Using Interest-Driven Differentiation to Increase Support and Engagement
in a grade 3/4 BC Inclusive French Immersion Classroom: Self-Reflective Action Research

by

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Abstract

With the new redesigned curriculum from BC Ministry of Education, the BC Inclusion policy and growth in the French Immersion program, there is an increasing need to support diverse learners in second-language classrooms. Teachers are encouraged to use a differentiated approach to teaching, and so my query quickly became focused on improving my interest-driven differentiated instructional approach in my inclusive grade 3/4 French Immersion classroom. Conducted over a 6-month period in a primary/intermediate classroom, this self-reflective action research study demonstrates how an interest-driven differentiated approach can be used as an effective teaching strategy for increasing engagement and success of all types of learners in a French Immersion classroom. Key themes that emerged were community building, UDL designs, language development, skill building and technology. Overall, this research demonstrates how a self-reflective interest-driven differentiated teaching approach can improve teaching practices and enhance the learning and engagement of students in an inclusive French Immersion primary classroom.

Keywords: inclusion, Primary French Immersion, Differentiated Instruction, Interest-driven differentiation, interest-inventories, engagement, motivation
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**Key Terms**

**BC Inclusive Education Policy**- An education system that entitles all students (both with and without special needs) to equitable access to learning, opportunities for achievement, and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their educational programs (BC Ministry of Education, 2019).

**Accommodations**- These are changes that can be made to a program in order to help a student achieve the same outcomes of all other students. These may include changes such as extended time, pre-teaching key vocabulary and assistive technology (BC Ministry of Education, 2019).

**Cyclical Action Research**- Research that involves a continuous process of acting, reflecting on the action, and acting again in the new ways in light of what you have found; the research therefore becomes a cycle of action reflection (McNiff, 2016).

**Universal Design For Learning (UDL)**- It is a framework of instructional approaches that recognizes and accommodates different learning styles. It provides learning activities that expand students’ opportunities for acquiring information and demonstrating learning, as well as for enhancing social participation and inclusion. It provides support for all students and motivates through the element of choice (Ministry of Education, 2019).

**French Immersion**- A language program where French is the language of instruction in all subject areas from Kindergarten to grade 4. In grade 4, English is gradually introduced, and French instruction is reduced to 12% by grade 12. Students are considered functionally bilingual at the completion of this program (Carr, 2007).
Differentiated Instruction- A framework of teaching that provides students with different ways to show their learning, by ensuring lessons are designed around student readiness, interests and preferred ways of learning (Tomlinson, 2017).

Interest-driven differentiation- When content, process and product are differentiated based on interests (Tomlinson, 2017).

Redesigned BC curriculum model- Two features essential to 21st century learning are a concept-based approach to learning and a focus on the development of competencies, which together require the active engagement of students and deeper learning experiences. A model where all areas of learning are based on 3 elements: the content (Know), Curricular Competencies (Do), and Big Ideas (Understand). They work together to enable personalized, flexible and innovative approach at all levels of the education system (Ministry of Education, 2019).

Student Interest Inventories- A method of keeping track of student interests that helps identify internal and external motivation factors (Grande, 2008).

Engagement- The actions of students in a classroom setting, which is determined through many components such as time on-task and level of interaction accompanied by enthusiasm (Antony-Newman, 2016).

Motivation- A goal-driven process that varies in intensity and involves mental and physical processes (Okon, 2014).
Chapter 1

Introduction

One of the major issues facing Canada’s public school French Immersion (FI) programs is its high attrition rates. Despite the fact that FI is proven to be an effective way of achieving bilingual proficiency, only a fraction of FI students are graduating from this program (Canadian Parents for French, 2017). In British Columbia (BC), between 2004 to 2015, FI student attrition rates averaged 16.5% in grades 1-5 and 43% in grades 7-12 (Canadian Parents for French, 2017). The attrition rates are particularly high when students transition from elementary to middle school (Canadian Parents for French, 2017). This poses a concern for parents, students and teachers who want to see more students benefit from completing a bilingual education. In many cases across Canada, the decision to stay in the FI program or move to an English program lies with parents whose children are experiencing either academic or social difficulties (Berube, 2015; Noel, 2004).

Research from the past few decades indicates that academic factors leading to attrition include difficulty with course content, the language, curriculum expectations and assignments (Berube, 2015). Social factors from the past few decades indicate that students leave for reasons like personal interests, family, friends, teachers and the culture of the community (Berube, 2015). Parent concerns include the possibility of a second language, causing language delays, the lack of student interest in learning French, and the need for more effective intrinsic and extrinsic motivations (Berube, 2015; Noel, 2004).

For teachers, a major concern is the lack of support for students who have special needs within immersion (Berube, 2015). In the FI program, “More often than not, students with special needs are encouraged to transfer to the English programs to access necessary
support services” (Wise, 2011, p.177). The problem guiding the present research is the need for greater retention of students, both with and without special needs, within the inclusive FI elementary classroom. As a grade 3/4 FI teacher, I am faced with these challenges and often wonder what I can do in my practice to improve the level of support and engagement in my increasingly diverse and inclusive classroom.

**Personal Context**

Despite the overall growth and success of the FI program, as a BC French Immersion teacher with 8 years of experience, I feel a growing sense of responsibility to address the issues related to attrition in order to help maintain the quality of the program. More importantly, as a bilingual Canadian who benefits from the social, cultural and economic advantages of bilingualism, I am passionate about providing equitable access to this program because I see firsthand, on a daily basis, the struggles students with varying interests and abilities face in the FI program. The BC Ministry if Education Inclusive education model poses many challenges as students with diverse learning styles and needs are accommodated in the classroom. As a result, all stakeholders (government, parents and teachers) are encouraged to get involved to address this complex issue. In response to this, I am one of many active participants seeking solutions through collaborative discussions, professional development, and committees across my school district. It is clear to me that teachers are seeking ways to avoid burnout, advocate for better supports and better meet the social, emotional and academic needs of students through evidence-based teaching strategies. With a revised BC curriculum based on a Universal Design For learning (UDL) framework that supports differentiated instructional strategies designed for inclusive and diverse classrooms, I see an opportunity to find ways to target attrition rates in a FI setting with a differentiated curriculum. In my personal experience, students who leave the FI
program in grades 3, 4 and 5 are often unmotivated and need specialized supports. These personal experiences support the recent statistics listed above and provided by Parents for French all over the province. I will continue to advocate for supports through a variety of avenues, while also seeking ways to adjust my teaching practice so I can specifically target the imminent needs within my classroom. This is the driving force behind my self-reflective action research.

Statement of Problem

Based on my personal experiences and the current state of student attrition within the BC FI inclusive program, I feel that a deeper understanding and integration of an interest-driven differentiated instruction (DI) can help increase the quality and support of the program. When I see students in my classroom struggle with engagement, motivation and lack of individual supports in their areas of need, I wonder how I can make best use of my limited time and resources in order to address these issues. In the next chapter I will explore interest-driven differentiated instructional strategies and use this to design and implement cyclical action research that allows me to reflect, adapt and make changes to my current practices.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to improve my classroom teaching practice through action research. More specifically, my objective is to see how I can improve my interest-driven DI in my inclusive FI classroom so that I can better engage and differentiate for all learners and abilities in my curriculum throughout content, process and product. I will use recommended strategies by educators and authors Carol-Ann Tomlinson and Joni Turville, who both specialize in Differentiated Instructional methods. I also refer to the redesigned BC Curriculum to ensure I provide a learner-centered, flexible and quality literacy French Immersion program during my
action research. The key features of the curriculum used the Know-Do-Understand (KDU) model, which supports a concept-based competency-driven approach to learning. The interest-driven differentiated activities that my students did are based on 3 elements: content (what they need to Know), curricular competencies (what they can Do), and big idea (what they Understand). My hope is that all my students, including those with learning challenges, feel more ownership over their learning through interest-based differentiation, because they have a voice in the topics covered, a more personally meaningful learning experience and achieve deeper learning experiences using the redesigned BC curriculum model. In the long term, I hope to deepen my understanding and practice of DI in the FI classroom through the use of interest-driven differentiated lessons, and also to influence other teachers to explore this approach in order to provide more equitable access and a quality program.

**Justification for Study**

For a FI classroom teacher the idea of individualized instruction is a daunting task. With a wide range of diverse interests and abilities in my classroom, a more in-depth understanding and application of differentiated instructional strategies is needed in the classroom to help support and engage all learners, particularly students leaving for academic and social reasons such as course content, the language, curriculum expectations, assignments, personal interests, family, friends, teachers and the culture of the community (Berube, 2015). According to DI expert Carol-Ann Tomlinson (2017), the time-consuming approaches of individualized instruction are not to be confused with DI. DI in mixed ability classrooms is rooted in evidence-based theories and recent brain based research, which is a valuable opportunity to bridge theory into my practice (Hall, T., Strangman, N., Mayer, A., 2014; Tomlinson, 2017). Several studies show the effectiveness of a DI teaching approach on elementary-aged children however, very
little of this research has occurred in FI classrooms (Grande, 2008; Valiandes, 2015). In my personal practice, I have found value in making connections between FI student interests and learner needs into new curriculum lesson plans, specifically integrated into content, process and product. In other words, I want to support all areas of learning based on the KDU model of the new BC curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2019). My hope is that it supports a concept-based competency-driven approach to learning in an area of my students’ interest by providing choice of topics in a personalized, flexible and innovative way. I want to explore this valuable teaching approach in greater depth. By researching the effects of an interest-driven curriculum on student learning, motivation and engagement, I hope to better support my students, improve my instructional approach and encourage other teachers in all inclusive classrooms to explore interest-driven DI strategies.

**Research Question**

My guiding question is, how can I improve my interest-driven differentiated instructional approach in my inclusive grade 3/4 French Immersion classroom?

**Overview of Study**

I will utilize a self-reflective action research approach that uses qualitative journal reflections, a self-survey and a critical friend, to systematically examine my practice within an inclusive French Immersion grade 3/4 classroom.

To answer my question, I created a series of differentiated activities for a FI classroom based on the research I conducted. Over the course of my self-reflective action research and project and reflections, these activities were integrated into a unit plan (Appendix A). This project was conducted over a period of six months and it is my hope that this type of
comprehensive interest-based differentiation helps to support and engage FI students in a way that strengthens and improves BC’s FI inclusive program.

