“How Much Popcorn”

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Science and Children

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“How Much Popcorn”, written by Katie Rommel-Esham, was written in the magazine “Science and Children” in October 2007. The article is about a teacher integrating the use of math and science inquiry in one lesson. The students are posed the question: How much popcorn will it take to fill up our classroom? It is up to the students to collaborate, experiment, and utilize inquiry to solve the problem. In the end when the students discuss their findings as a class, they are then asked to write a reflection. The strategies used in this article provide examples of how to use scientific inquiry in your classroom. I chose this article for a number of reasons; the main one being it was using Inquiry instruction for a Science lesson. I can use this strategy in my classroom for math and science instruction.

This article is about students conducting an investigation to find a solution to a posed question provided by their teacher. The teacher had the students brainstorm as a whole class, and then separated the students into groups. The groups then had to supply their teacher with a step by step written plan for how they will proceed in their investigations. The teacher never gave the students the answers to their questions; she simply encouraged them to collaborate and ask questions throughout while experimenting. “In this investigation, students were actively engaged in the processes of science, including observation, measurement, prediction, inference, developing hypothesis, gathering data, and experimentation” (Rommel-Esham, 26).

The strategies used in the classroom in this article provide examples of how to use scientific inquiry in your curriculum lesson planning. There are several uses of scientific inquiry. Students can make connections with ‘real’ world situations using inquiry. By using
scientific inquiry, teachers encourage their students to use more dynamic problem solving approaches to learning and thinking. It also is a great way to tie in math with science, since they can go hand in hand with one another. Inquiry helps students review what is already known in light of experimental evidence, as well as propose answers, explanations and have them formulate a hypothesis. Students will be learning how to gather, analyze and interpret data. Students are then required to reflect upon their findings in writing. This helps students to become more suspicious of information they receive. It teaches students to ask more questions, and to never be satisfied with an answer. These are real world skills students can use for the rest of their lives. Students become more confident with their own ideas and strategies, to be independent from their teachers, not dependent on them.

I chose this article for a number of reasons; the main one being it involved the use of inquiry in a science class. Since ED5534 is a science class that focuses on utilizing inquiry learning, I thought it would be appropriate. I think this article discusses everything we have learned in the past four weeks. While reading it, I reflected on the two experiments I conducted in this class and how they have similarities to how they conducted. I also chose this article for a silly personal reason, being the title had the word ‘popcorn’ in it, and I love popcorn! Also, this article was an easy read, with a lesson built into it that I could potentially utilize in my own classroom one day.

After only four weeks of being in this class, I honestly feel totally different about science and teaching overall. “How Much Popcorn”, written by Katie Rommel-Esham, was written in the magazine “Science and Children” in October 2007. The article is about a teacher incorporating the use of math and science inquiry in one lesson with her students. Utilizing inquiry she
encourages her students to go beyond the textbook, to develop their own ideas and predictions. Scientific inquiry is imperative in today’s classrooms. Students need to be encouraged to think and students need to know that there are no wrong answers, just alternative misconceptions. I picked this article because it is dealing with exactly what I have learned in ED5534, the importance of inquiry learning.
References