

Title of Session: Teachers-In-Training

Moderator: Dianne Allen

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DianneA: so be thinking about what sorts of questions you might like to have answers to by the end of the session

BJB2: Have you already done intros, Dianne?

BJB2 . o O (and reminded everyone to detach?)

DianneA: OK so that is our cue to get underway formally ...

DianneA: and to do that we do start with the reminder to detach your chat window to catch more of the chat ...

LauraAH: ah much better hha

DianneA: to do that click on the Actions menu in the top right hand corner of your chat space, scroll, down ...

DianneA: and find the Detach option and click on that

DianneA: and then in the top left hand corner of your detached space find and set the size of the font to make it easiest to read

DianneA: anyone not sure about what is happening?

LauraAH: I'm good

DianneA: and now we need to introduce ourselves ... where are you from? and what area of teaching are you looking forward to becoming involved in?

DianneA: I am from Wollongong NSW Australia and my area is currently Professional development ...

KateHu: Kate Hummer - Fredericksburg, VA - looking at being an English teacher (not teaching yet)

LauraAH: I am from VA and I'm in a licensing and master's program, and I just started teaching 2nd grade 2 weeks ago

DanielleNR: I am Danielle, a student in Boulder. I am currently majoring in psychology, and will either continue to go onto education psychology, child developmental psychology or switching to early education.

DianneA: though I have also worked in High School science teaching and vocational education

AmyEM: My name is Amy and I am from New Braunfels, TX and plan on teaching elementary education.

DianneA: thanks Danielle

DianneA: Thanks Laura and Amy

DianneA: thanks Kate

ErinR: My name is Erin and I am in my first year teaching sixth grade which is part of elementary school where I teach

DianneA: OK, Danielle has shared with me earlier that she is thinking about the move to majoring in education ...

DianneA: perhaps folk might like to share what it is about teaching/ education that has drawn them to this vocation?

DianneA: BTW Erin if you are having trouble with your connection and you are using wireless it helps to be as near as possible to the source

DianneA: Hi Jeff

ErinR: Okay thanks...my internet has been acting up all day!

KateHu: Mine came from working with the youth group at church. I had always said I would end up being a teacher, but they pushed me for it. My drive also comes from a fear of losing the importance of English - both as language and literature in the future.

DianneA nods to Erin we will keep our eye out for you, and the transcript you get later will have the whole session together

LauraAH: Well I love children so I have always known that teaching would be my profession, but I love the reward of knowing that I am teaching children something....it's very rewarding for all the hard work I put into my class!

DianneA: thanks Kate

DianneA: thanks Laura

ErinR: Mine came from working with children a lot through my church and through Girl Scouts while I was growing up

AmyEM: I want to be able to help children succeed in life and give them a good education that they deserve. I did a student internship in high school and it really helped me decide that I wanted to be a teacher.

DanielleNR: Kate, Laura and Amy have the same reasons that I am thinking of going into education

AmyEM: it is a blast!

LauraAH: It is a lot of work, but the reward is well worth it!

KateHu: It's funny because I have always said I would never have kids and I am finding myself in a profession where I will be surrounded by them.

DianneA: can I ask then, Danielle, what was informing your earlier decision to major in psychology?

DanielleNR: I fell in love with psychology and mainly wanted to learn how children learn, I guess being a teacher would help me take what I have learned and put into effect

DianneA nods to Danielle

LauraAH: I think it would be a great combo, having that insight will help you to really reach your students

KateHu: I think the two almost have to go hand in hand.

KateHu: I wish I had done more with psychology in undergrad now that I am where I am.

LauraAH: me too

DianneA: and might BJ and Jeff, as experienced teachers, have anything to offer about the pros and cons of finalizing the degree in psychology and then moving to education or moving to the education major now ...

DanielleNR: Working with kids is something I always knew I would do, before when I choose my major, I was not sure I could teach an entire class

LauraAH: you'd be surprised what you can take on ;0

LauraAH smiles

DianneA nods to Danielle, class work is only one way of working with children

JeffC: I suggest getting your undergrad in the field of study (if you're going to teach middle or high school)... and not major in education unless you're going to teach K-6.

DanielleNR: If I change to education I plan on teaching 1st or 2nd graders

DianneA nods to Jeff, that is the usual route and advice ...

JeffC: right... that's fine then.

KateHu: I would say do it in undergrad.

DianneA: working on the content discipline

LauraAH: I would get your education degree in undergrad

JeffC: you pretty much have to now for your credential... and... when you do go for your credential... try and get into a program that will give you a concurrent masters.

KateHu: I dropped my education degree as an undergrad because where I was focused more on the elementary methods - which I had difficulty believing would help in a secondary setting.

LauraAH: Jeff is right, try and find a good program that gives you licensure and masters

ErinR: I definitely agree with Jeff, find a program that will let you get your Masters as well...

DianneA: is there any reason, Danielle, why you are thinking about not finishing the major in psychology and making the move now to education?

