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Literature For Young Adults • Bloomsburg University • April 26, 2012





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Introduction:

When getting this assignment, to be honest, I was not sure what to expect. I was told I was going to a 7th grade class, having to interview a student, and then base three lesson plans off this student who I have no knowledge about. To make it more interesting, I had to pick a student who was completely different than myself. When going to meet Mrs. Sassafras and her class I couldn't decide if I was more excited or nervous. I didn't know what to expect either, because up until now, I have only observed in High School grades and I was nervous to think of what middle school students would be like. After walking in the doors of the school, I realized that my biggest fear of these students were that they were the same size as me or even worse, they were taller than me. As my student guide took me to Mrs. Sassafras's classroom I looked at all the art work on the hallway walls, and I thought to myself, this is a totally different world.

As I got to Mrs. Sassafras's class, the school was huge compared to my middle school, I entered her class and found a sense of peace, it was relaxed, and granted to was study hall, but I just felt like this was going to be a great classroom to observe in. I got to discuss her classroom policy and procedures with her, and as the next period bell rang and she began to prepare for her first section, I felt like it was my first day of school all over again. The students walked in and it seemed as if I was an alien, a new comer, two of her students even turned around and said "Are you like an intern or something". I just giggled and said "sort of".

School Schedule:

Lesson Plans --Lori Lupolt 2011-2012 Marking period 3

Date: Period/Time	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6
1 – 8:22-9:02	TARGETED LA	TARGETED LA	TARGETED LA	TARGETED LA	TARGETED LA	TARGETED LA
2 – 9:05-9:51	PREP	LA/RE w/Principal	PREP	PREP	PREP	PREP
3 – 9:54-10:40						
4- 10:43-11:29						
5- 11:29-11:59	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
6- 12:02-12:48						
7- 12:51-1:37						
8- 1:40-2:26	TEAM PLAN	PREP	TEAM PLAN	TEAM PLAN	7 th Grade w/Principal	TEAM PLAN
9- 2:29-3:15						

Classroom Set Up:

The classroom set up is very laid back. The students have the freedom to setting up their desks in any which way they choose. However on test day, they must have their desks in traditional row form. The room has lots of colors and different pictures with motivational quotes which I found to be really interesting because most of the time you see typical classroom posters and quotes, however these were truly motivating, and I think the students, Mrs. Sassafras, and any visitor to the classroom can look at these and get a sense of motivation and yet relaxation. Mrs. Sassafras made pillows for the students to relax on during their study periods, or even during class activities when they are free to work in any area of the room. The room itself is not wall to wall covered in school pictures and posters, it's organized, yet simple. The atmosphere of the classroom is very relaxing and welcoming. I felt this way the moment I stepped into the room that it was a relaxing environment and a good place to facilitate learning. I think students feel welcomed and that this is a place where their ideas and thoughts are accepted no matter what.

Observation of the Student:

After I watched Mrs. Sassafras's class, one student truly stood out to me, his name was Frankfurt. What drew my attention to him was he was nothing like me, he seemed to me like the funny student, when I was in 7th grade, I was so shy and timid, I kept thinking I had to be quite just like my sister was. So as I started to observe him; this is what I found:

Day 1: February 22, 2012

Review for Grammar Final : Time: 10 minutes-

The class started off with the class reviewing for their Grammar Final, that was going to be taking place later that week. Mrs. Sassafras went over the formatting of the test, and gave examples for each section. Also during the review the students were allowed to ask questions regarding the test, and to clarify any extra questions or concerns they had about the test.

Frankfurt observation: During this time, Frankfurt was paying attention, and was just listening to what Mrs. Sassafras was saying about the test. However unlike some other students he was not taking notes or asking her questions.

My Interpretation: I think that Frankfurt was paying attention to what was going to be on the test, and even thought he might not have taken notes, to remind himself of what to study, he was on task. Each student has their own ways of preparation for tests, I personally write down every possible word that the teacher is

saying just so I don't forget one thing, however other students might just recall what the teacher says.

Review Homework: Time: 10:10-10:25

During this time the students went around taking turns sharing their answers from the assignment from the previous night. The students requested before going over the homework if they could change the arrangement of their desks, so as a class they changed it into a "U" shape.

I found this to be really interesting and something that I really like about Mrs. Sassafra's classroom that she is very laid back about her classroom management. The students have a lot of respect for her, and she is a very fun and outgoing teacher, and wants to make what the students are learning about enjoyable.

Frankfurt during this activity was only on task mostly when Mrs. Sassafra was scanning the room and making sure all the students were on task. Frankfurt seems to get distracted by other students and laughs. My first impression is that he seems like he would be the class clown and the student that all the other students like. As the students are going over the homework answers, they are supposed to be correcting their wrong answers. Frankfurt is not really paying attention to his homework, or correcting his papers, I was not totally sure if he has all the correct answers, or just has no motivation to correct the wrong ones.

My interpretation: I personally believe that here Frankfurt was just off task. He seemed to be staring into space, and not really paying any attention to what the

homework answers were. The only time he was truly “on task” was when he knew it was close to his turn to answer the question on the homework assignment. I think personally he didn’t find this aspect of the class period to be beneficial, and going over homework was not as exciting as the rest of the class time that Mrs. Sassafras makes it. Like most students they do not want the teacher to see that they are not doing what they actually should be doing, so when he actually see’s Mrs. Sassafras looking and scanning him along with other students, he immediately put his head down acting as if he was paying attention. I mean most students do this when they don’t want to pay attention or find what they are doing to be boring.

