

A Future Educator's Prospective Classroom Plan

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EDU 301 02

Dr. Lamb

December 19th, 2016

As a future educator at a grade school and a teacher in a general sense, organized and prepared to succeed I must be, and with that preparation and goal seeking nature, a philosophy should be implanted intrinsically as the teacher and extrinsically to my students. My personal philosophy is as follows: “to pursue, identify, and illustrate the capability of every student who I encounter as a teacher, making sure that each individual knows his or her worth through excellence in social-emotional and academic guidance”. The writers that have inspired this philosophy are Harry and Rosemary Wong from *The Classroom Management Book*, Marzano’s *The Highly Engaged Classroom*, and Fay and Funk, writers of *Teaching Love & Logic*. In the following paragraphs, I will describe their philosophies and how I would apply them to my classroom in the following ways: during the first day or week of school through classroom procedures, how to help students cultivate social skills overall in their lives as students and as community members, and how to keep students on task.

To begin, I will discuss how I will introduce and open my classroom on the first day in accordance with Wong’s perspective in *The Classroom Management Book* by remembering the following statement, “As you greet your students each day, you connect with them. You show that you care that they are in your classroom” (p. 53). When the students arrive into the class, their desks will have the following items on it: their name tags with either a multiplication chart, cursive chart, or aid they would

most need visible to them according to what grade they are in. On the nametag should also be the student's classroom number. This will help the students know which slot is theirs for finished assignments; this also helps with endeavors in the classroom in the future (p.57). With this, they would also have a procedure folder with items like a "Give Me Five" or "Temperature Chart: What Should I Wear out to Recess?" This gives students visual aid in what will be discussed in regards to procedures as well as gives the students a sheet to feel prepared (p. 57). Lastly on the desk should be some kind of welcoming item, such as a pencil or bookmark- this will help the students feel more welcomed into such an unfamiliar territory.

Other items that need to be discussed in regards to the first day are the way in which to teach the morning routine and how to help students understand the daily agenda. Wong provides what I think to be the best instruction in how to get the listed above procedures and routines down: teach, rehearse, and reinforce (p. 62). Specifically talking about morning routines, my first plan of action would be (as students are seated) to physically demonstrate how students are expected to walk into the room and put away items in their cubby. This would be verbally and kinesthetically explained at first, along with a visual aid shown after the demonstration to cover all types of learners. After I have demonstrated this, students will demonstrate one by one throughout the course of the first week how to properly enter the room. Next, I would explain that materials such as pencils should be ready for morning work. I would explain where everything is located verbally and kinesthetically. The items will also have labels on them such as "late assignments" or "sick station". I think that keeping a central and consistent location

for an item(s) such as a “turn-in bin” or a spot for morning worksheets is essential for the students to develop consistency and pattern. In addition to this, I believe that a morning stretch or quick physical activity is essential to waking up the student’s brains and bodies. Making connections with Marzano’s work in *The Highly Engaged Classroom*, “regular physical exercise has been associated with improved cognitive functioning” (p. 5). Even if the physical activity lasts no more than thirty seconds and is done sporadically throughout the day, it is still helping students to refocus and stay sharp. The next thing I would discuss with the class is how our daily agenda would go. The daily agenda would be visible to the entire classroom and could be interchangeable depending on what kinds of rotations would be going on that day. The agenda would be in the shape of a circle to appear in the shape and direction of a clock, resulting in the agenda going clockwise. I would make sure that each item on the agenda be explained as descriptively as possible (especially the first day and first week). Even though this may take a large chunk of time, the students will know it well and feel comfortable in what they’re doing throughout the day. Overall, I firmly agree with the way in which Wong and Marzano instruct to engage students and how to help them in consistency with a morning routine.

Although developing and cultivating social skills may seem like an objective to cover in middle school or later into high school, Wong in *The Classroom Management Book* quotes, “social skills are essential to a positive classroom environment and are central to a student’s success in life” (p. 204). To engage students in developing better social skills, this objective would need to be pinpointed starting the first week of class. If the students in the classroom do not feel

that they can safely and comfortably talk to their peers, the barrier created can become problematic for the months of the school year to come. The best way to teach proper social skills is to demonstrate it. I would take a student whom might seem to be chattier than other students as you him as an example. This said student, as Wong expresses, would demonstrate how to listen, be respectful, be cooperative, how to share, how to be patient, etc. (p.205). These social skills that the student demonstrates could be interchanged based on the grade and social skills expected and needed as the student progresses in age. By giving the student the opportunity to do well, the student will feel more able to accomplish the social skills himself. In addition, it gives the students witnessing the demonstration something more approachable than seeing myself demonstrate it. However, the teacher's modeling can be just as powerful too. Wong states that by demonstrating the social skills you expect the students to make, they will wish to do the same or better than the teacher's example (p. 206). Students through their social skills can be rewarded through "Star Behavior" and be gifted a sticker at the end of the day. Overall, the student's ability to develop social skills is essential to the development as a student, worker, community, and family member.

One of the most difficult and always changing facets of classroom management are students that struggle to stay on task. Through the help of Fay and Funk in their writing *Teaching Love & Logic*, I have developed a procedure for situations such as these in my classroom. One of the main methods that Fay and Funk prompt in *Teaching Love & Logic* is as follows: use enforceable limits, provide choices within limits, and apply consequences with empathy (p.27). Although it may

seem old fashioned, it is very effective; if a student(s) are being disruptive or are not staying on task, they would know that recess time would be lost. Instead of blatantly stating that “recess time would be lost if you don’t do your work”, the golden phrase, as Fay and Funk discussion, might be something like “those that are respectful get the amount of recess time deserved” (p. 29). If a student is, for example, being lazy and refusing to work on an assignment, instead of giving the student two choices, as Fay and Funk review, I would say something similar to this, “Feel free to continue working on your assignment or feel free to continue your assignment in the principals office.” By not saying something such as, “it’s up to you” or “you decide”, the student will know that they have their options but that they are not making them, the teacher is (p. 30-32). From a secondary source, there are education toys that can also help to keep students alert and focused (“Silent Classroom Fidgets”, 2016). If a student is struggling to concentrate on a task at hand, items provided on this website, such as “Sensory Finger Squeezers” and “Monkey Fidget Exerciser” are small enough and not noisy to help said student stay focused. If students are using these items disruptively, they will be confiscated. Overall, by using enforceable limits, providing choices within limits, applying consequences with empathy, and using tools such as the items listed above, keeping students on task will be more effective.

Within the plan of action for my prospective classroom, I have discussed several topics and insights I’ve created with the guidance of Wong in *The Classroom Management Book*, Marzano’s *The Highly Engaged Classroom*, Fay and Funk, writers of *Teaching Love & Logic*, and ideas from therapyshoppe.com. I have described their

philosophies and how I would apply them to my classroom in the following ways: during the first day or week of school through classroom procedures, how to help students cultivate social skills overall in their lives as students and as community members, and how to keep students on task. By having a plan of action, my approaching first year of teaching will run as smoothly as it should, and the philosophy that I have conducted will be accomplished: “to integrate a safe, organized, respected, and well managed environment for students to engage in the highest level of individual and outward thinking possible”.

References

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