

**EDU 3600**  
**Semester 2,1994.**  
**Strand 3**

**AsssssmsM Point 1,,**  
**M1FAnalysis**

**Lecturer:** RosaMadigan  
**Student:** Alex Hayes  
**I.D. No:** 0922723

# **TASK 1**

**Self Analysis  
EDU - 3600**

**Lecture Rosa Madigan  
Student: Alex Hayes**

**1994**

## **Task 1 - EDU 3600**

My enthusiasm and investigative nature led me to a project unequalled, I believe, by any experience I had previously encountered as part of my three year Primary Education degree.

Having been offered to conduct my ATP in a negotiated manner, I was informed that the project offered was unique in nature when compared to the standard ATP programme run by Edith Cowan University, Bunbury Campus. It was portrayed as a trial pilot project, brought about by a change in the curriculum focus for West Australian Primary Education, 1994.

I understood that the project was being offered at Withers Primary School, located in a predominantly low socio economic area of Bunbury with the school population having a high proportion of aboriginal students. Initial preparations included talks between school staff and university lecturers as well as several visits to Withers Primary prior to ATP commencement. These were conducted prior to and following the Christmas Holidays 1993.

My first thoughts were, that this was going to be a challenging assignment although I must admit little did I realise the commitment that this project required. These predictions concerning personal challenge were justified following my marriage in January 1994 and the initial liaison meetings prior to school commencement.

Five trainee teachers including myself were selected to conduct ATP in such negotiated manner. Following this selection, all five trainee teachers were actively involved (two weeks prior to school commencement) with physically setting up the classrooms. This prevented me, in hindsight, from having any form of honeymoon. This dedication to duty therefore is also shared by my wife, a recent graduate from a Bachelor of Arts (Primary Education).

Initial classroom set up was based on classroom teacher knowledge as well as observations made by these selected teachers while on interstate travel to observe multi- aged grouping in practice. My involvement in this initial classroom set up proved invaluable in understanding the dynamics behind resource allocation and placement.

My initial understandings regarding professional practice were in general , informed although the broad scope of such a project threw these parameters of knowledge to the winds. This project reinforced gaining hands on experience as an important determinant for learning. The multi aged grouping project was set out to include 3 days contact with schools with negotiated units running concurrently with school activities. This format was to be undertaken over 23 weeks, possibly continuing on a part time negotiated basis after the designated ATP period. Not sol

In reality, the first 10 weeks were a series of introductory lessons typified by trial and error. Facilitating activities, physically rearranging equipment and, coping with constant interruptions due to changes in daily and curriculum timetabling were all part of the daily routine. To put it simply , classroom teaching felt like it was taking place in a goldfish bowl where analysis took place in the form of everyone "peering" in. The children succeeded in bonding with each other despite the huge range in physical, social, cognitive and emotional abilities and our role as educators was trying to facilitate as best as we could..

The planning and programming component of ATP ended up being a 7 day a week affair often taking place at my classroom teachers home, in conjunction with the tandem teacher for our class. This tandem teaching agreement provided many opportunities for me to observe the processes used by professional educators for programming, planning and subsequent teaching and highlighted the need for members of school staff to have effective communication skills. As well as this extra curricular planning, visits also took place on weekends to change the classroom set up not possible during school hours.

My supervisor at the time, (changed twice) gave me lots of advice based on her experience with similar situations overseas , so when it came time to take on major responsibility for classroom management I felt confident and informed. Taking the major role of educator took place for me from the start of week 6 ( out of 23 weeks) due to the nature of school management and organisation. Many situations arose within this major role as educator, where my initial planning turned out to be inappropriate, which meant I had to change my methods for implementation quickly in order to create a learning environment which was appropriate to the children's needs. These changes were noted and acknowledged by my supervisor at that time.

While on ATP I was given the opportunity to plan, teach, and evaluate all activities related to the curriculum area of Arts & Crafts. This involved conducting monitoring tasks related to student profile documents on my own. These were compiled and formed the backbone for school monitoring documents for my class at the conclusion of Week 16. This task was accepted gladly as I'm interested in Primary Art Education as a further research area or speciality. A major program was written for this curriculum area as well as programmes for curriculum areas of Language, Maths, Science and Social Studies.

According to official ATP documentation relating to this long term project, we were required to write only 4 programmes , consisting of 3 x 6 week programmes and 1 x 10 week programme, however I found the situation required more work for realism 's sake and I ended up writing 5 x 10 week programmes.

This meant I was prepared for subsequent teaching components and allowed me to negotiate teaching emphasis with my classroom teacher, whom incidentally I cannot speak more highly of. She helped me in every way possible, was demanding yet fair and had the children's interests at heart first - all in all a thorough professional. To express the commitment I felt necessary to enjoy my ATP experience and the dedication needed to gain a decent grade, I feel it necessary to outline the points of achievement gained as a result of my involvement with the school community of Withers Primary School, Bunbury.

As part of my 23 week ATP experience I conducted and co-ordinate a visit to a local regional art gallery for the entire junior cluster , co-ordinate a Wet Day for two K-2 classes, helped co-ordinate and implement art activities with a Middle cluster class, and organised a visit to the beach with two K-2 classes.

I made it a point to attend all school planning, inservices and meetings and in doing so was given the go ahead to co-ordinate and conduct an exhibit of childrens' art work at Bunbury Regional Art Gallery on three separate occasions.

All in all, I believe I met every member of the school staff, helping in every way I possibly could including lunch duties, assembly items and organising parent help. This extra help I believe was what helped in ascertaining what standing I had with the general school community. By week 18 I was feeling physically and mentally exhausted although I had built up a good rapport with the children, staff and parents and so my tasks were made that much easier.

Acting upon certain advice regarding my classroom management and general teaching/planning methods allowed me to be "performing" at my optimum when my confirmatory panelist arrived in week 23. By the end of my experience as a trainee teacher in Withers Primary School I emerged feeling "enlightened", having built up a vast resource base and feeling ready to tackle any teaching position. I learnt how to cope with incredible changes, difficulties and above all, learning how children acquire knowledge within the current primary curriculum.

I feel that my experience . despite the extra dedication required , helped me develop my planning/ teaching/ evaluating strategies, general teaching methods and professional development. The project was abandoned as such at the end of week 23 due to reasons unknown although I continue to keep in contact with the class in which I taught for the obvious reasons.

Generally I believe my ATP experience was rewarding, helpful and realistic although I would liked to have continued my stay on a part time basis had the environment been conducive to further learning.

I refer to my ATP as those 23 weeks where my wife saw red, my personal interests went partially on hold, my computer skills accelerated, my voice box worked overtime, my organisational and teaching skills were consolidated, and above all important teaching skills were gained

Despite the constraints that ATP had on my personal life I still managed to hold down a part time job, visit friends, study Fine Art at night and maintain a relationship no matter how fragile I became due to lack of sleep. It certainly was a challenge to work in such an environment but personally I believe my ATP experience will hold me in good stead for any future educators role I may hold.