LauraAH: when you have the combined program it is usually quicker process for the masters degree part of it, rather than doing in on your own

JeffC: some universities (maybe most) now have checklists for courses you'll need to teach middle/high school as undergrads... used to be called a "waiver program" way back when. check with the ed department what you'll need to take as an undergrad for whatever discipline you go for in a credential.

DanielleNR: A lot of the core classes to get a degree in psychology do not match with education, therefore I would have to take more classes to get an education degree

LauraAH: yes you're prob right Danielle

DianneA nods to Danielle

JeffC goes afk for a few

LauraAH: and we all know college isn't cheap!

DanielleNR: I have a checklist of education and of psychology, most of my high school classes go toward psychology but not toward education

DianneA wonders whether the 'rest of the psych degree' always take you away from children's development and learning development emphases

ErinR: that is definitely true...although it may be cheaper to take a few extra classes, rather than have to start a new program after you get your undergrad...

LauraAH: where are you in your psych program Danielle?

DanielleNR: I am only halfway through my sophomore year, I cannot specialized in child development until graduate school

LauraAH: oh I see

LauraAH: would you loose a lot of credits if you switched to an elem ed concentration?

LauraAH: bc I know in my undergrad experience I didn't really delve into the meat of my degree until my junior and senior year

DanielleNR: not a whole lot I would say if I switched before next semester only about 8-10

LauraAH: that's really not that much in the grand scheme of things

DianneA: Kate, you indicated you would have like more psych in your undergraduate studies, can you share with us the reasons for that?

KateHu: Had I had a crystal ball and known that this would be my path... Knowing how children develop and why they might react one way or another, or symptoms for different types of behaviors, I think it would be good knowledge to harness walking into a classroom.

LauraAH: I definitely agree

DianneA: thanks Kate

KateHu: in talking with different teachers, students are misunderstood. Their actions are called as inappropriate or unnecessary behavior.

LauraAH: it's a lot less frustrating when you realize that children are acting a particular way because that's where they are developmentally, and not because of something you may be doing

KateHu: I think it is just wrongly-channeled energy that drives teachers crazy.

KateHu: find out what makes them motivated - even if it's non-traditional, and put it to work.

KateHu: EXACTLY!

DanielleNR: Or find out a passion they have and connect a lesson to cater to that passion

DianneA: as I look back, Danielle, there are lots of routes into teaching, ... and if your focus is with younger children then discipline content is less of an issue than knowing about children and about learning and helping children to find out how to learn for themselves

LauraAH: definitely

KateHu: students of any age cannot be expected to sit still for 7 hours and absorb everything from every subject. Movement needs to be included, talking, interacting, excitement. All of it needs to be there.

ErinR: definitely

DanielleNR: I agree, I am an adult and have trouble sitting still for that long to learn :)

LauraAH: haha me too

KateHu: true story.

DianneA: now I am wondering if others are finding this conversation helpful, or if others have an issue they would like to raise with the group to see what advice they might tap in this group?

KateHu: Laura, you just started teaching, right?

LauraAH: yes

KateHu: what's something you would say is incredibly important to a new teacher walking in on day one?

LauraAH: haha wow

LauraAH: don't expect anything to be perfect the first time

KateHu: I think that is my biggest fear - stepping off on the wrong foot.

DanielleNR: I think that's every teacher's fear

LauraAH: I am a perfectionist, so it's been very difficult to realize that I am not going to have everything perfect in my classroom from day one....it takes a lot of work!

LauraAH: yeah I'm still worried about that, and especially so after meeting with my parents

LauraAH: it's a work in progress

ErinR: I would also say, expect that things might not go as planned, they might take longer or shorter to get finished..its good to be over prepared, especially those first few weeks ;)

DanielleNR: How did you over come that, I too am a perfectionist

LauraAH: definitely good to be over prepared!

LauraAH: down time is no good

KateHu: I think that's a great difference too. In high school the parents expect you to go to them (in my mind) but you're in elementary where the kids can't do anything without the parent's input.

LauraAH: haha I haven't

DanielleNR: haha oh ok

LauraAH: yes contact with parents is very important, and I have been completely honest with them about myself

KateHu: that's smart.

LauraAH: I have told them if they see anything positive or negative to let me know...I want feedback on how I am doing

DanielleNR: How soon did you meet with the parents? I would like to meet my parents the first day

LauraAH: and what I can do to better educate their child

LauraAH: within the first week

DianneA: Amy have you anything thoughts about what is important for the first day?

DianneA doesn't remember having a particular 'first day' because of things like lots of different group work before the first day of the real teaching career

AmyEM: I think it is important to get to know your students

LauraAH: that is very important, if you don't know who your students are how do you expect to teach them?