Bingo: Time: 10:30 - 10:45

During Bingo the students and Mrs. Sassafras decide that for the remaining of the year, if all students, or a specific student uses the correct pronoun when speaking, that they get a point of extra credit.

For the game of Bingo students have to fill the whole card, this was used for a fun way to help the students get ready for their test that week. There was a corresponding powerpoint that was the question aspect of the game.

During this time Frankfurt was not on task, but that is also because most of the other students were not on task. The room had a lot of commotion of the game, and Frankfurt was talking and comparing Bingo cards with his fellow classmate next to him.

My Interpretation: I feel as if this really is a fine behavior, the students were a bit rowdy. Most of the time students always get rowdy when they are playing a whole class game, and BINGO is a pretty social game. Also the students were allowed to call out the answers, so this gives room for students to be relaxed and not acting in typical classroom behavior.

After 2 rounds of Bingo the class ended. Students then move on to their other classes. There was no homework assigned, but to study and look over Mrs. Sassafras's website to look for study tips for their upcoming test.

Day 2: February 27, 2012

Opening: Time: 9:50 - 10:00 - 10:25

For this portion of the class when the students come in the directions for the class are already on the board, so the students are aware of what they will be doing/discussing during class. Since the new unit that the class is going to be working on is Poetry, Mrs. Sassafras starts off the class by asking a motivational questions asking: "What makes you frustrated about poetry?" Each student had to have a highlighter and a pencil or pen on their desk for the activity that was going to be done.

Frankfurt at this point really was not paying attention and was paying more attention to his highlighter, rather than the class discussion. After a few minutes, he began to pay attention again to Mrs. Sassafras and the rest of the class and engaged in their discussion.

My Interpretation: I feel as if all students some times get distracted by highlighters or different colored pens, I know personally I do. I think he just got a little distracted and then went back to paying attention because he was aware that he was off task. I wouldn't say this was an issue and he was not distracting other students when he was like rolling his highlighter back and forth.

After the students discuss what frustrates them about poetry, the students instead of sitting in a circle with their desks they asked Mrs. Sassafras if they can sit on the floor in a circle. So the class decided to sit on the floor.

Introduction to Poetry Packet: Time: 10:25 - 10:40

Mrs. Sassafras introduces their new study, using a poetry packet that she made for each student that has a bunch of different activities, practice writings, and introductions to how to write each type of poem. When teaching and introducing their new unit on poetry, she gave the students 10 suggestions of how to approach a poem. She went over them one by one individually so the students could openly ask her questions and she could also give examples of how they can be used when reading, or interpreting a poem.

Frankfurt was following along with what Mrs. Sassafras was reading in the poetry packet, but at some points he would be distracted by his highlighter, and then re-focus back to what was the task at hand.

My Interpretation: I thought that this was actually really good of him, because other times it took awhile for him to re-focus his attention, however the times that he

was distracted, it was very brief and he knew that he had to pay attention to what was being said.

Mrs. Sassafras moved on to another activity. In this activity she read the poem “How to Eat a Poem.” The poem itself is about eating an apple, and it shows how details really enhance different types of poems. Here Mrs. Sassafras read the poem over and over again picking out different aspects of the poem. As Mrs. Sassafras read over the poem time and time again, she incorporated the 10 suggestions that she introduced to the students just before reading this poem. Many students asked questions, when different questions raised about the poem, Mrs. Sassafras addressed each question and brought it to the text, so that she could break it down so that student and the rest of the class could better understand.

Frankfurt at this point, was hesitant to ask questions, or seemed as if he was nervous to ask, even though he looked like he wanted to ask a question or so to clarify some of the meanings of the poem. When Mrs. Sassafras would ask the students questions and when Frankfurt was asked a question, he did not seem as if he wanted to answer, or needed some prompting to answer. He would at some points talk to other students or goof around with other students distracting them, and then eventually getting back on task.

My interpretation of Frankfurt’s actions during this time is that when he wanted to ask a question he didn’t because he might have been intimidated to ask a “dumb” question, or something that other students would make fun of him for. When Frankfurt was asked a question about the poem, he seemed hesitant to answer and Mrs. Sassafras had to prompt him into the correct answer, or to prompt him into his answer. I yet again think that he is scared to give the wrong answer or an answer that is not acceptable to his peers. Frankfurt seems like a decently popular kid in this class, and that he does not want to give an answer that his peers or friends would make fun of him for. Also he seems to talk to other students when instruction is being taught, he may just do it to be social, and because he is losing his attention and focus for the assignment at hand.

Mrs. Sassafras also went back to the poem one more time to teach the students to read the poem using the idea of “mind pictures”. Here for this activity the students had to sit with their eyes closed as she read the poem one more time, and when they were finished reading, they had to think besides the fact of what they were just going over, what they thought of / what they saw in their minds when they listened to the poem.

Reading a new poem: Mother to Son: By Langston Hughes:

When Mrs. Sassafras reads the poem, she talks as if she has a “southern accent”, and is reading as if it was a women (as if it was a mother reading it to her son, despite the author being male). Mrs. Sassafras tells the students the reason she is reading the poem to them is so they can separate the distinction of the “speaker” and the actual writer of the poem. That just because the writer of the poem is male, does not mean that they can’t have a female speaker in the poem.

After Mrs. Sassafras reads the poem, she re-reads it one more time asking students a bunch of different questions. She asks the students what they think the meaning and what they think the message is behind the poem. She also brings up the aspect of “speed” in the poem, here she also wants the students to recognize what makes the poem go faster and what makes it go slower. She also questions students to think about the poem and what truly stands out to them when listening and reading the poem, one prompting question she uses to get the students to think is she asks the students what rhymes and what sticks out about the rhyme scheme in the poem.