To begin my action research project, I created an interest inventory at the beginning of the year so that I can get to know my students’ interests and abilities. I then created an interest-driven differentiated unit plan and implemented it at the beginning of November 2018. Data was collected weekly in a self-reflective journal and a self-survey that was completed over a period of 6 weeks. The methodology of this self-reflective action research project is described in chapter three. The data was analyzed and themes regarding the effectiveness of my interest-driven differentiated instructional approach were found at this time. A summary of these findings was shared with a critical friend to ensure my research, project, findings and critical friend input were triangulated. By having my critical friend review my data and data analysis methods, my findings were validated and applied in order to improve my interest-based instructional approach. My goal is to improve my practice so that I can better support, engage and motivate all my FI students, and reduce the chances of them leaving the program. Finally, I summarized and shared my findings in the results of this report. I also created an interest-based differentiated unit plan based on my findings.

This self-reflective action research project is a qualitative study of my personal practice. I recognize that this approach is subjective, and I believe that the social interactions of a classroom are most insightful through thoughtful human action. My research is designed in a way that it will be systematic and draws upon my professional experiences. I would like to create change in my personal practice by being the participant and researcher of this study. In an educational setting such as a classroom, I believe that an effective way to improve my practice is through an epistemological approach of social interactions, observations, triangulation and critical feedback.
In particular, I find that a local understanding of individual students and their needs can best be supported by a teacher’s ability to create a flexible and varied instructional approach (Rumrill, Cook, and Wiley, 2011). By integrating these actions with current research by other professionals within similar classroom contexts, I hope to influence other educators to improve and share their teaching practices so that as a community of learners, we can ensure that policy around inclusion and the FI program in BC continues to provide equitable access to all learners.

The following chapter two provides a literature review of past and current research regarding the inclusive FI program model and the interest-driven differentiated instructional approach. Chapter three outlines the details of my research method, which will be a cyclical self-reflective action research and project, that allows me to explore my question: how can I improve my interest-driven differentiated instructional approach in my inclusive grade 3/4 French Immersion classroom? In chapter four, the results of my self-reflective process and findings will be shared. This will include as description of instructional approaches I will be integrating into my future practice.

Conclusion

In summary, with BC FI attrition rates particularly high for students moving from elementary to middle school, it is my hope that by using an interest-driven approach to teaching and learning, students will be more self-motivated in their learning, no matter what their learning challenges are. By using a differentiated lesson format, my hope is that diverse student needs can be equitably supported and engaged using the redesigned BC curriculum.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

In the previous chapter I identified high attrition rates at the intermediate level of the BC FI program and described some of the realities of the inclusion policy as a classroom teacher. With a redesigned BC curriculum that supports differentiation and interest-based instructional approaches, there is an opportunity to improve access and retention of the FI to more types of learners. Current research in the areas of interest-based differentiation and second language development show promising results that this can not only help improve academic achievement, but also the social supports that students need in order to be engaged and motivated to learn. The focus of this research was “How can I improve my interest-driven differentiated instructional approach in my inclusive grade 3/4 French Immersion classroom?” I accomplished this by doing a qualitative, systematic study of current research that includes reflections of my own practice, with the support of a critical friend over a period of six months in my classroom.

This chapter is a literature review of the foundations of differentiated instruction and the inclusive FI program of BC. Current research and practices of interest-driven differentiation and the Inclusive FI program are explored in order to determine how integrating student interests in a second language classroom can help increase student engagement and motivation. In order to express the importance of this particular action research project, this chapter ends by describing the gaps in the current research and application of interest-related DI in an intermediate FI Inclusive classroom.

Supporting FI students within an Inclusive classroom setting is vital to ensuring attrition rates remain low and equitable access to the program is maintained. Over the last 10 years the FI
student population has increased by 30% for a current total of 53,487 FI students in BC (BC Ministry of Education, 2018). Students with special needs are also increasing and include needs such as sensory, learning, behavioural, gifted, physical, deafblind, intellectual, chronic health, visual, autism and mental illness (BC Ministry of Education, 2015). As outlined by BC’s policy on Inclusion, FI students regardless of their abilities and special needs, are encouraged to be a part of the classroom community as much as possible (BC Ministry of Education, 2018). Many students in these FI mixed-ability classrooms struggle to participate in instructional approaches resulting in a move to the English program or a failure to reach individual educational goals (Berube, 2015). Therefore, an interest-driven differentiated approach in a FI classroom context is worthy of exploring, in hopes of better supporting these students.

This literature review will begin by describing the foundational theories and descriptions of past and current research around the BC FI program and the interest-driven differentiated instructional approach. I will discuss any significant findings and research that combines these two themes so I can be well informed when planning the first lesson of my self-reflective action research. This chapter will conclude by discussing the current gaps in available research and how this study can help address these gaps.

**Foundations of Differentiated Instruction**

Differentiated instruction (DI) can be traced back to Dewey’s educational theory of pragmatism. In his book *The child and the curriculum* (1902), he emphasized the importance of a student being able to relate the information to prior experiences, allowing for a deeper connection with their new knowledge. His balanced approach between new knowledge and taking into account student interests and experiences provided a solid philosophical foundation for this research.
DI is said to have originated in the one room schoolhouse that existed up until the early 20th century, where teachers were faced with students of various ages and backgrounds (Erickson, 2010, p.4; Tomlinson, 2014). In 1978, child psychologist Lev Vygotsky proposed cooperative learning activities so that students could develop skills with more skillful peers, which activates the Zone of Proximal Development, a theory also known as scaffolding (Hall, et al., 2014). Today a differentiated instructional approach is a widely accepted framework for teaching mixed-ability classrooms (Benjamin, 2013; Bogle, 2014; Gregory, et al., 2013; Lawrence-Brown, 2004; Subban, 2006). It is regarded as an innovative way of thinking about teaching and learning by providing students from varied cultures, languages, abilities and interests with multiple avenues for learning (Tomlinson, 2017). Tomlinson’s DI approach has gained considerable attention in her 1999 book, *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners* (Bogle, 2014). In response to this book, Subban states that

“The Tomlinson is a leading expert in this field, defines differentiated instruction as a philosophy of teaching that is based on the premise that students learn best when their teachers accommodate the differences in their readiness levels, interests and learning profiles. A chief objective of differentiated instruction is to take full advantage of every student’s ability to learn. In addition, Tomlinson points out that differentiating can be performed in a variety of ways, and if teachers are willing to use this philosophy in their classrooms, they opt for a more effective practice that responds to the needs of diverse learners” (Subban, 2006, p.940).

Therefore, I will use Tomlinson’s DI approach to help guide my research and practice throughout this action research project.
Interest-Driven Differentiation

One of the many ways Tomlinson differentiates her mixed ability classroom is by focusing on student interests. Interest-based differentiation is one aspect of this broad approach that Tomlinson explains is “when a teacher encourages a student to look at a topic of study through the lens of that student’s own interest” (2017, p.97). The 5 goals of interest-based differentiation as outlined by Tomlinson in her book *How to differentiate instruction in academically diverse classrooms, third edition* (2017) are:

“(1) helping students realize that there is a match between school and their own desires to learn, (2) demonstrating the interconnectedness of all learning, (3) using skills or ideas familiar to students as a bridge to ideas or skills less familiar to them, (4) helping students develop competence and autonomy as learners, and (5) enhancing student success”. (p.97)

Incorporating interests into classroom curriculum has been shown to provide meaningful support for under motivated students with a wide range of abilities and interests. In fact, according to Tomlinson (2017) interest-driven differentiation was first introduced and influenced by theories on motivation and engagement. The theory of self-determination (SDT) on motivation by Deci & Ryan (1985) provides a broad framework for the study of human motivation and personality (Tomlinson, 2017). Their research today underlines the importance of three innate psychological needs that enhance intrinsic motivation, self-regulation and wellbeing which are competence, autonomy and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In a classroom with students with multiple learning disabilities, motivating students can a challenge. It is therefore recommended by the Learning Disabilities Guide, that student motivation be increased using differentiated instruction that maximizes strengths and works around weaknesses (Ministry of
Education, 2011). The goals of interest-driven differentiation listed above provide a learning environment that addresses these needs, which is the key reason for improving this instructional approach in my classroom.

Many agree that interest facilitates learning as well as motivation in learning (Hidi, 2000; Krapp, 2000; Leibham, 2005; Renninger, 2000). It has also been proven that intrinsically motivated students engaged in an interest-driven curriculum can trigger intentional cognitive engagement (Liebham, 2005). A recent study by Wójcik (2015) shows that Gardner's Multiple Intelligences (MI) theory can be combined with learner interests to increase motivation in students. Okon’s book, *Teaching English Effectively: with special focus on learners’ interests* (2014) discusses the importance of creating motivational conditions in a language classroom by providing tips for management, atmosphere and lessons that include students’ interests. In the FI program, a lack of student engagement and motivation with the curriculum is an important issue (Cummins, 2000; Makropoulos, 2010; Boudreaux, 2011; Berube, 2015). Berube (2015) identifies the lack of student engagement a result of social factors such as family, friends and personal interests. Anthony-Newman (2016) did a recent study on FI student engagement and found that having choices in doing tasks is motivating for students, particularly between grades 4-6. Engagement and intrinsic motivation are very important factors to consider in a FI classroom because according to Anthony-Newman (2016), when students are engaged in literacy activities they can become more “strategic, autonomous and self-regulating” (p.26). These are key traits I would like my students to develop. Interest-driven differentiation in the classroom can clearly be a source of intrinsic motivation to help engage students in their learning. During my research, I will be looking for signs of student motivation and engagement as I make instructional changes and create new approaches to my teaching practice.
Foundations of the Inclusive French Immersion Program

The French Immersion (FI) program we currently have in BC was first conceived in 1965 by a group of Anglophone parents in Quebec who wanted their children to learn the French language of the provincial majority (Anthony-Newman, 2016; Berube, 2015; Carr, 2007). In 1969, when the Official Languages Act was proclaimed and English and French both became Canada’s official languages, children were expected to learn them both in school (Dagenais, 2013). As a result, French Immersion programs began to spread across Canada and the world (Berube, 2015). Theoretical foundations of the Canadian French Immersion program are rooted in Canadian psychologist Wallace Lambert’s work on language education. In 1962 he published an article entitled *The Relation of Bilingualism to Intelligence*, which contrary to popular belief at the time, showed that bilingual people outperform monolinguals on non-verbal and verbal intelligence tests (Cummins, 2000). As a result, parents were less concerned about the implications of adding a second language to their child’s education.

Forty years later, second language immersion continues to be an effective way to teach a minority language in a majority-language population (Berube, 2015; Carr, 2007; Cummins, 2000; Genesee, 2000; Johnson & Swain, 1997). Second language expert, James Cummins, says that Canada’s FI Program is successful because “students gain fluency and literacy in French at no apparent cost to their English academic skills” (2000, p.1). This is supported by Fred Genesee’s research and influential book entitled *Educating Second Language Children: The whole child, the whole curriculum, the whole community* (1994). He says that for a second language program to be successful, it must be child-centered (much like that of Tomlinson’s DI approach). Genesee emphasizes that “From a second language teacher’s point of view, planning and providing instruction on the basis of children’s existing competencies and using experiences
provide a solid foundation for extending children’s skills and knowledge in new directions” (1994, p.3). Clearly, pedagogy much like that of Tomlinson’s DI approach, support the foundations of second language learning.

