

“Reflection”

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Intro to Teaching

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Abstract:

Every teacher experiences a point in their career where they are to observe. This paper is about my experience of observing Northwood Middle School. This opportunity has taught me many teacher skills that I will use in my teaching career. It has also given me the opportunity to see the qualities that I need to improve on to become a better teacher. This observation will show some strengths that I have realized, and some weaknesses that have occurred, all which are helping me become a more experienced teacher for the future.

Reflection:

My observations at Northwood Middle School have taught me a variety of teaching skills. I have also learned that there is more to teaching than just passing on knowledge; it is also about befriending students. I have learned that gaining respect is in result of disciplining and being thorough in what one says. Teachers are role models for the students and they can impact the children's lives in numerous ways throughout the duration of the class. It is the teacher's job to make sure the students are excited to come to class, and that they are interested in their work. However, the most important aspect of teaching is having the initiative to show up to work every day because one loves it.

An important aspect of learning is the settings in which a teacher provides. Students are at school for five days a week and seven hours each day, so it is extremely important that the children feel comfortable being there. I have learned that a good environment is controlled by the teacher. Mr. Lee, the teacher I observed, offered a very exciting and outgoing setting to the students, resulting in a comfortable environment for both the teacher and the children. The enjoyment they get out of their classroom helps the students feel comfortable in this

environment, and they are able to perform to their highest potential. These students came to class each day ready to participate in whatever activity Mr. Lee had created. Even when the students were assigned a writing assignment on Fridays, they never once argued because they knew Mr. Lee would have something interesting for them to write about. He has created a relaxed and fun environment for his students, which makes them eager to attend class every day. This results in better attention from them, which in turn will enhance their education.

While creating a comfortable and exciting environment, it is also necessary to maintain structure and rules to go along with it. When teachers enforce discipline, students gain respect for them because of the consequences in which they follow up with. They show the students that they have more authority than them and in return, gain the respect of their students. In my observations I have learned that a teacher must enforce consequences on every child that does not obey the rules. I have also found that a teacher must be very strict at the beginning of the year, enforcing consequences on the smallest situations, and slowly ease up as the year goes on. Mr. Lee's sixth graders were very respectful to him because of this. When they began their new grading period, Mr. Lee was very strict and when he read the list of rules, the students knew he meant them. It is essential for classrooms to have guidelines for children because without them the environment can become undesirable, which is unhealthy for children because they need a place to go where they feel comfortable.

Through observing I have come to see some of my weaknesses. I feel the need to have the approval of everyone around me on whatever I am doing. However, people do not always have the same beliefs, feelings, likes or dislikes as I do. In Mr. Lee's classroom I saw that there were students who rolled their eyes when they were told to do something, or argued back with

him and I could not help but wonder how he dealt with this. I then realized that if I spend so much time worrying about everybody enjoying my class, that I may ruin that opportunity for another student. In knowing this, I plan to turn my weakness around and use everyone's uniqueness to provide a classroom in which everyone can express their personality freely.

Observing has not only brought some of my weaknesses to my attention, it has also shown me some of my strengths. A strength that I have noticed about myself is my attitude towards teaching. I saw similar qualities within myself and in the ways in which Mr. Lee spoke to the children and how he interacted with them. The students feel comfortable around him and feel at ease talking to him about any situation. When I was in charge of a game, I found myself interacting with the children and having fun. I noticed that I was looked up to as a fun person, yet at the same time the children knew that I was in charge. I was shown that I have the energy to create a fun and enthusiastic classroom, while still having control over the students. However, my attitude towards teaching was not the only strength that I noticed. I have always been very competitive, refusing to accept failure. However, when I looked for this characteristic in Mr. Lee, I did not find it. I noticed that he allowed students to not participate in some activities and just stand in the back talking to their peers. As a teacher, I feel it is my obligation to enforce the participation of each child, in every activity. I felt that, in some cases, Mr. Lee was not improving their educational skills because he was allowing them to get away with doing nothing, which results in failure. In my eyes, failure leads to nowhere, and if the students are taught at an early age that failure is not acceptable, then they will continue to believe this throughout their lives.

My experience at the middle school has helped me decide what I want to do for my future students. I have realized that I want to be the teacher that students come to when they are having a bad day, and I want my classroom to be the one where they forget about all their other problems because they enjoy it so much. I want my students to feel comfortable in my room, where they do not have to hold anything back. Another goal I want to achieve is to form a safe haven in which children find calming. So many homes are battle grounds for families and many times children get stuck in the middle. They need a place to go where they can feel safe and content. Throughout these past two weeks I have seen so many different socioeconomical students, in which some of them seem to be really affected by their home life. I want these kids to be able to let free of their bad feelings and to enjoy the experience of my class.

Observing Northwood Middle School has truly been an amazing experience for me and has helped show me the teacher that I want to be. This real life experience has shown me what to expect from a teacher's point of view, as well as from the student's point of view. It has helped me pick out the skills that I want to take with me, and what I may want to improve on as a teacher. Overall, every observation will be an experience itself, forming me into the teacher that I strive to be.