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Two of biggest teaching strengths are my ability to be flexible and my confidence.

During one of my teaching days I forgot to bring my original book that my lesson was planned on. I had to rethink what I was going to do and didn't have more than 15 minutes to do so. I found a book on a similar topic and did my lesson as planned. I realized that this was a strength of mine because I did not panic at the thought of my original plan being thrown off, I just went with the flow and my lesson turned out great. Another strength is my confidence in the classroom. I have been in a lot of classrooms and this strength did not come over night. Now when I get in front of group of students I do not feel like a student myself but a teacher. Having confidence in the classroom sets a presence to the students; it gives a sense of authority and respect. Another strength that I have is my creativity. I like to find fun ways to introduce information. To me that helps engage the students and helps them retain information better than just reading or being told the information. If I can find a fun activity that will reinforce the material then I am willing to try it out.

One aspect I need to change is differentiating. I feel like understand that all students learn differently, and that different students will need things that others won't. My issue was the act of adding it to my lessons. When creating my lesson plans I really struggled with gearing up my lessons. Gearing down for was not as hard but trying to gear up so that those students were learning the same lesson but as everyone else but also being challenged was difficult. I did not and still need to work on how to gear up without making more work for the students. This change will be extremely beneficial to my students especially. The students that need the gear up will get tired of always having "extra" work. It isn't fair to make them do more than

everyone else just because they are advanced on the subject. Learning how to properly gear up an assignment will not only benefit them in challenging them but also help them towards mastery of the content.

I feel like I have a good sense of classroom management, especially when it comes to getting the classes attention and keeping them on topic. Something that I do want to change is being afraid to discipline. I know very strongly that I cannot be my students “friend” and that they have to see me as the authority in the room, but no one wants to be the mean teacher. In my Westview class I had a situation where I saw something happen and the classroom teacher did not. She had told us to use her discipline system when we felt it was necessary but I will admit that I debated in my head whether to say something directly to the student or tell the teacher and let her deal with it. For me this change is extremely important. I definitely want my students to like me and feel comfortable with me but I don’t want them to think they can do what they want to inside my classroom. I want to enter my student teaching experience feeling confident and I don’t want to be looked at as a guest in the room. Learning how to go in and feel confident disciplining in a way that the students understand what they did wrong, but also in a way that the student respects me because they understand why I am disciplining them will help. I don’t want to be one of those teachers that have to yell to demand respect. I believe making this change will help me with control in my future classroom.

It is essential for me to be culturally responsive in the classroom to be aware of the diversity and needs of all the students in my classroom. Every student that enters my classroom will be unique; they will have different needs and different backgrounds. As their teacher I have to be aware of their needs to insure content is mastered. Students need to feel like they are included in their classroom. It is important to get to know what my student’s backgrounds are to

involve their culture as well. If I have a student that celebrates Hanukkah but I only address Christmas because that is the majority, then I am actively leaving out their culture. Instead of just focusing on Christmas it is important to include all the different cultures that are in the class. The classroom is supposed to be a safe and welcoming environment. So being culturally responsive is essential to making the classroom a positive and encouraging environment.

During my EDEL 350 experience I got to see multiple developmental assets in place in the school. One asset that they placed a lot of emphasis on was school boundaries. The school had their mission statement displayed on plaques on the walls. They also had three things they follow to be safe, responsible, and respectful. When the teacher catches them doing good, being on task etc. they can earn a little green card to put into a drawing for a prize each Friday. These three concepts were posted on the hall walls and also inside the classroom. They also display voice levels in the hallways and classrooms. These are expectations that are set and the students know they are required to follow.

Another asset that I observed while in the classroom was adult role model. Mrs. B would constantly model what she wanted her students to do. Also even in disciplinary situations she talked to her students with respect demanding respect in return. For me this was a great way of modeling respect for others even when you may not be happy with them.

In Mrs. B's classroom I would say she promoted school engagement. She works to engage her students into that work that then helps the students become actively engaged in the lesson. She allows her students to use the smart board and write when papers are under the document camera so they get excited about participating.