

Anna Warnell
Dr, Smagorinsky

Field Experience Journal

Day 1

Today was my first day tutoring at Classic City High School. I was placed in a freshmen English class, with a fellow classmate, Kaelynn. We both were placed with Mrs. Johns class. My plan for this semester is to come each Wednesday for first period.

Today, Mrs. Johns' students consisted of eight boys. I was excited to find out about the topic for discussion covering independent and dependent clauses. The class split up into small groups to cover the worksheets. As English teachers or English Education majors there are times where I'm sure both forget the proper nomenclature for grammar mechanics. We also learned out noun clauses, which I had some trouble identifying.

I today I realized two things: I need some refreshers on noun clauses, and that just you might have a knack for a certain subject doesn't mean that you exactly know how to explain that subject to a student. This realization kind of gave me a wake up call in that I need to work on trying to accurately communicate concepts and ideas to students.

The biggest shock I had when I first got to class was the profound cell phone use. When I was in high school, cell phones were not allowed in the school building, and sure not allowed in our laps.

After my first day my goals for improvement are to be able to explain concepts clearly and precisely, and to become more comfortable and less shy while in class.

Day 2

Today was my second day at CCHS. I was back in Mrs. Johns' class with Kaelynn, and the students were working on an essay over bullying. The assignment asked the students to write an essay about a time where they may have witnessed bullying. The students were also allowed to write fictional stories about what might happen if they did witness bullying. I was paired with Anthoni. He chose to write about a movie that depicts bullying, but he didn't have much written.

Since he didn't have much to begin with, I thought that it would be best just to help him get a draft going. I had some issues with getting him to start, but once he did there were no problems. He gave me a summary of the movie he was writing about, and I helped

him organize his essay. By the end of the class period Anthonia managed to finish a working draft.

Mrs. Johns was very pleased with Anthoni's work for the day, and I was too. I was proud of him for putting his phone down to work on the assignment, and I was proud that the conversation wasn't awkward or uncomfortable. There were a few times I had to get Anthoni back on track, but it wasn't as if he was upset or minded when I did.

Day 3

Today was my second day at CCHS, and once again, I was in Mrs. Johns' class with Kaelynne. Today the students were going over the Progressive Era. I was excited because when I was in high school, I really enjoyed learning about the Progressive Era and The Roaring Twenties.

Mrs. Johns had the students break out into small groups and read over the handout. She asked students to underline or mark any words they didn't know or weren't familiar with. This took the rest of the class period.

When Kaelynne and I were preparing to leave, Mrs. Johns stopped us to ask us how things went with our groups. She mentioned that some students in Kaelynne's group take issue with Mrs. Johns prompting them, which is why she asked Kaelynne to sit with those students.

Today was enjoyable day, and I really saw the students eager to learn.

Day 4

Today I was back in Mrs. Johns' class. Kaelynne moved to another class at a different grade level. The students were asked to write an essay about an influential African American. Many of the students chose to write about Martin Luther King or Barack Obama.

Mrs. Johns asked me to work with Xavier. I hadn't worked with him before, but I had noticed from previous classes that he was often distracted by his cell phone. Xavier was one of the students who was writing about President Obama. It took some time prompting him and getting him back on track, but by the end of the class he had written a good amount for Mrs. Johns to grade, and she was pleased with the progress he had made.

Day 5

Today I was back in Mrs. Johns' classroom. The students were going over the Harlem Renaissance. I was excited because in my African American literature class this semester, we were also talking about the Harlem Renaissance.

The class discussion revolved around Langston Hughes and his contributions to the Harlem Renaissance. I noticed how often Mrs. Johns' would remind the students that the material would be on the quiz the following Friday.

Throughout the class discussion i noticed several students on their phones, which was frustrating. Only three or four students seemed to be actively engaged in the conversation.

Day 6

Today in Mrs. Johns' class another classmate, Claire Sanders, was there. I was excited to see her. Class began with the students taking their quiz over the Harlem Renaissance.

After the quiz, students were given the rest of the class period to work on and finish their legacy essays. I noticed that the classroom atmosphere seemed a little more relaxed, which was probably due to Spring Break the following week .

Day 7

Today I was in Mrs. Johns' class. It was a pretty normal day, and the students were going over working on scientific explanatory writing and scientific vocabulary. I was excited to go over this because I am familiar with science and enjoy it.

One thing in particular that I noticed in class was a student who was constantly working on a Rubik's Cube. At first I thought that it was distracting him and and was more invested in solving the game rather than class. However, after observing him i noticed that it was more just a way to keep his hands busy. This student was actively engaged in class and never let the Rubik's Cube become a problem in his ability to pay attention in class.

