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Intro to Teaching

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Field Experience Reflection

The field experiences that I was a part of were really helpful for me to understand a classroom from the teacher's point of view. Even though I have been in many different types of classroom environments throughout my school years, it is a lot different to see the students from a teacher's perspective and what they go through day in and day out. I think the biggest surprise for me was walking into the four different classrooms and see how different the teachers and classroom setup was.

My first observation was at the Manchester Elementary School. After I got my directions to the classroom I went on my way to the class and knocked on the door. Mrs. Bechtold introduced herself to me and then told me that I could sit at her teacher's desk in the back of the room and observe the students in the class. I really did not know what to do at first when I sat down so I just observed the classroom setup and started taking notes. I just described what she had in her classroom on the walls and how she had the students' desks setup in groups. After about ten minutes of the students working on their Reading she then split them up into two groups and took one group over to the reading center as the other group stayed at their desks and continued to work on their Accelerated Reading. I noticed that she did not really pay attention to the students that were not with her, so the students really were not concentrated on their work. I then observed the students that she had with her at the Reading Center. They were just going around taking

turns reading the book that they were concentrating on during that time. About halfway through the time I was there, the students put away their materials and went to another classroom as another set of students walked into the classroom. I assumed that they only learn certain subjects in their class and then switch and learn the other subjects from the other coordinating teacher. To tell you the truth I did not feel like my first field experience was very productive because I did not know what to look for and get out of the whole experience. I felt that she may not have had a really good teacher-student relationship with her class. I may have gotten the wrong impression but Mrs. Bechtold did not seem too excited in her career of teaching. When I become a teacher I want the students to be excited to come into class everyday. I want them to remember me as one of their favorite teachers because it was enjoyable and I provided a fun environment for them to learn in.

My second experience I went to the Manchester High School and observed Mr. Gilbert's History class. I knew going into the observation that it was going to be totally different than the Elementary school, and since I want to teach elementary grades I felt it would not be as helpful. When I first got into the class the students started to come in from their passing period. I introduced myself and gave him the Assessment paper and then he told me I could sit down in the back of the room. As the students settled in their seats they all seemed to be looking over notes or looking at the book. Then I realized they were going to have a quiz, he gave them a ten question quiz over the reading he assigned them for the night before. After they got done with the quiz, they started to recall what the reading was about and had a discussion about it. I was interested because they were talking about the Holocaust and I find that always interesting to learn about. To go along

with the discussion he had them fill out a worksheet about the Holocaust and what they knew about the event. Since Mr. Gilbert was an older gentlemen and was old-school it was a lot different than the way I want to teach. I feel that not all students are going to know everything about certain subjects and I thought that he kind of made some of his students feel “dumb” because when he asked them a question he responded with “I can not believe you do not know that” type of response. I know that I struggled in some areas of school so I want to be helpful to all students and not make them feel like they are at a lower learning level than I am, because obviously I am going to know more than them because I am the teacher.

My next observation was at the Manchester Junior High with Miss Davis. When I first walked into the room she explained to me that she was a senior at Manchester College and was doing her student teaching, so I expected the classroom environment to be different than what it might be with a full-time teacher. She told me that her class that I was going to observe was a lower level learning class and could be chaotic. As the class started I realized she was right. I tried reminding myself that it was a student teacher but it seemed that she did not have any control over the class. It was an eighth grade class that was talking about U.S. History. They were very disrespectful to Miss Davis and the assistant that was in the room. She ended up coming back to me and talking to me and allowed me to ask her questions. We had a good discussion about teaching and classes she took throughout her years at Manchester. The only thing that I would change about her classroom is having more control over the class. I understand that she is only a student teacher but I would still want to make sure the students respected me and I had control over them.

My last field experience took place at Laketon Elementary School. I had Miss Howard's class and she had five students in her class. It was very interesting to see how she interacted with her students because she did not treat them like they were Special Ed. students, she treated them like everybody else. The students seemed excited to be in her class as they came in and looked like they were into the subject they were learning. As they started class they started talking about superlative and comparative words and used them in sentences. Miss Howard had me come up with a sentence using one of the words also, which I liked because she was the only teacher that actually involved me in her class. Being in a Special Ed. class really was not much different than a normal learning level class besides the fact that the students learn a little slower and take a little more time to figure things out. I thought Miss Howard had a great student-teacher relationship and made sure that the students wanted to be there and allowed them to have fun. It was fun being in the class because the students were so excited to be there at school and made me inspired because that will be what makes me want to be a teacher.

Having the four field experiences allowed me to realize how different it is to be a teacher than a student. Being in the four different classroom environments allowed me to start shaping how I want my classroom to be like. It was very interesting to see how the teachers responded to the students and how they dealt with different things going on in the classroom. I realized that I want to be the type of teacher that they remember the rest of their lives and that I can give them the experiences that they can use later on in their lives. Many times teachers just teach a lesson and then move on but I want to be able to connect the lesson with the students personal experiences so it will be easier for them to learn and understand better.

