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### The Montessori School

Wow there was a huge difference between this school and the Reggio that I had been in directly before this visit. This school was very quiet and upon walking into the building you really could not tell that there was a school in session. However I do think that I could see myself teaching at this school. I really liked the idea of the younger students learning from the older students, almost having a role model within their own classroom. I think that aspect of this school was very cool. I also really liked the individualized lesson plans. I feel that this is crucial. No two students ever learn at the same pace.

I also really liked the hands on learning, all of these things that the students learned with gold beads for math, and letters that they moved around to spell words. Small things that show a teacher was thinking. I also like the fact that the teacher has about two group lessons a day then other than that they are working on their individualized lesson plan that had been agreed upon between the student and the teacher. They have a say in their education which is also very important. Also the students have a time each day with the teacher with a one on one lesson.

The other thing is after they are finished with the lessons that they need to accomplish they are allowed to go to the shelf and choose something to work on alone; which is another cool thing. There are shelves that are organized easy to hard left to right and then top to bottom. So each student knows where they are in each subject which

corresponds to a place on the shelf that they can go to for extra help after their other work is completed.

I also thought that it was pretty cool that the students used the teacher as more of a guide and while we were observing the students knew what they were suppose to be doing and we were able to talk to the teacher, which I found very helpful. The other thing that I saw was that this classroom was set – up for a multicultural student, the posters were not all of Caucasian students, and things were labeled in Spanish and English. It seemed more accepting of a minority student.

Within this school I really liked it overall and I definitely think that I would enjoy teaching here. However I do see how it could be a problem. I can imagine one student who just does not understand something, is stuck there for a period of time, and just can not move on to something else that they need to learn. I could see how this could hurt a student's ego. They also could get to the place that they notice everyone is further along than they are and could end up just giving up. So I really feel like this school has it's good points, and I definitely plan on using some of these ideas as well into my future classroom.

Within my experience of my observations I saw some major differences. I observed three schools a rural Preschool class, a Reggio Emilio Kindergarten class, and a Montessori class with both Preschoolers and Kindergarteners. The teaching styles, creativity, teacher/ student interaction, and child development were all very different.

The teaching styles were very different in the first one that I visited was in Pearl City, IL, if you have not heard of it, fear not many people have not. Which you are already seeing a difference in size of the town they are located in, comparing a small

town to inner city Fort Wayne. But at this school they learned about Strangers, and what they should do if a stranger gets near them. In this classroom they clapped, sang, and counted everything and that was their day – basically get on a schedule. But then we get into the Reggio and the Montessori schools where one learns by asking questions and the student has a voice as to what they are studying and they learn to express themselves. But in the last school the student learns about the information that is on the level that they are currently on academically.

All three schools help the student in the way that their school believes philosophically. They all help the student to find themselves and express that. In the first two schools they are very active, moving around the room, talking to one another, making things with their hands. However in the third school the teacher helped the student to know where they are in each class and how they can use that to improve. Both of these I think are good ideas but I almost find some “common ground” in teaching styles.

The teacher to student interaction was also quite different. I think that in the first two schools the teacher kind of teaches to the entire class and the students only get one on one time if they are really struggling with something. But in the third school I felt like the teacher really knew their students and knew where they were at in each subject and had a “bag of tricks,” several ways of teaching the same idea, so that every student will learn. The other thing that I think helps with this is the fact that the teacher has the same students for three years and that way they know so much more about their students and how to help that particular student.

The other thing that I noticed now that I am comparing them is the child development in all the students. In the first class they were Preschoolers so they are still getting used to being in school and still having some trouble communicating the ideas that were in their minds. But then I went into the Kindergarten classroom and know they were able to say exactly what they were thinking, the lessons were longer and more detailed. Then in the last school you had four, five, and six year olds in the same classroom and to my surprise the younger ones seemed much more developed then the preschoolers that were in the first school that I visited because they had been picking up mannerisms and communication skill and other things from the older students.

After observing the three schools I think that I would like to take ideas from each of the three and put my own spin on them. I really think that I want to just teach at a regular elementary school so that way I can make the student / teacher relationships my own. And have both the art projects and help the students to express themselves. Find out what the students are interested in and incorporate that as well. Make my teaching style my own with my style.