With the introduction of inclusive education in BC in the 1990s, the goal was to ensure that all students with exceptionalities, including those in FI, had equitable access to the general education system. This inclusive program of education was an important milestone for educational rights; however, applying it to the FI program has arguably been a challenging task (Wise, 2011). Dr. Wise is a Canadian FI researcher, educator and parent who supports the program and explains that it has often being labeled “elitist” because it has traditionally attracted more higher-achieving students resulting in more average or lower achieving students in the English stream (Wise, 2011). Parents of students with exceptionalities in the FI program have often been encouraged to switch their children into the English program in order to better access specialized support services (Carr, 2007; Genesee, 2007; Wise, 2011). Now after two decades of Inclusion, there is evidence that many educators are still unable to meet the unique and diverse needs of students in the inclusive classroom setting (Cummins, 2000; Kristmanson, 2011; Wise, 2011).

Despite these challenges of Inclusion, enrollment in the French Immersion program has been increasing both nation- and province-wide for 18 consecutive years (BC & Yukon Parents for French, 2018). Fortunately, with proper accommodations and support, the FI program can be suitable for students with special needs such as low levels of academic ability, language-related disabilities, disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds and minority ethnic groups (Carr, 2007; Genesee, 2007; Wise, 2011). The question is, exactly what kind of accommodations and supports can a classroom teacher do to help support both students with exceptionalities and without? The
next part takes a closer look at how current research and practices have integrated interest-driven DI curriculum into an inclusive FI classroom:

**Current research and practices of Interest-Driven DI in Inclusive FI classrooms**

The integration of student interests across the curriculum is one of many strategies proven to help students learn (Chapman & King; 2008, Ferguson, 2008; Smagorinsky, 2009; Tomlinson, 2017). Interests integrated into all subject areas are a “hook” for student engagement and a key motivating factor that makes learning more personally meaningful (Tomlinson, 2017, p.95). Recent research demonstrates that gathering information on student interests and learning styles through interest inventories can help engage and motivate students learning French (Kristmanson, 2015; Leibham 2005). In a second language immersion classroom, it is also believed that an interest-driven curriculum can have a strong influence on academic learning, engagement, and overall wellbeing (Cummins, 2000; Genesee, 1994). In a review of research by Genesee (2007), at-risk students (in this case defined as students with language, literacy and academic difficulties due to clinical or non-clinical factors) in an inclusive FI classroom can also benefit from this approach. For example, a qualitative case-study approach by Rousseau (1999) of a FI grade 3/4 class that included peer-assisted learning and developing student awareness of their learning styles, resulted in improved academic and non-academic areas. In fact, “The students reported improvements in their self-perceptions as learners in school related tasks performance “Parents also reported a high level of satisfaction with the results, indicating that ‘the children gained a lot of control over their disability and were now more able to be active learners. They became more aware of their strengths and weaknesses and were not as afraid of failing as they had been’” (Rousseau as cited by Genesee, 2007, p.670).
This is why I began my study by generating an inventory of my students’ interests and learning styles. Like Kristmanson (2015), I wanted to “find out their interests and differentiate your [my] teaching accordingly” (Kristmanson, 2015, p.17). Important aspects of an interest inventory include making sure there are a variety of question types (including both closed and open ended), to administer them at the beginning of the year (or when a new student arrives) and making it look different from a worksheet (Grande, 2008). Once student interests and are known, I can plan my lessons accordingly.

Okon (2014) also supports this approach and says that the best way to enhance students’ motivation in a language classroom is “to create the lesson based on the learners’ interests” (p.1). According to Tomlinson, applying an interest-driven lesson plan is an effective student-centered approach where “the teacher proactively plans and carries out varied approaches to content, process and product in anticipation and response to student differences in readiness, interests and learning needs” (2017, p.10). For example, when planning the content for reading and writing, it is recommended that the teacher guide students to select readings materials and topics they care about, while students can work independently or with others in small interest-alike groups (Tomlinson, 2017). Student interests can also be differentiated by process. For example, using a broad topic in Science, each student can select what they find interesting, and at various points students can share what they learn with other students (Tomlinson, 2017). Product can also be differentiated by interest. A teacher can provide options or allow students to propose their own product of a concept learned, for example a mathematical application (Tomlinson, 2017). A rubric is suggested for each type of product, such as a group project or independent report (Tomlinson, 2017). Using these flexible strategies “both the students’ goals and the goals of the curriculum can be served simultaneously” (Tomlinson, 2017, p.102).
A review of the research above shows that integrating both student interests and learning styles in an FI classroom can be successful in increasing student motivation and engagement. For teachers, it can help support diverse students more efficiently than other individualized approaches while meeting the curriculum goals in a more time effective way. Additionally, feedback from FI parents indicate that using integrated strategies such as flexible peer groupings and engaging lessons can also help at-risk children be more confident learners more likely to remain in the FI program.

**Gaps in Research**

Clearly, evidence that interest-driven DI is effective in the classroom does exist and is supported by many theories and current practices, however no study exists from a FI classroom perspective. So far, some studies have shown that children with academic needs have made academic gains with a DI approach in the classroom (Brimjoin, as cited in Ernest, J., Heckaman, K., Thompson, S., Hull, K., & Carter, S., 2011; DeBaryshe, B., Gorecki, D., & Mishima-Young, L., 2009; Tieso, C., 2002). These studies have shown positive mean student outcomes with the use of a pre and posttest, another with developmentally sequenced tiered instruction and one with state-standards assessments. A lot of research on applying interests in the classroom focuses on early primary (preschool to grade 2), or adolescents and adults, with very few practical studies made in the grades 3-8 classroom (Krapp, 2000).

A more recent mixed-methods research over a 10-week study by Anthony-Newman (2016) does confirm that providing personally relevant texts, allowing students to make personal choices around their reading and doing collaborative group activities are proven to increase literacy engagement in grade 4-6 FI inclusive classrooms. According to Grande (2008), there is limited research on the effectiveness of interest inventories on elementary-aged children or
students with special needs. None of these applies to FI classrooms, however one short guide recently published by Kristmanson (2015) does provide reflective teaching practices for Core French Teachers in Ontario with effective strategies for integrating student interests through inventories. No other studies were found placing interest-driven DI curriculum within a French Immersion second-language classroom context (Kristmanson, 2015).

Clearly, there is a greater need for more practical studies within the inclusive FI classroom, combining DI and student interests, that measure motivational and engagement outcomes. My hope is that by applying the above research into practice, I can not only provide much needed differentiated support that engages my mixed-ability classroom, but also some practical interest-driven differentiated approaches for other similar French Immersion contexts, particularly in BC during transition years, where attrition rates are highest.

**Conclusion**

A review of the BC’s inclusive FI program and interest-driven DI shows that both are rooted in many foundational theories. With strong evidence showing the benefits of the inclusive FI program for both the average learner and the student with special needs, many teachers continue to seek classroom strategies that can be used effectively and efficiently, in order to better retain students within the program. DI instruction provides a clear framework for best practices, supported by current studies of similar classroom contexts. I believe that integrating student interests into lessons can address the issue of motivation and engagement in my inclusive FI classroom. My goal is to further strengthen these connections in my practice, and bridge the gaps outlined above by using a self-study approach for my research. In this chapter, I described the foundations of interest-driven differentiated instruction and the FI program, current research and practices of their use in Inclusive classrooms and I identified some gaps in research. In the
next chapter, I will outline the methodology I plan to use for my self-study, which will allow me to further explore my research question.
Chapter 3

Methodology

Research Design

This study was designed as a cyclical self-reflective action research process through which I explored my question, *how can I improve my interest-driven differentiated instructional approach in my inclusive grade 3/4 French Immersion classroom?* This research design was inspired by McNiff (2016), who says that action research processes “involve a continuous process of acting, reflecting on the action, and acting again in new ways in light of what you have found; the research therefore becomes a cycle of action reflection (p.112). Figure 1 outlines my self-reflective action research design. It had four stages: 1) research and planning of an interest-driven differentiated unit plan 2) implementation and data collection of an interest-driven differentiated unit plan 3) data analysis and 4) reflection of results.

![Diagram of Self-Reflective Action Research Wheel]

Figure 1 Self-Reflective Action Research Wheel
Research and planning of an interest-driven differentiated unit plan.

In the first stage of my action research, I created an interest inventory so I can get to know my students’ interests (Appendix B). A guide for reflective teaching practices in language classrooms, written by Kristmanson from the Canadian Second Language Institute, says that an interest inventory is an important first step because it helps build rapport and engage students at the beginning of the year (Kristmanson, 2015). It is also important in creating a program that is relevant and interesting for students (Kristmanson, 2015). The layout of the inventory I created is based on recommendations by Grande (2008), who says that an effective inclusion strategy for elementary-aged students is a survey that includes both closed and open-ended questions and a design that helps identify both external and internal motivating factors (Grande, 2008). Also, to accommodate student abilities, there should be ample space for answers and an option for a scribe or assistance from an adult (Grande, 2008). I collected results from this survey and used an anonymous tracking sheet (Appendix C) to record the results so that I can look for key areas of interest among my students. These results were then used to create a series of interest-related differentiated activities that allowed students to explore their particular area of interest through content, process and product. The unit plan template used was based on a template created by Canadian author and elementary teacher Joni Turville (2007) in her book *Differentiating by Student Interest*. According to Tomlinson (2017), when planning lessons differentiated by interest, “key motivating factors for learning are a voice in and choice of topics, work that is personally meaningful, and a feeling ownership of the task at hand” (p.95). This was the approach I used. From September until the end of October 2018, I created a detailed interest-driven differentiated unit plan based on further research and recommendations by Carol-Ann Tomlinson and Joni Turville.
Implementation and data collection of the unit plan

At the beginning of November, I implemented the unit plan and gathered data using my reflective journal and a self-survey over a period of four weeks. In the next few paragraphs I outline the data collection instruments used in my research.

