

### **Week 3 & 4 Learning Activity: Learning Activity Critique**

#### **Background:**

The learning activity that I have chosen to critique is one that I use in the marketing research unit of my Marketing 11 class. In this unit students learn about and practice conducting secondary and primary research to support business and product ideas. This particular assignment is the first assignment in the unit and has students use real secondary data sources to justify a chosen location for a business idea they come up with. Prior to starting the assignment, I teach a short lesson on why marketing research is important and the differences between secondary and primary sources. In the assignment, students first must come up with an original business idea, and describe their intended target market. Once they have their idea they must use government census data that has been published on the City of Surrey's website to choose an appropriate location within Surrey for their business.

#### **Critique:**

I have chosen to critique my learning activity primarily using the Understanding by Design (UbD) learning model developed by Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins. I chose this model because I feel that it aligns more with the new curriculum in BC and is very straightforward and easy to follow. I will discuss ways in which my learning activity does and does not align with the key tenets of the UbD framework and the stages of backwards design as described by McTighe and Wiggins (McTighe & Wiggins, Understanding by Design Framework, 2012). I will also include a short critique of my learning activity using the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) learning model.

I will start with the ways that I believe my learning activity does align with the key tenets of UbD. I think that the activity does require students to autonomously make sense of and transfer their learning through authentic performance. The activity does this by requiring them to find, interpret, and apply real sources of secondary data to a realistic business idea. I also believe that my learning activity gives students the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to effectively use the content knowledge and skill of conducting marketing research using secondary data sources. After being shown how to use the census information they must demonstrate that they can effectively use that skill in order to complete the assignment.

There are also some of the key tenets of UbD that my learning activity does not align with. The main one being the concept of backwards design, in which curriculum and learning activities are planned through a three-stage process: desired results, evidence, and learning plan. When I originally designed this learning activity I did not follow this process. Instead, I was using an activity-oriented teaching style and did not think about the end results and how they would align with the curriculum. I originally designed this activity in my first year as a teacher when I was prepping for 4 classes and didn't have the time to design detailed learning plans for every activity and I was not thinking about the bigger picture of how this activity related to other parts of the course or how students could transfer this knowledge to other

things. I actually designed this lesson in the reverse order of UbD. I created the learning activity first, then I thought about how I would assess it, and I did not think very deeply at all about the desired results.

If I was to redesign this learning activity adhering to the UbD learning model I would follow the three-stage process of backwards design outlined by McTighe and Wiggins. First, I would identify the desired results and making it clear what I wanted students to know, understand, and be able to do by the end of the learning activity. In this first stage I would also state which of the curricular “big idea” that this assignment addressed. In the second stage of my planning I would determine the assessment evidence that would show me that students have achieved the desired results and demonstrated that their ability to transfer their learning to new situations. Lastly, after I had a clear idea of what my desired results were and what evidence students would produce, I would plan the lesson and learning activity with the end goals in mind. In this plan I would make sure that the students understand why they are learning the content and how they will be assessed.

My learning activity can also be critiqued using the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) model. The key tenets of UDL are providing curriculum that allows for multiple means for learners to acquire information, demonstrate what they know, and engage with the content (Wikipedia, 2017). I believe that my learning activity could be improved in all three of these areas. First, I think that in addition to me verbally telling the class about secondary data prior to them starting the activity I could provide links to websites that explain it in text format as well as videos of it being explained by someone else. This would allow students who have trouble paying attention in class or need to review the information another way of acquiring the information and engaging with the content. Second, I feel like my activity only allows students to demonstrate what they know in writing. I think that I could give them the option of presenting their findings to the class in person or with a video. They could also create an infographic or a poster to display their findings. Lastly, I feel that I could provide a much more detailed explanation of how their work will be graded so they can look up my expectations at anytime if they do not remember from the examples or verbal explanations provided prior to them beginning the activity.

In conclusion I feel that the core of my learning activity is a valid and effective way to teach students about using secondary data sources for marketing research. However, I feel it could be refined using the key tenets of UbD and UDL to make it more pedagogically sound and provide students with a greater opportunity for success.

## References

- McTighe, J. (2017, November 25). *Downloads*. Retrieved from Jay McTighe and Associates Educational Consulting: <http://jaymctighe.com/resources/downloads/>
- McTighe, J., & Wiggins, G. (2012). *Understanding by Design Framework*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Wikipedia. (2017, November 30). *Universal Design for Learning*. Retrieved from Wikipedia: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universal\\_Design\\_for\\_Learning](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universal_Design_for_Learning)