

Reflection Paper

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I have observed five teachers during my time in Education 111A. During my observations I have observed five different grades levels and five different teaching strategies. Through that I have observed several ways that the teachers and students interact with one another and how different grade levels learn in different ways. My time observing has helped me realize some of my strengths and weaknesses when it comes to teaching. I have set some goals for myself so I can improve upon my weaknesses.

I have observed teachers and learners from elementary school all the way through high school. My first two observations were at the elementary school level. My first observation was observing Mrs. Owens, a fourth grade teacher who taught a math lesson to the lower level math students. The students were divided among other fourth grade teachers according to their math ability. During Mrs. Owens's lesson on time, each student had a clock in front of them to practice telling time. She told her students a time and instructed them to set their clocks to the same time. Mrs. Owens used manipulatives to ensure that her students were grasping the material. During this observation I saw how manipulatives can help students grasp material rather than just making them take notes from the board.

On my second observation I observed a fifth grade reading lesson. During my observation, the teacher had the students read a chapter from a book they had been reading for several weeks. After the students had read the chapter they were given a worksheet that had to do with the material they had just read. On the worksheet the students had a list of words they had to look up in the dictionary and use context clues to figure out what definition of the word they were suppose to use. While the class was reading, the teacher only interacted with the students who had a question about something

they were reading or something on the worksheet. After allowing the students time to read and work on the worksheet, the teacher discussed a few main points of the chapter with the students. My observation at the elementary schools was what I expected for the most part in the way the teachers interacted with the students and the material the students were learning.

During my third observation I observed two math classes taught by Mrs. Thompson. Her students were divided into different classes according to their mathematical abilities. During the first part of my observation, I observed a basic seventh grade math class that was reviewing for their chapter test. Mrs. Thompson was teaching her students about factoring numbers, prime numbers, least common multiples and several different things. During the review, she had her students pull out their note taking workbooks and showed them an example of every problem that would be on the test. She called on volunteers for answers to the problems on the overhead projector and asked them to explain why the answer was what it was. Mrs. Thompson's kept track of her students' homework by a chart on the front of their math folders so that she could show parents if their students were doing their homework or not. She also made sure that her students were writing across the curriculum by making them write answers to a story problem in words every week. During the second part of my observation Mrs. Thompson's had her students pull out their algebra homework and check it as a class. Each student was required to tell the class how they worked out a problem to get the answer. Mrs. Thompson's class was never boring because she was always smiling and interacting with her students. Mrs. Thompson's made sure that everyone understood the material. One of the biggest things that I took from this observation was that you always need to have a

smile on your face and want to be in the classroom. Your students will respect you for wanting to be there.

My fourth observation was in a high school Physics/Chemistry class. During my high school observation I observed Mr. Myers who taught a Physics class of juniors and seniors. Mr. Myers was not a very interesting teacher because he read word for word off of a PowerPoint about friction. While Mr. Myers was reading off of the PowerPoint his students were talking amongst one another or sleeping in the class. After Mr. Myers read the whole PowerPoint he gave his students free time to work on their homework which none of the students did. I was surprised that students at the high school were aloud to wear their hats inside of the school and classroom. This was a surprise to me because I feel that it is rude to wear an inside a public building especially inside of classroom. This observation showed me the major differences of the three other schools I observed.

My final observation was in Mr. Dailey's special education classroom. Mr. Dailey explained to me that some of his day was spent inside his classroom leading lessons and the other part of his day was inside a classroom helping students while a teacher is teaching his/her lesson. While I was observing Mr. Dailey, he was leading a math lesson to a group of five students. These five students ranged from learning disabled to emotionally handicapped. Mr. Dailey taught his students a lesson on adding and subtracting fractions. Mr. Dailey was always interacting with his students to ensure that they were paying attention and understanding the lesson. He also allowed each of his students to work out a problem on the board to practice for their quiz. They were turning fractions into decimals. The students were getting told they were doing a good job to keep their self esteem up. My special needs observation was by far my favorite because I

love working with students of special needs. During my five observations I have found some things that may be challenging for myself.

One of the biggest challenges I think I am going to face is being able to communicate with my students and use proper English. I need to use proper English and communicate well with everyone not just my students. So a goal I am going to set for myself is to improve my communication skills with everyone and improve my ability to use and teach proper English. I will go about achieving this goal by taking a communications class stopping myself every time I say something that is not proper English. Another weakness that I possess is my time management skills. I need to learn to manage my time wisely so I am not waiting until the last minute and stressing myself out. I will purchase an organizer and start writing everything down that I have to get done for the week to improve my time management skills. I will also start working on assignments at least one week in advance. During my four years at Manchester College I will explore different ways that learners learn so I can adapt to all the different type of learners in my classroom. I also want to learn the ways you can incorporate students with special needs into your normal day to day class activities.

Through my observations in Intro to Teaching I have been exposed to many different aspects the field of education has to offer. I have seen how teachers have adapted the way they to teach depending on the age of their students. I have seen the many different teaching strategies teachers use to interact with their students to ensure that their students are grasping their material. During my observation I have come to the conclusion that I want to become an elementary school teacher.