IPC example lesson plan

Growing up and Thinking about drugs units combined – Year 6

David Skelcher is the Year 6 teacher at Welford-on-Avon Primary School. He joined the school in September and this is his first experience teaching the IPC. His class has just completed a combination of two IPC units: Thinking about drugs and Growing up. Here David explains the learning involved:

'It was felt that these two IPC units worked well together for Year 6. This is an eight week unit; four weeks focused on Growing up and four weeks on Thinking about drugs.

The learning objectives are to discover how humans and other animals reproduce, understanding, in particular, what happens as a child matures into an adolescent and learning about the effect of drug misuse on the human body. They are two excellent themes for preparing Year 6 for the transition to secondary school. Both units incorporate science, ICT, society and international learning targets.

Knowledge harvest

Prior to the Entry Point, we discussed, as a class, the sensitivity of the theme. We considered how we, as a society and as adolescents, talk about and view sex, and about the changes in our bodies that prepare us for reproduction.

I made it very clear that no one would have to ask or answer any personal questions and we discussed how we should treat it as a normal science lesson, for example, referring to sex organs by their correct terms. However, this was a great opportunity to talk and ask as many questions as were needed in a bid to lift any taboos about sex, puberty and reproduction while in the safe confines of the classroom.

The class responded incredibly well, they asked lots of questions and raised all kinds of issues including the subjects of menstruation for girls, wet dreams for boys and the impact of changing hormones.

A post-box style question box was also placed in the classroom and children were offered the opportunity of writing any questions on paper into which they were invited to post them anonymously. This remained in the classroom throughout the entire four weeks of the Growing up unit.

Entry Point

This was an incredibly successful Entry Point. It involved every child contributing to a life-size 'changing body' poster.

- The class was divided into four groups of mixed girls and boys.
- Each group was given two large sheets of paper, taped together, and some felt-tipped pens.
- Two of the groups were asked to draw a life-size outline of a boy, the other two groups to draw a life-size outline of a girl.
- The groups were then asked to draw and label as many body parts as possible that change during adolescence, including the sex organs. The groups were encouraged to work together as teams.
- Each life-size drawing was then displayed and the group talked about what they had identified. Every single child stood up and spoke about changes in adolescence.
- Where necessary, I corrected mistaken terms and expanded on their presentations.
- As a class, we discussed how physical appearances may vary, but it is our personalities that makes us who we are as individual human beings.
- This was followed up with a DVD on reproduction and subsequent discussion.

The classroom became a common platform in which the children could share their experiences, knowledge, questions and concerns about their own changing bodies and those of other adolescents. The life-size body posters were revisited at the Exit Point of the unit to assess learning development.

Also in this IPC unit, we looked at:

DAVID SKELCHER, YEAR 6 TEACHER, WELFORD-ON-AVON PRIMARY SCHOOL

IPC Example Lesson Plan (cont...)

Growing up and Thinking about drugs units combined – Year 6

- Alcohol: what happens when we drink it
- Drugs: good ones, harmful ones – situation analysis.
- Drug advice – accessing information.
- Viewpoints on drugs – supporting theories.
- The danger of drugs – spreading the message.
- Driving under the influence – group discussion.
- Drugs control around the world.
- Income from drugs; how some countries survive – class debate.
- World health: immunisation, sanitation and international aid.
- Lifelines: personal growth and development.
- Moving to adulthood – group research.
- Reproduction: humans and animals.
- Pregnancy and gestation – researching the foetus.
- Relationships, families and sustaining relationships: research and recording.
- Relationship webs.
- Rituals and customs: rites of passage, locally and worldwide.

There was a noticeable level of mature discussion throughout this unit. Having the flexibility to combine the two units and make it our own was a great success. I love the way you can work along the IPC teaching framework and then draw other elements in, such as current relevant issues in the media. What's also fantastic is that the children are doing more than their normal required level of homework. Out of choice they're taking on extra learning; bringing in loads of extra work completely of their own accord. The IPC has inspired their motivation to learn. To me that's very exciting.'

DAVID SKELCHER, YEAR 6 TEACHER, WELFORD-ON-AVON PRIMARY SCHOOL

IPC example lesson plan

The active planet unit – Year 4

Elliot Silvester is the Year 4 teacher at Welford-on-Avon Primary School. One of the IPC units he has worked on is The active planet. Here, he explains the work involved in the unit:

'This is quite a scientific unit inspiring plenty of open-ended activities, such as devising experiments. It is a very exciting theme that is particularly effective at engaging boys. It's also extremely inclusive, engaging able, less able and statemented children.

This is an 11-week unit incorporating the following subjects: geography, science, music, art, PE and ICT. The learning objectives are to explore our active planet, from volcanoes and earthquakes, to tornados and tsunamis.

Entry Point

The day of our Entry Point we turned the classroom into a disaster relief centre, preparing the room as a secure zone in the eventuality of a possible natural disaster. This including taping the windows to make sure there was no flying glass.

We went through all the procedures for dealing with a disaster; from ordering emergency supplies, preparing the space, planning resources and assigning key roles. We spent time working on how we would inform the public and what directions would need to be given. We wrote and performed announcements for the television, telling people what to do in case of an emergency. The children were totally involved; it was a super Entry Point for making them consider the implications of a disaster. For those children who were not particularly scientific, it engaged them with the unit in a very personal way.

Knowledge harvest

As a result of the Entry Point, every child had a far wider perspective of what The active planet meant, which stimulated a great deal of discussion into what they wanted to learn. The children made a lot of their own decisions for the unit, within the framework of my pre-planning. There was lots of scope to create their own scientific experiments and research the themes that most interested them.

Also in this IPC unit, work included:

- How the Earth is formed – investigation.
- Earthquakes: their causes, effects and how they are measured.
- Volcanoes and how they erupt – scientific experiments.
- How and why rocks melt – scientific investigation.
- Volcano islands: where they are in the world – ICT research.
- Hot and cold colours – creative work.
- Showing movement through art – creative techniques.
- Using musical instruments to make sound pictures.
- Composing music – group work.
- Volcanoes: depicted through physical movement – PE.
- International aid organisations – group research.
- What natural disasters do to people and their homes – class debate.
- The knock-on effect: the resulting impact of our active planet.

This was a great unit for incorporating many subjects, especially literacy. It was also an excellent way of helping the children to develop their scientific investigatory skills, which soared as a result. Laptops were a key part of the research and the children's ability to research changed significantly through the unit, as they fine-tuned their searches; identifying crucial information and taking notes from the internet, rather than just copying it all out.

Revisiting the 'Knowledge harvest' was a great tool for self-assessment. Comparing thoughts and ideas at Entry and Exit Points was significant in realising the knowledge we, as a class, had acquired. That was very exciting for us all.'

ELLIOT SILVESTER, YEAR 4 TEACHER, WELFORD-ON-AVON PRIMARY SCHOOL