

Kaitlin Hughes  
Observation #4 and #5  
10/6/10

1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Elementary Music

Key:

- ✓ + Indicates superior effort and/or teaching
- ✓ Indicates excellent effort and/or teaching
- ✓ - Indicates that you need work in a particular area
- Indicates that much work is needed to correct a particular area

Observation #4, Sycamore Elementary – Kindergarten

90%-95% free lunch  
50% Headstart

*Mrs. Davidson's*

- ✓ + Good call to introduce me. Very young students such as K need to know who the strangers are in the room. It's different than your Pettit Park students who know me now, and actually remember who I am (one even asked me today how I was doing after surgery 😊).
- ✓ You started with formal movement. Good call for this age group. It immediately focuses them.
- ✓ + Excellent use of facial expressions, good physical animations (much like at Pettit Park today)
- ✓ + I was impressed by how well they hold pitch in "Yankee Doodle"
- ✓ + Handled sick child perfectly.
- ✓ "Hasty Puddin" HAHAHAHAHAHA – love it
- ✓ Good job separating Jonathon from his clique. You did so quickly efficiently, and you didn't have to change the tone in your voice (which was excellent). Your motion and the look on your face were sufficient.
- ✓ - Sign language activity is certainly plausible for this age group, but you seemed to be going a little too fast. The students did not seem to a) be able to keep up, b) understand exactly what was going on, and c) did not seem to master the motions. I am therefore

concerned about their retention in this exercise from week to week. Perhaps just slow it down

- ✓ Good classroom management during the “Skin and Bones” activity. I am stealing this one for Methods next time around.
- ✓ I really liked the “throw me a hug” movement at the end/wrap-up of class.

*Mrs. Stockdale’s*

- ✓ - You did not introduce me, and the kids were asking aloud who I was, thereby creating an immediate classroom disruption at the beginning of the lesson. Again, see remarks above about introducing at this age.
- ✓ The movement you did was sequential in nature.
  - a) Formal movement w/o music
  - b) Formal movement w/ music
  - c) Culminated with the sign language exercise on My Country ‘Tis of Thee
  - d) NOTE: In addition to the above comments on teaching the sign language you might try the following:
    - i) Use smaller phrases
    - ii) Do words and movement slowly 3x’s (did I mention slowly?!)
    - iii) Then (and only then) combine phrases. This will reinforce the concepts, and make retention much easier.

Observation No #5 - Pettit Park Elementary

*2<sup>nd</sup> Grade*

Note: This class is one of my favorites. Their intra-class dynamics are hysterical. While they were still getting set for class, the fellow who had a bandage on his head was evidently said a couple of weird things, and the young lady with long-ish brown straight hair and a pink shirt on said “Shhhh.... He is writing a report!” and gave her head a nod in my direction. They are so cute.

- ✓ Reviewed motions of La Pinata
- ✓ ? I am curious about your instrument motion-positions on the guitar and violin. Are you doing it the opposite way to help them (i.e. using a mirror image)? Make sure you teach them to “hold’ them correctly even it is only “air-band”.
- ✓ Good permission form to participate in the program; well worded and thought-out. Make sure that you proof read it, or better yet have someone else proof it.

✓ + The spray/fantastic congratulatory idea is very age appropriate. I will be stealing this one.

### Wrap-Up

Once again, well done. You have matured quite a bit from the beginning of the semester, and I am now confident that you will make a great teacher. The only concern I have left is about your 4-5 grade level teaching. While I know it isn't your favorite, you need to work to be just as effective there as with the lower grades. From what I saw of the last 5 minutes of grade 5, here are a couple of suggestions:

- a) Make sure that you change your speech tone and pattern. You normally speak to your classes in a very lyrical, higher-pitched manner which is perfect for pre-k through about 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. However, this is not the case with older elementary students. As such, they will respond much better to a deeper, crisper vocal style. In essence, you should be using what I call your "ensemble voice". The "ensemble voice" tends to lend itself a more commanding idiom.
- b) Make sure that you are physically "bigger" with the grade 4-5 classes. Your naturally body language is perfect for grades pre-k-3, but it is not as well suited for older students. Stand up a little straighter, be a little more demonstrative with your facial expressions etc. When I say "make sure that you are physically bigger," it is akin in theory to one of the ways to ward off a bear or other wild animal attack. Stand tall move your arms as wide as you can get, show the bear how big you really are. This can scare them off from bothering you (trash cans – yes that happened to me in VA). So do this with those older classes. Take charge in a "larger" way. I would like to see this reflected in your teaching on Tuesday.

Scott Humphries, Director  
Instrumental Studies  
and Music Education  
Manchester College  
604 E. College Ave.  
N. Manchester, IN 46962  
Phone: 260/982-5331