

Alanna
Observation 3
October 7, 2015
ADL Middle School, Essex Junction

Today when I came in you had your class all set up and ready to go with supplies out and motivational materials readily available. You had a few minutes before class started and you had two eighth grade students visiting with you. One was checking on their canvas and another one was working on a wood sculpture. They were enjoying spending some one on one time with you. It is great that the art room is a place where students feel they can just stop by or come in to work on other creative pursuits. It truly feels like the heart of the school.

You began class by taking attendance and greeting all of your students. Your explanation was calm and clear and students were facing you and listening. I liked how after giving your introduction you asked them to repeat back to you what the directions were. Your tone of voice is very calm which sets a nice tone for the class. As you are introducing I would just make sure the students furthest from you can hear you clearly.

A great way to assess if your introduction was successful is whether or not the majority of students are able to get to work without coming up for clarification. All of the students gathered their work and supplies and got to work so it was clear that they understood the instructions!

One of the students asked if they could request the music today because they didn't have school on Friday and they usually do this on Fridays. You agreed because this class has been working so hard over the last few days. I think it is nice to have these special treats for students. Giving them some ownership over the room, in this case choosing music, helps them feel apart of the community. Plus, art is supposed to be joyful and this adds an element of fun.

I like the way you moved around the room and checked in with students about their work, offering suggestions and encouragement. The students were using gouache paints today, which was so great. It is wonderful to give students the opportunity to work with all different types of "real" artists' materials. I think they were fascinated with the little tubes of paint. You must have done a great job teaching them how to just squeeze out a bit of paint and to properly mix. They were mixing and painting with such control.

There was some typical middle school behavior going on between your student C and a female student. C is definitely a student to keep your eye on, as I'm sure you know. With a student like him it will be a balancing act between not getting on him for every behavior and not letting his behavior take over the vibe of the class. I liked when he asked you if you had any earplugs because he didn't like the song that was playing. You responded without much of a reaction. This kind of took the wind out of his distracting behavior and he got right back to work. I think it is great that you are building a positive relationship with this student instead of letting him frustrate you.

You kept an eye on the classroom and the time. You gave several warnings at the end that class was wrapping up soon. I like how you gave a job, picking up the black and white paint, to a student (W?). I think it is a good tactic to have students responsible for cleaning up their spots then assigning a few jobs to people to help with the other items out in the classroom. You can think about who would be good at a particular job or who might "need" a job that day. You may even want to give C a job and see what happens!

Your confidence in front of the classroom is growing. It is great that you are getting some great experience leading the class. Your projects continue to be engaging and well planned. I look forward to seeing how your unit goes with the 6th graders.

