

Juliana Alusik

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Two Settings of Observation Paperwork

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## **EDU 280 Sophomore Field Experience Reflection Template**

**Professor McMahon**

**Student Name:** Juliana Alusik

**Date:** February 8, 2018

**Cooperating Teacher:** Ms. F (General Ed.) and Mr. S (Special Ed.)

**Time:** 1:00-3:30pm

**Observed Grade, Subject Area, and Specialization:** Fifth Grade, Math, Inclusion Setting

**Domain 1: Planning and Preparation:** Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy, Demonstrating Knowledge of Students, Setting Instructional Outcomes, Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources, Designing Coherent Instruction, Designing Student Assessments  
My General Ed. CT demonstrates knowledge of her students when discussing her students' needs

with me while I am observing. When I first entered the classroom, she took me aside to explain that the school demographics are fifty-one percent poverty with large numbers of special education and English language learners throughout all classes and grade levels. She explained most students were low to average performing and many struggled with the material of the curriculum. With this information, she further informed me that this provides a challenge in teaching the students because they need so much one-on-one guidance due to their learning struggles. By knowing all this about her students, she used groups in each subject to have her special education teacher and herself work with a selected number of students who would need the most help based on the content. For example, in the afternoon math class, two groups were chosen and each group worked with a teacher for the topic of graphing. By having groups, the students were able to ask questions and have the specific help and support needed as the teacher worked with them.

**Domain 2: Classroom Environment:** Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport, Establishing a Culture for Learning, Managing Classroom Procedures, Managing Student Behavior, Organizing Physical Space

Because of the high number of students struggling in class, my General Ed. CT and Special Ed.

CT both spend a lot of time managing student behavior. The students are very chatty, disruptive and often move about the classroom, thus making engaged learning time a difficult success in the classroom. Both educators spend a lot of time asking the students to quiet down and pay attention during whole class lessons. However, both teachers have also recognized the issue stems from the low to average performance of the students as well as their difficulty learning the material. In order to work with the large amount of talking the students do, the teachers allow students to partner and/or group up during independent practice. The large group lesson begins with most students listening and learning before they become more talkative and side-tracked near the end. Thus, during independent practice, students are then able to collaborate and talk as they work. This student management style during lessons can help some students who struggle by working with peers and allowing them the opportunity to talk as they work.

**Domain 3: Instruction:** Communicating with Students, Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques, Engaging Students in Learning, Using Assessment in Instruction, Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

My General Ed. And Special Ed. CTs both use assessment in instruction after large tests and quizzes. After a math test, my Special Ed. CT took the graded math tests to the board and wrote each grade received by number, not letter. When a grade repeated, he put a check mark or tally mark next to that number. After all the grades were on the board, the students were able to see how the class performed on the test. As more students did well on the exam overall, students clapped for high grades and thought about how they would not want to receive a lower grade that was put on the board. Then, the tests were returned to the students and the class congratulated the one student who received the grade of one hundred. My Special Ed. CT then discussed the

importance of studying for tests as that is how to receive higher grades and succeed in class.

Students had a couple minutes to reflect on their test as the classes grade average for the exam was marked outside the class on a chart competing for the best grades against the other fifth grade sections.

**Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities:** Reflecting on Teaching, Maintaining Accurate Records, Communicating with Families, Participating in the Professional Community, Growing and Developing Professionally, Showing Professionalism

My Special Ed. CT and General Ed. CT maintain accurate records on tests and quizzes. As fifth grade has a grade book and prepares students for middle school, grades are recorded in a number of ways. Class assignments, homework, quizzes, and tests are entered online to the class gradebook by my General Ed. CT. Further, when exams are handed back, low grades—usually defined as below a sixty—are asked to be signed and returned by the students. As most students do not return the grades, my General Ed. CT makes photocopies of the students' grades for future reference in the instance a family member or administrator needs to see this for evidence of grade. Also, my Special Ed. CT is in charge of determining the grade average of the class for different subjects, especially math, and filling in the unit test average on the chart outside the classroom. This chart demonstrates the progress of the students and competes against the other fifth grade sections. These records are very important for the teachers' validity and progress of student work.

**Student Reflection:**

Following my first day of observations, my CTs questioned me numerous times if teaching was truly what I wanted to do after I had observed the difficult demographics and behavior challenges in their classroom. After observing the struggles that the students had in the fifth grade, I was awakened to the truth of how difficult teaching can be in high needs schools. As I have read about how "Nearly one-fifth of children in America grow up in poverty" (Essa,

2014, p. 59) and that poverty has a difficult impact on students, I was faced with the true situational impact these statistics have. Students struggled academically and personally in the classroom with their behavior and learning because of the difficulties they faced at home. Further, because so many students have special needs and are English language learners, teaching to very diverse individuals led to issues managing the large group lessons. I experienced how "...when students enter the classroom each morning, they carry with them experiences that impact their physical, social, emotional, and academic development" (Ryan, Cooper & Bolick, 2016, p. 91). Observing student struggles is personally difficult because student success is one of the main goals of education, however when each student needs individualized attention for numerous different steps and concepts of lessons, it is hard to meet those needs. Student needs in this class are very high and very unique to each student, thus the classroom management seemed to be a difficult task when the teachers were trying to meet student needs and teach new content before exam deadlines.

With the high needs, classroom management appeared to be more difficult for teaching lessons as engaged learning time with the teacher would be interrupted numerous times. "In most cases, the breach of discipline is an overt act by one or more students that distracts attention from or interrupts the performance of the task at hand" (Ryan, Cooper & Bolick, 2016, p. 436). These breaches of discipline were most frequent during class lessons compared to independent practice; with this observation, I was able to understand and respect the high amounts of time given for the students to collaborate during independent practice. As Woolfolk suggests that "Sometimes students become disruptive because the work assigned is too difficult" (Woolfolk, 2016, p. 493), I would further agree to this based on my observations and could use this concept to rationalize why the students are very disruptive. These students have such high needs for support and their

learning that often when they are not working, it is because they didn't understand something they were working on. Because of the student demographics and struggles with classroom management, I wonder if rules for the class had been written and hung up in the room would make a difference in engaged learning time. I acknowledge that I do not have enough experience to understand how it feels to run a high needs classroom, however I do wonder if there are other techniques that can help regulate the student behavior during lessons. Research suggests that rules and routines are best for classroom management, but I do wonder if there are more specific techniques that could help my CTs in their fifth-grade class.



## **EDU 280 Sophomore Field Experience Reflection Template**

**Professor McMahon**

**Student Name:** Juliana Alusik

**Date:** February 22, 2018

**Cooperating Teacher:** Ms. F (General Ed.) and Mr. S (Special Ed.)

**Time:** 11:30am-12:15pm

**Observed Grade, Subject Area, and Specialization:** Fifth Grade, Science, Inclusion

**Domain 1: Planning and Preparation:** Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy, Demonstrating Knowledge of Students, Setting Instructional Outcomes, Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources, Designing Coherent Instruction, Designing Student Assessments  
My General Ed. CT demonstrated knowledge of resources when introducing a new district wide science project on endangered animals. To start the project, students had to choose an endangered species and research their characteristics for the first steps of the project. My CT handed out a paper copy of the project for the students to have but also uploaded it to the Google Classroom for easy access if students lost or misplaced the packet after today. She then displayed how to get to the World Wildlife Fund website using the projector from computer to Promethean Board to show how to find endangered species to choose from. My CT then let the students use their Chromebooks to research the animal of their choice and begin taking notes either on paper or in the Google Drive. The use of the Chromebooks enabled my CT to travel around the room and redirect students to work independently or in the small group they were assigned to.