During this time Frankfurt is on task and is following along with what is being discussed. He seems as if he is really into the poem, and raised his hand to answer a question that was asked about the poem, however he was not called on.

I think that this poem sparked an interest in him, and also because like many of the students they way that Mrs. Sassafras read the poem caught the students attention. Also much like the other students he found it surprising that the voice of the poem was a women, even though the author of the poem is a male. It was also nice to see that Frankfurt raised his hand to participate even though he did not get called on, it was the first time that he volunteered to answer and that he was confident enough to give his own opinion.

Figurative Language Discussion- 10:25-10:40

In this part of the lesson, Mrs. Sassafras moves on to the concept of what is figurative language, and it's significance to poetry. Along with figurative language, Mrs. Sassafras brings up the concept of idioms, and what they are. She makes it fun by giving the students some examples, and then turns it to the students where they give an example. The students found this to be really fun, and they all had really funny and concrete answers.

During this time Frankfurt was highly distracted. At one point during the discussion, the student sitting next to him was having an issue with their contact, and Frankfurt found this to be funny, and actually caused the class discussion to be put to a stop, and Mrs. Sassafras had to ask if there was problem and if the other student was okay. Frankfurt made jokes to other students around him, even after the class discussion went on. He kept making faces and talking to the students around them distracting them, Frankfurt was redirected by Mrs. Sassafras as this continued.

I think that by this time of the class period, Frankfurt was really distracted, and just could not re-focus enough to hold his attention to the end of the class. He got excited by the issue with the student next to him and also with the silly discussion that was being brought up with idioms. I think he just wanted the attention of others and the student next to him, so he kept bringing it up and continuing the misbehavior.

Class Ending: 10:40

Students close the discussion, and no homework was assigned.

I think personally today was a semi-good day for Frankfurt, I observed a lot about his different actions. I think he is deep down paying attention, and just easily gets distracted by the students around him, and tries in a sense to be a class clown. However he needed to be redirected twice today which shows, that even though he wants to be funny, there is only so much that he can do before he starts to truly distract the students around him. I think that his behavior was much better when the students were sitting in desks and had their own personal space rather than on the floor, and he had more focus when he was sitting his desk.

Frankfurt Interview:

- What is your favorite subject in school & why?

I really like reading the most. I don't have a lot of trouble when it comes to reading class, and I always get good grades.

- What is your least favorite subject in school & why?

I don't really like science, because I have to remember a lot of different formulas, and if I use the wrong one, I get the answer wrong. And the problems with the formulas are really hard to figure out sometimes.

- What do you like most about English class with Mrs. Sassafra & why?

I really like that she is always changing what she does, and it never gets boring and she lets us sit where ever we want to. That way I can talk to my friends, and I have a lot of freedom in her class and in study hall, and it just makes everything more relaxing.

- If you could be a teacher and teach the class how would you teach the class?

(laughed)- If I could be the teacher I would let them sit where ever, on pillows on their desks, and I would just ask what they wanted to learn today, and have nothing planned.

- If you had to teach something in English what would it be?

I would probably teach the parts of speech, and some poetry. I like to read poetry, and I like how it can be really silly and funny, but I wouldn't make my class write it, because it's hard, and I don't like it, so I don't think they would either.

- What is your favorite book to read and why?

The 11th Plague, it was a really adventurous book, and a lot of people are trying to survive, and there are a lot of details that make it seem really realistic, even though it really isn't. I saw it in a book magazine, and it looked pretty interesting so I decided to read it. This would definitely be something that I wish we could read in class because it was so cool, and I thought it was a good book, but I don't know if other people would too.

- What is your all time favorite movie to watch?

I like the movie True Grit, just because it's an old western type of movie, and those ones are my favorites because there is a lot of action and excitement.

- What is your favorite TV show to watch all the time no matter what?

I really like That 70's show because Kelso is my favorite character. He's really funny and goofy and always makes the show funny, and I wish I could be funny like him.

- If you did not have to do homework, what would you do to have fun?

I like to play basketball outside, or in the gym, and I play shooting guard in basketball, or I like to throw/play lacrosse with my friends. I like to just be outside doing something.

- What is your favorite sport/activity?

Well I really like to play lacrosse, but we don't have a team here at school, so for the school and for fun I play basketball because we actually have a team.

- Favorite part about school and why?

Well last year, all our classes were together, and they were called PODS, and we literally did everything together. But now this year, all the classes are split up and we have more freedom because we get to go from different class to different class and instead of just being in one room we get to different rooms and it's more like high school, kinda. And we are not always stuck with the same people, so I get to see some of my other friends.

- If Mrs. Sassafra could change her classroom, and how she taught, how would you change it and why?

I wouldn't tell her to change anything. I like the way she teaches because its fun and relaxing and a lot different then other teachers teach.

- What is your least favorite thing about English?

I guess trying to figure out the different parts of speech, I get them at first, but when I have to put them all together, and figure out where they are, they get really confusing and then I just don't want to do it.

- What is your favorite special?

I really like art. Its fun to paint, and the teachers is pretty easy. They give us an assignment and or a project and I am free to make whatever I want and however I want. Nothing is ever right or wrong I guess.

Frankfurt Interview Interpretation:

When I first had to interview Frankfurt, I was a little nervous, I will admit. When him and I walked to the back of the room, he looked around to see if his other classmates were looking that I picked him out of everyone and I was nervous to think what if he doesn't care, or doesn't really like the questions I have to ask him, or he just refuses in general.

