

Self-Reflection 1: Care and Maintenance of Farm Tools

This was one of the initial lessons I conducted during my first Individual teaching Practice for the Diploma in Education Program, focusing on the topic "Care and Maintenance of Farm Tools." The lesson objective was to ensure students understood the importance of proper handling, cleaning, and storing of agricultural tools to increase their lifespan and maintain safety during use. This topic included a CSEC SBA skill under Unit B: Crop Production. Although I had a strong grasp of the content, this lesson was a formative experience that revealed both strengths and areas for development in my teaching practice.

I utilized actual farm tools as teaching aids and provided step-by-step demonstrations of proper care techniques. While some students responded positively, showing curiosity and asking relevant questions, I noticed that others appeared disengaged, particularly during the theoretical explanation at the beginning of the lesson. This led me to reflect on the balance between teacher-led instruction and student-centered learning. In hindsight, incorporating more active learning strategies such as interactive stations could have increased participation and motivation across the classroom.

My mentor, Mr. Wallace, provided constructive feedback indicating that my content delivery was well-organized and clear; however, the pacing of the lesson needed refinement. Certain segments were rushed, while others were prolonged, which disrupted the flow and overall time management. Additionally, the transitions between demonstration and discussion were not as smooth as they could have been, making it difficult for some students to connect theoretical content to practical application.

This lesson taught me the importance of planning with differentiated learners in mind and structuring lessons to accommodate various learning styles. I began to explore pedagogical theories such as Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, which emphasizes the need for appropriate scaffolding. I also started integrating formative assessment strategies like exit slips and verbal quizzes to better assess student understanding throughout the lesson.

Self-Reflection 2: Methods of Weed Control

This second lesson, delivered several weeks after the first, marked a significant point of growth in my teaching journey. The topic, "Methods of Weed Control," was particularly relevant to students' lived experiences, especially those with backgrounds in farming communities. This lesson was also linked to the CSEC syllabus and is a SBA skill required to be assessed. My aim was to teach students to identify and differentiate between mechanical, chemical, cultural, and biological weed control methods, and to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of each approach.

Building on the feedback from my previous lesson from Mr. Wallace, I intentionally incorporated more student-centered activities. I designed group-based case studies, where each group was tasked with analyzing a specific weed control scenario and presenting their findings. This approach not only increased engagement but also encouraged peer collaboration and critical thinking. I also used a short video segment to visually demonstrate how various weed control methods are applied on actual farms, which catered to visual and auditory learners.

Student engagement was noticeably higher during this lesson. They participated actively in group discussions, asked insightful questions, and responded positively to the practical examples provided. Formative assessment was embedded throughout, including quick polls, targeted questioning, and short reflective writing prompts. These checks for understanding allowed me to adjust the pace and clarify misconceptions as they arose.

Feedback from my mentor highlighted a marked improvement in classroom management, student engagement, and my ability to connect theory with real-world application. However, I was encouraged to further refine my questioning techniques to better challenge higher-order thinking, as defined by Bloom's Taxonomy. This lesson reinforced the effectiveness of collaborative learning and the importance of continuous feedback in maintaining academic rigor.

Through this experience, I began to internalize pedagogical methods such as constructivism and inquiry-based learning, which have become integral to my lesson planning. I felt more confident in my ability to facilitate learning rather than simply deliver content.

Self-Reflection 3: Primary and Secondary Tillage for Land Preparation

The final lesson in this series, titled "Primary and Secondary Tillage for Land Preparation," was a turning point in my professional development and demonstrated significant maturation in my pedagogical approach. By this stage, I felt more confident and competent in my role as a facilitator of learning and was more confident to complete my final ITP for the Diploma Program. The aim of the lesson was to enable students to differentiate between primary and secondary tillage, understand the functions of each, and identify relevant tools and machinery.

The lesson was structured using a blended pedagogical model that combined direct instruction, inquiry-based learning, and cooperative group work. I began with a visual presentation supported by labelled diagrams and real-life images of tillage equipment. This was followed by a "Think-Pair-Share" activity where students discussed the environmental and economic implications of tillage practices. To reinforce learning, I used videos and diagrams for a hands-on exploration of tool types and functions.

Student engagement and comprehension were exceptionally high. They demonstrated curiosity, asked deep and reflective questions, and collaborated meaningfully during group tasks. I also employed formative assessment tools, including concept mapping and reflective journaling, which enabled students to make connections between classroom learning and real-world agricultural practices.

The feedback I received from both my tutor and students was overwhelmingly positive. My use of varied instructional strategies, integration of technology, and alignment of assessment with learning objectives were noted as key strengths. Importantly, I felt a strong sense of presence and adaptability in the classroom traits I had been developing through both theoretical coursework and practical teaching experiences.

This lesson affirmed my growth as an educator. I had successfully applied core principles from the Diploma in Education program, including student-centered learning, scaffolding, and differentiated instruction. Drawing from Bruner's theory of spiral curriculum, I structured the lesson to build on prior knowledge while laying the foundation for future topics. I also employed reflective practice, using feedback from earlier lessons to fine-tune my instructional methods.

In conclusion, this lesson encapsulated my journey from a content deliverer to a reflective, student-focused educator. I now feel equipped not only to teach effectively but to continuously evolve in response to student needs, educational research, and professional feedback.