Abstract #5

Differentiating for Multiple Intelligences: A Study of Students’ Understandings through the Use of Aesthetic Representations

Courtney L. Crim, Kimberley D. Kennedy, Jenifer S. Thornton

This study intersects Multiple Intelligences, differentiated instruction, and aesthetic representations. During three semesters, 122 preservice teachers created aesthetic representations as the culminating project for a teacher preparation courses. Guiding research questions were: (1) How do students perceive the alignment between their aesthetic representations and their self-identified strongest area(s) of Multiple Intelligences? (2) In what ways does the use of aesthetic representations support the components of a differentiated classroom? Results indicate that students in this study overwhelmingly gravitate to areas of Multiple Intelligence strength(s). Additionally, findings suggest meaningful choice, critical thinking, and personal validations support student learning. Participants deepened their understandings of course content and experienced how differentiation can increase student success, honor modes of self-expression, and authenticate individual learning styles.