

Case Study - A brief introduction

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Many students learn better from examples than from logical development starting with basic principles. The use of case studies can therefore be a very effective classroom technique.

A case study is:-

- A story about something unique, special, real and engaging, involves issues/conflicts to be resolved
- A puzzle that has to be solved/typically describe a program or intervention put in place to address a particular problem
- It's a specific field research method
- It covers a wide range of problems posed for analysis/presents an interesting and provoking issue

What do case studies do?

- Present realistic, complex, contextually rich situations
- Involve dilemma, conflict, thought provoking issues that the characters in the case must solve
- Bridge gap between theory and practice
- They attempt to attain a comprehensive understanding of the event
- Allow flexibility and hence are not rigorously planned
- The coax the reader to think and be a part of the study

With reference to a classroom scenario

- Involve students in classroom discussions
- Provide a rich basis for developing problem solving/decision making skills in children
- Help teachers assess students ability to synthesize, evaluate and apply information and concepts learned in lectures and texts to real life experiences
- Build analytical skills/use of concepts in complex real world
- Help students identify the parameters of a problem – recognizing and articulating positions – evaluating courses of action – arguing different points of view

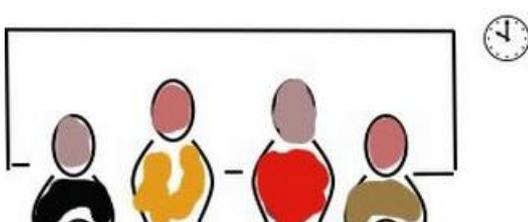
How to create/find a case study...

The sources of creating a case study could be many:-

- Personal/professional experiences
- Contemporary situations
- Books
- Historical data
- Online sources

Case study in a classroom

Use of a case study in the classroom will depend on the goals of the class session and also on the format of the class session, lecture or discussion. If the teacher chooses to transact the class session in the discussion mode, she would need to bear in mind a few points.



The teacher needs to :-

- Have a clear understanding of the case
- Have thoroughly read the details of the case and accordingly prepare



questions in advance. The questions to be such that they would guide the students towards the major issues to be discussed

- Anticipate any hurdles during the case discussion and aptly direct the students
- Be able to utilize the experiences of the students and enhance the discussion productively
- Guide the students to appropriate sources of information

How does a teacher lead a case study discussion?

The teacher needs to :-

1. Set ground rules for the discussion. These rules could be evolved with the inputs from the students
2. Provide ample time for the students to read about the case and ponder over its issues
3. Allow the students to explore the problem presented in the case.
4. Provide guidelines to students as to how to approach the case
5. Form the groups for the discussion and assign roles based on the interest and knowledge of the student on the topic
6. Provide time for the discussion in the group and ask for a presentation by each group
7. Paraphrase the presentation and also ask clarifying questions
8. Ask questions which are open ended and that keep the discussion alive
9. Summarize the content of the case and process of analysis. This could be done by the students
10. List out issues which are unresolved and suggest them for further study
11. Provide the students with feedback on their group work and also on their processes and strategies
12. Reflect on her approach, the students responses to the case, the need for more information etc.

Websites visited for information:

1. www.wrting.colostate.edu
2. www.gttp.org
3. www.cmu.edu
4. www.stanford.edu
5. www.faculty.washington.edu

Category: Teacher Development

Subject: Others

Grade/Standard: Class 6-8
Class 9-10
Class 11-12

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