**Domain 2: Classroom Environment:** Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport, Establishing a Culture for Learning, Managing Classroom Procedures, Managing Student Behavior, Organizing Physical Space  
My General Ed. CT organizes the physical space with opportunities for students and teachers to move throughout the classroom. The students sit in chairs and at tables that fit two students and

move on wheels. These tables are then moved to make three tables in rows and two tables that make groups. This set up also has the two teachers' desks on the side of the room with storage behind them. The table with a computer connected to the Promethean board is stationed in the corner and for use of students when necessary. The classroom is open around the outer borders and space between desks for teachers and students to move about. Further, the walls are covered in images and posters of information and decorations that make the classroom bright and lively. The classroom organization feels welcoming, clean and easy for students to access things they need. These characteristics also helped students move into their groups and set up to work on their endangered species project quickly and easily.

**Domain 3: Instruction:** Communicating with Students, Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques, Engaging Students in Learning, Using Assessment in Instruction, Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

My General Ed. CT and Special Ed. CT both used questioning and discussion techniques to help students determine which animals were better to research. They asked probing questions that helped guide the students to narrow down the animal they wanted and aided in beginning research by asking questions that would differentiate the animal from others. Students would think through the answers with the teacher and discussed about why this was the animal to research. Further, the student then started thinking about the assignment to determine what kind of enclosure the animal would need based on their research.

**Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities:** Reflecting on Teaching, Maintaining Accurate Records, Communicating with Families, Participating in the Professional Community, Growing and Developing Professionally, Showing Professionalism

My General Ed. CT introduced the project by showing professionalism to the students. As the groups were announced, my General Ed. CT discussed the importance of working in a group meant all students needed to collaborate and do any equal amount of the work. She explained



that to collaborate in jobs, such as how she coteaches with my Special Ed. CT, requires input and work from all members involved. Issues and disagreements would need to be talked through by the students and resolved to make the project be a success.

**Student Reflection:**

The district wide project was a packet of twenty-eight pages on the topic of creating a safe enclosure, either in the wild or a zoo, for an endangered species. During this assignment I observed my General Ed. CT work hard to meet with each group and individual child working on the assignment. I believe her behavior during this project brought out characteristics I have seen throughout my hours so far that make me believe she has more of a romantic philosophy of education. She works hard to understand her students and has been able to discuss them to me with well-rounded detailed. She is constantly concerned about their futures inside and outside of school as they move up to the middle school and wants them to be good people. She has discussed with me that she has spent a lot of time teaching the class how to be polite and treat other people. Based on these observations and discussions with her, she teaches as the “purpose of education is individual self-fulfillment—that is, education must help the students develop physically, intellectually, socially, and morally” (Ryan, Cooper & Bolick, 2016, p. 289). Her care for the students has a stronghold in the classroom and has an impact on how she teaches material and has the students work in the classroom.

Romanticism is a child-centered approach, which is the commonality between my General Ed. CT and my own philosophy of education, progressivism. "Progressivism views nature as being in flux, as ever changing. Consequently, knowledge must continually be redefined and rediscovered to keep up with that change. [Furthermore,] ...progressives view the mind as a marvelous mechanism for problem solving. Like the romantics, advocates of the progressive viewpoint believe that people are naturally exploring, inquiring entities" (Ryan,

Cooper & Bolick, 2016, p. 291). I agree that children should be fully developed and grow into strong adults at school; however, I also feel that the content taught in schools should be relevant and applicable in the world students will be entering. As the future of the world, I want my students to be able to have a strong foundation of skills and abilities to lead them forward to be successful and prosperous in their lives. Their success is the focus on my teaching and with problem solving skills, students will be able to build a future for themselves.



## **EDU 280 Sophomore Field Experience Reflection Template**

**Professor McMahon**

**Student Name:** Juliana Alusik

**Date:** February 22, 2018

**Cooperating Teacher:** Ms. F (General Ed.) and Ms. Z (Special Ed.)

**Time:** 1:45-2:15pm

**Observed Grade, Subject Area, and Specialization:** Fourth Grade, Leader In Me Presentation, Inclusion

**Domain 1: Planning and Preparation:** Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy, Demonstrating Knowledge of Students, Setting Instructional Outcomes, Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources, Designing Coherent Instruction, Designing Student Assessments

Both of my CTs demonstrated knowledge of content and pedagogy during a presentation on the fourth habit of the Leader In Me program. The fourth habit is to “think win-win” when faced with a problem or disagreement with others. The goal of the habit is to learn to compromise with mutual benefit in the end, as well as to cooperate rather than compete with others. My CTs introduced this topic by opening a discussion between teachers and students to provide examples of times when thinking win-win was necessary. Both teachers gave detailed examples of their own win-win experiences that connected to the topic of them co-teaching together for the first time. Moreover, the teachers had the students watch a video that connected with the content and helped students visually conceptualize the habit. They then discussed what happened and how a win-win attitude can lead to mutual success and benefit. This discussion was followed up by a scenario for an example and the students broke into groups to fulfill a graphic organizer that differentiated win-win, win-lose, lose-win, and lose-lose situations to the scenario. Both teachers fully discussed and explained the habit to the children as they both understood and experienced the habit to help the students learn.

**Domain 2: Classroom Environment:** Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport, Establishing a Culture for Learning, Managing Classroom Procedures, Managing Student Behavior, Organizing Physical Space

My CTs used the lesson on a win-win attitude to establish a culture for learning within the classroom. During the discussions of the habit, both CTs often exemplified using win-win tactics to improve oneself and ability to succeed. Further, both CTs also explained that by adopting this habit and the other seven of the Leader In Me program aids in learning and succeeding in the classroom. By emphasizing the importance of being successful, the teachers highlighted the need for students to care about their lives and their peers. This can help the students focus on learning and growing academically with their peers, thus building a sense of a learning community for the whole class. Additionally, the teaching of this habit also emphasized the classroom as a place for learning academics and personal skills that will prepare the students into their futures.

**Domain 3: Instruction:** Communicating with Students, Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques, Engaging Students in Learning, Using Assessment in Instruction, Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

My General Ed. CT and Special Ed. CT demonstrated flexibility and responsiveness due to the addition of this lesson to the daily plan. The lesson on habit four was a Google Slide presentation shared throughout the fourth grade as a necessary lesson and event during that day. My CTs had to change the schedule of the day to be shorter and more focused during working periods in order to create time for this lesson. They altered their plans for the week to make time available for this lesson and then presented the information during the small chunk of time made available. By having a flexible schedule and the ability to work through changes in class plans, the students were able to benefit from the lesson on habit four and respond with the teachers in discussions about this lesson.

**Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities:** Reflecting on Teaching, Maintaining Accurate Records, Communicating with Families, Participating in the Professional Community, Growing and Developing Professionally, Showing Professionalism

Throughout the habit four presentation, my CTs proved they have been growing and developing professionally in their school. The Leader In Me program is new to the Lindeneau staff and students as it has been introduced rather recently. While discussing the fourth habit, my CTs showed they were highly knowledgeable and prepared to speak about this habit with the students. Thus, both teachers have spent time on being prepared to incorporate this program into the classroom with full understandings of what this includes the staff and students to be able to do. Further, both teachers continue to learn about new expectations and desires the principal has for implementing the program as an integral part of the classroom. By developing self-awareness and understanding within this program, my CTs had a full and interactive discussion with the students to help them understand and apply the fourth habit into their lives.

**Student Reflection:**

The high amounts of time my teachers put into being masters of the content and programs they must teach inspires me. Both teachers are highly informed on the programs in their classroom, even as this school is constantly piloting new programs and introducing more content into the school year. While presenting Habit Four, I was able to understand and relate the content being taught into my own life when I had not been introduced to the Leader In Me program at all by this point. My CTs understand their student's high needs and can learn their content to effectively apply their knowledge and expertise as information digestible by the difficult demographics of their students. The amount of time invested in becoming professionally developed in the new content is very respectable and honorable in this fourth-grade class, especially as the classroom has eight classified students and a large population of English language learners. For teachers, professional development is how to be "a continuous learner,

committed to one's growth both as a person and as a professional. It means knowing the most current information in one's field *and* knowing how to share it with students" (Ryan, Cooper & Bolick, 2016, p. 474). Both of my CTs exemplify being professionally developed, especially in the content that directly impacts their teaching and the students' academic lives.

