Jeanny Park

**Journal Entries**

Day 1: **Chameleon**

* Today, I observed my school advisor
* My advisor’s teaching style varied across different classes
* The first block my advisor had was Tech Lead class composed of only five students
* These students were responsible for fixing computer and technical problems in school. My advisor referred to them as the “first-aid tech guys”
* My advisor was more laid back in Tech Lead, giving more autonomy to his students
* The Tech Lead class was composed of five students who were superb in technology
* There was no form of lecture in Tech Lead class
* Instead, my advisor gave them certain tasks to do (i.e. fixing another teacher’s computer, making edits on the school website, fixing remote controls, etc…)
* My advisor was more strict in Accounting 12
* He started with a formal lesson then gave students time to work on their assignments
* He made sure the students were focused by asking many questions during lesson
* He also made it clear to the students the consequences of not handing in their assignments on time (they will receive O)
* Students were mostly on task and some students were even helping other students
* Keyboarding 8 started out with 20 min typing
* Then, my advisor gave them an assignment to work on
* For the assignment, the students could work in pairs, but they couldn’t work with same person they worked with previously
* After observing my advisor’s three classes and his varying teaching styles, I learned that teachers have to be chameleons. Teachers have to adjust their teaching styles to accommodate different students. At times, teachers have to give students autonomy, and at times, they have to give students discipline. My goal is to recognize different needs of students and adjust my teaching styles to meet those different needs.

Day 2: “**Expect more and they will perform higher”**

* Today, I observed Dance 8 & 9 class
* The class was very fun to observe
* Students seemed to enjoy the class a lot
* Students started out with a stretch choreography to music “Turn up the music”
* One girl was not following the choreography
* When I asked about her, the teacher told me that she was a gifted student
* When the teacher and E.A weren’t looking, however, she followed her classmates
* The teacher and E.A talked about how she performs well on her own but doesn’t when she’s around the teacher or E.A
* They said that some students intentionally don’t try to get attention
* The task of the day was to create their own choreography for the Christmas show
* First, the teacher asked students to create a dance “phrase” (i.e. tumble 🡪 jump 🡪 fall-🡪 tumble back)
* After five minutes, teacher then asked students to group themselves in a group of three or four and teach each other the choreographies they created
* The teacher gave students autonomy to pick the order of choreographies and how to transition into each “phrase”
* The groups now had a “paragraph”
* After several practices, the teacher separated the class in half
* Half the class went on stage and half the class watched
* Teacher gave each group a number and the groups performed in sequence
* They now had a five minute choreography
* I couldn’t believe how smooth the class went. I was amazed to see Gr. 8 & 9 students create such a great choreography in just one class. The dance teacher told me to “Expect higher and they will perform higher.” This stuck to my mind. Today’s observation taught me an important lesson: to never underestimate the ability of my students.

Day 3: **“What’s occasional?”**

* Today, I observed an ESL Level 2 class
* In a class, there were ten students
* Before the bell, a group of Chinese boys talked in their native language
* After the bell, the teacher told them “English only”
* One European boy in the class spoke very good English; he also had good pronunciation
* I wondered why that boy was in ESL class
* The class started with a spelling quiz
* The teacher reminded students several times that this was a spelling quiz, not vocabulary quiz and made sure the class understood the instructions
* The list of words were: justice, plot, boundary, inherit, occasional, struggle, imagine, precious
* The European boy said that he quiz was “so hard” and asked what occasional means when she read the word out
* After the quiz, the class read aloud *Frankenstein*
* The European boy struggled to read; he did not know how to read “below,” “come,” “afraid,” “supper,” etc…
* Through observing this lesson, I realized that oral language can vary considerably from academic language. Even though the European boy had good verbal everyday English, his academic language was very poor. This also reminded me of why I wanted to become a teacher. I was often prejudged by my high school English teachers by my accent. Because of my accent, they thought I would have poorly in English classes. Even though my oral English wasn’t perfect, however, I had solid academic English, and even took AP Literature class. I wanted to become a teacher without a prejudice, yet I prejudged the ELL students based on couple of sentences they spoke. The European boy allowed me to remind myself how I felt when I was prejudged by my teachers, and motivated me to get to know my students before prejudging them.

Day 4: **Halloween**

* On Halloween, I observed Food and Nutrition 11/12 class
* In the class, there were six large tables with built-in stoves
* In a table sat four to six students
* The students seemed to seat in “cliques”
* Right before the bell, four students worked in the class and sat at the back table
* These four students seemed to be the “popular” group
* They seemed excited about Halloween and talked about what they are going to do after school
* They barely paid attention to the teacher
* When the teacher told the class they will be practicing knife skills and making a salad, one of the girls said, “Urgh. I shouldn’t have come to class” and rolled her eyes
* She didn’t seem interested in making salad and kept playing on her cellphone
* The teacher told her to put her cellphone away several times, but she didn’t
* When students don’t pay attention to teacher’s instructions on topics such as proper use of knives, they can seriously hurt themselves. I think it is important to make sure students pay full attention when it comes to safety instructions. I also think it is crucial to set clear cellphone policies in classrooms with students in the beginning of the term. I also wondered how I can motivate students who aren’t interesting in the course to participate in in-class activities.

Day 5: **“I want to get to know you”**

* Today, I gave my first lesson to Marketing 11 & Entrepreneurship 12 class
* I gave a lesson on Marketing Research
* I explained to them what qualitative and quantitative research are
* I then asked the students to create their own qualitative and quantitative research questions, and interview their classmates
* I explained that the purpose of this activity is them to practice creating their own research questions and interview skills, as well as for me to collect information about to class to get to know them better
* When some of the students asked me if they could interview me, I reminded them that I want to get to know *them*
* When I marked the assignments they handed in at the end of the class, many students got 100% and no one failed
* I saw that the students enjoyed the interaction in the class
* There were many areas I could improve on, but I think it was a good first lesson. I don’t think it was a good lesson because I have excellent teaching skills; I think it was a good lesson because the students learned from interaction with each other. I also think that the students appreciated the fact that I wanted to get to know them better. Many students came up with creative interview questions, and everyone was on task. When they were interviewing each other, they focused on interviews and not on other topics. I think that students see whether you really care about them or not. By starting off my first class with an activity that allows me to get to know them better, I think I was able to earn some appreciation and respect from the students.

Day 6: **Innovative Teaching**

* Today observed a great lesson
* This is my favourite lesson so far
* The Social Studies 10 teacher incorporated drama to teach history; students (in groups of five to six) had to prepare a short 50-60s skit to advertise certain Canadian region
* The marking rubric had four parts: equal participation of group members, organization, content, and presentation
* In this activity, the students aren’t only learning about Canadian regions, but they are learning how to advertise and promote a product
* In this lesson I saw a mix of three classes: Social Studies, Drama and Marketing
* This lesson motivated me to incorporate other subjects to teach Business. I thought I could use this idea in Marketing class as well; Marketing students could also prepare a skit to advertise their products or service. Today’s observation really encouraged me to explore other innovative ways of teaching.

Day 7: **Plan B**

* Today, I gave my second lesson to Computer Applications 9 class
* My lesson was on creating Prezi and Google Presentations
* When the class started, I got students to sign up for Prezi
* The school computer, however, did not have the latest flash player and Prezi did not open
* I did not anticipate this and panicked a little
* I told the class that we will skip Prezi and go straight into Google Presentations
* Another technical problem happened. The students couldn’t sign up for an account without verifying on their cellphones
* I soon figured out that it was because they were under-aged and told them to change their birth date to year 1990 when they sign up for an account
* I learned from this lesson that even though unanticipated problems occur, I have to stay calm. After the lesson, my advisor also told me that it is important to stay calm and get the class going on a different activity if what I prepared does not work out. This lesson taught me to always have backup plans and activities for the students.

Day 8: **BCIT Case Competition**

* After school, there was a business case competition to determine one winning team that would represent the school at BCIT Case Competition on November 16th
* Four groups (over 30 students) wanted to go to BCIT Case Competition
* All four teams were very competitive
* I could see that all teams spent a lot of time preparing for their presentations
* It was great to see so many students interested in business
* However, one winning team had to be decided
* When the winning team was called out, some students became really upset about not winning
* Two boys especially thought they deserved to win, and asked why the other team won
* I told them that their group lacked explanation for their implementations. I recommended them to stick to a couple of implementations next time and to explain the steps in more detail. I told them that I appreciated them asking for an explanation of the results. It was a pleasant surprise for me to see how much students care about this case competition. I also wondered why many of those students who participated in the competition weren’t enrolled in business courses. I wondered if they knew the importance of taking business courses before entering a business school.

Day 9: **Lies**

* Marketing 11 & Entrepreneurship 12 students have to work certain number of shifts in school stores
* This shifts count towards their participation mark, which is worth 30% of their final mark
* A Gr.12 boy hasn’t shown up to classes or his shifts
* When my advisor saw him walking past the school store, he told the boy to come to class and reminded him that he has missing three shifts in a row
* The boy said, “What? Really? I didn’t know.”
* My advisor reminded the boy that it was the boy himself who signed up for those shifts
* The boy promised my advisor that he will show up for his lunch shift
* The boy, however, did not show up at lunch
* I was told that the boy does drugs and often skips classes
* My advisor told me that the boy most likely won’t graduate this year
* It was sad to see a teenage boy addicted to drugs, falling behind in school. My advisor told me that he tried to help and the counsellors tried to help him as well, but there’s so much they can do when the boy himself isn’t trying. He also warned me that I’ll come across many teens becoming addicted to drugs and falling behind in school in my teaching career. This boy made me wonder, “What can I, as a teacher, do to prevent students from doing drugs?” “How can I motivate them to get back on track?”

Day 10: **Same lesson, new problems**

* Today, I gave my third lesson to Applied Skills Keyboarding 8 class
* The lesson was on creating Google presentations
* I modified my lesson plan and took out the section on Prezi presentations
* I could’ve updated the flash on each computer to do a lesson on Prezi, but I concluded from my last lesson that teaching them how to create Google presentations was enough load for one class
* Again, I started the class with creating Google accounts
* Last class, as long as the students changed their birthdate to 1990, they could create accounts without making cellphone verifications. This time, however, the students still couldn’t sign up for accounts without verifications.
* I thought I was fully prepared this time, yet I faced another totally unexpected technical problem
* I stayed calm and found out that the students didn’t need verifications on Internet Explorer, so I told students to sign up for an account on Explorer and, once they have an account, to sign in using Google Chrome
* I learned from this lesson that even though I teach same lesson, I could be faced with different problems. I realized that anything can go wrong at any time. The important thing is to keep calm and look for solutions.