

The Reflective Journal: Week 14

This past week was the beginning of my fade out weeks, which means I am doing less and less teaching in the classroom. I was in charge of teaching spelling and continuing reading Hatchet. However, I also grade papers, help the students, and facilitate transitions.

My goal for this week was to allow students to choose at least one activity or end product. On Thursday, Mr. York asked me to give the students a grammar worksheet to help review for ISTEP. Before giving the students the worksheet, I told the students that they could choose one of two things. The first option was they could have five minutes to work and do the rest for homework. The second option was they could have ten minutes to complete the worksheet and then I would collect it for a grade. So, we took a vote by raising our hands and most students for working on it in class. Once it was decided, I wrote the time on the board and collected the worksheet after the ten minutes. Thus, I accomplished my goal of giving the students a choice.

My most proud moment was during recess. Six students were arguing about who is out during a four-square game. I told the students to have a re-do and they started arguing again except that they started making fun of each other. So, I told each student to go to a pole to cool off for a couple of minutes before I talked to them. Three of the girls started yelling at me about the situation. I told them that I did not want to hear it until they calmed down. After about five minutes, I called each of them up one by one and they explained their situation. I told each student that I understand that the other students are in the wrong, but so are you. We continued our discussion until they understood that there was no name calling. After talking to each student, I told them they were done with four-square for the day and to avoid each other. Talking with the students and working through their situations worked out well.

On the other hand, one of my failures this week was reviewing the definitions for the spelling words. Mr. York stepped out of the room and the students would not stay focused. I kept moving magnets and doing call and responses, but nothing was changing. So, when nothing was phasing the students, I sat down and waited for them to get quiet. This worked, but after reviewing another definition, the students started talking to others again. At this point, Mr. York walked in and the students were quiet and focused. This was my failure for the week because some of the students still do not see me as their teacher. By disciplining the students more and working on my tone of voice when talking to the students, I think I can get their attention.

Throughout this week, I continued with tutoring and made at least seven students more copies for make-up work. This week was also the beginning of ISTEP, therefore the days go by fast. We only teach the students about three hours a day due to lunch, recess, ISTEP, and specials. Additionally, Mr. York talked to the students about how their behavior needs to change because they are fifth graders and they should know better. He explained to the students how we do talk about them. We talk about their potentials and how we get so frustrated that they do not see it in themselves. Mr. York and I also discussed how some of the behaviors are formed because of the trauma they went or go through; however, it does not excuse the behavior. This was the biggest lesson for me this week.