By understanding the content and programs in the classroom, my teachers also demonstrate how to cooperate and be flexible within the classroom. My Special Ed. CT has led intervention groups and co-taught in the past; however, this is the first-year co-teaching with Ms. F. With the adjustment to co-teaching, both teachers have learned very well how to work together and cooperate in the classroom. They are both very knowledgeable in ways to teach the students and can successfully work scheduling to have successful engagement time in the classroom. According to Woolfolk, good teachers must "have some basic research-based routines for managing classrooms, but they must also be willing and able to break from the routine when the situation calls for change" (Woolfolk, 2016, p. 9). Both CTs have very good management of the classroom and in working scheduling as they alter the schedule for numerous events, added lessons—such as the Habit Four lesson—, and time missed for absences. Further, they have both welcomed me into the classroom and have involved me in their schedule to learn more. Observing the cooperation skills and content mastery of these teachers has been a privilege that continuously inspires me for how to be a successful teacher in the classroom.



## **EDU 280 Sophomore Field Experience Reflection Template**

**Professor McMahon**

**Student Name:** Juliana Alusik

**Date:** March 1, 2018

**Cooperating Teacher:** Ms. F (General Ed.) and Ms. Z (Special Ed.)

**Time:** 1:30-2:00pm

**Observed Grade, Subject Area, and Specialization:** Fourth Grade, Leader In Me, Inclusion

**Domain 1: Planning and Preparation:** Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy, Demonstrating Knowledge of Students, Setting Instructional Outcomes, Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources, Designing Coherent Instruction, Designing Student Assessments

My CTs, and the school as a whole, have been setting instructional outcomes for the students through The Leader In Me program. Each student in the school has a binder in which the students record information about themselves personally and academically. In replacement of Intervention and Enrichment time, my Special Ed. CT ran the classroom to fill in their Leader In Me binders to prepare for the student-led conferences happening in the next weeks. My Special Ed. CT had students pass out the papers going into the binder and instructed students what to do in their binders. She actively showed what she wanted with her master binder for examples to the students and other teachers. After the students had completed their binders' organization, I was formally introduced to the class as Ms. Alusik. I then introduced myself to each individual student and checked if they had completed the "My School Activities" and "My Home Activities" sections. Students were to list activities they took part of at school and at home as a portion of identifying how they were an active part of the community in school and at home. I had two students complete the writing and checked off the rest of the completed work of the students as requested of my Special Ed. CT. These binders represented hard work and success

the students have done in the classroom during assignments and completion of work on programs done on the Chromebook. The teachers set the standards for what is to be completed and worked on so that the students can see the outcomes of their work in school.

**Domain 2: Classroom Environment:** Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport, Establishing a Culture for Learning, Managing Classroom Procedures, Managing Student Behavior, Organizing Physical Space

With the Leader In Me program, my CTs can create an environment of respect and rapport throughout the classroom. With a highlight on Habit One: Be Proactive, my CTs have the students take responsibility of their learning and behaviors. My General Ed. CT has asked one student—who was off task—if they were doing what they were supposed to. The student responded honestly, saying “no” and went to do his assigned work. The teacher did not have to have fully discuss the importance of completing work as the student took responsibility and changed their behavior. Further, my Special Ed. CT was able to check on how the special education students were doing on the completion of online programs (such as MindTap, Study Island, and Lexia) by finding out where the students were struggling in their work. The students would openly explain what section of the program they were on and what they needed help with to complete the number of minutes required of them each week.

**Domain 3: Instruction:** Communicating with Students, Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques, Engaging Students in Learning, Using Assessment in Instruction, Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

Leader In Me is a program that engages students in learning throughout all classrooms and grade levels. My fourth grade CTs both adapt the seven habits of this program to involve students as leaders of their own learning and actions to put them in control of themselves. The seven habits are hung within the classroom as guidance for self-control and self-advocacy in personal learning. Further, to also have the students in control of their learning, students have a “work



menu” with the assignments for the week available to view. Students then use the menu to regulate themselves by completing the “Must-Dos” on the list before starting any possible “May-Dos.” As each student receives this menu, the whole class knows what is expected of them and can see other students working on their assignments themselves to be motivated to also follow the menu. The students can be in control of their work and learning to make them more independent and work to their needs.

**Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities:** Reflecting on Teaching, Maintaining Accurate Records, Communicating with Families, Participating in the Professional Community, Growing and Developing Professionally, Showing Professionalism

My Special Ed. CT reflected on her teaching of the Leader In Me program in the classroom. She explained to me that the program provides a good sense of empowerment and self-control for the student’s own learning. However, this program is a heavy load of work and requires a lot from the students. For a classroom of high needs students, with special needs and a large amount of English language learners, it is difficult to fit time correctly into the class schedule for this program. On this day, and most often, the time spent on the binder set up took away Intervention and Enrichment time for the students. Instead of students leaving the classroom for specialists at this time or being called over for one-on-one work with the teachers, the whole class had to sit and organize their Leader In Me binders. My Special Ed. CT was upset she could not work with her special education students as much that day because of the program taking out so much instruction time.

**Student Reflection:**

The Leader In Me program is a new way the Lindeneau School is trying to improve the student and parent involvement in the school’s academic success. After being flagged for low test scores, the school adopted this program to put students in charge of their learning and

involve parents with their student's academics. The program has seven habits in all that connect with student-led learning and are healthy life habits that parents can adopt for their own lives. Although this program is good for academic engagement, it has been proven difficult to fit into classroom schedules due to the heavy content and inclusion aspects. Some schools have entire sections of their schedules for this program, however Lindeneau teachers have trouble fitting it in with all the other pilot programs, online work programs, events, and meetings throughout each school week. For these teachers, they understand that "The schedule should also allow for flexibility, rather than be rigidly followed. There are many occasions when the set time frame should be altered" (Essa, 2014, p. 205) as they run their classrooms because many events and programs are added throughout the school year and interrupt academic time. The heavy amount of content needed to be taught before the PARCC exam in May places a large stress on teaching time for educators that becomes more difficult with the addition of programs, such as Leader In Me, that takes away learning time.

On the contrast, this program also insists students lead their learning and gives them more control over themselves. They learn how to oversee their behaviors and learning as the teacher becomes a facilitator. This program follows along the constructivist approach with active learning for the students to be in control and the teacher aid their learning. "The constructivist approach requires that learners actively interact with the information, building on their prior knowledge, attitudes, and values"(Ryan, Cooper & Bolick, 2016, p. 386).

This approach switches the traditional teaching style of direct instruction guiding student learning to a different style of student-led learning that the teacher assists. As a facilitator, "teachers can monitor students' projects, guiding their efforts and providing feedback. Instead of being a teller and a tester, the teacher can be a leader and a co-learner" (Ryan, Cooper & Bolick,

2016, p. 208). With this, there is more control over students who follow their own learning speed and can acquire the individual help they need as it arises. The teachers are then able to focus on individual needs and support for lower achieving and struggling students. I have seen this in the fourth-grade classroom as my CTs both use their computers to track where students are in Study Island, Lexia and MindTap to determine who to call up for individualized instruction.

With both sides considered, I wonder if introducing one or two habits as the focus per each grade level may be more effective for the educators and students. According to the Leader In Me website, there are seven habits in total that all build on each other. I wonder if by focusing on one or two habits per grade level would enable the teachers to manage and incorporate the habit into the lessons throughout the school year. This could then make the binder fill more overtime in each section and be built upon over time as the next habit is introduced. Also, the habits could then be complete and detailed in understanding by the time the students graduate in fifth grade. Perhaps this could be too difficult for over time, but I wonder if it could be effective.



