

Reflection Paper

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Intro to teaching

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It is amazing what a classroom full of students can make one think. After my experience this fall I cannot wait to get into the education program. I had many great experiences at the schools I observed. The opportunity to observe teachers and students in real classes greatly increased my teaching knowledge.

My observations started at the Manchester Jr. High. I thought this was a great first place to start my observations. While watching a co-ed gym class, I was impressed with the student's ability to get along with each other and play games fairly. I never wanted to teach the middle school age but this observation made me think about teaching other grades. Previously, I had imagined myself teaching younger kids; I thought that middle school students were immature and it would be difficult to control the classroom. By proving to me that they could handle responsibility and act maturely, the students at Manchester Jr. High opened my eyes to middle school teaching.

During my second observation I went to Manchester High School. The high school was an experience I will never forget. The junior class subject was civil war and slavery. I thought the subject was interesting and would love to teach it, but I did not like the teaching method used by this particular teacher. This teacher lectured the entire class. I want to teach kids the tools to do well in high school and to succeed by using various interactive teaching methods in school. After the teachers lecture he asked questions to the class, and he called on individuals to answer the questions. The question-and-answer portion of his class was very effective.

The following week my group traveled to the Manchester Elementary School. I had the time of my life. I had a great first year teacher who told me about all of her struggles with teaching. She told me about the new teaching methods she was testing out and how they were working for her. The teacher let me help a young girl with her math. She was struggling, and I helped her by telling her some basic rules in math so she can remember numbers. I felt amazing helping this little girl; I was making an impact on this student's education by developing a skill she would use later in life. I also had the opportunity to help a young boy with his reading. I had always wanted to teach in elementary school and my experience there only reinforced it.

The next week I went to Laketon where I sat in on a sixth grade math class. This was another great experience. I really liked how the teacher interacted with the students and how they got along. I also loved the content area. I again got the opportunity to help a student who had been absent for three days, get caught up on the lesson plan. It was great getting to teach a student about a subject that I really cared about. I explained to her all about prime factorization, and I loved the one on one teaching experience. I explained the topic to her thoroughly, did a couple example problems with her, and then watched her do several problems on her own. Sixth grade math would be a great subject to consider teaching.

The final class I observed was a special education class. The class was taking a test, I don't believe I got the complete experience but what I saw was very interesting. It was interesting because the teacher would read questions to the class and eliminate one of the answers. I thought these students were very well behaved and were very intelligent. I would have loved to see them on a typical day. The teacher said she enjoyed teaching special

education because she felt like she is was making more of an impact on the world and each individual student as well.

Before I can begin educating young minds, I know I have several things to work on. I will need to be able to gain complete control over a classroom at any time. I learned this from most of my elementary school classroom observations. I saw many struggles by these teachers and I saw them overcome many obstacles. I know that young students can be hard to control. Also, I need to be able to develop a method of teaching that reaches the students. I learned this from the math teacher at Laketon Elementary. She showed me there are many different ways to reach a child and I need to be aware of all of them. I know that I need to have specific lesson plans that include what students will be learning, when they will be learning it, and how they will learn it. Overall, I need to continue observing classrooms and getting more teaching experience.

I have numerous strengths that will help my teaching career. I have a great personality; I am extremely outgoing, personable, and welcoming. I think that these are important traits to have as a teacher, especially in the elementary department. Also, I believe I have a sharp mind and the drive and determination to help young children to succeed in life. Students need to have positive examples of adults in life. I have seen throughout the observations that all of these teachers were role models in the classroom and I hope to be a role model for my students someday.

Throughout this experience I have learned many things. Personally, I learned all about the classroom and I finally saw the classroom from behind the teacher's desk. These observations strengthened my knowledge of education. I knew right away when I was in the schools that it was the right environment for me.