

Reflection Paper

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Entering Manchester College, I knew I wanted to pursue a career in education. The problem was, I had not yet decided what age group of people I wanted to teach. I had tried to think of all the pros and cons of each age group, however, I still could not decide which level was right for me. It was not until I entered the course Introduction to Teaching, that I finally found the answer to my question. One of the assignments for this class was to observe Manchester Community Schools. Each classmate and I would go into Manchester Elementary, Laketon Elementary, Manchester Jr. High School, and Manchester High School to observe the differences and similarities of each age group of people. By observing all these different age groups of people, as well as the individuals in charge of their education, I was able to finally see where my passion lies.

My first and second observations took place at Manchester Jr. High and Manchester High School. Both of these observations allowed me to get a better understanding of what it is like to teach teenagers, as well as focus on one subject matter. I learned a lot from these two observations. I really enjoyed observing Mrs. Harell's eighth grade English class. Mrs. Harell was well respected and you could tell that the students really enjoyed her. She found ways to get everyone involved and was willing to answer any questions the students might have had. Mrs. Harell was very patient with her students, and I learned that this is an extremely important characteristic to possess. Mrs. Snover, a High School English teacher, was just the opposite of Mrs. Harell. She was not patient, and her class was full of rebellious students. Mrs. Snover was strict and told students she did not have time to answer their questions, and that they would have to stay after school. The students did not enjoy being present in this particular classroom, and I learned what not to do as a teacher.

Manchester Elementary School and Laketon Elementary School were my third and fourth observations. At Manchester Elementary School my eyes were opened to the wonderful world of kindergarten. I sat in on Mrs. Clevenger's kindergarten class and learned that this age group of students takes much more attention than the upper age levels. I really enjoyed this observation and found myself not wanting to leave when the time came. At Laketon Elementary School, I was placed in a sixth grade English class. Mrs. Jenkins' was the teacher, and she was also very helpful and caring towards her students. This observation taught me how to get my students excited to learn. Mrs. Jenkins gave each student two different pieces of candy and the students observed each other and found the many different similarities and differences between the two. The students not only enjoyed the candy, they also enjoyed comparing each and writing a paper about them. I really enjoyed these two observations and learned a lot from each.

For my fifth and final observation, I was back at Manchester Jr. High School where I was placed with the Special Education students. Mrs. Castle was the teacher in charge of the students, and she was wonderful. By observing this classroom, I learned that it is very difficult yet rewarding to be a Special Education teacher. Mrs. Castle was very outgoing and made sure to get each and every one of her students involved. She took her students around the school in search of action verbs, and the students really enjoyed doing this. They were not only getting out of the classroom, they were learning and using their brains as well. I really enjoyed this observation and found out that teaching Special Education students is much different than I had expected.

After observing all of these different age groups of people, as well as their

educators, I was able to find out my likes and dislikes of each. I really enjoyed observing each grade level; however, my favorite observations took place at Manchester Jr. High and Manchester Elementary School. Mrs. Harell, the eight grade English teacher, taught me that my students will treat me the way I treat them. I learned that it is important to be patient with my students. Without patience, everyone in the classroom will have negative attitudes. I also really enjoyed observing the Special Education class. I loved how Mrs. Castle got her students involved and was able to help each of them with their individual struggles. My most favorite of all was Mrs. Clevenger's kindergarten class. After observing, I knew right away that this was where I was meant to be. I loved the younger children's eagerness to learn and their wild imaginations.

After observing, I have found the answer to my question, "what age group is right for me?" I now know that I want to be an elementary school teacher. I love the wild imaginations and excitement that comes along with the young minds of children. As an elementary school teacher, I will be able to interact with my students and open new doors as they mature in life. I look forward to not only being a good teacher, but also serving as a positive role model for each individual within my classroom. I learned that I want to pursue a career in elementary education, and I have also decided that I want to minor in mild interventions. Mrs. Castle opened my eyes to the wonderful world of teaching Special education students, and I would also find it rewarding to help these wonderful individuals as they also progress in knowledge and life.

Before entering the Introduction to Teaching course at Manchester College, I had no idea which age group of people I was destined to teach. If it were not for these observations, I would still be lost and unsure what I am meant to do. I am now exciting

and determined to take what I have learned from these observations and apply the positive things to my class. Several goals I have now set for myself are: to practice being patient, relate to my age level of students, and get each student involved with the lessons by using different and unique teaching methods. I now know where my passion lies, and look forward to the years of teaching that are ahead of me. I will work towards achieving my goals as I also work to become the best teacher that I can be.