Clinical Field Experience B

Identifying Student Challenges

When teaching English language arts to students with mild to moderate disabilities, special education teachers will first need to identify the areas where students are having challenges, in order to help them flourish in their academic learning. There can be numerous areas in which students struggle in English language arts and identifying differentiation strategies to help lessen these struggles is important.

Allocate at least 3 hours in the field to support this field experience.

Collaborate with the mentor teacher to identify a student or small group of students with disabilities who would benefit from differentiation and engagement strategies during an upcoming ELA lesson or activity.

***Part 1: Student Challenges***

With permission from the mentor teacher, work with the student or small group of students and observe them while they work on problems in class from an ELA lesson that was taught. Identify the areas noted below where the student/s seem to struggle.

Some areas of concern where students may struggle in ELA include:

* Output difficulties
* Organizational difficulties
* Language difficulties
* Attention difficulties
* Visual spatial or ordering difficulties
* Difficulties with multiple tasks

After observing and noting areas of concern, discuss with each student if he or she considered the areas identified as challenging for them. Continue to work with the student/s with guided practice and support.

Meet with the mentor teacher to discuss your findings. Share strategies you feel would benefit the student/s and have your mentor review these with you to make sure they are appropriate.

Be prepared to use these strategies for Clinical Field Experience C.

Use any remaining field experience hours to assist the teacher in providing instruction and support to the class.

***Part 2: Reflection***

After your observations and discussions with the student/s and your mentor teacher, summarize and reflect upon your experiences in 500-750 words, including:

* Describe your initial conversation with the mentor teacher, including how the student/s were chosen.
* Discuss the areas where the student/s seem to struggle. Ensure pseudonyms are used for the students to maintain student confidentiality.
* Address the discussion with each student regarding the areas that seemed to challenge them. Was the student in agreement with you, or did not feel there was a challenge, or did not need support? If so, how did you continue to support them?
* Discuss the strategies that you shared with the mentor teacher. Did the mentor agree the strategies were appropriate? Explain.

Explain how you will use your findings to further assist the students while working with them in this placement. This will also help prepare you for Clinical Field Experience C, as well as your own future classroom engagements. APA format is not required, but solid academic writing is expected.