

Instructional Strategies

In this section, I have included a copy of the paper I wrote on problem-based learning. I chose to include this paper because it highlights my ability to perform and assimilate research on educational issues. In addition to writing the paper, I had to prepare and teach a lesson that utilized the problem-based learning strategy. The lesson *How Many Fish Are In My Pond?* (included in the *Developing and Assessing* section of this portfolio) is the lesson that I taught.

If there has been one dominant theme in all of the education courses I have taken, it is that teachers must be aware of the fact that all students are individuals and that they can vary greatly from one to another. Thus, it is not possible for any one instructional strategy to be highly effective with all students at the same time. For this paper, I found a great deal of research touting problem-based learning as a great improvement over lecture-based learning. However, there was also plenty of evidence that problem-based learning was not the “holy grail” of education. So, this paper reflects I have learned that teachers must be aware of many different instructional strategies, teachers must be able to perform research in their field, teachers must be able to implement what they learn, and teachers must be able to communicate their new knowledge.

The research I performed on problem-based learning has definitely affected my view on non-traditional instructional strategies. As mentioned in earlier sections, my secondary school mathematics experience was over 20 years ago. Back then, the closest I remember getting to a non-traditional instructional strategy was a really tricky word problem or perhaps a film about math applications. I did just fine in math with traditional instruction being used, and I assumed that anyone who “couldn’t get it” just wasn’t cut out to do well in math. I

now have a better understanding of how students vary in their interests, their capabilities, and how their brains are “wired” and why it is necessary to employ varied instructional strategies to help each student achieve their best.