

Start of School Reflection

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I introduced myself with a game. I had my name written on the board and told the class that I wanted to learn a little about them before they learned about me. I had questions prepared to ask them and they were to stand up depending on their answer. For example: “If you like vanilla more than chocolate, stand up. If you could leave right now and go to the mountains or the beach, who would go to the beach?” and so on. Afterwards I told them a few of my likes and dislikes, where I am from, and how happy I was to be there! I also gave them some goals of learning about themselves, other people, their culture and other cultures, and of course music throughout the semester!

My introduction activity was mostly an activity to have a little fun and for them to get to know me. It is important for the student’s to feel comfortable in the classroom, especially when they have never met me and I am just thrown into their class at the beginning of the semester. I also wanted the students to be able to open up and enjoy music class on their first day because we only get each class twice a week and I want them to look forward to it each time, ready to learn! My cooperating teacher went over the classroom’s “one” principle in detail so I focused on introducing myself in a fun way while explaining to the students a few broad goals I had for them. In the days following up to the first student day, I helped my teacher put up all the bulletin boards in our room and one of the boards was all about the rules of the classroom. They all revolve around one principle: Respect. The school’s motto is also “Be Kind, Be Safe, Be Clean, Work Hard, and Fix your Mistakes”. Upon hearing this motto at the first organization meeting, it reminded me of Harry Wong’s (2009) idea of responding to a bad behavior by saying “Because you CHOSE to break the rule” (p. 154). I can easily tell the child that they chose to break the rule so it is their time to fix their mistakes. This gives the child a chance to fix their mistake without me having to send them directly to the office. Harry Wong (2009) also says to

place your classroom procedures in the classroom and have them displayed so students always know what to do and there are no questions (p. 170). Our bulletin board is centered with “Respect” but there are also signs that say smaller procedures for the classroom, which are sometimes easy to forget. Harry Wong (2009) remarks that “You can accomplish anything with students if you set high expectations for behavior and performance by which you yourself abide” (p. 37). We ask the students to respect themselves, the property, and others in a way that we will respect each of them. By giving them a limited amount of rules, it shows the students that we trust them enough and have high expectations for them to have one specific rule.

The success and effectiveness of my activity was great. The students all reacted to my introduction with great interest and enthusiasm. The students really enjoyed the different questions I asked them and then also learning my personal answers to the questions. After doing the activity several times with different grades, I learned that I had to alter the way I asked questions to different grades. With kindergartners, I altered the questions to make them easier. For example, instead of “If you prefer chocolate more than vanilla, stand up”, I asked “If you like vanilla more than chocolate stand up” or “If you like vanilla stand up. Sit down. If you like chocolate stand up”. Sometimes I thought of new questions to suit a certain grade level better. I would not change anything about my introduction activity. I could have included more goals and expectations for my classes but being the new teacher on the first day, I left my goals very broad. Teaching the same activity numerous times throughout the day helped me to get comfortable in doing it and able to change it up for that particular atmosphere. My cooperating teacher really enjoyed my activity and all of my students responded very well to it! Some classes were hesitant and some were overly excited, but they all seemed to understand and enjoy the activity. I completely agree with Harry Wong (2009) when he says “We must TEACH and SHOW our

students – that we can be responsible for one another, that school is a place to gain knowledge, that school is a place to give and receive love, and that school is a place to become successful” (p. 47). I want my students to know that school, especially my music class, is a place for knowledge and fun! I want them to feel comfortable to experiment and be creative in my class. In order for them to feel this way, I must show my students that fun and excitement in my teachings and how I present my classes!

Works Cited

Wong, H.K. & Wong, R.T. (2009). *How to be an effective teacher: The first days of school*.
Harry Wong Publications: Mountain View, CA.