Day 8

I was back in Mrs. Johns' class again, and so was Kaelynne. I was glad to see her since it had been a while since she had worked with me in Mrs. Johns' class.

Today the class was still going over explanatory writing, however rather than science the students were working with math, specifically the Pythagorean Theorem.

I was nervous in this class because I am really bad at math. However, I remembered learning the Pythagorean Theorem in high school so I was familiar with the material. I felt smart as I was able to redirect students in correctly writing the formula down.

An interesting thing that happened today was one student knew many of the square roots, just off hand. Another student asked him for an answer and remarked how smart he was. I think this was a good thing to experience in the classroom because it demonstrated student camaraderie.

Day 9

Today both Kaelynne and I were back in Mrs. Johns' classroom. Attendance seemed pretty high for it being the end of the school year. Today the lesson was over Edgar Allen Poe's poem "The Raven." I studied this poem in high school, so I was excited to be learning it again. The activity consisted of students breaking into small groups and going through the poem to find examples of literary devices such as imagery, metaphor, simile, and so on.

I was paired with two students, Tommy and Jose. Tommy had already gone through the poem, but Jose missed the previous day, and needed some extra help in getting through the poem. It was fun for me to sit with a student and review things like metaphor, rhyme scheme, and other devices that I was already familiar with.

After students had time to go through the poem, Mrs. Johns went through the worksheet for everyone. Something that I've noticed is how hard it is to get the students to participate in class discussion. There are times where the students are engaged and actually put effort into class discussions, but for the most part it's like pulling teeth to get them to answer. I think part of this is because it's the end of the year. I also think it's because cell phones. I'm learning how to deal with my frustrations concerning cell phone use in class.

Day 10

Today Kaelynne and I were back in Mrs. Johns classroom. The students were working on practice tests, so Kaelynne and I observed and offered help to students. Since the students were working on their own, Kaelynne and I listened to stories Mrs. Johns had from her different experiences with standardized testing.

She described the high stress and anxiety she felt at her previous school, and how she felt like anything and everything she did could be misread as an attempt of cheating. She

then compared her experiences there to her experiences at CCHS, and how she much preferred CCHS.

Hearing Mrs. Johns talk about standardized testing made me hate it even more, and made me continue to question its role and need in the education of students today.

Day 11

Today I was once again in Mrs. Johns classroom. Many of my classmates have already finished their hours, but because of some issues going on at home, I missed a few days here and there and am having to finish my hours later than expected.

Because testing is done and it's the end of the semester, the students in Mrs. Johns' classroom were working on make up work. Since the students were working on an individual basis, I had the opportunity to talk more with Mrs. Johns. As we were talking, she showed me her transcript from college. I was thankful for her sharing this, as it made me realize that you don't need all As to achieve your career goals.

I'm naturally hard on myself and Mrs. Johns' sharing her college experiences with me made me realize everything will eventually work out, and to not stress so much about minor obstacles.

Day 12

Today I was back in Mrs. Johns' classroom. Many of students were working on individual work, including make up work. I was there if any of them needed help, but for the most part they did work on their own.

I told Mrs. Johns about my upcoming Maymester class, and that it too requires service hours. After talking with my professor and Mrs. Mimi it was decided that I would continue to volunteer at CCHS through the rest of the school year.

Mrs. Johns was excited to hear about my extension in her class, and I was excited to be able to stay. Mrs. Johns explained that even though the students are pretty much done with their coursework for the year, there are still two weeks of school remaining. For the rest of the period, Mrs. Johns and I brainstormed end of the year projects for the class to vote on.

Day 13

This is my last day volunteering for Dr. Smagorinsky's class. I will continue to come back to CCHS everyday, however it will be for my Maymester course.

Today the class voted on which project they wanted to do for their end of the year project. The outcome was a project over Hawaii, where students will research various non-fiction articles about Hawaii and present that information to the class.

Mrs. Johns is planning a luau party for the day of presentations, and because I am continuing my volunteer work, I will be able to be in class the day of the party.

The biggest takeaway I have from this experience at Classic City High School the power and necessity for compassion. Throughout my time during this semester, I have observed Mrs. Johns' relationship with her class. She is compassionate, patient, and respectful of her students, and I think this relationship is reciprocated by her students.

The thing I enjoyed most about my time at CCHS was observing the relationship between Mrs. Johns and her students. She demonstrated what I believe to be some of the most important aspects of being a teacher.

The thing that frustrated me most about my time at CCHS was the use of cell phones in class. I understand letting students have their phones, but being able to have them in class is distracting, both for students and teachers.

I enjoyed my time at CCHS, and I look forward to being able to continue my volunteer work there. I think that this experience has helped prepare me for the day I have my own classroom of students.