

Reflective Essay on Classroom Observations

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<u>Date</u>	<u>Time of Observation</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Program/Grade</u>
8/14/2006	1.5 hours, a.m. reading instruction	Michael Elementary	Ms. Fish	K-2 Autism SC
8/16/2006	1.5 hours, p.m. math instruction	Raymond Middle	Ms. Finger	6-8 Autism SC
10/30/2006	1 hours, a.m. collaborative speech/language instruction	Michael Elementary	Ms. Page	3-5 MOID SC
12/1/2006	1.5 hours, p.m. social studies instruction	SMPP	Ms. Johnny	2 nd grade SEBD SC

As a required component of my Educational Leadership practicum, I observed four separate classrooms for the purpose of making sense of teaching and learning in the school context. The most static theme I observed during my observations was that all students can learn when given the opportunity and needed assistance. My observations were conducted in special education classrooms that served students with disabilities considered severe in nature.

During my assignment, I observed how ISLLC standards 1 and 5 were directly related to the types of classroom observations and related interactions that may be conducted by a school administrator. ISLLC standard 1 deals with the necessity to observe, facilitate and support a community and faculty shared vision of learning. As a classroom supervisor, when I observe classrooms I want to see that teachers are embracing the vision of learning that is adopted by both our district and school faculty. ISLLC standard 1 speaks to the necessity for strong communication when making sure that all faculty members understand the adopted vision of learning. If an administrator were to observe an educator who was not embracing the vision of learning that is adopted by the school, communication would be an essential part of changing the practices of the observed teacher. The 5th ISLLC standard states that an administrator should have knowledge of the professional code of ethics and should value the right of every student to have a free quality education. The heart of standard 5 deals with ethics, values and confidentiality; the standard insists on appreciation and sensitivity to the diverse needs of the student population. When observing a special education program, it is essential that sensitivity and confidentiality is used when acknowledging the specific needs of students with disabilities.

In the classrooms I observed, structured activities were taking place that were related to both the GPS standards set forth by the State of Georgia and the IEP goals and objectives of each student within the room. During the first observation, Ms. Fish guided her students through phonemic blends as they read a story by the author of the week (Eric Carle). The instruction was being differentiated for the needs of each individual student. The second observation took place at Raymond Middle School in Ms. Finger's classroom. One student in particular was quite convinced he could not complete a project within the allotted time; Ms. Finger assigned the student a partner to help out, embracing her school's mission statement that "team work makes the dream work". My third observation found students with moderate intellectual delays working with both a speech and language pathologist and special education teacher to articulate their science vocabulary words; during my fourth observation, I watched as students with severe emotional and behavioral disturbances worked on a nutrition lesson using hands-on activities to help the students link the concept to their everyday life.

After each observation I conducted a post-conference with the teachers to work on communicating what I saw while observing their class. Each post-conference gave me the opportunity to commend each teacher for their hard work and all of the learning that was evident during my observation. This activity was a valuable learning experience that helped me to view teaching and learning while relating it to the knowledge points and practices that are expected of a leader in education.