

Authenticity: It's Not Just a Fairy Tale

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Published by *K20 Center*

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Time Frame 130 minutes

Essential Question(s)

- How does authentic teaching enhance student learning?
- Why is creating authentic lessons important for student achievement?

Summary

This professional development session focuses on the components of authentic learning. Participants will connect the components of authentic learning to a Rumpelstiltskin lesson.

Learning Goals

- Participants will be able to identify how instructional strategies support authentic instruction.

Attachments

- Authentic Lesson Reflection Tool—Authenticity It's Not Just a Fairy Tale.pdf
- Authenticity Framework Reading—Authenticity It's Not Just a Fairy Tale.pdf
- Claim, Evidence, Reasoning (CER)—Authenticity Its Not Just a Fairy Tale.docx
- Claim, Evidence, Reasoning (CER)—Authenticity Its Not Just a Fairy Tale.pdf
- Court Cards—Authenticity Its Not Just a Fairy Tale.docx
- Court Cards—Authenticity Its Not Just a Fairy Tale.pdf
- Instructional Strategy Note Sheet—Authenticity It's Not Just a Fairy Tale.docx
- Instructional Strategy Note Sheet—Authenticity It's Not Just a Fairy Tale.pdf
- Presentation Slides—Authenticity It's Not Just a Fairy Tale.pptx
- Rumpelstiltskin Story—Authenticty Its Not Just a Fairy Tale.docx
- Rumpelstiltskin Story—Authenticty Its Not Just a Fairy Tale.pdf

Materials

- Presentation Slides (attached)
- Instructional Strategy Note Sheet (attached; printed front/back; one per participant)
- Court Cards (attached; cut out enough to be evenly distributed among participants)
- Rumpelstiltskin Story (attached)
- Authenticity Framework Reading (attached)
- Claim, Evidence, Reasoning (CER) document (attached; one per group)
- Authentic Lesson Reflection Tool (attached)
- Sticky notes
- Pens/pencils
- Chart tablet paper
- Markers

20 minutes

Engage

Presenter's Note: Preparation

Print and prepare all attached handouts and materials before the presentation. The following should be available on the table at the beginning of the session: a **Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER)** document (one per table), an **Instructional Strategy Note Sheet** (one copy per participant), sticky notes, pens/pencils, and blank paper. The Instructional Strategy Note Sheet should be printed front/back. Pass out the other documents as needed, according to the prompts below. Additionally, use the attached **Court Cards** to print and cut out a number of cards that can be evenly distributed based on the number of participants. For example, if you have eight participants, print and cut out two of each card since there are four types of cards.

As participants enter the professional development session, hand out one of the **Court Cards** to each, face down. Tell them to sit wherever they would like and keep this card until the end of the session.

Presenter's Note: Grouping Strategy

Passing out cards accomplishes two goals. It's a great way to pique the curiosity of participants and gain their interest. It is also a quick and efficient grouping strategy and will be used twice for that purpose in this session. This strategy can be used in the classroom with students as well.

Begin with the attached **Presentation Slides** and introduce yourself to the participants. Let them know that they will be learning about authenticity and its importance in teaching.

Go to **slide 3** and ask participants to think about their most meaningful learning experience. Ask them to write as many adjectives as they can think of about the experience. For example, a participant whose most meaningful learning experience was a field trip to an aquarium might write, "fun," "exciting," "new," "thought-provoking," and others. After completion, have participants set aside their lists of adjectives to revisit later in the session.

Transition to **slide 4** to share the guiding question with participants. Inform them that several new instructional strategies will be introduced to them throughout the session. These strategies are tools used to support and guide higher-order thinking in an authentic way. Make sure each participant has a copy of the attached **Instructional Strategy Note Sheet**, and encourage participants to use it to jot down their ideas for personalizing a strategy to be used as an instructional tool in their classrooms. Before breaks and after the strategies have been modeled, the presentation will allow time for participants to reflect on how to use these strategies.

Go to **slide 5** to highlight the session objectives briefly. This will provide a roadmap of where you will go together during the session and will let participants know what to expect from the session.