It took a few minutes to actually warm up to each other and I think the ice broke, when we both mutually agreed that we were both Shooting Guards in basketball, except that I'm a girl and I'm too short.

When I look back at our interview, Frankfurt is a pretty simple kid. He is your typical 7th grade boy, he likes sports and action packed books and movies. He surprisingly actually likes English which made me smile just a little bit, because when I would observe him I always thought he hated it, or would rather like another subject. He has a free mind, and likes to be creative but at the same time, holds up his class clown funny kid persona such as when he said he wishes he could be Kelso from That 70's Show. He's athletic, and has a very creative mind, and it shocked me knowing that he actually likes art because he likes to create and think outside the box. Another shocker was that he liked old western movies, when I saw him, I thought he would definitely be the type of student who revolved everything around sports, but he looks at all different aspects of life and the media.

Frankfurt is a very well rounded student. He's respectful, and is aware of his education, and balances it between his social and sport life. He is open to learning in all different ways, but is most comfortable in a atmosphere where he can be free and is not locked down to one specific way or formula. I think he is a more "out of the box" thinker, and rather than have certain restrictions on his assignments, he would want a more open to interpretation type of assignment and learning style which is what is given to him in Mrs. Sassafras's classroom.

Mrs. Sassafra Interview: Language Arts Teacher:

1. **What was your first impression of Frankfurt as a student?**

Honestly, I really don't know. He is a pretty easy going student, and has good nature, and is really aware of how others feel. He gets a little silly at some points, but he usually always knows what is going on and what we are learning about. He always does his work, and usually has it done on a timely manner.

2. **What is your teaching style towards students like Frankfurt?**

Nothing really. I teach him and students like him like I would any other student. I try to help out for small individual needs if he has personal questions, and if he needs individual work or practice I will help him out. I don't really change my style of teaching just for one student.

3. **You have a wide variety of students in your class, how do you differentiate your lessons for each student so they fully understand the concepts you are trying to get across to the students?**

I honestly don't really change anything. I just stop the class and talk to them as if they are regular people. I ask them why they are not paying attention, or what they are not understanding about a certain concept, that way I can maybe change the wording of something that I am saying.

4. **What are some of Frankfurt's positive learning qualities?**

He really catches on well to new concepts. He always knows what is going on most if not all the time and can explain it when he is asked and prompted. He always keeps up with his work, and stays on level with myself as well.

5. **What do you find Frankfurt struggles with the most during class?**

Honestly it's his focus during class. He always wants to be silly. Also he really is not a strong writer. He is always looking for the easy way out of writing and doing only the minimum of what is asked and needed. He does not do a lot of revision when it comes to his writing. He honestly is a simple writer. I think what helps and what will help him as a writer is talking to other students and getting feedback from them, rather than relying on himself. What is your approach to

teaching in a classroom with students with different learning styles?

6. What are your approaches to engaging the students before, and during class?

I usually have on the board what we are going to do for the day, and what the students need to do to prepare for the day's activities. It honestly gets them excited to learn. And this is something that I do everyday, and I believe that routine is really important, that way the students always know what you expect of them right off the bat.

7. What would you say is your style of classroom management?

Mutual respect. At the beginning of the year, like the first or second day, I make a chart on the front board. I tell them what I expect out of them, and then from there I ask the students what they expect from me under these circumstances. I like to make it as equal as possible that way we all can be honest and respect each other. You really need to be in touch with yourself, and not let the little things bother you, and don't act as if you are on a high horse because you are the teacher and hold all the rules, then the students really won't learn. At the beginning of the year I openly admit that doodling truly distracts me when I am teaching, because I want to know what they are drawing and why.

8. Your classroom is ever changing, with the seat style, do you find a more loose classroom is easier for the students to focus in, or do you think strict needs to be the way to go, or a mixture of both?

I always like to move around my seats. I kinda of just leave it up to the students to rearrange the desks however they want them to be. The only time I actually require a seating arrangement is when they are taking a test and then I force them to sit in rows. Actually a hit with the students for seating is the idea of "appointment seating" which means that they all sign up for a time, and then when they come in for instance on the board, I will tell them today they have to sit next to their 2:00 appointment. If a student is absent that day they can sit with another group or someone who might not have an appointment. The students always like doing this because they never know who they will be sitting with and or who they will be working with.

9. What was your inspiration to become a teacher?

I honestly always wanted to be a teacher. It was always something I used to play when I was little. I had a lot of good teachers to inspire me and model myself after. I always wanted to be a 3rd grade teacher, never a 1st grade teacher because they were too young and really needy and they really are not artistic or so creative and I didn't find that to be too much fun. I eventually found my most

inspiration from my 12th grade English teacher, and they are one who truly inspired me to become an English teacher. that.

10. What keeps you motivated to this day to keep teaching, even though the teaching field seems to be slowly declining?

One thing: The Kids, I love what I do and I love the kids. Just some days when I'm having a bad day they just know how to cheer me up. And honestly the cuts are not good for the students. We are not allowing for full learning with the students, so I try to make the best of each moment and take every minute for granted.

11. How do you “teach to PSSAs”?

Honestly, teaching to the test is crappy. If we teach them in our own style they will be okay. Using the sample problems and prompts half the time are never used, and they make zero sense and the students may have never studied a concept. I never really make my whole class or lessons circled around the PSSAs or any other standardized test, I will incorporate it in the lesson and just stat “oh this is something you might see on the PSSA's or something like that” but the more we pressure our students the more they will get nervous and it takes away from other instructional time.

12. What advice can you give to a future teacher, or students who are thinking about going into the field of education?

I hope you get a job, don't do it unless you love it, respect the students, think about how you want to be treated. Creativity is being squished and we need to make the students think creatively, rather than to a test.