## **EDU 280 Sophomore Field Experience Reflection Template**

**Professor McMahon**

**Student Name:** Juliana Alusik

**Date:** March 12, 2018

**Cooperating Teacher:** Ms. F (General Ed.) and Ms. Z (Special Ed.)

**Time:** 9:00am-9:45am

**Observed Grade, Subject Area, and Specialization:** Fourth Grade, Morning Meeting, Inclusion

**Domain 1: Planning and Preparation:** Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy, Demonstrating Knowledge of Students, Setting Instructional Outcomes, Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources, Designing Coherent Instruction, Designing Student Assessments

Ms. F and Ms. Z have designed coherent instruction during the routine of entering the classroom that flows into time for Morning Meeting each day. Since the beginning of the school year, the students enter the classroom to the teacher welcoming each student at the door. Each student makes eye contact with one or both teachers and says, "good morning" in response to the teacher saying, "good morning." After entering, the students bring themselves and their belongings to their seat, unpack there, and then bring their backpacks and jackets to be hung up in the closet. All students then sit down at their seats and begin the instruction on the board, which for this day was to write a paragraph about one event in their weekend with three supporting details. As the students worked, those who received breakfast were able to eat and work, lunch was recorded for the next day and brought to the office, and new classroom jobs were announced. After the morning routine was complete, students were instructed to leave their work open to be checked and all gather in a circle on the carpet for Morning Meeting. During Morning Meeting, one student was chosen to lead the greeting of all by choosing a fist bump, handshake, or high five to pass around the circle. The student chose fist bump, thus starting to the right, one student fist

bumped another and said, “good morning.” This occurred around the circle until returning to the first student. Following this, Ms. F shared an event in her weekend with three supporting details and then asked students to put a thumbs up in front of them if they would like to ask a “juicy” question. A juicy question was described as one to bring out interesting information and details for the speaker to answer. Three juicy questions were taken for Ms. F and then this structure repeated for three students.

**Domain 2: Classroom Environment:** Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport, Establishing a Culture for Learning, Managing Classroom Procedures, Managing Student Behavior, Organizing Physical Space

The morning routine and meeting manage classroom procedures through student involvement to build a structure conducive for an easy transition into the beginning of the school day. By forming this structure early in the school year, the students can control their environment to complete what is expected. The students walk into the classroom, unpack, and follow the directions on the board each day. With this consistent structure and routine, the teacher can simply facilitate and handle student questions and concerns that arise. In leading their behavior, the students also have a major role in the control and success of the classroom. By the students having responsibility and control as they enter the classroom, they are improving their learning and independent abilities. The morning routine and message both promote student responsibility and leads to successful management of classroom procedures. With welcoming all students and teachers in the classroom during these daily routines, all students are found important and valuable as well. The teachers are able to ensure the students are taken care of, welcomed into the room, and that they are available for help if needed. Additionally, this leads to more calmness and security in the classroom as the school day begins. Overall, this structure in the morning

provides emotional and academic support to the students in their independence as the students have a major role in managing the classroom procedures of the morning.

**Domain 3: Instruction:** Communicating with Students, Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques, Engaging Students in Learning, Using Assessment in Instruction, Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

During Morning Meeting specifically, Ms. F facilitates the conversations and welcoming of the students by promoting open communication between students and teacher. She actively takes part in the greeting around the circle by integrating herself into the circle at her seat. Further, Ms. F begins Morning Message by sharing her experiences with the students as a way to exemplify what she wants the students to do, but also to connect herself with her students. She talked about her weekend experience of going out to eat with her husband. After sharing, she welcomed student questions and connections to her night out. By discussing her weekend event and then facilitating the discussion, the students were very interested, engaged, and responsive. Many students put a thumbs up on the carpet to respond and learn more about what Ms. F did while out to eat, such as asking what she got to eat, how the food was, and if she enjoyed her time. By involving herself in the discussion, Ms. F was able to be an example of what was expected, but also communicative with the students about herself and then hear about their weekend events.

**Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities:** Reflecting on Teaching, Maintaining Accurate Records, Communicating with Families, Participating in the Professional Community, Growing and Developing Professionally, Showing Professionalism

Ms. F has her own website available for parents and students through the school website that she uses to ensure communication with families. During morning routine, Ms. F will check in with students in private about parental concerns and to check in with students. On her website, it is available to contact both teachers by email, phone call, and notes in homework folders. The morning routine provides Ms. F with an opportunity to see if any students have notes from home

that she will have to respond to by the end of the day. In addition, Ms. Z receives a daily chart from the mother of one student to keep track of online program completion at home. The time the student spends on the program each night is recorded and signed by the parent each night to connect student class achievement with parents and involve learning at home. Both teachers communicate with families through email for notifications, the website for a connection to what is going on in the classroom, and by papers in the homework folder for updates and events.

**Student Reflection:**

Setting up classroom procedures and routines in the beginning of the school year is crucial to successful classroom management in the elementary classroom. “Studies have shown that classroom management routines have a direct impact on social and children’s emotional development in addition to cognitive growth, and reduces behavior problems (Ostrosky, et al., 2003)...Implementing routines, to ensure a safe and secure learning environment, takes time and effort, however, it is time well spent and considered the “backbone of daily classroom life” (Murry, 2002)” (Rawlings, Bolton, & Notar, C. E., 2017, p. 398). With this research and the evidence in the fourth-grade classroom, I have begun to learn how impactful a normal routine can be for the students. Beginning in the lower elementary grades, it has been proven that “A regular schedule and routine are essential for helping young children work comfortably in their environment; they need the security and regularity” (Essa, 2014, p. 387). By forming a sense of routine and regularity in the classroom for young children, it is important to continue this into the upper elementary grades. The morning routine and message provide students with tasks that they can succeed in and fulfill expectations for when entering the classroom in the morning. By providing this structure for the students to handle, the beginning of the school day is easier for each student’s emotions and self-esteem. In the beginning of the day students are returning to school from whatever may have happened since they went home the day before, thus having

regularity and a role they can control in the morning can help the students succeed and settle in the classroom. The morning routine has clear expectations and gives each student a role that they can manage and handle as they are just starting their day. The Morning Message then makes each student feel empowered with a voice, as well as connected to their teachers and classmates.

As I observe the impact of these routines, I begin to think about what I would like to implement in my own classroom one day. I first highlight that “Routines, critical to maximizing learning opportunities, are best established at the beginning of the year to set the tone for the remainder of the school year. They must be taught, modeled, and rehearsed for students to identify the skills and expectations necessary for “classroom health” (k5chalkbox, n.d.), and to initiate students’ self-directed learning” (Rawlings, Bolton & Notar, 2017, p. 398). The routines I will decide to implement and rely on throughout the school year must be started on the first day my students enter the classroom. It is critical I begin to instill these procedures early as they are to become the key to success in my classroom. Therefore, the beginning of the school year may become designated to more time in developing routine and learning my students my first year of teaching. As I begin to decide on routines, it will be a process to determine what works within my classroom for my students and myself to attain the best structure. With this, “Establishing, explaining, reviewing, and modifying (as needed) rules, routines, and procedures that are clearly understood to handle the daily recurring activities as well as developing procedures for unpredictable events that may occur, will help you to devote the maximum amount of time available for instruction and enhance classroom management (Marshall, 2001 as cited in Pedota, 2007)” (Rawlings, Bolton, & Notar, 2017, p. 410). Devoting time to the success of routines in my classrooms will be time well spent in order to improve engaged learning time in my classroom. I plan to adopt ideas of the teachers I have observed, such as the greeting of students



at the door and having students unpack at their seats, in order to be most efficient and successful in my own classroom.



