English Language Learners

Exhibit 1

Class Description

Mr. Lin teaches middle school mathematics intervention classes for students who scored a 1 or 2 on the state mathematics assessment. Mr. Lin has been working with Valeria, an eighth-grade English Language Learner who struggles academically. Valeria started school in the United States in second grade. She has been at the advanced stage of English language proficiency for several years but has been unable to achieve the performance level of proficient on the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT). Valeria is also performing significantly below grade level in mathematics.

Valeria communicates fluently in English and when doing so, she sounds like a native English speaker. Although she has some proficiency in her home language, she rarely speaks her home language, even with family members. She is assimilated into U.S. culture and is largely indistinguishable from native-English-speaking peers.

In his interactions with Valeria, Mr. Lin noted some of Valeria's strengths and needs in mathematics. She sometimes struggles to understand Mr. Lin's explanations of mathematical concepts. Mr. Lin has found that presenting a concept multiple times using different methods helps Valeria understand the meaning of the concept. Once she comprehends his explanation, she is usually able to understand the concept and accurately complete the appropriate calculations. However, Valeria has trouble applying the concept to word problems and frequently skips steps or misinterprets the question. Mr. Lin is planning a lesson on linear equations. As part of the planning process, Mr. Lin is reviewing Valeria's diagnostic mathematics assessment report and NYSESLAT scores and considering strategies for making the lesson accessible to her.

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Exhibit 2

Excerpts from Valeria's Assessment Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student: Valeria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade level: 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age: 12 years 7 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algebra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integer Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraction Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decimal Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparing and Converting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimating and Rounding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluating Exponents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratio and Proportions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simplifying Expressions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate Graphing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple Equations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Skills—Timed Math Facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Skills—Untimed Math Facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Skills—Following Directions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Valeria's NYSESLAT Data**

(last year)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Raw Score</th>
<th>Raw Score Required for Proficient</th>
<th>State Average Raw Score</th>
<th>Maximum Raw Score Possible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exhibit 3

Excerpt from Mr. Lin's Draft Lesson Plan

**Topic:** Linear Equations

**Standard:**
Analyze and solve pairs of simultaneous linear equations. (NYCCLS M.8.EE.c8)

**Lesson Objective:**
Students will identify the intersecting point of a system of linear equations.

**Essential Question:**
How can we use graphs to solve linear equations?

**Vocabulary:**
slope, intersecting lines, system of linear equations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Component</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Using a coordinate plane on the board, review with students how to graph a single linear equation using the slope and y-intercept. Explain to students that this skill provides a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Sample Exam Section

**Demonstration**

- Write two linear equations on the board (e.g., \( x - y = 5 \) and \( 3x + y = 7 \)). Model for students how to rewrite the equations in slope-intercept form, graph both equations on the same coordinate plane, and identify the point of intersection.

- Using the same linear equations, show students how to construct a table of values and find appropriate values to fill the table. Lead students to the observation that the \( x \)-value that gives the same \( y \)-value for both equations is the point of intersection and therefore the solution to the linear system.

**Practice Activity**

- Students will solve five linear systems by graphing the lines and constructing the table of values.

*Note: Be sure to circulate and to monitor student understanding.*

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**Use the exhibits to answer the questions that follow.**

6. In planning instruction for Valeria, Mr. Lin has a professional responsibility to focus his efforts on

   A. teaching Valeria how to use various strategies for monitoring her own progress and learning
   B. adapting academic standards to ensure that Valeria has an opportunity to experience success
   C. identifying real-world contexts in which Valeria can practice concepts and skills
   D. providing Valeria with the scaffolding she needs to master the same concepts and skills as her peers

**Answer**

7. Mr. Lin can best promote Valeria’s comprehension of academic language by using which of the following strategies during the lesson on linear equations?
A. Write the vocabulary associated with the lesson concepts on the board while explaining it to students.
B. Assign individual students to describe for the class the steps they used to solve one of the problems.
C. Develop a numbered list of steps for students to refer to as the teacher models the problem-solving process.
D. Allow students to complete the practice activity with a partner or in small groups to encourage discussion of lesson concepts.

Answer

8. Mr. Lin plans to meet with Valeria's English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher to discuss how to meet Valeria's needs as they relate to this lesson. Which of the following lesson planning tasks should Mr. Lin and the ESL teacher focus on first to help ensure a productive collaboration?

A. Design alternate activities for Valeria that address the concepts targeted in the lesson.
B. Identify strategies and materials for integrating language objectives for Valeria into math instruction.
C. Determine which peers would be most appropriate for Valeria to work with during the lesson.
D. Rewrite textbook explanations on mathematical topics for Valeria to focus more on computational procedures and less on abstract concepts.

Answer

9. Which of the following factors related to language acquisition is most likely contributing to Valeria's below-average content-area literacy skills?

A. She is reluctant to take risks in English learning.
B. She has limited literacy in and use of her home language.
C. She has a debilitating level of communication apprehension.
D. She receives insufficient English input in the school environment.

Answer

Use the exhibits to complete the task that follows.
10. After analyzing the information provided, write a response of approximately 150–200 words in which you:

- identify a specific learning need for Valeria;
- describe a strategy for differentiating instruction related to this lesson to address the need that you identified; and
- explain why the strategy you described would be effective in addressing the identified learning need.

The final version of your response should conform to the conventions of edited American English.

**Sample Response**

Valeria has difficulty applying mathematical concepts and sometimes skips steps or misinterprets information even when she comprehends Mr. Lin's explanations and understands the concept represented by the problems. Since she has not yet fully mastered some of the prerequisite skills for this lesson, she will need scaffolding to help her successfully perform the lesson activities.

One strategy for differentiating instruction for Valeria in this lesson to address this need would be to provide Valeria with a written step-by-step guide of the procedure for solving linear equations. Each step of the process would show an example of what the calculations should look like at that step.

Providing Valeria with a written, step-by-step guide will help make sure that Valeria does not skip steps in solving the equations. It will also facilitate her ability to apply mathematical concepts because she can use the guide to verify that her solutions resemble the examples in the guide. This approach will help scaffold Valeria’s ability to solve linear equations accurately.