13. If you were to make one lesson just for Frankfurt, what would it consist of?

Hands on and active. He works well in groups so a lot of group work and interacting with myself as the teacher and his peers to help. I wouldn't lean towards independent work, I would keep in a social atmosphere.

Mrs. Sassafra's Interview Interpretation:

When I started this interview, I honestly did not know what to expect, and I did not know how my questions alone would help me. However I learned a lot about Frankfurt and teaching in general. While I was doing the interview Frankfurt was actually in the class for study hall, so actually while she was describing him, I could see him interacting with his peers.

Much like I thought and assumed that Frankfurt is a very active learner, and that he always like to be in groups or dealing with group work. However I did learn that besides the fact of being/trying to be the class clown, he really does deep down care about his grades and getting his work done. It was surprising to me because I thought since he gets distracted easily that it would be hard to keep him on track and keep him updated with what is going on, but to know that he really does have a firm grasp on what is being taught made me think that maybe since he gets the concepts that are being taught, maybe that is why he gets so distracted and zones out and will lose focus.

Another main aspect of this interview that made me feel a little sound, was our discussion of the PSSA's and shaping myself into a soon to be teacher. There was a lot to write from this conversation, however, hearing it from an actual teacher who is teaching these concepts of the PSSA's and not making her whole classroom revolve around it, gave me a little hope thinking that I will not have to do this in my future classroom. I also found her wisdom of becoming a soon to be teacher, and what to think when I begin to student teach, and even take with me in my future class, was just reassuring that this is really what I truly love doing, and I can't imagine myself in any other field.

Mrs. Delicious Interview: Reading Teacher:

1. **What was your first impression of Frankfurt as a student?**

Frankfurt is a very outgoing student, and is always willing to volunteer. He is always really quick to help others if they are struggling in class. He does try to be the "class clown" and this is not just in my class, it is in other classes that he is in as well.

2. **What is your teaching style towards students like Frankfurt?**

He really does demand a lot of attention, and it can get a little overwhelming. I just always try to be aware of how much attention I give him, that way I am not taking away time from other students, and I find that the less attention I focus on his negative behavior he will focus more.

3. **You have a wide variety of students in your class, how do you differentiate your lessons for each student so they fully understand the concepts you are trying to get across to the students?**

Each class is really different. One period I can go faster. Others I find myself having to explain more, and then there are some where I can go fast, but yet have to take my time because the students may not understand. Sometimes I can make my lessons fun, however for instance in Frankfurt's class I have to watch how "fun" I make it, because they take advantage of it, and they can't always handle "fun" so I find myself being more strict with his class rather than any other.

4. **What are some of Frankfurt's positive learning qualities?**

He really works well with others, and does not just throw the work on one student or take it all on himself. He works really well with one on one partner work. He is a very good listener when he actually does listen. Also he volunteers a lot which a lot of boys, especially his age do not. He also gets his work done in a timely manner and never really ever falls behind on getting his work done.

5. **What do you find Frankfurt struggles with the most during class?**

He has a hard time paying attention, which really depends on the type of day he is

having. If he is really talkative during class it is hard to get him to focus and he needs constant redirection. And sometimes I really can't give him the attention that he needs to really get him to focus, and it gets frustrating because I do not want to stop class just for him, but sometimes he needs it so it will stop distracting other students.

6. What are your approaches to engaging the students before, and during class?

I really try to vary everything, like whole class reading, partner reading, individual reading. I try to use media as much as possible too to make connections with what we are reading/learning about so the students can relate.

7. What would you say is your style of classroom management?

It really just depends on the class, certain classes I have to have more movement around the class to make sure the students are staying on task, and other classes I can be stationary and don't have to worry about them getting off task or making other students become off task.

8. Your classroom is every changing, with the seat style, do you find a more loose classroom is easier for the students to focus in, or do you think strict needs to be the way to go, or a mixture of both?

I usually change the room and seating up as much as I can. I try to change it up at least once a month. I usually allow the students to sit with whoever they want to, until it starts to show a problem if they are too talkative or other issues arise, then I have to make changes for the students. I found that instead of forcing students to sit somewhere, they will pay more attention with and when they are sitting with their friends because they are more relaxed.

9. What was your inspiration to become a teacher?

I always wanted to be a teacher. I had a lot of great teachers in my past and growing up even through college. I love to read, but to be honest math was my first choice, but I got offered teaching a Reading Job, and it really grew on me and it is something that I really love teaching it. I started off really wanting to teach Pre-K, and then took a job teaching 5th grade and fell in love with this age, and then came here and moved all around.

10. What keeps you motivated to this day to keep teaching, even though the teaching field seems to be slowly declining?

It always and will always be about the kids. I can have the worst week outside of school and at home, but there is something about when I step into this classroom and the students come in, they just appreciate you, and it changes your mood instantly and makes you so happy to be surrounded by them.

11. How do you “teach to the PSSAs?”

I don't stop what I'm teaching and then solely focus on the PSSAs. I bring it into my lessons all through out the year. We have a target class for the lower functioning and scoring students. Since we have both a “reading” and “language arts” class we can focus on specific parts of the PSSAs instead of just in one class and it is not as overwhelming to the students. The students always struggle to get motivated when taking them, so I try to just talk to them to break the anxiety of taking them. I try to tell them that no matter what I will always be proud of them, and set some expectations that are reachable so they feel as if passing the PSSAs is not impossible. I really disagree with the whole PSSA and standardized tests because it gives them a label and they necessarily don't go or fit under that label, you never know if they were having a bad testing day, and that label sticks with them until their next test.