## **EDU 280 Sophomore Field Experience Reflection Template**

**Professor McMahon**

**Student Name:** Juliana Alusik

**Date:** March 13, 2018

**Cooperating Teacher:** Ms. F (General Ed.) and Mr. S (Special Ed.)

**Time:** 9:00am-10:00am

**Observed Grade, Subject Area, and Specialization:** Fifth Grade, Common Prep Tuesday Meeting, Inclusion

**Domain 1: Planning and Preparation:** Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy, Demonstrating Knowledge of Students, Setting Instructional Outcomes, Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources, Designing Coherent Instruction, Designing Student Assessments  
For the Common Prep Tuesday Meeting, the fifth-grade teachers came together to discuss

numerous topics and set instructional outcomes. The fifth-grade classrooms have a unique set up to prepare students for the changing of classes in middle school. Two sections of fifth grade teach literacy and social studies, and the other two sections teach math and science. For example, Ms. F and Mr. S have two sections of fifth grade that they teach: one section is theirs for homeroom, 5-2, and then a second section, 5-3. From the morning homeroom until lunch, the 5-2 section is in Ms. F and Mr. S's classroom for special, math and science. After lunch 5-2 switches out to the 5-3 homeroom class for English and social studies lessons. During this time, the 5-3 homeroom comes to Ms. F and Mr. S's classroom for math and science lessons from after lunch until the end of the day. This switching also occurs between the 5-1 and 5-4 sections and provides the teachers with the ability to make lesson plans only for their content as the students learn how to change between classes in preparation for middle school. Due to the switching of classrooms, all fifth-grade teachers need to work together to make the grade level successful. These meetings provide these teachers the opportunity to discuss topics of the grade level, such

as class trip and meetings, in order to remain connected and unified. During these weekly Common Teacher Prep Tuesday meetings, the teachers set instruction outcomes for their sections in order to keep the grade level consistent. These outcomes are usually not content-based; however, they pertain to all classes. This meeting focused on obtaining all class trip forms, determining which students needed to be contacted, and chaperones. With all the teachers together, discussion was open and easy for those attending to set their grade-level outcomes.

**Domain 2: Classroom Environment:** Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport, Establishing a Culture for Learning, Managing Classroom Procedures, Managing Student Behavior, Organizing Physical Space

During this meeting, the teachers who attended worked to create an environment of respect and rapport for each other. Because not all teachers could make it to the full meeting, Ms. F had a google document file shared with all the content listed for the teachers to cover. The other teachers had been able to update and add to the file with information they received or wanted to cover during the meeting prior to Tuesday. The information was also updated during the meeting for those not present to view. With the updating of the document, all teachers' discussion topics were focused on in order to respect all members. Further, the discussions for those present built rapport between members as they could openly talk about each person's needs, concerns, and questions with sincere responses and group input. All teachers gave input where they could to build the team as a whole and improve communication with teachers and their students. The meeting succeeded in building teacher respect and connecting all sections under the grade level needs.

**Domain 3: Instruction:** Communicating with Students, Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques, Engaging Students in Learning, Using Assessment in Instruction, Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

During the meeting, as the teachers incorporated respect and built rapport, they also highly demonstrated flexibility and responsiveness. In Lindeneau Elementary School, the principal

incorporates many events, clubs, and meetings amongst the introduction and piloting of numerous programs throughout each week of the school year. With this, academic engaged learning time is often hindered and limited. Although all these events alter each teacher's schedule in different ways, they all attempted to make it for at least a portion or more of the meeting. In order to make the meeting, some teachers had to be flexible and alter their daily scheduling time during prep to attend. In contrast, some teachers had to let the group know that they would not be able to make it and the others responded understandingly. These meetings are important and the openness of the staff about working to fit in their time or to contact the group they can not make it helps advance the whole group. Finally, the google document open for all to edit also improved the ability to communicate ideas effectively for those unable to attend as they had the opportunity to view the content later and respond over the document with their concerns and comments. These fifth-grade teachers overall work well together in helping each other out with flexible scheduling and responsiveness to others.

**Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities:** Reflecting on Teaching, Maintaining Accurate Records, Communicating with Families, Participating in the Professional Community, Growing and Developing Professionally, Showing Professionalism

All the fifth-grade teachers in this meeting clearly and actively participated in their professional community on the grade level. By commenting, adding, and updating in the google document shared amongst the teachers for the Common Prep Tuesday Meeting they all played a role in communicating all concerns and questions they had with all grade level teachers. More specifically, Ms. F held the meeting in her classroom, thus she displayed the google document onto her promethean board for the meeting. Throughout the meeting, Ms. F went through and updated the document as the group discussed numerous topics. Through Ms. F's leadership, all the topics were sufficiently covered and clearly updated on the document for the other teachers.

By working together in the group, the topics necessary for the teachers to cover were solved and communicated for all to move forward. For example, the class trip paperwork was a major concern for Ms. F as an official list of those attending was needed to be submitted soon. Ms. F and a fellow teacher easily cleared through the students questioned to be attending and settled the official chaperones. By all teachers participating and having their role incorporated resulted in a successful professional community discussion.

**Student Reflection:**

Teacher cooperation in the fifth grade is so important as the classes switch and each teaches half the curriculum between two classes. This is even more focused in the classroom as Ms. F and Mr. S co-teach together in their classroom. These situations have highlighted the impact co-teaching has made in the educational system as more common than when I attended school, and how likely it may be for me to co-teach one day. Research has shown that cooperation and collaboration are key qualities in the workforce and can provide opportunities from more learning and growth for all involved. Co-teaching can also impact teacher self-reflection and self-understanding as they learn to cooperate with another in their classroom. “As teachers understand more about themselves as individuals and as a team, co-teaching may become even more powerful in positively affecting the growth and development of students with special needs” (Simpson, Thurston, & James, 2014, p. 103). Having special and general education teachers cooperate can also improve the learning environment for the students. Having a teacher more content focused and a teacher more student need focused provides opportunity for more quality learning to arise within the classroom. The implications and research on co-teaching experiences is very positive and strong which support it as a quality decision for schools to make.

With all the research and observing of co-teaching, I am personally concerned I will be

paired with a teacher I disagree with or am not compatible with which will disrupt my future teaching experiences. Although I have not had any poor experiences in observations, work experiences with coworkers has led to the concern I have. In response to this concern, I have seen teachers work through these issues. Further, research discusses how to solve issues with poor relationships that help me think through these concerns. A major focus on research highlights that learning about oneself can help improve the relationship. Further, daily occurrences and change over time are also discussed. As evidence of such research, authors of *The Ultimate Student Teaching Guide* explain that “You and your CT have a wide range of personality characteristics, and these traits (behaviors) are fluid (they change often) and are dependent on the situation” (Daniels, Patterson & Dunston, 2015, p. 57). The focus on time leading to change in disruptions between two people is evident and can provide relief in difficult situations. Moreover, the fact that conflict may be inevitable, has resulted in handling these situations as a key focus in data as well. “However, there may be a time when you have to deal with a conflict. If this happens, our advice is that you use strategic problem solving as a means of resolution. This model encourages you to view conflict through a positive lens and then select and utilize a strategy to solve the conflict” (Daniels, Patterson & Dunston, 2015, p. 57). By looking to research and understanding myself and another teacher, I hope that I will be able to have strong co-teaching relationships like Ms. F and Mr. S as they can provide such amazing results and bring learning opportunities to the classroom unavailable to a single teacher.