30 minutes

Explore

Transition to **slide 6** and pass out the attached **Rumpelstiltskin Story** handout. Ask participants to take a couple minutes to read this version of Rumpelstiltskin at their tables silently. Then, say: “When you entered this session, you were handed a playing card. Use that playing card to identify the character you are going to be for the next activity.”

Go to **slide 7**. Once participants have identified their characters, explain to them that the justice system has finally caught up with these reprehensible characters, and charges have been filed against them. In groups, they are going to defend each character against the charges.

Go to **slide 8** and have participants move to sit with the other participants who have the same card/character. Ask participants to read through and take note of the charges that have been brought against their character.

Transition to **slide 9** and introduce the CUS and Discuss strategy. Ask participants to examine the Rumpelstiltskin story again. This time, they will circle any mention of their character, underline any actions taken by their character, and star any emotions or important adjectives.

Go to **slide 10** and read the example of the Claim, Evidence, Reasoning (CER) strategy. With the character information gleaned from the reading, groups will use this strategy to formulate an argument in their character's defense. Participants should use the attached **Claim, Evidence, Reasoning (CER)** handout as their guide in arguing their client's innocence. Transition to **slide 11** for instructions on organizing the defense teams and presenting arguments.

After 20 minutes, or when everyone is finished, go to **slide 12** and announce: “All rise. The Honorable Judge is in session. Which group would like to quickly present its argument first?” Ask for a group to volunteer. Then, ask the question: “Does the text-based evidence support the innocence of the character?”

Allow each group to argue the innocence of their client or character using the text as evidence to support their claim and reasoning. After each group's argument, allow the rest of the participants to give a "thumbs up" or a "thumbs down" to indicate whether the character is innocent or not. For large groups, you can appoint a judge from the audience to perform this task. Continue in this manner until each character is found innocent or guilty.

Emphasize to participants that the subject of the lesson, the Rumpelstiltskin story, was not significant or the point of the lesson. Instead, the goal was for participants to construct a logical and supported argument based on textual evidence.

Presenter's Note: Defending Statements

It is important to stress that this activity uses text-based evidence as proof. When students present arguments or write papers, it is important that they know how to defend their answers and statements using evidence, rather than relying on "I heard" or "I think" statements.

Transition to **slide 13**. Reiterate that this was a lesson designed to help students think critically and to construct a logical and supported argument based on a guiding question.

Go to **slide 14** and have participants look at the **Instructional Strategy Note Sheet**. Explain that they have used two strategies at this point. Ask them to spend a few moments writing and reflecting on how each strategy was used and how they might incorporate each strategy into their own lessons. Allow time for participants to share their ideas for how they might use these strategies in their classrooms.

30 minutes

Explain

Transition to **slide 15**. Explain that an authentic lesson begins with students' accessing prior knowledge. The authentic lesson then builds on the concepts shown on the slide: Construction of Knowledge, Disciplined Inquiry, Real-World Connections, and Student-Centered Learning.

Within their previous groups, assign participants to one of the four components of the authenticity framework (see below).

- Construction of Knowledge = Kings.
- Disciplined Inquiry = Queens.
- Real-World Connections = Jacks.
- Student-Centered Learning = Jokers.

Go to **slide 16** and pass out copies of the attached **Authenticity Framework Reading**. Have participants use the Jigsaw strategy to divide the reading into parts, according to their assignment (above). All participants should read the introduction. After that, participants will read their assigned section. Allow a few minutes for each person in the group to read their section of the handout.

While reading through the introduction and their section, participants should use the Why-Lighting strategy to highlight and annotate key ideas in the text. When everyone is finished, have participants take a few minutes to discuss the reading with their group members, including what information they highlighted and why it's important.

Go to **slide 17** and pass out chart tablet paper and markers to each group. Ask participants to work in their groups to construct a summary sentence, a social media post using the GramIt strategy, and a visual representation of their authenticity component.

For example, the group representing Construction of Knowledge might summarize that section as follows: When students construct their own knowledge, it sparks new ideas. They also might draw a light bulb turning on to represent new ideas being formed and create a social media post with the hashtag #knowledgeispower.

