Learner Profiles

In an effort to get to know our students better, our school decided to implement learner profiles in every classroom. We have been working on these learner profiles for four years now and they continue to evolve as we experiment with them. Learner profiles share important information about the way each student learns. They may include elements like preferred multiple intelligence, modality (auditory, kinesthetic and visual) and interests. The profiles are visible in the classroom so that the student, teacher, parents, classmates etc can reference it. In addition, the profiles may change throughout the year as interests change and new learning takes place.

This past year in my Kindergarten class, we approached our learner profiles from an inquiry approach. I created a board with a symbol showing each of the multiple intelligences. We talked about what each of them meant. Throughout the day, I would take pictures of the students engaged in different learning opportunities. At the end of the day, we would look at the pictures and decide which multiple intelligence was best represented in the picture. We then tacked it up under the correct symbol on the board. By the end of September, the students had enough understanding of the multiple intelligences to start thinking about their own learning. Each student chose the symbol that showed their preferred learning method. This symbol was then put up on the bulletin board along with his/her picture. Throughout the year the students were invited to reflect on their learning and make changes to their profiles.

The symbols that we used were just clipart pictures we had found and weren't always the best picture for representing the learning. This year, Vera Trembach has created new pictures for ECEC

members to use to create learner profiles in their own classes. Vera based these pictures on traditional First Nations symbols.   These symbols are very simple and will be easy for children to understand and begin to apply to different activities, and eventually their own learning. Vera has also provided us with symbols to match learner modalities – visual, auditory and kinesthetic.

This is a photo of my learner profile board last year. I took pictures of the students participating in different learning activities. We then sorted them according to which Multiple Intelligence they thought that it addressed.

Here is the beginning of my board for this year. We will put the photos up at the top, categorizing their learning. Once the students know more about how they learn, they will choose what they think is their top multiple intelligence and we will put it under their picture. This will be revisited several times throughout the year, and students will be given the chance to change what they think their multiple intelligence strength is.

Please find attached a dialogue for learning to help students think about what their multiple intelligence strengths are and posters to use as part of a learner profile display.

Learner profiles have really benefitted my students. If you have any questions, or if you try this in your classroom, please let me know how it goes. Hadwen.karen@nesd.ca

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