## **EDU 280 Sophomore Field Experience Reflection Template**

**Professor McMahon**

**Student Name:** Juliana Alusik

**Date:** March 15, 2018

**Cooperating Teacher:** Ms. F (General Ed.) and Mr. S (Special Ed.)

**Time:** 10:00am-11:30am

**Observed Grade, Subject Area, and Specialization:** Fifth Grade, Math, Inclusion

**Domain 1: Planning and Preparation:** Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy, Demonstrating Knowledge of Students, Setting Instructional Outcomes, Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources, Designing Coherent Instruction, Designing Student Assessments

On this day, all the fifth-grade students had to take an eighty-minute math placement test for the middle school. Rather than have the fifth grade and middle school teachers communicative within the designing of this student assessment, it was completely created by others. My CTs did not like being withheld from the designing of this student assessment for several reasons. To begin, the teachers did not know what was on the test, thus they could not help the students prepare other than discuss the importance of the test. Second, the adjustments for special needs students were not explained and were not incorporated into the test as needed until very late. Finally, this test disrupted the entire day schedule as the teachers were also required to go to a data meeting during and into time after the test. By excluding the teachers from the designing of the student assessment, their empowerment and preparation were not inclusive.

**Domain 2: Classroom Environment:** Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport, Establishing a Culture for Learning, Managing Classroom Procedures, Managing Student Behavior, Organizing Physical Space

Throughout the testing period, Mr. S was in charge of managing student behavior throughout the eighty-minutes as Ms. F was needed to attend a data meeting. During the test Mr. S monitored

student behavior as they worked on their test and ensured all were focusing on their own work. As students finished the exam, Mr. S provided students with additional opportunities to work and remain quiet for those still working. As more students finished, they became restless and louder from having to concentrate and work in their seats for such a long period of time. In addition, the high needs demographic of the classroom also provided more reason for the students to become so restless and talkative after their testing period. Mr. S took into account the needs of the students and responded understandingly but emphasized the other students still working.

**Domain 3: Instruction:** Communicating with Students, Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques, Engaging Students in Learning, Using Assessment in Instruction, Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

My CTs were upset that they could only communicate a small portion of information to their students about the math placement test. The test content was not disclosed and specifically only available to the students once the test began. The limited information about the test provided the teachers with minimum discussion for the students. My CTs explained honestly that they had no information about the test content, that the test's importance was about placing each student in levels at the middle school level, and that each student should do their best. Ms. F and Mr. S discussed good studying tips of getting a good night's rest, having a healthy breakfast, taking one's time on the test, thinking through the problems, and trying one's best. Both Ms. F and Mr. S communicated as much information as they could to inform the students and prepare them for the placement test.

**Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities:** Reflecting on Teaching, Maintaining Accurate Records, Communicating with Families, Participating in the Professional Community, Growing and Developing Professionally, Showing Professionalism

During this test, the fifth-grade teachers were to have group data meeting, thus Ms. F had to leave during the exam and Mr. S had to stay until the test was complete. Both teachers were to be



participating in their professional community for the data meeting, however this placement test required Mr. S to be in the class.

Mr. S was only able to go to the meeting as it started to finish because he could not leave until the test was over and a substitute came to manage the classroom during the lesson following the test. By only participating in the final discussions of the data meeting, Mr. S explained to me that it seemed counterproductive for him to have attempted to attend the mandatory data meeting when the class had the exam and needed a teacher to manage behavior and redirect the students after the exam finished. On the other hand, Ms. F was able to attend the entire data meeting and participate in the professional community and fill in what Mr. S missed. Both co-teachers worked together to fill in what occurred in the morning as they each were in different places.

**Student Reflection:**

High stakes testing is a major discussion taking over the realm of teaching. Based on my CTs reactions I can see the impact of the testing on their academic engaged time and passion for the field is lowered. As many teachers are throughout the nation, my teachers are "...troubled by the amount of time that testing takes—to prepare for the tests and to give them. They complain that the tests cover material that their curriculum does not include" (Woolfolk, 2016, p. 600). The large quantity of tests in the elementary school disrupts large amounts of time my teachers have to teaching. Furthermore, the demographics of the school make high stakes testing more difficult and emotionally draining because the students are of such high needs but don't fully receive all the support they need. For testing to be worth taking, the results need to be valuable and applicable to student level. "If students score low on a science test not because they lack knowledge about science, but because they have difficulty reading the questions, don't speak English fluently, or have too little time to finish, then the test is not a valid measure of science

achievement for those students” (Woolfolk, 2016, p. 601). With demographics of such high needs, the math placement test had a chance of not matching the students’ needs and thus leading to the tests being less valid as they are used to judge the students.

Because standardized testing has so much improvement yet to have done, I would like to work on the testing of students based on project-based learning. I feel as though this process would be more appropriate in the early childhood grade levels and represent more of the students as a whole. If testing focused on whole students as people rather than as test scores to compare against other countries, more engaged learning time could be in place to improve the students. In the face of standardized testing critiques, “A further step that could be taken would be to ensure that the criteria used in school evaluation, including self-evaluation, make explicit reference to a full range of subjects, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural as well as cognitive aims and an appropriate variety of teaching methods and learning outcomes” (Harlem, 2003, p. 48). By focusing on the whole student and their growth as an individual, more students would learn and improve throughout the grade levels than when time is taken for tests that do not accurately represent the children forced to take them.



## **EDU 280 Sophomore Field Experience Reflection Template**

**Professor McMahon**

**Student Name:** Juliana Alusik

**Date:** March 19, 2018

**Cooperating Teacher:** Ms. F (General Ed.) and Ms. Z (Special Ed.)      **Time:** 11:30am-12:15pm

**Observed Grade, Subject Area, and Specialization:** Fourth Grade, Intervention and Enrichment, Inclusion

**Domain 1: Planning and Preparation:** Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy, Demonstrating Knowledge of Students, Setting Instructional Outcomes, Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources, Designing Coherent Instruction, Designing Student Assessments

During Intervention and Enrichment time, Ms. F and Ms. Z both demonstrate knowledge of resources through the integration of technology in the classroom. To begin Intervention and Enrichment (I&E) time, Ms. F posted a list of priorities for the students to do onto the promethean board. This list included the following assignments: two Study Island assignments, Study Island Math Diagnostic for math for listed students, Lexia and Mindplay Minutes, and other Menu items. All of these assignments required the students to access the programs through their Chromebooks. Both Ms. F and Ms. Z were well acquainted in all the programs, thus they were able to help all students with any issues or difficulties they had. Further, Ms. Z checked in with how the special education students were doing on the program as she could print worksheets that focused on any area that the students needed additional help in. By being well versed in all the programs, Ms. F and Ms. Z demonstrated high knowledge in their technology resources for their students' best benefit.

**Domain 2: Classroom Environment:** Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport, Establishing a Culture for Learning, Managing Classroom Procedures, Managing Student Behavior, Organizing Physical Space

During I&E time, my CTs organize the physical space into two main areas of the classroom. For students working independently on their work they stay seated at their desks with their headphones on. By sitting at their desks, the students are to remain quiet unless asking for help and can focus on their work peacefully. For collaborative assignments, the students can gather in small groups on the carpet and discuss their work in a hush tone. In this space, the students are not required to have their headphones on for any time other than for listening to things on their Chromebook as to not disturb the other students. In organizing the space into two centered areas, all students can respect others and work efficiently in their own spaces. Furthermore, both teachers each sit at a rainbow shaped table at opposite ends of the classroom that they use to work with students who need help individually. The classroom during I&E time is organized for all to be successful and focused with opportunities to work independently, cooperatively, and with teachers when in need.

**Domain 3: Instruction:** Communicating with Students, Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques, Engaging Students in Learning, Using Assessment in Instruction, Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

The Study Island, Lexia, and Mindplay programs all implement the use of assessment in instruction. Study Island first provides a mini lesson on the information the students have been assigned. Following the lesson, students complete an assignment that tests whether the students understood the information taught and what areas that may need to be reviewed. In addition, the Lexia and Mindplay programs record the amount of time a student spends to pass a level. If the students are repeatedly struggling with specific sections, the program can alert the teacher for helping the students learn the material in alternate ways. By assessing students' comprehension, understanding, and progress throughout the lessons, teachers can analyze what material needs

more coverage and what students are succeeding with.

**Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities:** Reflecting on Teaching, Maintaining Accurate Records, Communicating with Families, Participating in the Professional Community, Growing and Developing Professionally, Showing Professionalism

Ms. F and Ms. Z both maintain accurate records through the programs they use within the classroom. Study Island, Lexia and Mindplay all record student activity on the program, and grade assignments completion. Study Island records time spent on the program by use of a timer on each assignment and then includes the time used in the grading section. Similarly, Lexia and Mindplay both record student time on activities as the program is in use and as levels are worked on. Lexia and Mindplay minutes are also used to in the district to include academic time on technology and measured between schools for completion. All assignments completed result in certificates to the student after level marks are completed for the teachers to print out and enter in student Leader In Me binders. By measuring student activity and completion through these programs, the teachers have accurate records to see student progress and struggles.

**Student Reflection:**

Edison Township is a district who is a major proponent of integrating technology into the classroom. In Edison Township Elementary Schools, kindergarten and first grade students receive iPad Air devices, and second through fifth-grade students receive Chromebooks. These devices are distributed by the Township and used both in school and at home for assignments. The technology integration is in place for the preparation of students to become technology savvy and knowledgeable individuals. In society today, “Laptop initiatives are taking place throughout the country. As the laptop computer becomes a regular tool in the classroom, a new model for assessing the use of technology in the curriculum with low SES students must be developed” (Kemker, Barron, & Harmes, 2007, p. 318). The integration of technology is a new development highly encouraged in the current classroom and can provide more learning

opportunities for students. As more research is entered in the field of education on the impacts of technology, benefits are found for many. One study gathered data that recorded, “There was a convergence of the evidence across data sources (classroom observations, student work, student interviews, and teacher interviews) to suggest that authentic instruction was taking place in this classroom through lessons that integrated laptop computers. Further, evidence from all data sources indicates that the high levels on the five standards were achieved in many of the lessons” (Kemker, Barron, & Harmes, 2007, p. 318). Through the use of technology as a learning tool and source of student learning, many can improve their skills and progress through technologies opportunities.

As technology is introduced in classrooms and is a major focus, I consider how to use technology within my own classroom one day. I admire the cohesion and success my CTs have with technology in their classroom as a high-quality tool. “Some computer applications can be classified as cognitive tools when they are used to engage and enhance thinking...Cognitive tools manage information in ways that allow users to think more clearly, creatively, and critically” (Ryan, Cooper & Bolick, 2016, p. 191). Computers provide large arrays of application in the classroom and being used as a cognitive tool can improve learning for all students in the classroom. Thus, integrating technology correctly and efficiently for student learning and progress is a high focal point in my future learning. By integrating technology into my own classroom, more students can be engaged and learn in many different ways. Although “The key is that...the needs of teachers and students shape the uses of technology in the classroom, not the other way around” (Ryan, Cooper & Bolick, 2016, p. 187), proper implementation can lead to high success in the classroom and increase student engagement as they interact with their learning. As research improves on how technology can be integrated in the classroom, more

ideas and studies are done by researchers and teachers. In *Those Who Can, Teach*, the authors researched and described their findings on three stages of technology application as: 1. Technology is applied to things we already do; 2. Technology is used to improve on existing tasks; which also can branch out in different directions as the topic and discussion suggest that were not possible in the past; and, 3. Technology is used to do things” (Ryan, Cooper & Bolick, 2016, p. 187). These steps can provide simple, beginning steps for myself as I start to use technology in lesson planning for my future. Following research and observing the application done by other educators, I hope to improve my options to integrate technology smoothly into lessons and engage my students.



## **EDU 280 Sophomore Field Experience Reflection Template**

**Professor McMahon**

**Student Name:** Juliana Alusik

**Date:** March 26, 2018

**Cooperating Teacher:** Ms. F (General Ed.) and Ms. Z (Special Ed.)

**Time:** 1:00pm-1:30pm

**Observed Grade, Subject Area, and Specialization:** Fourth Grade, Writing, Inclusion

**Domain 1: Planning and Preparation:** Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy, Demonstrating Knowledge of Students, Setting Instructional Outcomes, Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources, Designing Coherent Instruction, Designing Student Assessments

Ms. F and Ms. Z both demonstrated knowledge of content and pedagogy during a writing lesson on themes in stories. Ms. F led the writing lesson by speaking aloud her process for determining the theme in a book that the class had read aloud. All the students sat on the carpet and Ms. F gave three examples for a theme with three examples as evidence. Then, each example was written into a sentence on her post it to demonstrate to the class how to organize their thoughts on the topic and how to make these thoughts into sentences. After one example, Ms. F worked through three other theme possibilities by speaking out her ideas aloud and organized the students into three groups. In each group, the students discussed at least three examples of the theme from the story and then shared these with the class. After the students showed they understood the topic during the discussions, the class dispersed from the carpet to their seats and began work on their own theme post-its with their books. During the independent practice, Ms. Z had the special needs students come to her back table to work through determining their own themes in their story. Both teachers fully explained and exemplified how to determine a theme and write supporting sentences for their books.



**Domain 2: Classroom Environment:** Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport, Establishing a Culture for Learning, Managing Classroom Procedures, Managing Student Behavior, Organizing Physical Space

By incorporating all students in the example group work for the themes and supporting the students who needed additional help, Ms. F and Ms. Z established a culture for learning in the classroom. As Ms. F grouped the students by simply counting by threes, the groups were diverse and were in charge of their own theme examples. All students were treated equally in the groups and represented as important for the contribution of thinking of examples for the theme. Then, all three discussion groups were able to support the theme they were provided with their examples. By every student having a voice and input in the lesson, all students were able to learn and connect with the lesson. Furthermore, the large group discussions of the themes incorporated input from all students and provided opportunities for all students to think through and explain their supporting examples. By all students being acknowledged, the entire class learned together in a fair and accepting learning environment.

**Domain 3: Instruction:** Communicating with Students, Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques, Engaging Students in Learning, Using Assessment in Instruction, Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

While demonstrating how to determine a theme in a book and providing examples, the students used questioning and discussion techniques within their groups. As the groups formed, students referred to Ms. F's thinking aloud process to think of examples that would match the theme assigned to their group. As each student provided an idea for an example, the students responded to their classmates to determine if this example fit under the theme. Some students began by questioning how the example matched the theme, as others built off the example to prove or disprove how it was part of the theme. After small group discussion, each group had a student provide their examples to Ms. F and the class. Ms. F then provided feedback to the students' examples and opened the theme to all the class to build upon. All students actively listened in

order to support or question the examples accuracy in representing one of the book's themes.

**Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities:** Reflecting on Teaching, Maintaining Accurate Records, Communicating with Families, Participating in the Professional Community, Growing and Developing Professionally, Showing Professionalism

Throughout the writing lesson and practice, both teachers grew and developed professionally in the content from one another. As Ms. F led the lesson, Ms. Z showed her support and understanding for the content as she added information she thought would increase student understanding to the end of the lesson. Ms. F listened and focused on how Ms. Z restated a few of her directions for all students. Further, both teachers focused on emphasizing the use of the theme chart that hung in the classroom for reference. As Ms. F was able to guide most children with the topic, Ms. Z demonstrated for Ms. F how to include some direction variations to incorporate understanding for the special needs children to follow along with as well.

Throughout the year, Ms. F has learned more policy and differentiation with Ms. Z as this has been their first-year co-teaching. By learning from one another, both Ms. F and Ms. Z have grown and developed into more knowledgeable professionals to help serve more children.