Allow time for each group to share their representations of the reading.

30 minutes

Extend

Transition to **slide 18** and pass out copies of the attached **Authentic Lesson Reflection Tool**. Inform groups that they will use this reflection tool to identify and reflect on the elements of authenticity that they observed in the Rumpelstiltskin lesson.

Assign groups to the same authenticity component that they previously read about. Using the reflection tool as a guide, have participants discuss with their groups whether the Rumpelstiltskin lesson incorporated that element of authenticity.

Have groups identify where they observed this element of authenticity in the lesson and how it might be improved. Encourage them to ask questions as they reflect: “Where was the lesson strong in terms of this element? Where was it lacking?” Allow groups to share out their responses to the whole group.

Ask participants: “How can you envision using authenticity in your own classroom instruction?” Allow small groups to discuss among themselves for a minute and then share out some of their ideas with the whole group.

Take a moment to wrap up the conversation and bring participants' attention back to the Instructional Strategy Note Sheet.

Go to **slide 19** and explain that they have used three more strategies at this point. Ask them to spend a few moments writing and reflecting on how each strategy was used and how they might incorporate each strategy into their own lessons. They should also note how each strategy supports authentic instruction. This will be a great reference tool for planning lessons once they are back in the classroom.

Presenter’s Note:

Optional Discussion Prompts

Consider having participants discuss the questions below to reflect on how technology tools can support authentic learning.

- How can calculators be used to promote deeper mathematical thinking rather than just speeding up computation?
- How can maps be used to deepen students’ understanding of historical context rather than just presenting facts?
- How can digital storytelling and collaborative writing platforms be used to enhance students’ voice and audience awareness rather than just digitizing traditional assignments?
- How can virtual labs and data collection tools be used to promote scientific reasoning and experimentation rather than just demonstrating concepts?

20 minutes

Evaluate

Transition to **slide 20**. Use the instructional strategy 3-2-1 to wrap up the session and evaluate participants' learning.

Ask participants to get three sticky notes each. On the first sticky note, instruct them to write three things that make a lesson authentic. On the second sticky note, they will write two authentic things they plan to implement in this week's lessons. On the third sticky note, they will write one question they still have about authenticity or authentic lessons.

Research Rationale

Authenticity can be implemented in all content areas and all grade levels. Authentic teaching has four components: construction of knowledge, disciplined inquiry, value beyond school, and student-centered learning. These four components are created and apparent through authentic tasks. Authentic tasks defined by Herrington, J., et al (2014), are ill-defined, requiring students to define the tasks and subtasks needed to complete the activity. They are investigated by students over a sustained period of time. Tasks can be applied to different subject and content areas and lead with opened-ended outcomes. These tasks are seamlessly integrated with assessment and create accomplished products valuable in the student's own right. They allow for competing solutions and a diversity of outcomes.

Authentic lessons allow opportunities for collaboration, which leads to the exploration of multiple perspectives and various points of views to be heard during a lesson. By forming collaborative groups, students are able to construct knowledge. Through the use of essential, open-ended questions, teachers provide the opportunity for students to reflect and articulate their thoughts and the processes of their learning. Researchers write that "[A]uthentic learning environments need to provide collaborative learning where, for example, more able partners can assist with scaffolding and coaching, and where teachers provide appropriate learning support" (Herrington, J., 2014; e.g., Collins et al., 1989; Greenfield, 1984).

Herrington, J. et al., describes the four components in an authentic lesson as follows: 1) Students should seek to solve a real-life problem to which they would attach emotional commitment as well as a cognitive interest; 2) The problem should be sufficiently open-ended so that there are a variety of strategies for its solution; 3) The problem-solving strategies and "solutions" developed should encourage students to change their actions, beliefs, or attitudes; and 4) The problem should have a real audience beyond the classroom. Authentic tasks are more worthy of the investment of time and effort in higher education than de-contextualized exercises and tasks (Herrington & Herrington, 2006).

Resources

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- K20 Center. (n.d.). CUS and discuss. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/162
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