

Reflective Paper

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EDUC 111: Introduction to Teaching

In reflection, during high school I was able to take a class called Cadet Teaching. So coming into this class I had some experience in the classroom. I was excited to see differences in the classrooms I have already observed in and the ones I was going to get to observe this semester. As everyone knows children are very unpredictable; you never know what they are going to say or what they are going to do in the classroom.

For my first observation experience I went to Mrs. Wise's ninth grade English class. The students were learning about semi colons, how to use them and where to place them in a sentence. As the period continued they transitioned into the *Julius Caesar* play they had been working on for the last couple of weeks. They finished watching the movie and completed a worksheet with the remaining class time. I enjoyed observing Mrs. Wise's classroom, she was a very likable person and her students seemed to adore her. She was up helping her students the whole class period making sure they understood the material. I liked the feel and layout of her classroom from the moment I walked in the room I felt comfortable, and felt like I could definitely learn in her classroom environment.

The second classroom I observed was at the Manchester Elementary School. I observed Mrs. Rose's Kindergarten class. I was surprised to find out I was observing a Kindergarten class, I thought I was observing a first or second grade class because they were so well behaved. The only thing I noticed that seemed to stand out in my mind was that they couldn't seem to sit still, they were all moving and squirming in their chairs. At first they couldn't stop

looking back at me, it seemed like they weren't sure why I was there or what I was going to do. But after about five minutes they were back to paying attention to Mrs. Rose. Not long after I arrived it was time for recess, because it was raining the students had to stay inside. For indoor recess the students went to the cafeteria with play dough, toys, coloring books and crayons in their small hands. Once recess was over they all headed back to Mrs. Rose's classroom. After putting away the recess toys, coloring books, and crayons the students sat in their seats and waited for Mrs. Rose to start their next lesson. The one thing that really stuck out in my mind about kindergarteners is that you have to constantly keep them busy or they start to get into trouble. The first thing Mrs. Rose did when all the students were seated was make sure they were listening to her, once all the students were listening she started to read the poem "One, two buckle my shoe." Some students got very excited because they had heard this poem before, and began to sing along as Mrs. Rose read it. After reading the poem and discussing it, Mrs. Rose moved the student's right into vocabulary. They worked on their vocabulary lesson learning new words like two, hot, and cot. After vocabulary Mrs. Rose read the students a story called *David's Drawing*, and the students had to explain what happened in the beginning, the middle, and what happened at the end of the story. It wasn't long after this story I had to leave Mrs. Rose's classroom. I really enjoyed Mrs. Rose's class and I would have to say that just based on my first visit to her classroom that I would definitely consider teaching kindergarten; something I never before even considered.

My third observation was of Mrs. Sear's fifth grade classroom at Manchester Intermediate. Mrs. Sear had a substitute the day I came to observe, his name was Mr. Priest. I have never observed how students react with a substitute, so I was really excited to get the opportunity to observe the students and see what was going to happen. When I arrived the students were reading silently *The Rats of Nimh* and were working on filling out a worksheet on the chapters they were reading. The students were quiet and listened well to the substitute at the beginning of class. After a while the students started to get distracted when other students from other classrooms came in to give food to Mr. Priest. As students finished their worksheets Mr. Priest checked them. Students were free to get up and sharpen pencils, get Kleenex's, and turn in papers, without having to ask. As more and more students begin to finish their worksheets the talking and goofing off in the classroom started to get worse. During this time many students came up to me and asked why I was there, along with many other questions. At this point most of the class was off topic. Mr. Priest tried to get the students back on topic but some students continued to talk even after they were asked not to talk. One thing I noticed that kind of surprised me was that the students were allowed to have gum and wear hats in the classroom. Coming away from this observation I was surprised how disrespectful some of the students were to the substitute and wonder if they continued to act disrespectful after I left.

My fourth observation took place at Manchester High School. World History was the subject Mr. Schlitt was teaching. The students discussed the

Reformation of c. 1500-1600. They talked about Martin Luther and his role in the Reformation. Most of the students paid attention to Mr. Schlitt, except for a select few students. Those students continued to talk throughout the entire period and were a major disruption. However when Mr. Schlitt's second World History class arrived they were much better behaved. I believe this had a lot to do with the fact that there were only nine students in this class compared to the thirty students in the previous class.

My last observation took place at Manchester High School. The students in the class we were observing had Learning Disabilities. One of the students had an Emotional learning disability; I noticed that our presence in the classroom changed his behavior. The student was a little agitated and he seemed to be having problems concentrating on his school work. Life skills class is three class periods per day. Students work on math, reading, banking, cooking, and occasionally driving skills. They also recite their addresses and phone numbers. The students enjoy Wednesdays because they are able to break routine and cook, occasionally drive, go on field trips and work on special projects throughout the year. The classroom had a kitchen area that is available for the students to use when it is appropriate. The kitchen had a stove, refrigerator, dishwasher, sink and plenty of counter space to work on for food preparation. The classroom also had an ironing board. The students had access to four computers in the room. There was also a TV, VCR, and DVD player in the room, along with a whiteboard. Posters and plants helped make the room more inviting. The students in the class we observed were students

that were for some reason unable to graduate with an actual diploma, the Life Skills class they were in helps prepare them for the real world. The class teaches them skills so they will be prepared for living on their own. I did enjoy observing this class though I may never teach a class like this, it really makes you appreciate all the students hard work along with the hard work of the teaching assistance.

Teaching is a very tough career. In high school I was once told, "Pick a job you love, and you'll never work a day in your life." I believe teaching will be an amazing job that will never feel like a job, because I will be doing something I love. I will be helping mold the minds of our future generations. Every time we do a field experience we learn something new, we see things that could be improved in the classroom and we see things that work really well for our students. I am very excited to take everything we have learned from our field experiences and use it to make myself a better teacher. I know being a teacher will sometimes have its challenges but I am looking forward to being able to teach the minds of our future generations.