination in the progress of each individual. The variety of assessments that will occur will be;

Pre - testing

- ✚ An important tool for carefully assisting me in planning the curriculum and differentiated unit of work for the students is pre-testing. It will take the form of a mind map (See appendix 4), where there will be a centered statement in the middle and they will then have to branch off from that demonstrating their knowledge.

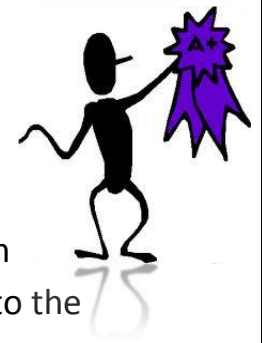
Informal teacher observation and assessment

- ✚ While students are working on either their core or differentiated activities the teacher will informally observe and take notes on what the students are doing without them being distracted to monitor their progress.
- ✚ Ongoing student assessment will take place during their progression of the task they're working on. The teacher will move from student to student and ask them what they are doing, what they have completed so far, give them any needed assistance and ask them any questions but being careful to not leave them feeling pressured or distracted.

Self assessment

- ✚ Each student will complete a self evaluation on the completion of each activity and will be handed to the teacher for an indication of each student's progression (see appendix 2).

The self evaluation will benefit the student as well as the student, it will contain questions such as; their enjoyment of the activity, how they found the activity, how they thought they went any changes they would make if they were to do it again and level of difficulty.



Peer Assessment

- ✚ Students will select other members of the class to complete an assessment of their work and will be collected and handed in to the teacher.

Overall assessment

- ✚ The portfolio will be completed and handed in by a certain date at the conclusion of the unit for an overall assessment with a formal evaluation conducted by the teacher, by taking various objectives listed earlier and an assessment sheet (See appendix 4).

Things to be considered when assessing the portfolio are; whether or not all activities that were agreed on in the contract were completed, the quality, quantity and presentation of their work, demonstration of learning and wider knowledge of 'the zoo' topic has occurred, evaluations have been completed (minimum of 2 personal evaluations and at least two peer evaluations), demonstrated the ability to work independently, used a range of different activities and has shown variety.

HOW MY UNIT RELATES TO THE MAKER MODEL OF WORK.

Maker's model of curriculum development for gifted students is very important in many different ways. Different models are appropriate for different things and different students, and it is to be noted that not all curriculum strategies are suitable for each individual student (maker model). The modification of the content, process, product and learning environment as well as other techniques are important to consider and incorporate into teaching the curriculum.

The main reason for a differentiated curriculum for gifted students is to help those who are different from others in their learning, enable them to work more efficiently, greater complexity in their work to avoid boredom, and finally allow all students to reach their full potential.

<i>CONTENT</i>	
<i>Abstraction</i>	The topic selected for this unit of work enables students to think abstractly and deeply into it to gain knowledge about the particular topic as well as engage in discussions, presentations and reading materials. They will hopefully develop their own understanding about the topic in the progression of the unit as well as at the end of the unit.
<i>Complexity</i>	There are a few activities present in the unit of work that require complexity by allowing the students to work at a higher level and challenging themselves.
<i>Variety</i>	With the different types of activities that the students are welcome to choose from enables variety of choice in allowing them to choose something that they would be interested in doing and something they would like to do rather than forcing a task upon them and them having no motivation to do it.
<i>Organisation</i>	Throughout the unit, the range of activities and ways that they are presented and organised allows students to engage in learn the content but in different ways.

PROCESS

<i>High order thinking skills</i>	In order to challenge the students, there will be the need for higher order thinking for them to complete some of the activities.
<i>Open ended processing</i>	There will be provocative questions in some of the activities that will hopefully stimulate further thinking and research into the topic, allowing them to engage in divergent thinking and motivate them in finding out more about the topic.
<i>Freedom of choice</i>	Throughout the unit, the activities present in the grid using Gardner's multiple intelligences allows for students to have their own choice in the activity that they wish to perform. This seems to increase motivation and boost independent learning in the students self regulation of difficultness.
<i>Group Interactions</i>	Some of the activities will require group interactions to enable students to engage in both intellectual and socio effective goals when working with others.