Self-Reflective Journal

Keeping a written journal of my classroom observations, my weekly actions and critical reflections of my actions, was one important instrument that I used for improving my practice. I chose this for my qualitative study because McNiff (2016) states “a powerful form of data is in those instances when you comment critically on your own process of learning and demonstrate reflective critique” (p.150). Therefore, my journal was critical of my own practice by recording how and why my thinking changes over the course of this study (McNiff, 2016). According to second language learning expert Paula Kristmanson (2015, p.8), keeping a journal is an important part of a reflective practice that helps foster a positive learning environment. She also says, “Students need to feel secure before they can focus on learning and participate actively” (Kristmanson, 2015, p.3). This was why I began the year with a reflective journal that helped me better understand my students’ internal and external motivating factors. I used it to record my experiences, reflect on them and create new ideas (Kristmanson, 2015). My journal recorded a variety of critical and factual observations and events related to my research goals (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013, p.456). I also used my journal to gather data, complete my self-survey and reflect with my critical friend. McNiff (2016) provides examples of record sheets in chapter 9, Collecting and managing the data, of his book Research Methods in Education. I used these templates as guides for recording my journal and data. In order to ensure that my journal observations were ethical and unbiased within my inclusive classroom, I focused on my research
question, I was systematic with regular entries, I ensured no student names were used, and that students were equally observed throughout the study, regardless of their needs and abilities (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013, p.459). I also kept my reflections in a locked cabinet when not in use. When gathering data about my own actions in a self-reflective journal, I declare that everything I included was truthful and I avoided the limitations my personal opinions and biases could bring (McNiff, 2016, p.154). The use of my reflective journal throughout this study was organized, professional, systematic and central in the gathering and recording process of this action research.

**Self-Survey**

An important aspect of this project was a series of systematic questions I asked myself as I worked through research and project. These questions allowed me to adopt an insider position, which McNiff (2016) argues is an important part of action research because researchers can “interrogate their own practices in relation with other people” (p.20). Some of the questions I asked myself to help guide my research and project were:

1. What is my goal?
2. Which interest-driven differentiated strategy (-ies) did I use?
3. Which observations have I made that indicate the strategies I used were useful (or not)?
4. Do I notice any themes or patterns that indicate when changes can be made?
5. What can I do differently next time that will engage and motivate my students more?

These questions helped guide my actions and answers that I recorded at the data analysis stage of my research using my reflective journal notes.

To ensure ethical considerations were maintained, I followed the same procedures as those used in my reflective journal. This included making sure I am focused on my own practice,
and how it can be improved. No names or quotes were included to ensure students being observed remained completely anonymous. My role as a teacher was the priority, and the weekly entries of my journal and completion of my self-survey were during non-instructional hours.

**Data Analysis**

In mid-December I analyzed my data. Data analysis of this action research and project were an important part of adjusting my teaching practices accordingly. How I did it determined the validity of my findings; therefore, I organized and explained my data by looking for themes in my research, actions and reflections (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013, p.537). I organized this data by instrument, then by content (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013, p.553). This technique was used to make thick descriptions and connections with my journal observations, reflective questions and critical friend. My analyses procedure for each of these was as follows.

First, analyzing data from my journal involved organizing my notes into themes. I had one for my personal reflections and one for my critical friend’s feedback. I began by sorting my notes into these general categories and saving them into a document organized in chronological order (McNiff, 2016). After 6 weeks of reflective journal writing, I looked for themes, such as key words, phrases or processes using colour coded highlighters (McNiff, 2016). This process of finding themes within categories is called coding (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013). Coding is a systematic way of analyzing qualitative data that can help me predict, clarify meaning and develop a grounded theory for the improved teaching approaches I am seeking (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013).

Secondly, analyzing data from reflective questions of my self-survey were important in recognizing the changes I needed to make in order to improve my practice. The answers I
generated from these questions provided me with systematic data I can use to improve my application of interest-differentiated activities in my inclusive FI classroom.

Thirdly, analyzing data with the help of my critical friend was key in determining whether the changes I was making were valid. I ensured the process was consistent and confidential throughout my action research and project. Also, a summary of my findings was shared with a critical friend to ensure my analysis makes valid connections to current research and practice. This allowed me to measure the effectiveness of my interest-based instructional approach. My goal was to improve my practice so that I can better support, engage and motivate all my FI students, and reduce the chances of them leaving the program.

**Critical Friend**

With myself as both participant and researcher, it was important to include a critical friend during this project, particularly for reflecting on and reviewing my results. According to McNiff (2016), action research requires someone who can provide feedback and help validate my claim so that my results are not simply my own opinions (McNiff, 2016, p.195). A critical friend can provide professional wisdom and can help improve the quality of teaching and learning and provide another point of view (McNiff, 2016). For example, conversation provided another perspective from my journal observations, specific to my research question and learning goals. Most importantly, “critical friends can help you find and retain focus” (McNiff, 2016, p.114). These informal conversations provided enhanced insights that observations and surveys cannot provide (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013, p.433). All conversations were kept anonymous in order to maintain confidentiality of the critical friend and observations (McNiff, 2016, p.168).
Ethical considerations included making sure my critical friend was informed of my self-reflective action research project and design. A potential limitation included selecting someone unable to be critical of my current practice due to a power imbalance in the relationship, or lack of familiarity with the inclusive FI context. In order to avoid this, the critical friend was an administrator and FI teacher I have worked with for three years and currently provides me with critical feedback on a regular basis to help improve my current practice. This critical friend has a Master’s degree in Educational Leadership and possesses the professional skills required for this role. In this study, the conversations with this critical friend provided me with important feedback that helped me maintain focus, improve my practice and validate my search for effective strategies within my interest-driven differentiated unit plan.

**Reflection of results**

My reflections at this stage helped me identify emergent themes that I could use to improve my application of interest-driven differentiation and the engagement and success of my students. A thorough content analysis of my findings at this stage helped me share results with my critical friend. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2013) say that content analysis can be applied to text from journals, questions and conversations because it “reduces and interrogates them into summary form through the use of both pre-existing categories and emergent themes in order to generate or test a theory” (p.564). The results are shared in chapter 4.

**Data Collection Instruments**

The instruments used for data collection during this study were my research, observations in a reflective journal and a self-survey. Ethical considerations were a priority when using these instruments for self-reflective data collection and were explained above in detail to ensure transparency and consistency.
Research site

The school where I conducted this self-reflective action research is located in a low and middle-income urban neighbourhood in BC. This community is home to families of diverse economic and cultural backgrounds. The public school has approximately 450 students and is dual track, offering both an English and FI program from kindergarten to grade 5. This study took place in an inclusive grade 3/4 FI classroom of 21 students.

Participant

The participant of this study is myself. I did research on how to improve my current practice by developing a plan, implementing my plan, collecting data, analyzing the data, reflecting on my actions and looking for ways to improve my practice (Figure 1). To improve the validity of my self-reflective action research, I consulted with a critical friend, who is a teaching colleague and administrator. This critical friend has many more years of experience in an inclusive FI classroom setting than I do and provided me with critical feedback during my research.

Triangulation, Reliability, Validity and Generalizability

The reason for selecting the above data collecting methods was to enable triangulation, which is a process of analyzing from at least three different sources (McNiff, 2016). To validate claims of knowledge the goal is “to triangulate data, that is obtain data, from more than one source, and show how the data from these different sources go towards supporting explanations you give of your situation” (McNiff, 2016, p.119). This is why I selected my research, my observations, a critical friend, and myself as sources of data. According to McNiff (2016), “once the data have been triangulated, therefore, you are in a good position to be interpreting the data and selecting as evidence those pieces that show the realization of values” (p.184). Multiple data
sources can also ensure my inference was more reliable and valid (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013).

Reliability in observational data increases when they include both systematic and critical incidents, therefore I had a routine weekly data entry system while also adding information about unforeseen or new events related to my research question (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013). To ensure my journal entries and observations were ethical and reliable, student names and the critical friend’s name remained completely anonymous. The focus of my study was on my actions and how I can change to improve them.

At the data analysis stage, reliability and validity were also considered. Content analysis is an important stage of this research. Therefore, I made sure my notes were not ambiguous and words were clearly written so that I can properly analyze my data (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013, p.572). The classification of data is prone to ambiguous coding errors and human error (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013, p.573). To avoid this, I coded all my data myself and reviewed it with my critical friend. The validity of knowledge claims is important to consider (McNiff, 2016, p.192). This study will provide clear evidence that can be verified through referenced research and data analysis provided in this report.

And finally, avoiding generalization were important when making observations. Any generalizations made must be validated with other research within similar contexts and discussed with my critical friend who teaches in a similar inclusive French Immersion classroom.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter I described in detail my research design. I was inspired my McNiff’s (2016), self-reflective action research model because it provides practical strategies for professionals such as teachers, who are planning and implementing a work-based project and
using it to seek way to improve the quality of their practice. Based on this inspiring approach, I designed a self-reflective action research wheel with four stages (figure 1). These stages where described in detail and included 1) research and planning of an interest-driven differentiated unit plan, 2) implementation and data collection of an interest-driven differentiated unit plan, 3) data analysis and 4) reflection of results. Data collection instruments outlined were journal observations, a self-survey and critical friend feedback. Details of my data analysis were described to ensure there was consistency. A description of the research site and participant were also included in this chapter. It concluded by explaining how my chosen research method was triangulated, reliable, valid and how generalizations were addressed. In the following chapter 4, I describe the results of my self-reflective action research and project. The outcomes of both are described chronologically, which include the planning and implementation of an interest-driven differentiated unit plan, self-survey reflections and critical friend discussion. The chapter will end with key themes, applications, limitations and recommendations.
Chapter 4

Results

Overview

This chapter describes how I set out to answer my research question: How can I improve my interest-driven differentiated instructional approach in my inclusive grade 3/4 French Immersion classroom? I describe how I used a differentiated instructional approach, with a focus on student interests in order to engage and motivate my students. The key themes that emerged were community building, UDL designs, language development, skill building and technology.

To answer my research question, I chose the action research process as explained by McNiff (2016). This research approach allowed me to do a continuous process of acting, reflecting on the action, and acting again in new ways, in light of what I found. The reason I chose self-reflective action research and project is because I wanted to improve my instructional strategies that support and engage a diverse population of FI intermediate students. To illustrate this action process visually, I created a self-reflection action research wheel (Figure 1). It includes four steps: 1) research and planning of an interest-driven differentiated unit plan 2) implementation and data collection of an interest-driven differentiated unit plan 3) data analysis and 4) reflection of results. This wheel provided an action plan for me to research, plan, implement, analyze and reflect on my own practice from September 2018 until February 2019. Data was collected using a variety of tools such as a reflective journal, a self-survey and a critical friend. This data was analyzed and used to improve my interest-driven differentiated instructional approach by creating a unit plan and reflecting on my approach.
Research and planning stage

I began this journey in September 2018 by doing research on how an interest-driven differentiated curriculum can help support and strengthen the BC FI inclusive program in a grade ¾ classroom. The details of this research were described in chapter 2. I found a strong connection between interest-based differentiation and student motivation in the inclusive classroom (Tomlinson, 2017). I also found that getting to know student interests could be particularly effective for second language classrooms, as a way to build rapport and engage students in a new language (Kristmanson, 2015). In addition to that, Tomlinson emphasized that getting to know your students is an important aspect of differentiation (2017). She says that asking students about their interests helps a teacher learn about individual student abilities and differentiate instruction accordingly (Tomlinson, 2017). As I began planning and implementing my unit plan, I reviewed differentiated classroom management, interest specific differentiation guidelines and instructional strategies to ensure I was on the right track for success. I then described my actions week by week. Included are my self-reflective journal notes in italics.

