

Student engagement (TPE 5) was the focus of this artifact. I was inspired after teaching a typical anti-drug abuse lesson as a Substitute Teacher in Biology at West Hills High School. The class, usually enthusiastic and cooperative, was a sea of blank faces. I wondered how the topic could be made more interesting.

My conclusion was to make the lesson about people teenagers find interesting: rock and hip-hop stars, athletes, movie and television personalities, and other media idols. This is an improvement to items 5 and 7 in the Artifact. It is a simple process to find lists of these people where they died or had their lives ruined due to drugs. Therefore, the assignment starts with a student or small group and let them choose an icon or let them select from a list. This is as appropriate to English Language Learners as native English speakers (TPE 7) because drug abuse hits all communities, and the students are welcome to choose idols from their, or any other ethnic group. Their research could be done in English or their native language, but the final product had to be in English.

The assignment would be consistent with TPE 6C because the research methods, mainly Internet-based research, are appropriate for Grades 9-12. The students would choose a celebrity and determine which drugs led to their downfall. For an example from my past, I would choose the baseball legend Mickey Mantle and the drug that shortened his career and his life was alcohol. This could be assessed by each group declaring their subject and the drug(s) associated with their demise.

The assignment would lead to a second part, where the students research the effects their drug of choice has on the body, and also the effect it has on society. This allows Biology students to learn about the interrelationships between different organs and organ

systems. Assessment of this part would be through a report or Power Point presentation by each group.

This second section has the most value toward meeting Subject - Specific Objectives. This is where Physiology is learned. For alcohol abuse, the role of the liver is central. For various narcotics, different areas of the brain are selected. For Erythropoietin (a favorite of endurance athletes) production of red blood cells is central and for metabolic steroid abuse, muscles and endocrine organs are key.

The third section is the message about the dangers of drug abuse. Each group determines what their hero's life would have been like without the addiction in terms of longevity, professional performance, and personal success. This is the section that personalizes the lesson and makes it memorable to the student.