

# Use of Supplementary Materials to Introduce Science to Literacy Level Students.

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## **Abstract:**

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The purpose of this action research project was to address the problem of the gaps in knowledge and vocabulary of literacy level students in the science area. About 45% of the students in the learning centre want to pass the GED 12 exam. Most of these students have never studied science. We decided to introduce group taught science classes, using a variety of materials to stimulate interest and increase science vocabulary. Hopefully this would translate into more success at the GED level.

## **Question:**

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Would the use of appropriate, user friendly supplementary materials aid understanding and ultimately raise the scores of literacy level students with little or no exposure to science.

## **Preliminary Action:**

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- First we determined the average reading levels of the class.
- We examined the GED science text to determine reading level for understanding.
- We examined required skills needed to answer science questions.
- We studied vocabulary required to read GED science texts.
- We contacted various publishing companies and sent for samples of science texts and materials.

## **The Intervention:**

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The Literacy Learning Centre consists of a multi-level group of students. On average we have about 20 students at one time.

- We organized one group taught science class per week and included all students.
- The science materials were distributed and articles were read orally by students followed by general discussion.
- Provision was made for pronunciation of vocabulary and looking up meanings of words.
- We distributed notebooks for science and encouraged students to take notes.
- Assignments involving answering questions, reading charts and drawing conclusions were done as a group.
- Students completed assignments individually in notebooks at the conclusion of the class.

### **The Findings:**

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We interview students on a regular basis to discuss what is or isn't working.

- Less anxiety when working on science course.
- Students aren't as intimidated by science studies.
- Improved science vocabulary.
- Better science study skills.
- Improved interest in science expressed by many students.

### **Reflections On or Implications for Practice:**

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We need to continue this research for a greater length of time to determine its effect on GED level student's scores. We feel that the positive effects of heightened interest, increased vocabulary, confidence and less anxiety when working on the science course have been quite noteworthy.