Managing a differentiated classroom

To create an effective interest-driven differentiated unit plan, I began by reviewing important classroom management techniques. I felt uncertain about how to manage a differentiated classroom when seeking to provide a flexible and varied approach to student learning. I wanted to ensure that before starting a new instructional approach, I had a firm understanding of the basic steps involved in managing it.

Therefore, I found a variety of classroom management recommendations by Tomlinson (2017). They included but are not limited to, creating and delivering instructions carefully, having a plan for quick finishers, providing focused attention to students who need it, promoting
on-task behaviours and making a plan for how students will turn in work (2017). These are the classroom management recommendations I applied when implementing my unit plan.

Three other management recommendations that stood out the most to me were, 1) determining your rationale, 2) knowing your students, and 3) beginning at a place that you are most comfortable (Tomlinson, 2017). She says, “have a strong rationale for creating a differentiated classroom” (p.63). This was an important first step for me as I tried new things, by changing how students learn and how I teach. My rationale for introducing a series of interest-based differentiated activities in my classroom was so that students can feel more ownership over their learning because they have a voice in the topics covered. I wanted students to experience a personally meaningful learning experience and achieve deeper learning that could help them connect to the French language using the redesigned BC curriculum model.

The second recommendation for classroom management I chose for my differentiated classroom was to “study your students” (Tomlinson, 2017, p.62). Some of these included greeting students at the door, taking the time to speak to them informally as often as possible, cultivating good listening skills and asking them what works well for them in the class and around routines (Tomlinson, 2017). Making notes while watching students work can help understand their strengths, weaknesses and guide instructional planning (Tomlinson, 2017). Asking parents about their child and working with them for the benefit of the child can also be effective (Tomlinson, 2017). These are all important actions for me as I planned my first differentiated unit plan and ensured my programming was inclusive of all my students.

The third and most important piece of advice I used as I began this journey was to differentiate at a pace that was comfortable for me (Tomlinson, 2017). Depending on a teacher’s experience making adjustments and changes to curriculum and instruction, Tomlinson
DIFFERENTIATION IN THE IMMERSION CLASSROOM

recommends that each teacher think about how they feel most comfortable making adjustments that allow for student differences (2017). Some examples include beginning with a single text for the entire class, while allowing students to move through it more quickly. Once a teacher builds more confidence with differentiation, adding more learning resources and diverse texts are recommended (Tomlinson, 2017). What was important to me was that I find my point of readiness in my personal practice and begin there. That meant beginning with a student interest inventory and having students get to know each other’s interests.

Guidelines for a differentiated classroom

While developing my unit plan, some specific interest-based differentiation guidelines I followed from Tomlinson (p.97-104, 2017) were:

- Linking interest-based exploration with key components to the curriculum
- Providing structure likely to lead to student success such as goal-setting, rubrics, timelines, mini-workshops on conducting research
- Developing efficient ways of sharing interest-based findings with option to present to the to just the teacher, a small group and the whole class
- Creating an open invitation for student interests by encouraging students to propose ideas for tasks and projects that will help them expand their interests

These will be highlighted as I describe my actions at the implementation stage of my action research.

Instructional strategies for a differentiated classroom

Once I had some key differentiated classroom management guidelines and specific interest-based differentiation guidelines, I selected some differentiated instructional strategies that I wanted to introduce to my teaching practice and felt would be practical in a FI classroom.
They included varied reading materials, flexible seating, front-loading vocabulary, student goal-setting, show and tell, choice board, learning contracts, project-based learning, varied graphic organizers and picture writing (Tomlinson, 2017, p.65). At this point, I created a unit plan that would incorporate these strategies that I could begin implementing into my classroom. (Appendix A). As I describe the implementation of my unit plan, I will highlight how I integrated these strategies into my teaching practice.

**Implementation and data collecting stage**

These research and planning findings provided a framework for the next step of my self-reflective action research wheel; 2) implementation stage of an interest-driven differentiated unit plan. In order to create a relevant and accessible program to all my students, the first lesson of my unit was a student interest inventory (Appendix B). I began to create it at the beginning of October, once I had gotten to know students a little and some basic routines were established. As recommended by second language expert, Kristmanson (2015), my goal was to build rapport with my FI students by getting to know them at the beginning of the year. The layout of the student interest inventory I created was carefully written and designed with a UDL approach that supports a variety of learners with diverse language abilities. Based on my research, a UDL approach meant that I ensured to pre-teach the vocabulary, I used large print, I read the inventory aloud, headsets were available for students who were easily distracted, and flexible seating was available to students who needed it. Students could work with peers or get help from a teacher or learning support teacher to complete the inventory or even scribe if necessary (Ministry of Education, 2011). At the end of October, I introduced the interest inventory and began collecting data by making weekly observations and taking notes in my self-reflective journal.
**Week 1- Interest Inventories**

I began the first lesson of my unit plan by introducing vocabulary and using chart paper to write and describe their meaning. This was an important first step recommended by Tomlinson that is called front-loading vocabulary (2017). This is also common practice in the French Immersion classroom, where students need support learning vocabulary prior to any language activity. Once the student interest inventory vocabulary was covered, students were more engaged and able to complete them independently or with peers. This flexible format helped students feel more supported and confident in their learning. While students were completing this activity, I noted that the design and layout of my student interest inventory was received positively by my students, however some fonts were still too small, and some lines did not allow enough space for student’s answers (journal entry). I originally included different size fonts, and noticed that some were too small, so I made a note to increase some of the fonts and the amount of space available for student answers. I noticed they particularly liked the part where they got to draw their families and portraits of them, which all were able to complete on their own, regardless of their abilities. This was a great form of picture writing and I would like to incorporate more of this in the future. During and after this activity, I noticed that some students were writing their one-word answers in English, and those that did write their responses in French, they were having difficulty with the masculine versus feminine articles. This provided me with important feedback. I made a note that grammar needs to be reviewed such as the use of le/la and un/une articles (journal entry). Therefore, the following day I decided to do a mini lesson to specifically target these concepts. By the end of the week, I provided corrections and extra time for students to complete their interest inventories. Overall, I found students to be excited by the fact that I was interested in who they were and what their interests were.
Week 2 - Interest Tracking

The following week, I compiled student interests on a tracking sheet (Appendix C). This process helped me get to know my students; select books for the classroom library and plan my lessons (journals entry). I then began planning interest-differentiated activities by content. I selected a variety of French books at varying reading levels. I also looked for common interests and noticed soccer was a popular sport among these students, comics was their favourite book genre, pizza was the most popular food, with sushi being the second favourite. I also noted the interests of some of my more vulnerable learners that have reading and writing challenges. I then integrated these interests right away in order to build a connection with my students. For example, soccer was the first team building activity we did as a class in PE. Comic books were added to the classroom library read at the carpet and included in the upcoming project as a project choice. Pizza was also shared with the class as a reward for good classroom behaviour. In other words, the student interest inventories helped me get to know my students and build a relationship with them early in the year. These actions helped build a sense of community in the classroom because students made a connection between their interests and their classroom.

Tomlinson (2017) provides an example in her book of a teacher who differentiates content in response to student interest and says “he has learned that allowing them to read and write about topics that they find genuinely interesting makes the work of building the required skills and mastering the key principles more engaging. As he has seen firsthand, if a student has a spark of curiosity about a topic (or better still, a fire), it’s more likely that student will learn” (p.95).

Overall, by tracking my student interests, I was able to get to know my students’ interests, create engaging activities and build a classroom library that set the stage for differentiated reading and writing projects based on interests and the curriculum simultaneously.
**Week 3-Treasure Box Activity**

The following week, I decided to plan an introductory activity that would further build a climate of excitement and support French language development. I found the treasure box idea from Canadian author and elementary teacher Joni Turville (2007) in her book *Differentiating by Student Interest*. She says this is a great activity to do at the beginning of the year in order to create an accepting classroom climate (Turville, 2007). I gave students a copy of their student interest inventory to take home and a letter asking them to bring 3 objects that represent their interests in a shoebox (Appendix D). I also sent an email to parents in English, in case their child needed support at home. As student treasure boxes trickled in throughout the week, there were many signs of student engagement. I began by modeling my own treasure box so that they can get to know me on a personal level. I observed student engagement was high during this activity, described as time on task, accompanied by cognitive effort (Anthony-Newman, 2016). The student signs of engagement included the willing participation of almost all students for about 30 minutes each time. One student was not comfortable sharing their treasure box; therefore, they were given the option to share it with their teacher, or a small group of students and their teacher (as an accommodation for students with anxiety or fear of presenting). Other signs of engagement during this activity were that *most students wanted to go first and sit to my left in our circle as quickly as possible* (journal entry). Once students started sharing, there was a lot of spontaneous French conversation that had rarely happened before. Following the advice of recent literacy engagement studies in the French Immersion classroom, I was able to help students learn new vocabulary around their topics of interests by helping to cue their English words with the French (Anthony-Newman, 2016). These studies suggest that by making connections between both the first language (English) and second language (French) during literacy activities, there is
an improvement in overall literacy engagement in the second language (Anthony-Newman, 2016). With some teacher oral prompts and supports, many students built their confidence in sharing their personal objects in French, while many asked questions and made personal connections. This is the goal of the BC FI curriculum, which states, “The objective of this program is to place students in learning situations in a French-speaking context (Ministry of Education, 2019). There was a lot of laughter, and as a teacher I felt a strong connection building with my students. I recorded these interests and went back to the library for books covering topics that may have been missed the previous week. I felt this activity was also able to meet a key goal of interest-based instruction, which is “helping students realize that there is a match between school and their own desire to learn” (Tomlinson, 2017, p.97). Now that students and teacher had built positive relationships and had an opportunity to build vocabulary and oral language around their area of interest in French, I decided to link interest-based exploration with key components of the curriculum in the upcoming choice board interest projects (Appendix E).