PRODUCT

<i>Real audiences</i>	Some of the activities require the pieces of work to be evaluated not only by the teacher but peers, parents and other teachers as well.
<i>Evaluation</i>	Throughout the unit there will be a number of different types of evaluations and assessments taking place by the teacher, the student themselves and other students.
<i>Transformation</i>	All of the work produced by the student will be original, personally chosen and produced by them. All of the hard work that the student will put into the portfolio will then be finally displayed in the portfolio which will be practical evidence of what the student has learnt and was capable of producing.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

<i>Accepting</i>	It is very accepting of students in having all levels of difficultness, consideration of others and adapted for all students
<i>Complex</i>	Some of the activities present in the unit, have the ability to challenge students and go beyond what they already know and also giving them options on the degree of challenge that is suitable for them
<i>Flexible and open</i>	It is flexible and open in considering individuals needs in the classroom
<i>Independent</i>	It is encouraged in many of the activities for students to work independently, with specific activities directed in promoting and developing independence in getting the work done and not relying on others, instead it being a product solely completed by the student.
<i>Learner - centered</i>	The unit of work was planned by the teacher and carefully taking into consideration the student's academic, social and emotional needs at all times. The variety of different activities allows for children to openly choose their type of learning and do it at a level that's suits them.
<i>Varied groupings</i>	There a few instances where students have the opportunity to work with others, most likely 'like-minded' peers but also with others that have different skills and abilities. This allows learning to be shared and passed on as well as learning off others.
<i>Respectful</i>	Being respectful towards other students in the class is important and will be the way of the teacher noticing the amount of respect is through the peer assessments that the children will do on one another.
<i>Encouraging</i>	It is important that the students feel encouraged to do the very best they can and try to get the work done in the best way possible. The contract as well as the ongoing student encouragement by the teacher should help them develop the courage and motivation to successfully complete this unit.

Reference List

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Gross, Sleaf & Pretorius (1999) Gifted students in secondary school:
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Google Images, 2012

STUDENT CONTRACT

I _____ will complete a minimum of 6 activities that will be presented in a portfolio format by

Friday the 26th of August 2012.

If I fail to do these activities or and do not hand in my portfolio by the due date I will be responsible for it and take any consequences that are given to me. I will also briefly show each completed activity to the teacher before starting a new one.

Activities I am going to complete are:

1. _____.
2. _____.
3. _____.
4. _____.
5. _____.
6. _____.



Student Signature

_____.

Teacher Signature

_____.



SELF EVALUATION

This self evaluation is for yourself only to complete, you must be honest and answer it as best you can. It helps you reflect on how well you've worked on the activity or areas that you need to improve in.

Name: _____ Date: _____ .

Activity: _____ .

1. Did you enjoy this activity? Why/Why not?
2. Are you happy with the way you have completed and presented your work?
3. Did you learn anything new from this activity? If so list one.
4. Do you think there is anything you need to improve on and if so what?
5. Would you recommend this activity to someone else?

Appendix 3 – Peer Assessment



PEER ASSESSMENT

Please answer this questionnaire with honesty and respect to your fellow classmate.

Name of person assessing: _____.

Name of classmate: _____.

1. Did your classmate explain what their activity was?
2. Did you like their activity? What did you like about it?
3. Would you be interested in doing this activity yourself?
4. Have you learnt anything from your peers activity?
If so what?
5. In your opinion could you suggest doing anything differently or improvements to be made?
6. What would you give this activity out of 10?

Appendix 4 – Teacher portfolio Assessment

PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT



Name: _____ .

Number of activities completed: _____ .

Date Submitted: _____ .

	Beginning 1	Developing 2	Accomplished 3	Established 4	Score
Presentation					
Quality & quantity of information					
Use of research					
Presentation formats					

Comments:
