

Analysis of Intern: Sarah Bourdeau

Professional development

Building on Sarah's many strengths, here are some suggestions for "next steps":

The observed lesson demonstrated many strengths—particularly in engagement, clarity of structure, creative presentation of content, and rapport with students. Based on this strong student-centered lesson structure, Sarah could expand students' ownership of parts of lessons. Given Sarah's student-centered instruction, it would be a natural progression to further increase opportunities for student team led activities. This would be a natural progression beyond structured participation into more rigorous, student designed discussions. Students were highly engaged in group work, demonstrating their readiness for more cognitive responsibility. Additionally, Sarah could strengthen her use of formative assessment to more intentionally check for understanding across all learners, rather than relying primarily on volunteer responses and her conversations-as-she-circulates, which may not fully capture gaps in comprehension. Differentiation is another area for increased emphasis. In addition to informally supporting students during group work, Sarah could use planned scaffolds or extensions to help ensure depth over breadth and prevent potential cognitive overload. Sarah's pacing and prioritization of content—particularly given the number of concepts introduced (e.g., multiple elements of the rhetorical framework) is laudable. Data collection to document outcomes would augment the already high value of this approach. Focusing on these areas will support Sarah in experimenting with maximizing student ownership and consequent deeper learning.

Strengths:

Sarah demonstrated strong instructional effectiveness through a well-balanced combination of structure, engagement, and responsive teaching. Students were clearly glad to be in her class! From the outset, she established a positive classroom climate by personally greeting students and informally checking in on their needs, which fostered a visible sense of belonging and readiness to learn. Her lesson design is highly organized and transparent, with a clear agenda, learning goals, and tasks consistently displayed and referenced on the whiteboard at the front of the classroom. This allowed students to track and understand expectations and learning outcomes and check their progress toward these goals. Sarah skillfully activated student interest through an engaging Do Now and maintained momentum by incorporating relatable examples, like the Moana film clip, to make abstract rhetorical concepts accessible. She frequently used purposeful questioning to promote critical thinking, encouraged students to justify their ideas, built on prior knowledge, and made connections across tasks. During collaborative work, Sarah provided clear directions, expectations, and autonomy. As a result, there were high levels of student engagement and meaningful, animated – but very productive - peer discourse. Her active circulation, attentive listening, and ability to deliver timely clarification or reteaching (as needed) demonstrated strong formative assessment practices. Overall, her calm, supportive demeanor and intentional instructional strategies created a classroom environment where students were both intellectually engaged and comfortable taking academic risks. Very impressive!