**Week 4- Student Learning Contracts and Choice board**

Before beginning their interest projects, I created a student-learning contract (Appendix F). During this week, students were given time to read and peruse the classroom library books (based on the interests shared in their inventories and treasure boxes). I decided to include student-learning contracts because I wanted to provide structure and a time line for students beginning an independent project for their first time. This was an idea I got from Tomlinson (2017), who explains that this is one way to differentiate interest by process. This means that students are given some guidance, while also providing choices about which facet of a topic they wish to specialize in (Tomlinson, 2017). For example, a student may choose to do a project on cats, and in their learning contract, their goal is to create a 3D model and diagram identifying its
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parts, whereas another student may choose cats, with a goal of creating a game with trivia questions and answers. According to Turville (2007), learning contracts can allow students choice within a range of activities and a pact between the teacher and learner to complete their learning goals. Tomlinson (2017) says that a student-learning contract allows flexibility in a differentiated classroom for students who need varying lengths of time to complete their projects. This contract also helped me as a teacher to manage the classroom, while students were working on a differentiated project.

This is also the week I introduced the choice board interest projects. I found that having this time for students to explore their project topic, project type and timeline, got them very excited and built a sense of ownership of their learning. On the other hand, I noted in my journal that describing the choice board interest project options was too much for one lesson (journal entry). I had to incorporate some movement breaks while I explained the 12 project choices on the choice board. I therefore decided that I would break down the explanation of the 12 choices in two days (journal entry). This was a good reminder to me that my instruction needs to always be delivered into smaller more manageable pieces.

Students who had difficulty selecting their topics, got help from the learning support teacher or me. For example, during silent reading time, students with academic reading and writing challenges were given one-on-one support to help them select and read books of interest. The learning support teacher was also there at the time to help a second and third student. I used my interest-tracking sheet to help these students find books related to their interests. While supporting students with the written portion of the contract, I noted that there were features that I needed to edit. For example, I needed to edit the learning contract and change the bottom portion from "notes" and replace it with a list of "materials" (journal entry). Because I had not
reviewed vocabulary around project materials, such as pencils, paper, glue and scissors, I made this portion of the contract more accessible by providing a list of words to circle. By the end of the week, students completed their contract that determined their topic of interest, project choice, and in some cases their interest book.

**Week 5- Project Completion**

The following week, students were ready to do their chosen differentiated projects. The differentiation strategy I chose for this project was a choice board. Each of the choice board tasks included student handouts (Appendix J-U), so that students can learn by doing rather than by passive listening or reading. This is a flexible structure that also supports the configuration of combined grades, such as my grade 3/4 classroom. “Classes of students more than one grade provide opportunities for teacher to develop a mindset that sees all the students as a group of learners with a range of needs and interests” (Ministry of Education, 2019, Curriculum Redesign). Overall, it was exciting as a teacher to see that by providing a selection of choices on a choice board, student learning and student motivation for learning and completing their projects were high. I thought this was a great opportunity to provide students with different types of graphic organizers, one of the differentiation recommendations by Tomlinson (2017). The choices included doing a food chain, graph, song, story, interview, Venn diagram, 3D object, timeline, card game, comic, recipe, science experiment or book report. I noted that students chose diverse options with the most common choices being interviews and recipes. Oral language and vocabulary building were successful regardless of the project choices.

When presenting the project choices, it was clear to me that there was too much text on the choice board. Students were having difficulty remembering which project choice they had made. I decided for next time I would replace to project descriptions with images because I
found not all students were able to read the descriptions independently, particularly students with reading challenges. Students worked on these projects daily for about 1.5 to 2 hours, while both the learning support teacher and I were present. Observations I made were that most students remained on-task during the entire time, including students that are usually off-task or easily distractible. I wrote in my journal that *students who usually have difficulty focusing for 5 minutes, were on task for 20 minutes* (journal entry). On the other hand, student with reading and writing challenges needed quite a bit of one-on-one support.

I made a note to myself that next time I do this project, *I would like some students to have access to assistive technology such as speech-to-text or text-to-speech* (journal entry). This means planning time for some students to learn how to use these programs and build the skills needed necessary, will be important for future project independence. Despite the high need for one-on-one support, and the challenges this provided with limited learning support time, these students were engaged and there is potential for greater support using technology available at most schools. Overall, students showed excitement and engagement while they worked on their chosen project. I could see that as Tomlinson (2017) had predicted, that when differentiating by content in response to student interests, “allowing them [students] to read and write about topics that they find genuinely interesting makes the work of building the required skills and mastering the key principles more engaging” (p.96).

As students began to complete their projects at different times, they were asked to practice presenting their project by themselves or with others. I also asked them individually at this step if they wanted to present to the whole class, a small group or just to their teacher. In hindsight, to make the presentation choice more manageable for me, I would like to add these
choices to the student-learning contract so that students can know whom their audience will be as they complete their project.

At this point, I did a short whole-class mini lesson on research and presentation skills and reviewed the marking rubric. This was a valuable way to differentiate and target content that some students may need a little more time to grasp (Tomlinson, 2017). The research skills I reviewed included how to use reference books, a table of contents and summarize information. The presentation skills reviewed included voice volume, eye contact, voice tone and body stance. These mini lessons worked very well in helping to support students be more independent during the creation of their projects. In my journal I wrote it would be beneficial to build these skills more before beginning this unit plan (journal entry). I will discuss this with my critical friend to see what they think.

As students completed their projects, they practiced their presentation skills by themselves or with other students. This was the plan for quick finishers, which is an important aspect of a differentiated project (Tomlinson, 2017, p.71). This was a great way to keep everyone busy while some needed extra help and others were completing their work.

As students began completing their projects, I took the time to read the marking rubric to the whole class and provide examples for each category. The marking rubric is based on the new curriculum model KNOW-UNDERSTAND-DO (Appendix I). I chose this model because it focuses on fostering a deeper level of understanding, with more authentic tasks that connect learning to the real world (Ministry of Education, 2019).

**Week six- Project Presentations**

Students then began presenting their projects in their preferred and chosen format (to their teacher, a small group or the whole class). This is where students shared their product and
applied their oral language, their presentation skills and the new knowledge they learned about their interest topic. A differentiated product assignment allows each student to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding, skills, as well as, apply and transfer what they have learned to a context beyond the classroom (Tomlinson, 2017). I noted that for some students, more practice with verb conjugations in the plural form was needed; therefore, after the presentations I planned another mini-lesson to review common verbs in the present tense. I also noticed many students were not applying the presentation skills and many needed more practice with voice volume, pacing and eye contact. In addition to more practice, I will add presentation skills to the marking rubric as an incentive to apply these skills.

Despite the challenges, I noticed this product assignment was successful in both vocabulary building and engagement. As Tomlinson puts it, “well-designed product assignments can be highly motivating. They ask students to give evidence of and extend critical learning, while allowing them to apply this learning to personal interest areas and work in preferred approaches. In other words, they allow for differentiation” (2017, p.143). All of the student products served as a summative assessment tool for me and I used my marking rubric to grade their work. In order to extend their critical learning, their presentations were followed by student reflections.

**Week 7- Student Reflections**

After presenting their projects, the following week students completed a 3-2-1-exit card (Appendix G). I found these in my research as an effective way for students to think about what they understand to be the important learning from the class. “It [3-2-1 exit cards] also enables the teacher to quickly find out which students understand a concept and who needs extra assistance (Turville, 2007, p.110). This is 3-2-1 exit card played an important role in bringing closure to the
project and I used it as a formative assessment strategy. As Tomlinson puts it, this is an important information gathering process (2017). This formative assessment strategy helped me make a note of what students learned, which project choices were good for supporting student learning and what changes I needed to make for next time. Overall, the project presentations were an excellent way for students to practice their new French vocabulary and oral language around their interests. The exit cards also provided an important self-reflective component that helped students know that their interests are valued.

The final student self-reflection I felt was an important question-based approach that could provide insight into student thinking around their interest projects. This type of self-assessment is an important piece of the differentiated instructional approach. Both Tomlinson (2017) and Turville (2007) feel it is important that students become good self-evaluators so that students realize that they are in charge of their own learning. Self-reflection is also a part of the BC curriculum, whose purpose is to encourage a sense of wonder and curiosity among students. As a result, I saw many students reflect positively on their interest projects and this provided me important feedback as to whether or not my interest-driven differentiated unit plan had a positive impact on the engagement and learning of each of my students.

Data Analysis stage

Self-survey Results

Once I completed the implementation of my unit plan, I reflected on my practice with a self-survey; a series of questions that helped me further reflect on my practice. As McNiff (2016) states, a self-survey is a systematic way to analyze the data and reflections I collected during research and a project.
My first question was “What is my goal?” My goals was to better support my students, to improve my instructional approach and encourage other teachers in all-inclusive classrooms to explore interest-driven DI strategies. More specifically, I wanted to meet the five interest-based differentiation goals prescribed by Tomlinson (2017), which were to 1) help students realize that there is a match between school and their own desires to learn, 2) demonstrate the interconnectedness of all learning, 3) use skills or ideas familiar to students as a bridge to ideas or skills less familiar to them, 4) help students develop competence and autonomy as learners, and 5) enhance student success. Throughout by research, planning, teaching and observations, I feel that these goals were intricately woven into this project, and I will continue to seek creative way to develop more continue applying them to my future practice.

My second question was, which interest-driven differentiated strategies did I use? Here is a list of strategies that I integrated into my unit plan:

- Choice of reading materials and books
- Flexible seating
- Front-loading vocabulary
- Range of materials based on varied interests
- Show and tell options (treasure boxes)
- Sentence frames
- Student goal setting
- Small group sharing
- Choice boards (assignment options)
- Learning Contracts
- Independent investigations based on student interest
• Project-based learning
• Varied graphic organizers

My third question was, which observations have I made that indicate the strategies I used were useful (or not)? The first observation I made was time-on-task. By using the above strategies, I noticed that all students increased the amount of attention and time they spent doing their tasks, such as reading interest books, working on their projects and practicing their presentations. By applying the above strategies in my practice, I also noticed an increased use or oral French, particularly when students were sharing their treasure boxes and presenting their final projects. I also noticed that many students developed increasing independent work habits, while some who needed one-on-one support could have benefits from access to assistive technology such as text to speech and speech to text.

My fourth question was, do I notice any themes that help indicate what changes can be made for improving my practice with interest-driven differentiation? When analyzing my journal notes and reflections, I noticed the following themes emerged:

• Community building
• UDL designs
• Language development
• Skill building
• Technology

The fifth and final question I asked myself at the end of my unit plan was, what could I do differently next time that will engage and motivate my students more? Some of the things I feel I need to do differently next time are, improve the formatting on my handouts by increasing fonts size and allowed more space for students to write their answers. I would also like to take the time
to better scaffold the building of skills needed for research, presentations and summarizing. I also need to be more flexible by breaking down some of my lessons into more manageable pieces. For example, when presenting the project choices, only describing a few at a time or providing fewer choices deepening on the strengths and weaknesses of the students. I would also like to use more technology to engage my students.

**Critical friend discussion**

The discussion with my critical friend included reading my weekly journal observations, reviewing my research and discussion the details of my project. As I read my journal observations from my grade 3/4 classroom, my critical friend made the following comments. As an experienced French Immersion teacher of a grade 2/3 inclusive classroom at the same school, she provided some important tips to consider with a slightly younger audience in mind. She suggested taking more time to build vocabulary and certain graphic organizers. To address this, she suggested doing the treasure box activity first, then the interest inventory. Her reasoning was that because the treasure box activity was so well received and generated spontaneous oral language and high engagement, that it could be more effective as a "hook", rather than a follow-up after the interest inventory.

We also discussed the importance of skills building. The skills we noticed that needed more practice were presentation, research, summarizing, sentence building and questioning. She suggested more time be spent doing these using a think-pair-share format before starting the unit plan. I thought this was an excellent idea because I did have to interrupt by unit lessons with several mini-lessons. These mini lessons did address these skills during the unit, however when student presented their final projects, I recognize that an more time was needed to develop and practice these skills.
My critical friend is passionate about the use of technology she provided some suggestions as to how this could be integrated in order to further increase engagement and success for all the learners in my class. First, she suggested using tablets for student presentations of their final projects. She pointed out that this could be a useful tool not only to get the student excited and build confidence about their learning, but also to practice, observe and improve their own presentation skills. Filming students during their actual presentations was also discussed. Secondly, it was also suggested that laptops with assistive technology be used to help support students with reading and writing challenges. I agree that teaching these students to use text to speech and speech to text can help more students access curriculum content and be more independent learners.

At the end of the discussion, she shared a learning grant opportunity for the French Immersion program. A few days later we completed the learning grant application, which was later approved. Shortly after, were delighted to be awarded $1000 to purchase interest-related books for our school library. We consulted with other teachers and used my student interest inventory to compile a list of common interests’ books that could benefit our library.

This critical friend discussion and collaboration was key in helping me validate my self-reflective action research project. She provided me with some important positive feedback and suggestions that can help me further improve my practice. In particular, my critical friend helped highlight some of the reoccurring themes emerging from my research and project.

Reflection of Results stage

Key Themes

With the help of my research, self-reflective journal, self-survey and critical friend discussion, I began to see several important themes emerge. These included community building,
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UDL designs, language development, skill building and technology. I will describe each of these and how they can help me answers my research question how can I improve my interest-driven differentiated instructional approach in my inclusive grade 3/4 French Immersion classroom?

**Community building**

There are many ways to build community within a classroom, and by integrating student interests more deeply, I was able to find new ways of making connections with my students and helping students connect with each other, with themselves and the French language. In my research, I found that by the age of 12 (or grade 5), FI students reach a critical developmental stage that requires authentic and personal connections in order to encourage the intrinsic motivation to continue learning a second language (MacIntyre, P., 2011). This is why it was important to me for students to build a sense of community in their grade 3/4 classroom. The treasure box activity, the sharing of interests in French, and successful completion of their passion projects, indicated to me that students were engaged during this process. Watching students help one another, get to know each and support each other during their presentations was inspiring to see as a teacher. Positive feedback from parents and teaching colleagues made me feel that I was part of something special. Most importantly, I feel strongly that recognizing student interests in the classroom created a stronger sense of identity, belonging and acceptance among my students. I hope that this feeling will intrinsically motivate them to continue their French Immersion studies into their middle school years.

**UDL designs**

The UDL framework is designed to accommodate varied learning styles and opportunities to access learning by addressing student needs. A UDL design had to be woven into all the aspects of this project and this is why I was able to expand my understanding and
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application of this important approach. When creating my own print materials, I realized the importance of using a larger font and allowing ample space for student responses, whether they are lengthier or shorter. I also proactively addressed student’s needs by recognizing that in some cases, using symbols instead of explanations are more effective. This came to my attention when some students were struggling to read the descriptions on the choice board, which I ended up replacing with images and symbols. Also, by providing greater choice in project types, presentation type and topics all at once, it provided students with more flexibility to create something could be successful with. For example, students who chose to bake a family recipe for the class had an opportunity to share their unique gifts and build their confidence. When using a UDL framework to differentiate by interest “both the students’ goals and the goals of the curriculum can be served simultaneously” (Tomlinson, 2017, p.102). This project helped me expand my UDL approach, so that more students can better access their curriculum through interests.

Language development

A French Immersion classroom requires a unique language development approach within an Anglophone community, and therefore was an important theme throughout my research and project. Language development at the grade 3/4 levels relies heavily on vocabulary building, oral language and grammar. As the program get more difficult, the integration of these language strategies becomes more important. Facilitated by the engaging topics related to their interests, I watched as students, even the shy ones, practice their oral French in a very natural and spontaneous manner. When building vocabulary around interests, students often enjoyed relating their new words with the English ones. What I found interesting in my research is that French Immersion experts support the interplay between languages because it can optimize student's
bilingual development by explicitly drawing similarities and differences in the two languages (Cummins, 2014). When applying this concept to oral and written interest projects, I found it particularly effective in supporting students to make connections with both their language and thus build a stronger appreciation for some of the unique qualities of the French language.

**Skill building**

*Skill building* is an important part of our school curriculum and often came up during mini-lessons and my reflections. In a 21st century educational context, it includes a combination of skills, processes, behaviours and habits of mind (BC Ministry of Education, 2019). My study in interest-based differentiating integrated many of these skills in a variety of tasks and contexts. Students had to learn how to find information in a variety of texts, summarize it in their own words, expand their knowledge, relate to others and reflect on their own actions. These are complex tasks, especially in a new language; therefore, it is clear to me now that a lot of time, repetition and explicit instructions are required to develop these skills. The importance of proper scaffolding of presentation, research, summarizing, sentence building and questioning skills are key in setting students up for success. I found mini-lessons throughout the unit plan helped this process and using students’ interests were key in motivating students to develop a positive growth mindset around the development of their new skills. In my future practice, I will put more of an emphasis on skill building prior to the introduction of my interest-driven differentiated choice board.

**Technology**

Another theme that emerged was *technology*. A discussion with my critical friend revealed ways that I could have integrated tablets to increase engagement, support presentation skill building and self-reflective opportunities. In my future practice I would also like to make
better use of assistive technology for my student with reading and writing challenges. I have always been very cautious and mindful about using technology only if necessary. In this case, I found that because students were highly engaged and there were only 3 students who needed one-on-one support, it was manageable without the help of assistive technology. However, for these students, learning to use program such as text to speech and speech to text in grade 3/4 will be invaluable for supporting their French Immersion education. I would like to therefore plan to improve my differentiated practice by making sure all my students learn to use digital tools that support French language development and engagement.

Applications

The results explain how I can adjust and change my teaching practices in order to better support my French Immersion students in an Inclusive setting. To ensure my project and results provided me with some important insights into the types of instructional approaches that are effective in my current 3/4 classroom, I used an action research project methodology inspired by McNiff (2016). In this study, I researched the purpose of an interest-based differentiated approach and found it effective in supporting diverse learners in a classroom setting. I also reviewed the purpose and needs of the BC French Immersion program to find a need for better supports and inclusion in order to reduce high attrition rates at the intermediate school level. I collected evidence that showed that I can apply interest-based activities to foster a sense of community, promote greater access to learning through UDL designs, make bilingual connections to help support language development, provide diverse skills training in a variety of contexts. I did not yet use technology such as tablets for motivational and self-reflective purposes or provide time for students to learn the reading and writing supports of digital programs, however it will be something I plan to do in my future practice this year. At the
conclusion of my self-reflective action project, I am able to apply many interest-based instructional approaches such as show and tell options that promote oral language, vocabulary brainstorming, learning contracts that support goal-setting, project-based learning, a range of materials based on varied interests, sentence frames in a variety of graphic organizers, choice boards with assignment options, and group sharing through different presentation options.

Although my findings should not be generalized to other classroom setting, my findings are applicable to other French Immersion educators who are seeking ways to better engage and motivate their students within the Inclusive classroom.

**Limitations and Recommendations**

As both the participant and researcher of this study, it is important to consider to limitations this may pose. I was the only person who did the research and only my critical friend reviewed my interpretations of the data. My key themes and results were supported by feedback from my critical friend; however, they are influence by my personal experiences and unique classroom composition. Also, because all classroom experiences are unique and social interactions are subjective to those present, my findings cannot be generalized to other classroom experiences. Any other teacher who wishes to implement similar strategies should consider that their outcomes may differ from mine. I recommend that further research be made within similar classroom contexts, in order to see how interest-based and other differentiation strategies can help better support teacher and students in the BC French Immersion program.
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Appendix A- Unit plan

Interest-based Differentiated Unit Plan

Big Ideas (Know): Designs grow out of natural curiosity

Curricular Competencies (Do):
CONTENT- 1) generate ideas from their experiences and interests
PROCESS- 2) making- choose tools and materials,
PRODUCT- 3) sharing- decide on how and with whom to share their product.

Cross-curricular Content: Science-biodiversity (grade 3), biomes (grade 4), social studies-
relationship between humans and their environment- domestication of animals (grade 3), math-
using concrete patterns using words and numbers based on concrete experiences, predictability in
song rhythms and patterns, making 3D objects, one-to-one correspondence using charts and
tables (grade 3&4), visual arts (grade 3 & 4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Instructional Strategy</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Materials and Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1    | Student Interest Inventory            | Front-loading vocabulary, picture writing                  | formative    | Chart paper
                                                               |              | Inventory worksheet                                         |
| 2    | Treasure Box introductory activity     | Show and Tell                                             | formative    | Shoe boxes
                                                               |              | Letter to parents                                          |
| 3    | Introduction to Choice Board          | Project-based learning, varied graphic organizers         | formative    | Projector
                                                               |              | Choice board                                               |
                                                               |              | Project worksheets                                         |
                                                               |              | (up to 10 choices)                                        |
| 4    | Discussion of Project Goals           | Student goal-setting                                      | formative    | Projector or chart paper
                                                               |              | Big Idea, curricular competencies and content options     |
| 5    | Student Learning Contract and book exploration | Learning contract           | formative    | Projector
                                                               |              | Learning contract                                          |
                                                               |              | Interest Books                                             |
| 6    | Completion of Project                 | Show and Tell                                             | summative    | Project worksheets                                          |
                                                               |              | Paper, Pencils                                             |
                                                               |              | Glue, Tape, Scissors                                       |
                                                               |              | Recycling containers                                        |
                                                               |              | Interest books                                              |
                                                               |              | Internet                                                   |
| 7    | Sharing of Project                   | Show and Tell                                             | summative    | Carpet                                                      |
                                                               |              | Student projects                                           |
| 8    | Exit card and self-reflection        | Meta-cognition                                            | formative    | Exit cards                                                  |
                                                               |              | Self-reflections                                           |
                                                               |              | Pencils                                                    |
Un portrait de moi: _______  Ma fête _______

Mes choses préférées

Sport: ________________
Nourriture: ___________
Musique: _____________
Animal: _______________
Genre de livre: ________
Jeu: _________________
Sujet à l’école: __________
Couleur: ______________

Ma famille et mes animaux:

Mes talents sont:

Ce qui me fait le plus content est:

Ce que j’aime le plus à l’école est:
Appendix C- Teacher’s tracking sheet template

<table>
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<th>Interests</th>
<th>Games</th>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
Mes trésors

Cher(e) élève et parents,
Cette activité va aider tes amis dans la classe à faire ta connaissance et à savoir ce qui te rend unique.

