

Alanna Gaylord- Observation # 5
11/3/15
Albert D Lawton Middle School



Today you were in the midst of solo teaching. I came to visit you during your two seventh grade classes. Your students were working on their elements and principles painting project.

I heard several students talking about their work with their neighbors. "How are you doing rhythm?" I noticed that everyone remained engaged in their work throughout class. Although there are set parameters for this project, using the elements and principles, there are also plenty of choices regarding how they go about showing their understanding. This project naturally differentiates for different types of

learners. You presented the material in a way (power point, demonstration, and handouts at each table) that made it accessible for all students. Some students who were ready for a challenge created more complex demonstrations of the elements and principles. Others who were still working on their painting skills could feel successful and demonstrate their learning in a less complex way.

I liked how you ended the first class with a few questions to circle back and reinforce the knowledge of the elements and principles. As you know, this also gives you information regarding if your students are really "getting it". You also began the second class by asking them to list the elements and principles. This was a great way to warm them up and get them in the right mindset to work on their paintings.



The students in this classroom are well trained to set up their workspace. I like how you expect this of them. You left their paintings in a spot in the front of the room and students came up to find their work and then gathered their paint, brush, pallet, and paper towel. Teaching students how to set up and clean up allows you to have more time to help students with their work. Sometimes it feels easier to just set things up yourself but taking the time to teach students how to do it works out well in the long run. Have you observed how Tina has trained them for set up?

The second class seemed a little mellower which, as you reflected, isn't always the case. We talked about two students who were sitting together today. They usually sit apart and shout to each other. Perhaps putting them together helped keep the classroom atmosphere a bit quieter. As with the first class, everyone was so engaged in their work! Every time I scanned the room students had their brushes moving and their eyes gazed down onto their paper. It is clear that this project was age/skill level appropriate. I think the structure of this project also contributed to its success. As I mentioned before there was a lot of choice too. This balance between structure (shapes of color on square paper with elements and principles) and choice is usually a very successful combination for middle school students.

Your interactions with students are so lovely. You are consistently kind and respectful in your tone and words. You are always willing to help and reassure students, encouraging quality work.

You are doing it! Your planning and instruction are that of a more seasoned teacher. Your ability to reflect and think deeply about your teaching as a whole will help you continue to grow and expand as an art educator.