DianneA nods to Laura and Amy

AmyEM: I also think it is good to observe your students the first few weeks and find out how each of them learn best

DianneA: one of the things I realised after a bit of time teaching was that the most important thing about teaching is in the relationships you have with the child and with them in their life and having a good relationship with their parents may well be part of that

DanielleNR: I agree I think that is very important so you know how to teach the rest of the year

LauraAH: yes if your students can't connect with you, they are not going to want to learn from you

DianneA: and like any good relationship, it takes time and effort to develop ... so being open to those relationships from the very beginning and working respectfully to develop them is a significant 'starting' resource

AmyEM: I agree

LauraAH: does anyone have any behavior secrets? I'm getting tired of stopping every 2 seconds to scold someone, it's taking away from my teaching :(

DianneA: and being serious about what it is you all hope to achieve, in a year, constitutes part of that respect

KateHu: first grade right? I don't have ideas for you...

LauraAH: 2nd

ErinR: when I was working in a first grade class, we used the 1-2-3 Magic Discipline plan...it worked pretty well, at least for that class

AmyEM: while I was doing my internship in high school the teacher would clap a rhyme to grab the students attention and then they would clap it back. It helped her

LauraAH: I do that

LauraAH: and it works for a second, but it's the constant talking it drives me crazy

LauraAH: what's the 1-2-3 magic discipline plan?

KateHu: I know it works for high schoolers (a 28 person show choir no less). Raise your hand until everyone is quiet.

KateHu: takes time, but those who are paying attention speed up the process - you don't talk and eventually if you stop talking and the kids are still talking, they'll figure it out... ideally.

ErinR: basically ,if a student misbehaves during math, for example..you would say "Michael..that's one." and then you continue on teaching..if he does it again..you say "Michael, that's two.."...if he reaches three during that time period, he goes to a time-out corner for a short amount of time...

LauraAH: yeah I stop talking and just wait, but I feel like it takes FOREVER for certain students to grasp what I am doing

LauraAH: I give my students 3 warnings and at the end of 3 warnings they have to flip their color in their color chart...green = good, yellow = 1st warning, orange = 2nd warning, red = call or note home

LauraAH: maybe I'm just not being firm enough

ErinR: ohh yeah that's good too

DanielleNR: We had that system when I went to school, it seemed to work for the kids in my class. We also had stars on a chart and so many stars meant a prize at the end of the month, you could try something like that too

LauraAH: I like it, and it's a visual so they can see where they are...and they can work their way back to green

LauraAH: yes incentives seem to work well

LauraAH: I have a marble jar for the whole class, when they are good I put some marbles in, and when they are bad I take some out....when we fill the jar they get a pizza party

AmyEM: yes they do

DanielleNR: That's a very nice incentive, what grade do you teach again?

LauraAH: 2nd

LauraAH: it's only our second week as a class so I guess I can't be that hard on myself
haha

JeffC: Anyone here who teaches (or will teach) elementary... I strongly recommend joining the K-3+ Resources group here. It's the best developed professional development group at Tapped In.

DanielleNR: Yeah, it's going to take some time to get used to things

LauraAH: good to know Jeff

JeffC just added a Passageway to the K to 3+ room (take a look after tonight's session is over).

DanielleNR: Yes thank you Jeff

DianneA nods to Laura, yes much of it is about expectations and as a young teacher working on your own adjustments of your expectations .. and having other ways of thinking about what is going on in the classroom, and a variety of strategies for engaging children in their different ways of learning

DianneA: thanks Jeff

LauraAH: yes it's all adaptation and figuring out what will work for our class

LauraAH: I'm sure I'll get there eventually haha

DianneA: and it is a mutual adaptation both of you responding to them and them responding to you

LauraAH: yes def

DianneA: and not setting standards that are impossible to achieve for their developmental stage

ErinR: yeah it really comes down to what works best for you and for your students in that particular class

DianneA nods to Erin

LauraAH: yes bc I've completely learned that what worked in my long-term sub class

doesn't always work in my class now

DianneA: and the big surprise in classroom teaching is that what does work for one may not work so well for another

DanielleNR: This has been a great discussion, and I have learned a lot. Thank you everyone, but I have somewhere I have to be. Thank you again.

DianneA: and then thinking about why this is so, and how you can prepare for difference (I am thinking here about my middle to high school experience)

DanielleNR left the room.

DianneA: We have just about taken our hour's time for discussion

LauraAH: I think soo much of this is simply experience

DianneA: and I'd like to thank you all for your contribution today

LauraAH: thank you

ErinR: thanks

AmyEM: thanks

KateHu: Thank you

DianneA: it is a matter of experience Laura and doing the work of learning from experience, not just letting it wash over you thinking that it will all come out in the end

BJB2 looks at the clock on the wall

LauraAH: thank you

DianneA: As Jeff shared earlier ...

DianneA: check out the K to 3+ group ...

DianneA: and any of the other passageways to rooms from this room for groups with similar concerns

LauraAH: thank you very much, have a good night!

BJB2 hugs Dianne. Thanks for leading this discussion!

DianneA: and keep an eye out on the calendar for the next session here .. probably

January ...

BJB2 thanks all the participants for their input and discussion...good job!

DianneA: Thanks Bj, thanks every one