1. Trouve une petite boîte.
2. Écris ton nom dessus et décore-la si tu veux.
3. Remplis ta boîte avec environ 3 objets qui démontrent à tes amis tes intérêts. Considère les objets suivants:
   • des photos
   • des dessins
   • des souvenirs
   • des objets d’une collection
   • des médailles

Sois créatif! Pense à des choses qui vont dans ta boîte que tu peux utiliser pour raconter tes intérêts uniques. Ton jour pour partager tes trésors est ________________________.

Nous avons hâte à mieux te connaître!
Sincèrement,
Mme Hoefer
Appendix E- Choice board interest projects

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>2. Un graphique</td>
<td>3. Une chanson ou histoire</td>
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<tr>
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<td>4. Une entrevue</td>
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<td><img src="image7" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image8" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image9" alt="Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image10" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image11" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image12" alt="Diagram" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix F- Student learning contract

**Contrat d’apprentissage**

Date_______________________

Nom_______________________

**Mes choix de projet (encercle)**

1. une chaîne alimentaire
2. un graphique
3. une chanson
4. une histoire
5. une entrevue
6. un objet 3D
7. un jeu de carte
8. une ligne de temps
9. une bande dessinée
10. une recette
11. une expérience de science
12. un rapport de livre

**Mon intérêt (ex. les chiens)_______________________________**

**Mes choix de présentation (encercle):**

1. la classe
2. un groupe
3. le professeur

**Mes matériaux que j’ai besoin (encercle et/ou ajoute):**

- un crayon
- un papier
- la colle
- les ciseaux
- la peinture
- le ruban
- un livre
- une recette

**La date je vais finir mon projet____________________________**

Je vais prendre mon temps pour faire un travail de bonne qualité avec une belle graphie. Je vais corriger mes fautes d’orthographe et suivre les conseils de mon professeur.

Signature de l’élève _____________________________________

Signature du professeur_________________________________
Appendix G- 3-2-1 Exit card

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3-2-1 Carte de sortie</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 choses j'ai appris:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. ____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. ____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 façons que je peux appliquer ce que j'ai appris:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. ____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Une façon que je vais partager ce que j'ai appris:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. ____________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix H- Student self-reflection

Nom:____________________   Date:______________________

Remplis la boîte qui te décrit le mieux.

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. J’ai aimé ce projet.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. J’ai bien utilisé mon temps.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Je suis fier de mon projet.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Mon but pour améliorer ce projet la prochaine fois

Je vais___________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________
Appendix I- Teacher’s marking rubric

Nom d’élève: _______________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>4 points</th>
<th>3 points</th>
<th>2 points</th>
<th>1 point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Know</td>
<td>Student knows four or more new facts and/or definitions about their topic.</td>
<td>Student knows three new facts and/or definitions about their topic.</td>
<td>Student knows two new facts and/or definitions about their topic.</td>
<td>Student knows one new facts and/or definitions about their topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand</td>
<td>Student can apply what they know in four or more ways.</td>
<td>Student can apply what they know in three or more ways.</td>
<td>Student can apply what they know in two or more ways.</td>
<td>Student can apply what they know in one way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td>Student can share what they know and understand clearly to four or more people</td>
<td>Student can share what they know and understand clearly to three or more people</td>
<td>Student can share what they know and understand clearly to two or more people</td>
<td>Student can share what they know and understand clearly to one person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>Student spoke at a good rate, volume and with good grammar. They maintained eye contact while using, but not reading their notes.</td>
<td>Student spoke a little faster or slower than necessary, or too quietly or loudly. They used acceptable grammar. They maintained eye contact but relied to much on their notes.</td>
<td>Student spoke at a good rate and volume, and used poor grammar. They relied heavily on their notes.</td>
<td>Student shows little attention to rate, volume or grammar. They read nearly word for word from notes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Une chaîne alimentaire

Animal: ________________________________

L’habitat (la forêt, l’océan, le désert, les plaines, l’arctique, le lac/la rivière)
______________________________

Qu’est ce que ton animal mange (la proie)? ____________________________.

Qu’est ce qui mange ton animal (le prédateur)? ____________________________.

Un producteur est une plante, une algue ou un plankton qui commence la chaîne alimentaire avec la photosynthèse du soleil.

Ma chaîne alimentaire:

le producteur  

__________________________  

le soleil  

__________________________  

la proie  

__________________________  

le prédateur  

__________________________

Nomme les adaptations de ton animal (pense à la forme du corps, la couleur, la nourriture, la communication)
________________________________________________________________________
Appendix K- Choix 2- un graphique

Les animaux domestiques de la classe

Combien d'élèves ont des chats?  

Combien d'élèves ont des chiens?  

Quel est l'animal le plus commun parmi la classe?  

Quel est l'animal le plus rare parmi la classe?  

Qu'est ce que les élèves font pour prendre soins de leurs animaux?  

______________________________________________________________  

______________________________________________________________
Appendix L - Choix 3 - une chanson

Date: ___________________________  Nom: ___________________________

**Titre de ma chanson:** ___________________________

A ______________________________________
B ______________________________________
A ______________________________________
B ______________________________________

Refrain:
_____________________________________
_____________________________________
_____________________________________
_____________________________________

A ______________________________________
B ______________________________________
A ______________________________________
B ______________________________________

Refrain (répète):
_____________________________________
_____________________________________
_____________________________________
_____________________________________


Appendix M- Choix 4- une histoire
Appendix N- Choix 5- une entrevue et un diagramme Venn

Date: ____________________________   Nom: ____________________________

**Une entrevue**

**L’introduction**

A. Bonjour, comment ça va?
B. Ça va bien, merci. Et vous?
B. Oui, d'accord.

**10 questions**

1. A. Mon animal préféré est le/la _____________. Quel est ton animal préféré?

   B. Mon animal préféré est le/la _________________________.

2. A. Mon sport préféré est le/la _____________. Quel est ton sport préféré?

   B. Mon sport préféré est le/la _________________________.

3. A. Mon ____________ préféré est le/la _________________________.
   Quel est ton ____________ préféré?

   B. Mon ____________ préféré est le/la _________________________.

4. A. ____________________________________

   B. ____________________________________.

5. A. ____________________________________

   B. ____________________________________.

6. A. ____________________________________

   B. ____________________________________.
La fermeture

A. Merci d'avoir répondu à mes questions!
B. De rien.
   A. Au revoir mon ami(e)!
   B. Au revoir!

Sommaire

Les choses différentes sont:__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________.

Les choses en commun sont:__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________.
Diagramme de Venn

personne A (l'interviewer)

__________________________

personne B (l'entrevué)

__________________________

moi

__________________________

pareil

__________________________

mon ami(e)

__________________________
Appendix O- Choix 6- un jeu de cartes

Date: ___________________________  Nom: ___________________________

Sujet des cartes: ___________________________

Les questions

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<tr>
<td>Sujet des cartes:</td>
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Appendix P- Choix 7- une ligne de temps

Date: ____________________  Nom: ____________________

Ma ligne de temps pour ____________________

Année

Année
Appendix Q- Choix 8- un objet 3D

Date: ____________________________  Nom: ____________________________

Un diagramme de mon objet 3D: ____________________________

- Utilise les articles le/la/les et inclus au moins 8 étiquettes

Les matériaux:

__________________________
__________________________
__________________________
__________________________

__________________________
__________________________
__________________________
__________________________
Appendix R- Choix 9- une bande dessinée

Date: ___________  Nom: ________________________

Le titre de ma bande dessinée: _______________________________

les personnages...

Mon intérêt c'est

J'ai appris que

J'ai aussi appris que

Une autre chose que j'ai appris c'est

La fin
Appendix S- Choix 10- une recette

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Le nom de ma recette</th>
<th>Les ingrédients</th>
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<tr>
<th>Un dessin de ma créature</th>
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Prêt en ______ minutes
Sert ______ personnes
Mon expérience scientifique

Le problème: Est-ce que
__________________________________________
__________________________________________?

L’hypothèse: Je pense que
__________________________________________
__________________________________________.

Les matériaux:
__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________

Les résultats:
__________________________________________
__________________________________________.

Les dessins de mes étapes:

1. 

2. 

3. 
Appendix U - Choix 12 - un rapport de livre fiction et non-fiction

Date: ___________________________  Nom: ___________________________

**Mon rapport de livre fiction**

Titre du livre: ___________________________

L'auteur: ___________________________

L'illustrateur: ___________________________  Nombre de pages: __

**Genre littéraire (encercle la bonne réponse):**

Aventure  Conte  Mystère  
Bande dessinée  Fantasie  Romans  
Biographie  Légende  Science-Fiction

Personnage principal: ___________________________

Personnages secondaires: ___________________________

Décris le personnage principal (les vêtements, l'âge, les cheveux, la grandeur). Répond en phrases complètes.

______________________________________________

______________________________________________

Où est-ce que l'histoire se déroule? Répond en phrases complètes.

______________________________________________

______________________________________________

Quel est le problème principal dans cette histoire?

______________________________________________

______________________________________________

Quelle est la solution du problème principal?

______________________________________________

______________________________________________
Mon rapport de livre non-fiction

Titre du livre: __________________________

L'auteur: _______________________________

L'illustrateur: __________________________ Nombre de pages: __

Sujet (encercle la bonne réponse):
Animaux  Histoire  Nature
Arts  Sciences  Mathématiques
Biographie  Sports  Autre________

Sujet principal: __________________________

Écris quatre nouvelles choses que tu as appris dans ce livre.
__________________________  __________________________
__________________________  __________________________

Écris trois nouveaux mots et trouve la définition dans le dictionnaire.
1. ____________________________
2. ____________________________
3. ____________________________

Comment est-ce que tu peux utiliser ou appliquer cette nouvelle information? Réponds en phrases complètes.

Je peux ____________________________
__________________________
__________________________