

The Reflective Journal: Week 10

This past week was long, but good. I finished my unit and the students truly did learn a lot about civic duties. On Thursday, the students even spent an hour volunteering. Students washed windows, picked up trash, cleaned the computer lab, cleaned the classrooms, swept, vacuumed, and dusted. Mr. York and I also attended two professional development meetings and a parent teacher conference.

My goals for this week was to improve the time it takes for the students to move from one thing to the next by setting a time limit. I feel as though the students do hurry up and transition smoothly when I count down. When I do not count down, but state that they only have a certain amount of time before we are moving on to the next thing, the students seem to move slower. When I do not give the students a time limit, they take their time. Overall, I believe that I did set the appropriate amount of time limits throughout the week and the students responded well.

My most proud moment this week was when we took the field trip to Motivate Our Minds, MOMs, to volunteer. The students absolutely exceeded my expectations. Within the last two weeks as well as the day of the field trip, the students complained that they had to volunteer and not get paid. However, once they started working, they were actually having fun. A couple of the students even commented that they wished we could have stayed the whole day or wished we could go back to school and clean. After about an hour, we gathered the students back together. One lady, who works at MOMs, told the students thank you and that they inspired her to work harder for the rest of the week. The custodian also thanked the students. Then, I asked the students to share their experiences and a lot of the students said that they had fun, they felt good about helping, and they want to do it again. Overall, I was extremely happy that the students felt good about themselves and were proud of themselves.

On the other hand, one of my failures this week was my math lessons. This week, the math lessons were after lunch and most of the students just shut down after lunch. A couple of times throughout the week, Mr. York also left the classroom during this time. We did not get through much content and I had to stop at least once every day to explain to the students that they were not behaving the same way with me as oppose to if Mr. York was teaching. Students were walking around the classroom, talking without raising their hands, and talking back to me in a disrespectful way. I also sent a few students down to the principal's office and handed out detentions. Overall, I struggled through the lessons and kept trying my best, but the lessons still went terrible.

Throughout this week, Mr. York and I did not have as much time as we usually do to talk about the lessons. However, we did talk about the math lessons almost every day. He assured me that he even has problems teaching math when it is after lunch because the students just shut down. He explained to me that I need to be firm and move magnets if necessary. We also talked about the logistics to the field trip to make sure we were both on the same page. Additionally, one thing that Mr. York taught me without telling me was it is okay to mix things up if the students respond well to it or in other works, take risks. I was struggling to get all of the students to participate and stay on the beat while doing clap, chant, write. Then, put on a beat and all of the students were all engaged, participated, and had fun. It was truly a moment I will not forget.