

Reflection Paper

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Introduction to Teaching

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A special education teacher once told me, "In order to be a good teacher, you have to be quick, patient, and creative." When I first started the Teaching course, I was unsure which age group I wanted to teach because different ages require different needs. I would always find me asking myself, "Who would my strengths benefit and cooperate with the most?" Through observing different ages, different teachers, and different environments, I am still unaware of what age group I would like to teach! However, I do know what *kind* of teacher I would like to be and how I will teach my students to be the best that they can be for their futures.

I observed two specific teachers, whom I would have loved to have growing up, during my observations. One was a fifth grade teacher and the other was a special education teacher. Their attitude and Progressive philosophy method of teaching seemed to fit perfectly with mine. I enjoyed watching and learning from the fifth grade teacher, Mr. Craft. He was in charge of the challenged math students of the fifth grade, but he never gave up on them. He repeatedly encouraged them and had close personal relationships with his students. Mr. Craft made sure he involved everyone in the activities and exercises on the board. He continually joked with them and put each student at ease and a sense of comfort in the classroom. His students seemed to look up to him and had an interest in learning. I want to show energy and comfort in my classroom. I want to open up new opportunities and let the students experience hands on activities to help them understand fully and have fun while learning.

Mrs. Cassett, the special ed teacher, was one of a kind! She, unlike the other teachers I observed, found it best if we were actually involved with her classroom. She had us read with the students as they 'popcorn' read along in their book, The Loser. She explained to us that

these were students who were slower with Reading and English and that many of them had come from harsh backgrounds. She was very quick witted with her students and she knew how to stay in charge of them! She treated them not only as her students but her friend as well. She allowed them to put their picture up on her “bulletin board of fame” if they accomplished something that meant a lot to them. She did not yell at them, rather she talked to them and asked for their opinion on certain instances to keep their attention and respect for her. At the end of class, the students were working on making scrapbooks, relating their lives to the boy’s life in their book, The Loser. At the end of the class she allowed us to walk around and ask the students about their progress. It was nice to get involved with the students and it seemed like they appreciated us talking to them and caring about their project. Some of them opened up and showed us their project while others stayed quite. All I could do was to praise them on a job well done so far and to keep up the good work!

Throughout my observations I found my strengths and limitations. My strength is that I believe I have the right mind set to be a teacher. I am always a positive and happy person, who likes to get involved and think of creative new ideas. I think having these qualities will help me to connect with my students. I believe that is very crucial in a teacher’s role. Being able to know my students will help me to be a better teacher and to combine lesson plans and activities with my students’ personalities. A child needs love and encouragement at all times. The special ed teacher and the 5th grader teacher I observed, repeatedly encouraged and/or gave rewards, such as gummy worms or suckers, for their achievements. I know I will keep encouraging my students to think for themselves, to never make fun of others, and to never quit. Sometimes the hardest part about going to school is being made fun of because you

aren't the smartest or falling behind and wanting to just give up on the work. I want to be able to create that sense of reassurance in my classroom where everyone feels comfortable speaking their voice and everyone can help one another with problems. I hope my students can learn not only from me, but also from each other and I hope to learn from them.

I believe my biggest limitation will be discipline. Many beneficial disciplinary actions have been banned from schools or can easily cause trouble with the administration so finding a sensible way to discipline the students may be challenging. I know I will have to deal with children who have come from negative backgrounds or have transferred from a tough neighborhood, and I am willing to show them the love and support they need! I know I will deal with children who are disruptive and want attention, and I am willing to help them grow and mature. I have seen many teachers who only yell at their students or send them to the office. However, I do not feel these methods of discipline work for the students' advantage. I went to school with many kids who only laughed when they got yelled at or were sent to the office. This is one area I definitely need to look into and find healthy and positive disciplinary actions that will hopefully benefit my students. I want my students to be able to talk to me openly if they have a problem instead of causing trouble in or outside the classroom. I will definitely be looking into fixing this weakness of mine so I feel comfortable and in control, in my classroom.

One thing I noticed about most or all of the teachers I observed was the hands on experience and the energy that they incorporated into their lessons. Whether it was using new technologies in the classroom, making a scrapbook, combining learning with games, or even

just cracking jokes during quizzes and assignments, they involved the whole class and helped to keep the attention on them.

Finally, goals I would like to pursue before becoming a teacher are knowing what teaching technique works best for me in the classroom. Knowing this will help me teach my students effectively in the classroom. I also want to increase my knowledge of disciplinary procedures to help better my students in a productive manner. My biggest goal as a teacher is to make sure that the students are learning everything they need to be taught or more. During my observations I would introduced to different teaching techniques, different learning styles, and I now know my strengths and weaknesses. These observations have helped me in officially deciding that teaching is the career for me and I want to become the best teacher I can be!

EDUC 111 Reflective Paper Rubric

Eastman

Student Name <i>Kaitlin</i>	Date 4.22.08		Submitted on time: <input checked="" type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> NO	
Categories	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
	0	4	5	6
Reflective statement voice	Paper presented but written as a list of events and not reflective	Student writing lacks independent and original thought, or expression of a personal tone.	Student writes in a personal tone that is somewhat reflective of independent and original thought.	Student writes in a personal tone that is reflective of independent and original thought.
Descriptive Content	Paper presented but omits description of classroom environment and/or student/teacher interactions	Does not utilize professional vocabulary when describing the experience.	Uses professional vocabulary, but lacks in detail or does not provide concrete examples.	Effectively describes the classroom environment and student-teacher interactions observed in the experience.
Strengths and limitations	Paper presented but omits discussion of own abilities	Does not adequately reflect on his or her own abilities, struggles/limitations, or experiences as a learner or teacher.	Reflects on his or her own abilities, struggles/limitations, experiences, but does not apply that information to the observation experiences.	Reflects on his or her own abilities, struggles/limitations, experiences as a learner or teacher by including concrete examples
Content	Paper presented but omits setting new goals for professional development growth	Does not utilize the information provided in the experience.	Uses information provided in the experience, but does not connect that information to individual goals.	Effectively uses the information provided during the experience setting new professional development goals.
Conventions	Severe & pervasive errors result in sentence incoherence	Consistent errors detract from meaning; Weak sentence structure	Sentences convey meaning; Inconsistent errors that detract from meaning	Well-organized sentence structure; Minimal errors do not interfere with meaning
				Points Earned <i>29</i> /30

Comments:

reflection presents your professional journey!!