

Sadie Levy

LAP 4: Guest speaker William Polanco

1. Content: Describe **what** it is you will teach. What is the content?
 - a. In this lesson, I wanted students to meet someone who lived in Worcester who could share a little more about their culture to add depth to our study and get a different perspective. On the initial survey I sent students home with, I asked any parents if they'd want to come in and share a part of their culture. Astrid's family volunteered, and in this lesson her father, William Polanco came in to talk about the Puerto Rican flag. He spoke about what the colors on the flag represent, and then took many questions from the students about his culture.

2. Learning Goal(s): Describe what specifically students will **know** and **be able to do** after the experience of this class.
 - a. SWBAT follow normal classroom norms in the presence of a guest speaker.
 - i. SWBAT raise their hand if they have a question or comment.
 - ii. SWBAT listen to the speaker by looking at him and not talking with their neighbors.
 - b. SWBAT ask questions of Mr. Polanco related to culture, especially the flag.

3. Rationale: Explain how the content and learning goal(s) relate to your Curriculum Unit Plan learning goals.
 - a. This lesson is imperative to the trajectory of our unit because it makes a strong connection between their cultural backgrounds and Worcester, as well as sets us up to look critically at the flags of our own countries and wonder how there are connections between cultures, and what unites cultures. Talking about culture, especially for some students like Christian and Mario, can feel so abstract and intangible to such an extent that they are not engaged with the lesson or conversation. Part of my goal this lesson was to bring them into the conversation more by having a speaker who is not Mary or I.

4. Assessment: Describe **how** you and your students will know they have reached your learning goals.
 - a. While this lesson does not have any tangible work the students produce, what will show me they've learned is by the questions they ask and the reflection on his visit in future lessons. I expect students to ask *relevant* questions which connect to their research. That may mean students will ask about the flag in relation to Puerto Rican culture, or might mean they ask about the food in PR or Mr. Polanco's opinion of PR. Since I don't know Mr. Polanco personally, I am not asking him to prepare much of anything for the class, except to be able to say a little about the Puerto Rican flag and what it means to him.

5. Personalization and equity: Describe how you will provide for individual student strengths and needs. How will you and your lesson consider the needs of each student and scaffold learning? How specifically will ELL students and students with learning disabilities gain access and be supported?

a. Students in this lesson will be asked to listen to Mr. Polanco and respond. Since my goals are very general for this lesson, students can access Mr. Polanco’s knowledge in whatever way makes sense for them. What I expect of each student’s questions they ask depends on the student, and what I know I can expect of them. For example, if Mario asked a question like “What is your culture?” or something equally broad but related, I would be excited and pleased. If someone who I see in the class as having a stronger notion of abstract ideas such as culture asked that question, I would be surprised. I might expect someone like Nathaniel or Keziah to ask a more pointed question related specifically to what Mr. Polanco talks about.

6. Activity description and agenda

a. Describe the activities that will help your students understand the content of your class lesson by creating an agenda with time frames for your class. Be prepared to explain why you think each activity will help students on the path toward understanding.

time	activity	learning goals
3 minutes	Astrid and myself introduce Mr. Polanco to the class.	SWBAT welcome our guest with respect - eye contact, say “Hi.”
10-15 minutes	As a class, we listen to Mr. Polanco and what he has to say about his Puerto Rican flag he’s brought in.	SWBAT listen with calm bodies. SWBAT listen by looking at our speaker and not interrupting.
10 minutes	Students will ask questions to our guest speaker related to the content he shared with us. Questions may be about the flag he shares, may be more about Puerto Rican culture in general, or could be a connecting point to their own culture.	SWBAT ask relevant questions with vocabulary from our unit (<i>culture, type of, opinion on, etc.</i>) SWBAT ask questions related to what Mr. Polanco shares with us.

b. What particular challenges, in terms of student learning or implementing planned activity, do you anticipate and how will you address them?

While I think this lesson is very accessible, I still worry that my students will have a hard time focusing their questions on culture and Mr. Polanco. I will try and guide and remind students to ask questions related to culture

7. List the Massachusetts Learning Standards this lesson addresses.

- a. 3.11 Identify what individuals and families bring with them (e.g. memories, cultural traits, goods, ideas, and languages or ways of speaking) when they move to a different place and identify the significant impacts of migration; identify elements that define the culture of a society (e.g. language, literature arts, religion, traditions, customs); explain how the community is enriched by contributions from all people who form it today.
 - i. *Clarification statement: Students should be able to give examples of traditions or customs from other countries practiced in the US today, with a focus on the cultures represented in the class and what those cultures have contributed to US society: describe traditional foods, customs, games, and music of the place they, their family, or their ancestors came from.*
- b. SL. 1 Participate in collaborative discussion with peers and adults in small and larger groups on history/social science topics.
 - i. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g. listening to others with care, speaking one at a time, staying on topic)
 - ii. Build on one another's talk in conversations by responding to comments through multiple exchanges.
 - iii. Ask questions to clear up confusion about the topics and texts under discussion.
- c. SL.4 Describe people, places and things related to history/social studies; speak clearly at an understandable pace and use appropriate vocabulary.
- d. SL.3 Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.

8. Reflection

- a. In light of all areas of planning, but especially in terms of your stated purpose and learning goals, in what ways was the activity(ies) successful? How do you know? In what ways was it not successful? How might the activity be planned differently another time?
- b. What did you learn from the experience of this lesson that will inform your next LAP?

I think this lesson was really exciting for my students to meet someone new (especially someone's dad in the class!). On my part, I think I could have better prepared the students.

Because I don't personally know William, I didn't know how much to ask of him before he came in. Originally, his wife offered to come in and then she let me know it was her husband who would be coming in to show the flag. I suggested to her over text maybe he come in and share a little about the significance of the colors on the flag. I should have thought beforehand that that might not be an easy ask (I couldn't say off the top of my head what the colors of our flag mean to the country). I could have asked him more to tell us about Puerto Rico. Why did he move here? What does the flag mean for *him*, what does Puerto Rican culture look like in his house? Are there certain parts of Puerto Rican culture that his likes or dislikes? Had I asked him more general, personal related questions, maybe he would have felt a little more comfortable. I'm not sure if it was being in the school, or needing to say something about the flag, or just feeling a little nervous about speaking in general, but Mr. Polanco seemed visibly nervous to me. Regardless of the root of it, I tried my best to route for him and encourage whatever he had to say!

That being said, it was still very fun to have him and the students got a lot out of it I think. I also was inspired by what he told us about the flag to add in a lesson to my CUP about the significance about flags in our cultures. Oftentimes they say something about the history and our connection with the land.

Below is a picture of the class that Mr. Polanco suggested we take. The energy of the students definitely shows in this picture. They were *very* stoked to have a new face in class, and were not limited in things to ask him, despite my wish that we had pre-prepared questions. I was happy to see students who don't always ask questions, participating. For example, Ashley seems to always light up when there's a guest speaker in the classroom, or that might have to do with the linguistic connection of the people I've brought in (all Spanish speaking). I was also happy to see that Mario had a question for Mr. Polanco as did Chino. While Mario is usually

very attentive, he often doesn't apply himself to conversations (whether it's out of fear or just disengagement, I'm not sure), but his question was relevant and about Puerto Rican culture. Chino often doesn't participate, even though I know he's fully paying attention, but I was happy to see him raise his hand and wait to be called on.

I think bringing in guests wherever possible is crucial to keeping the classroom doors open to the rest of the world, reminding students that learning takes place everywhere, and especially for this unit, to remind students of the cultural richness in Worcester.

