

## The Reflective Journal: Week 7

This week was an extremely busy week. Mr. York has been having the students get ready for ISTEP by answering last year's ISTEP questions and I have been helping guide the students. After school, the third through fifth grade teachers practiced and recorded a video for ISTEP and also attended an ISTEP meeting. On Thursday evening, we also set up and worked at family night. During school on Friday, there was also an ISTEP pep rally.

My goal for this week was introduce myself to at least two families and talk about how their student is doing in the class during family night. However, Longfellow's family night did not have the same set up as previous families nights that I have attended and I did not get a chance to talk to families. The families were split in two groups. One group ate pizza, listened about ISTEP preparation, and watched a movie and the other group painted a picture. My job was to distribute the pizza, chips, and punch. I honestly thought I would have time to talk to families, but between passing out pizza and families listening to the movie, there was not time to talk with families. Hopefully, in the future I will find more opportunities to talk with students' parents.

My most proud moment was during my grammar lesson on capitalization. First, I asked the students what words need to be capitalized in a sentence. Then, the class made a list of words that need to be capitalized. I was very proud of the students' responses because some of the things they said I did not think of such as some abbreviations or book titles. The students then received a paragraph with no capital letters. I told them that they had to circle the letters that needed to be capitalized. After five minutes, I told the students that there were thirty-four letters that needed to be circled and the students went crazy. Some had too many letters circles and others not enough. After a couple of minutes, we went over the paragraph together and explained why some letters needed to be capitalized and why others did not need to be. I also explained the reason why we did this activity was because many students are not capitalizing the right words. Overall, I thought the lesson went well.

On the other hand, one of my failures this week was my lesson on teaching the students their spelling definitions. This week, I had a PowerPoint to visually represent the definitions instead of just stating the definitions. I started off like I usually do and asked the students what the word injection means. Various students raised their hands and gave their definitions. Then, I showed them mine; however, my definitions were wordier than they needed to be. I told the students several times that their definitions were way better than mine and I would work on making my definitions shorter.

This week was full of extra activities including recording an ISTEP video, an ISTEP meeting, family night, and an ISTEP pep rally. I really enjoyed recording the video with the teachers and student teachers. It was a great way to get to know them more while having fun. Also, the ISTEP meeting informed me on the rules that teachers and students have to follow. During family night, I remember thinking how great it was that approximately eighty families attended because it showed me that they supported their child's education. However, the ISTEP pep rally was by far the best extra activity. I thought it was a great way to get the students excited and boost their confidence. Also, the students seemed to like the activities that were planned such as two other student teachers and myself getting pied in the face because our class lost a game, Mr. Moore dunking basketballs, watching dancers dance, and watching the ISTEP video. Overall, this week was tiring, but definitely worth it.

Throughout this week, Mr. York and I talked about various topics. However, more of our conversations happened throughout the day instead of after school because we did not have enough time after school to reflect. One conversation we had was that during one of my spelling lessons, I gave good praise to the students. He stated how he liked that I told each student who gave an answer that they gave a great definition because either I did not think of that definition or they stated it very clearly. He said that through my positive feedback, I was helping create a caring learning environment. Another time, Mr. York showed me some other features that the SMART board had to offer and explained a lesson I could do with the features. I was happy to learn more about the SMART board.