12. What advice can you give to a future teacher, or students who are thinking about going into the field of education?

Make sure you truly deep down love teaching. If you don't love it and bring it forward in the class, then the students won't love it and it will make everything miserable. You need to learn to come off strong, being a young teacher, or just getting into the field, the students will just try to be your friend. Come off strong showing them that you're their teacher, but don't be mean, then you won't gain any respect from them. Its easier to come off strong and meet them half way then coming off as a mean horrible person and trying to get them to warm up to you. But don't be too soft, they will walk right over you.

13. If you were to make an lesson just for Frankfurt, what would it look like?

I would say a lot of hands on working with groups. This way he is being social, but working on the task on hand, and not distracting others, and also this way you as the teacher can focus on everyone and not have to worry all about Frankfurt depending on his day.

Mrs. Delicious Interview Interpretation:

My first reaction to this interview is wow. At first when we started the interview I didn't think we were talking about the same student. Frankfurt has a totally different personality in Mrs. Delicious's class than in Mrs. Sassafras's class.

From what Mrs. Delicious said that he is very needy and is always looking or needing attention really shocked me. I mean I saw him acting out in Mrs. Sassafras's room but the encounters that Mrs. Delicious would talk about just shows that students truly do act different for different teachers.

I really and truly surprised me that he would always want attention, but I can see him being more of a class clown in other classes since in Mrs. Sassafras's room they have a lot of mutual respect, and students get frustrated with one another when they frustrate Mrs. Sassafras. I think that in Mrs. Delicious's room, he really brings out his class clown role, and wants the attention of the whole class as much as possible, because he already knows that his class is a struggle all together and everyone is probably fighting for the attention, and fighting for that class clown aspect.

I found my interview really insightful with Mrs. Delicious because she is only a few years out of college, and unlike Mrs. Sassafras who has more experience and years teaching, it was nice to be able to relate with someone who has recently been through what I will be going through and experiencing.

Much like what Mrs. Sassafras stated, Frankfurt, really does need more group and collaborative types of activities that way he is always active and can be socializing whether it is on the task at hand, or just small talk if he needs to re-focus himself. Also working in collaborative groups will prevent taking time away from instructional time to

redirect him, and here if needed you can do it individually, rather than giving him the satisfaction of a whole class attention.

Student Work: Poem Selection

Name, LA

Collection of Poems

April 11, 2012

Simile

"Ugly Girl"

She is as cute as a rat

She smells as good as a sewer

Her hair is as clean as the toilet

And as clean as an elephant

Metaphor

"You Better Be Sure"

The basketball is gold,

Take care of it and hold it long.

Take a shot it you're sure,

And watch the ball fly in the air,

For this could be the last time

you watch it soar.

Personification/Hyperbole

"Running Is Torture"

Running is torture!

I'd rather drink poison or live with a tiger!

I'd prefer to be in a pool of spiders!

I hate you running, please don't make me!

Haiku

"The Frog"

The frog leaps out far

And makes a startling splash

And swims away safely.

Crazy Title -Sound Poem

"Ordinary Insect"

A praying mantis zips by flowers,

Flying with great mighty power,

It hovers for hours and hours,

Above the grass he towers.

All the insects adore the flying bug,

Even the big fat slug!

In the ground he dug,

And In the ordinary insect's home, he is snug.

Choice Poem

"Pain Endurance"

Lacrosse is tough,

But you got to get up

When you're knocked on the ground.

When you get hit, it's a terrifying sound,

Keep your courage,

But most of all,

Your pain endurance.



Lifted Line Poem

"Potatoes, She Beamed With Pride"

Potatoes, potatoes

I love you so,

Mashed, or sweet,

Any type is a treat to eat!

I could eat potatoes every day.

If someone eats my potatoes I say "HEY!"

My Interpretation of Student Work Sample:

This sample of work that was given to me was from Frankfurt's poem unit that was taken place over the course of my observations. Here for part of their poetry packet, he had to write 7 (seven) type of poems.

When I look at his first poem sample named "Ugly Girl" which is supposed to be a Smile poem; I honestly can't help but laugh. He is writing as if he is your typical teenage boy, girls are icky and wants nothing to do with them. But then I wonder if he wrote this about a girl in his class, and who it could be? Or is this written because deep down he actually has a crush on someone. I just think that this is a typical poem that a boy would write about girls.

Looking at his second poem sample "You Better Be Sure" which is a metaphor poem, I really liked this poem sample. You can see that he really enjoys the sport of basketball and this is something that is an important aspect in his life. You can see that he is writing about shooting the basketball, and taking care of the ball, and the anticipation of shooting it, and not knowing if it is going to go in or not.

The third sample "Running is Torture" is also another good sample. I can see what Mrs. Sassafras was talking about that he seems to be taking the easy way out so far by examining the three poems. The first two have a lot of detail, but this third one is really vague. It is a pretty simple poem, but I think we could look at his word choice and if he would maybe enhance that, and look at a different subject rather than sports, it might have made this poem a little more exciting rather than flat.

Viewing the fourth sample “The Frog” this is your typical Haiku poem. I think he just followed a template and filled it in with an animal that he likes. I think this type of poem is pretty easy to replicate and make up, and it doesn't really show his experience or versatility of a writer.

In the fifth sample “Ordinary Insect” I thought that this was really creative, and that it shows that he has different interests besides just sports. You can see that he put effort into this poem and has a consistent rhyme scheme and it actually really funny. He has a serious aspect to the writing and follows the template of writing this type of poem, but adds a little bit more to it.

