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| **Elements of Best Practice with definition** | **What the teacher is doing...** | **What the students are doing....** |
| **Student centered**  Instruction that connects in meaningful ways to students' experiences | * Provides relevant lessons to engage with the content * Helps build off of students' natural curiosity * Teacher prepares lessons that are meaningful to the students. | * Working at their own pace * Motivating themselves * The teacher writes questions for the students on the board to prompt investigation. |
| **Social/Collaborative**  Learning that is socially constructed and interactive, which scaffolds learning. Also, the classroom is a model community, where students will be required to work together. | * The teacher will be the facilitator. * The teacher will prompt students to think critically and explore different questions. * The teacher will be walking around the classroom to make sure everyone is on task and actively engaged. * Teacher modeling | * Team work and cooperation * Actively engaged in discussions with other peers * Asking questions and exploring information to answer questions * Exploration of in-depth inquiry |
| **Experiential/Authentic**  Active learning that occurs through hands-on, concrete experiences. Students learn through *doing* a specific activity rather than *hearing about* it. | * Helps students think deeply and discover ideas through direct/simulated immersion * Authentic learning experiences and authentic assessments to monitor and evaluate student learning * Letting the students choose assignments/projects | * *Doing*, rather than *hearing about* an activity - can be done in any content area as well as collaboratively * Could involve simulations, role-playing important events and conflicts, political debates, etc. * Higher order learning * Students have different choices within the classroom. |
| **Cognitive Learning**  Children develop a true understanding of concepts through higher order thinking and inquiry-based learning. | * The teacher creates activities that are developmentally appropriate and that tap into their prior knowledge. * Teaching students about metacognition (thinking about thinking) * Teaching the students to reflect on what they learned * The teacher will model and facilitate activities. * Create differentiated lessons/activities | * Students are engaged in developmentally appropriate activities. (The teacher will be sure the lesson is differentiated.) * The students will develop skills of metacognition (thinking about their own thinking). * Students will reflect on their own effort, progress, and understanding. |