Case Study #2

The biggest problem in this case study is the lack of communication between Denny Clifford and Dr. Cynthia Oakes. Cynthia is a big proponent of the constructivist approach to teaching and learning, which is something that Denny is not familiar with. Cynthia has high expectations, strict constraints, and not much personal time that she can dedicate to giving workshops or meeting with Denny. Denny must use his notes from their meetings as well as other resources to create a new way to distribute information.

I approached this case study by first looking at the resources that Denny collected to complete his tasks. I thought that he would be able to get valuable information if he used the list of 24 teachers, who had previously completed the workshops, and request to interview them. He would be able to ask them what worked in the classroom, what they would improve on, and the types of lessons and activities that they incorporated in the classroom. Next, I think it would be helpful if Denny watched the tapes that observed teachers using the constructivist approach. He would be able to pick up on the consistent words, objectives, and instruction that were present throughout the lessons. Denny could also read the grant proposal along with the articles to understand more about the approach.

After reviewing Denny’s resources, I mapped out how Denny could effectively distribute instruction to local teachers. I came up with a few ways that I think would be innovative and readily available for teachers to review on their own time. 1. A reference list of local teachers who have taught using this approach and those willing to learn. I think this list is important because teachers can create support teams within schools and districts and also seek help and advice from those teachers that are more experienced. 2. Teacher notebooks would be included for each lesson along with a video modeling how to teach the lesson. The notebooks would consist of step-by-step explanations for each lessons as well as key points and questions that the teacher should focus on. The notebooks would provide an ELL section, activity extensions, and other supportive information. The notebooks would not be distributed with the intention that teachers should read them word-for-word. They would be intended to provide teachers with background information and supportive instruction along the way. Videos would be available so teachers could watch a lesson modeled by an experienced teacher. These videos, along with the teacher notebooks, would be distributed in books and also available online. 3. Teacher blogs and forums would be created to connect teachers all over the country. Teachers could post questions, lesson plans, and other information that may be helpful to others. I think an online community would be very beneficial and convenient for teachers. Also, Denny and Cynthia Oakes could hold question forums or release new information on a website that all of the teachers could access. Having information on the internet would be a convenient way for teachers to access information at their house or anywhere outside of school. 4. Lastly, I think workshops should be used in Denny’s distribution. I would recommend that he ask Cynthia if she would be willing to give a workshop once or twice to Denny and teachers so that they can learn her approach and be able to distribute in their local areas. The teachers would then be able to create regional workshops, which would be more manageable on a national scale.

Once I mapped out how Denny could distribute instruction, I created a sample lesson that would follow the constructivist approach. This sample is something that could be available online for teachers to use and add helpful advice. This lesson follows the 5 E’s of constructivism: engage, explore, explain, extend, and evaluate. The lesson is on erosion and deposition and would align to the constraints that Cynthia had proposed.

RESOURCES!!!!