Looking at the sixth sample “Pain Endurance” we can see that he really does enjoy lacrosse and basketball the most. It's obvious that he has a lot of passion for this sport, much like basketball and that it is revealed in his poetry. It's obvious that his passion lies within sports. This is where we can see his true emotions and feelings come out.

Finally in the seventh sample his Lifted Line Poem ; it is quite obvious that it is meant to be funny, and this definitely represents Frankfurt and his personality.

I think all 7 of the poems really represent Frankfurt as a student and a person. Obviously the students have to fill out a template type of poem, but it is obvious that Frankfurt wanted to take a more comical approach to his poetry. However I found it really insightful that his true emotions and passion came out when he wrote about Lacrosse and Basketball. These poems show that he is serious, and can convey his emotions rather than just trying to be the “funny kid”. However as much as I liked reading his poems on Basketball and Lacrosse, I think his more comical poems truly get at

and show us Frankfurt's true personality. After observing him, and listening to him talk and others talk about him, I just think this brings him and his personality all together.

Lesson Plan 1 Outline:

Big Question:

- What does poetry teach us about ourselves and the different ways we look at one another and look at ourselves?

Materials:

- Poetry Packets
- Pen or Pencil
- Highlighter

Objectives:

- Students will examine each others works of poetry, in order to understand that the concept of poetry shapes individuals, and how we view one another.
- Students will be introduced to the Haiku poem, in order to be able to write their own in the future and examine other types of Haiku poems.

Activities:

- As a class, as a warm up activity, there will be a poster board with the word "Struggle". Each student will have a different color marker and each student will write one sentence about the word struggle, or a struggle that they have went through (personal,

family, as deep as they want to). This will form our own class poem. When it reaches back to the front of the class, it will be read out loud. Students will have to write down what they think about this poem.

- After our warm up activity, students will learn the different aspects of a Haiku poem. As a class we will examine many different Haiku poems, and write out own examples. After working collectively as a class students will then use what they have just learned and apply it individually. Individually students will have to write a Haiku poem using a template that guides them through the writing process. They will have to write a total of 3 Haiku poems. After writing the 3 Haiku poems, students will then break off into groups based on their "POV NUMBER" of the day. In this group students will share their Haiku Poems that they write individually. As a group they must choose one poem from each group member. On a large poster board, students will write their top Haiku poems and then add an illustration, or magazine clipping to correspond and give a visual to their poem. As each group member will read their poem, and describe their reasoning as to why they wrote this poem, and what they liked about it.
- At the end of class, after each group has shared, we will read 2-3 selected poems from the book "Falling Up" (depending on time). Students can either elect that they read it aloud to their class, or the teacher may. We will examine the different aspects of the poem and relate it to our current lives.

Assessment:

- Ticket out the Door: Students will have to write down 3 facts about a Haiku poem as they walk out of the classroom to hand in to check comprehension.
- For homework: Students in their poetry packets will have to write 6 examples of Haiku's (they may not use any of the ones that were written during class today) for the next class. We will be reviewing them, and they will go towards the over all grade of their poetry packets.

Reflection:

- If I were to revolve this lesson around Frankfurt, I think that he would work well in the group activities. I think that there is not a lot of instruction time, and there are a lot of hands on aspects of this lesson that will keep him engaged. He will be working with his peers most of the time and will not need consistent re-direction and will not be distracting the class as if we were having a lecture class.

Lesson Outline 2:

Big Question:

- What does different author's writing styles show us about their poetry writing?

Materials:

- 25 Copies of select poems from the Poem Books: **Falling Up & Where the Sidewalk Ends By: Shel Silverstein**
- 25 copies of **Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices : By Paul Fleischmann**
- Pens/Pencils
- Markers/Highlighters
- Poetry Packets
- Colored Sticky Notes

Objectives:

- Students will be able to examine different author's and their poems looking at their different aspects that make their poetry in order to compare and contrast them.
- Students will be able to pick out key aspects and elements of poetry in the author's works in order to apply them to their own poems they will write.
- Students will examine Shel Silverstein & Paul Fleischmann writing and poem styles in order to compare and contrast the different writing styles they bring to poetry.

Activities:

- As a warm up activity, students will pick from a fish bowl a colored sticky note. As the whole class comes together they will pair up with their color. These will be the teams that they are in for the day remaining of the class (groups will consist of 4 - 5 students). Here they will read from the poetry selections **Insects**. As partners or groups of 3 they will have 2-3 poems each that they will have to analyze, and then read together out loud.

- For this lesson on poetry we will be looking at the different writing styles of two different authors, Paul Fleischmann of **Joyful Noise** and Shel Silverstein of **Falling Up & Where the Sidewalk Ends**. Students in their poetry packet will fill out the notes that follow along with poetry voice & writing style. They will have to take notes of Paul & Shel's writing style in **Insects**.
- After examining Fleischman's writing style in **Joyful Noise**, we will look at poems selections from Silverstein in **Falling Up & Where the Sidewalk Ends**. Students will get back into their groups that they had chosen from the beginning of the class and examine Silverstein's poem style in selections from his books **Falling Up & Where the Sidewalk Ends**.
- Students will either act out, draw, or create some visual to go with their poem selections. As a class they will have to read their poems to the class, and then describe their visual. They will also have to compare and contrast the poem selections that we have examined during the class.
- When comparing and contrasting we will be discussing this as a class, and students will have to fill out a venn diagram as well.

Assessment:

- **Homework:** Students will have to pick an animal and write a multiple voice poem such as Fleischman's poems in the novel **Joyful Noise**. Students will have to share their poem as a warm up in the next days class.