**Student Reflection:**

In Lindeneau Elementary School, many classrooms have an inclusion structure of a general education teacher and special education teacher in the same room every day. There are also a few rooms for learning disabled and language learning disabled students as well. With more special education teachers pairing up to improve the learning for students, there are more teachers are in need to be hired with higher expectations. "Today, more than any time in history, SETs are expected to play a role in developing and supporting rigorous content instruction for students with disabilities that is technology rich. Pressure for students with disabilities and their teachers to meet high standards is evident in a national movement that all students graduate

“college and career ready” by, among other things, successfully meeting a rigorous core of content standards for various subject areas (Haager & Vaughn, 2013a)” (Leko, Brownell, Sindelar & Keily, 2015, p. 25-26). The need for high qualified special education teachers provides more focus on the need to improve the teaching faculty for all students to learn and develop to their full potential. In addition to these standards, special education teachers also need to have cooperative and collaborative abilities in order to succeed in the high prevalence of co-teaching circumstances.

After observing the impact of co-teaching special and general education teachers, I felt as though this was a learning opportunity all students could benefit from. The opportunities to improve and develop were stronger for each child as both teachers had so much knowledge in content and student needs. An article about general education and special education co-teaching that directly related to my observations experiences and connected with me was "Making Inclusion Work With Coteaching" by Thomas E. Scruggs and Margo A. Mastropieri. This article highlights the impact this co-teaching partnership can have on teachers. "Effective co-teaching depends on co-teachers engaging in a true partnership, in which the special education teacher helps design and implement the validated strategies known to be effective with students with disabilities and other special educational needs. Collaborating with general education teachers and administrators, and demonstrating the utility of the skills special educators can bring, can help improve the process. Special education teachers also can play more active and equal roles in co-taught arrangements if they become more familiar with the content of instruction in co-taught classrooms" (Scruggs and Mastropieri, 2017, p. 292). The focus on both teachers able to provide an equal understanding of the strong abilities to both sides of the table and really struck me as a different perspective that I could understand. In the fourth-grade classroom, Ms. F and Ms. Z

both worked to support and teach all the students based on their needs and levels. Ms. Z brought knowledge of student needs and disabilities that helped educate Ms. F into more specific tactics for teaching. Just as well, Ms. Z learned more content heavy teaching needs and expectations that she used when focusing with individual students. Similarly, in my fifth-grade classroom, my General Ed. CT was previously a science middle school teacher and my Special Ed. CT had worked with second, fourth, and fifth grades over the years and had a strength in teaching math. Both brought insight that made the classroom very knowledge and powerful for student learning. By both teachers working together and building from what each other had mastered and was strong at, the workload was more successful, and they acted as more of a cooperative team built on friendship. As co-teaching with someone I can easily work with and build a strong foundation is a concern for me, this article brought a new perspective to me and gave me valuable insight for co-teaching between Special Education teachers and General Education teachers.



## **EDU 280 Sophomore Field Experience Reflection Template**

**Professor McMahon**

**Student Name:** Juliana Alusik

**Date:** April 16, 2018

**Cooperating Teacher:** Ms. S (General Ed.) and Ms. D (Special Ed.)

**Time:** 11:00am-11:30am

**Observed Grade, Subject Area, and Specialization:** First Grade, Math, Inclusion

**Domain 1: Planning and Preparation:** Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy, Demonstrating Knowledge of Students, Setting Instructional Outcomes, Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources, Designing Coherent Instruction, Designing Student Assessments

Ms. S and Ms. D demonstrated the knowledge of their students when implementing a math test.

A first group who needed questions read and guidance throughout the test sat on the carpet in the front of the classroom with clipboards. A second group who could read the questions and answer on their own overall were sitting in their seats with privacy boards. A final group who had special needs and accommodations sat at the back table with the special education teacher and privacy boards. By knowing where the students were as masters of the content and test taking, the three groups were split quickly and easily by the teacher as the tests were handed out. All students were fitting in their groups and one student in the group on the floor was able to transition to the table as he got farther in the test. These groups had their needs fulfilled during the test because the teachers were fully aware of their students' levels.

**Domain 2: Classroom Environment:** Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport, Establishing a Culture for Learning, Managing Classroom Procedures, Managing Student Behavior, Organizing Physical Space

Both teachers managed classroom procedures during the test through directions and routines in place. As per normal routine, students at the small table in the back and those on the carpet were

able to call on their teacher when in need of help. The teacher would then come to the student and work through the problem by reading the question and providing alternative ways to explain what was being asked. By the end of the test, all students were able to hand in their tests to a teacher and spend time on Lexia with their iPads and headphones on. In contrast and as not per routine, the teacher introduced me to the classroom and explained for students sitting at their seats that they may raise their hands as I would come to read and re-word the questions for the students understanding. By introducing my role to the students in seats, the teachers managed the normal procedures to be more applicable during this test and provided for smooth classroom management throughout the test.

**Domain 3: Instruction:** Communicating with Students, Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques, Engaging Students in Learning, Using Assessment in Instruction, Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

While working through the math test, one section began to be questioned by a large portion of the students that resulted in the teachers communicating with the students about removing the section from the test. Throughout the test, numerous students struggled to understand the wording of the problem and the diagram provided. In all three groups of testing students, the problem led to confusion and frustration, especially due to the wording not matching throughout the problem. Further, the students were required to improve on a diagram that existed but did not fully capture the meaning of the words in the problem. Due to all of this, the teachers agreed to remove the problem. Very clearly, they repeated that all students should make a big “X” throughout the page that the problem took up. They also explained to the students that they should not worry about it because it was a bad problem and would not be graded. The students responded with relief and happiness that they could move forward without struggling through the problem.

**Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities:** Reflecting on Teaching, Maintaining Accurate Records, Communicating with Families, Participating in the Professional Community, Growing and Developing Professionally, Showing Professionalism

By integrating me in the classroom for the math lesson this day, both my teachers showed their professionalism in the classroom. Both CTs had welcomed me in their classroom for English language arts lessons as an observer throughout the semester, however today they allowed me to stay through the math lesson and partake as a classroom support during the test. They effectively distinguished my role as a student teacher/observer and provided me with all the information to be most successful in their classroom. Due to their ability to inform me on the activity occurring and instructions on how to help the students during their test, I was able to help all the students at their seats work through and finish their test fully. Each teacher led her section strongly and provided me the opportunity to do so as well.

**Student Reflection:**

Differentiation in the classroom is key to success for students in general and special education settings. As seen in the first-grade classroom, both the teachers demonstrated that they are aware of their students' levels and needs, and thus could differentiate the math test accordingly. The importance of student needs and levels is seen when teachers and researchers can match student progress with milestones children succeed with. In a study by Jacobi-Vessels, Brown, Molfese and Do (2014), specific milestones for students were developed based on age and content learned that was then used to determine student mathematical development levels. Through this, teachers could build from the current development level to where the student was expected and needed to be for mathematical success. "Through the use of the Counting Milestones, teachers can identify children's current skill levels and determine appropriate learning goals to promote counting learning trajectories" (Jacobi-Vessels, Brown, Molfese & Do, 2014). The use of milestones enables a teacher to determine where the student currently stands

and thus helps guide further instruction toward a future learning goal. Through analysis of each student, learning outcomes could become differentiated and student specific for key developmental successes in students.

I believe that effective teaching requires a teacher to understand know their students in order to differentiate and focus learning that relates and relies on individuality. Knowledge of one's students is key to success in academics and classroom achievement. By analyzing specific student needs and abilities, a teacher can provide successful opportunities for learning and growth. In order to effectively differentiate in the classroom, "...teachers recognize that they need to customize their instruction techniques to meet individual student needs. That is, teachers are trying to tailor their instruction to provide appropriate challenges for gifted students, students who lag behind, and students who fall in between the two extremes" (Ryan, Cooper & Bolick, 2016, p. 145). Differentiation is required to meet all students needs in order for them all to learn and succeed. By knowing one's students, a teacher can use differentiation to effectively teach lessons and improve the learning for all students in the classroom.



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