Reflection:

- I think much like the other lesson, Frankfurt would enjoy this lesson because it is very hands on. He will also be working in groups where they will have to work together and also be creative, and read these poems out loud. He also can take his silliness out on the acting point

Lesson 3 Outline:

Big Question:

- What can poetry teach us about current events, and how can we relate poetry to current events taking place today?

Materials:

- Poetry Packets
- Pencils/Pens
- Highlighters/Makers
- Computer/Projector
- Laptops or Computer Lab

Objectives:

- Students will examine current events happening in today's society in order to research poems or poetry relating to them.

Activities:

- As a warm-up activity, students will share their Two Voice poems that they had to write the previous night for homework. They will have to pair up with their 3:00 appointment to read with. (If a student was absent or did not complete the homework, they can choose to read from the novel Joyful Noise)
- As a class we will do research in the computer lab to research current events happening in the community, or world. Students can either choose to research on.
 - For their research project they can either work in a group, or individually. This project will be finished within the class period.

- Students must find a current topic that has happened within the last year (2011 can count), they must give a description of what happened and use 4-6 sources. The write up must be at least 1-2 pages double spaced. In their description they have to say why this event was important as well.
- Students must then see if they can find a poem or poems related to this even, must site the source as well. When they are examining the poem they have to state in their description papers how a poem effects, (positive or negative) an event, and how this poem can help people understand or mislead people about that event.
- After looking up and finding any poems that have been written about this event or have to do with this event, students must make up 3 pomes (using any type of style) about this subject.
 - Students must also have an illustration or visual to go with their poem, it can be computer based, or they can illustrate it themselves.

Assessment:

- A rubric will be made in order to assess the students on their research project, and poems that they have written. They will be assessed on their description and if they have proper sources, following poem models, and also presentation.

Reflection:

- I personally think that this type of lesson would work well with Frankfurt. He again will be working with his peers, and instead of the typical English class, Frankfurt will get to do research on a topic of his interest. He also is going to have to prove and use his knowledge of what he has been learning about with poems. I think this is a good way to apply what is going on in the world around us and relate it to poetry because it is a very common thing to do and students will learn different writing styles also.

Final Reflection:

So after countless hours, of observing and working on putting this whole assignment together, I really and truly learned a lot about myself as a student, soon to be teacher, and I also learned a lot about the future students that I will be teaching.

I think back to my first day in Mrs. Sassafras's class when those two girls turned around and asked "Are You and Intern Or Something?".... and I didn't know how to answer so I smiled and said, "I'm just here to watch you guys." If I could go back and change what I said, I would simply tell them "Yeah, and instead of me someday teaching you, for the next few weeks you all get to teach me and show me what I should become when I'm a teacher."

I feel as if we sit here and are so quick to judge students, based on how they act, how they dress, who they associate themselves with. When I walked into that middle school I thought to myself, "Is this what I was like... YIKES". However, after doing this project, I would give anything to go back. I learned that you can sit here and watch a million teachers, and how they handle their classroom, and look at a million different students and think how you would handle them. But you never actually get to sit down with one and get to know them, and think how you personally would teach them. I mean, we are never really going to know until we are standing in front of a room with 23 students staring at you wondering what you are going to do first.

When I first saw Frankfurt, I just thought right away this kid is perfect. He was nothing like me at all, and when I started to watch him, I automatically assigned him the "class clown", and thought he really didn't care about his studies. But over time, watching him, and then talking to two of the teachers he interacts with most; I found myself to be partially true. However I was also partially wrong. Besides the fact that Frankfurt may

or may not be the next Kelso from *That 70's Show*, he is actually a really intellectual student. His views and priorities are exceptional for a student his age, despite having to be redirected occasionally. But for a student who wants to be that "Kelso" he really does grasp many of the different concepts that he is learning.

Maybe we push our students into conforming into certain social groups, and today's media plays a huge role in that. However, I believe for myself, and for all future teachers, that we can't judge our students right away just by looks... or the original saying "you can't judge a book by its cover", maybe we can change that to fit more to Frankfurt's case saying "you can't judge a 7th grader based on their trapper keeper". If I wouldn't have done this whole assignment, and just watched him, and never really got to know him, I would have never seen the passionate side he has for Lacrosse, or Basketball. I also wouldn't have seen or thought that he was into Old Western Films. And most of all, I wouldn't have learned that I personally still have room to grow as a future educator.

When I think of middle school students I get chills down my spine. I myself was quick to assign students with what I thought what learning category or what group of other students they hang out with. However, from when I was in middle school, times have changed. I think to myself, if I never would have stepped foot in Mrs. Sassafras's room, would I still have the same outlook as I did on middle school, as compared to what I see in them now. I see middle school as a huge influential time to shape our students, to make them love education, and to prepare them for the future. I know that if I ever have a future student like Frankfurt, which I hope I do, because it will be a challenge, yet a great joy to watch this student grow. Maybe teaching is a give and take, we give the knowledge to our students, but we as the teachers take the memories and lessons that our students teach us.

Overall from this whole experience I learned a lot, about myself and about Frankfurt. We have so many opportunities to take and work with when it comes to students. Facilitating to their needs, and thinking about incorporating as much diversity and as much activity is the key to making our students remain focused and enjoy school. I believe that you can't succeed over the students you have to join them in the journey in discovering them as learners, individuals, and you also have to join the journey of finding yourself as a teacher, bring out the inner middle scholar in you, and embrace what the students will teach you. Teachers hold the key to success, and we pass them to our students to open the doors of knowledge and their futures; let's not hand them one key, but many.