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Human Relations Report (Cleveland Public Schools)

It is hard to describe fifth graders as at this stage, each student is different as maturity is setting into their lives. The thirty-eight fifth grade students at Cleveland Public Schools were responsible, caring, and “on top of things.” They thoroughly enjoyed interacting with others and doing activities that require movement and their participation. Learning, to most of the students, was fun! The students strived to learn more and build off of their previous knowledge while making connections with previous experiences or previous texts that they have read. As their eagerness to learn from a teacher is above and beyond, it is important to note that they love to learn from their peers as well whether that is about a specific subject matter or themselves, in general.

By this grade in school, these students are aware of the routine and know what is acceptable as well as what is not acceptable. With this, however, there are still going to be those few students that need redirection. With this, I found it necessary to do a warm-up activity to get their attention as this was right away in the mornings. I introduced the warm-up activity as a way to “wake their brains up.” One of the most popular warm-up activities was Boggle. I found it necessary to make it a competition to see who could get the most words. The students would sometimes request to extend the time or allow them to take it home that night! I found that the students learn the best in small groups or group discussions. As students by this age have established their learning style, it is important to incorporate an abundant amount of them into

the lesson or into the week's lesson/objectives. I also learned that reviewing previous material learned the day prior is important whether that is later in the day or the following day,

- A. As there was only one minority student within the thirty-eight fifth graders, I did not experience much of a racial and cultural standpoint from the students. As a teacher, it is important to remember that not all students receive the feedback and support at home that you may imagine them to have. Many parents can look like they care in conferences, etc. but in reality, they may be busy or just “not care” in the home atmosphere. Cleveland is a small school and town in which a community atmosphere is fully known about. Many students also do not have the financial support that their peers may have available to them. I clearly observed this through the clothing that the students came to school in. One student wore the same grey sweatshirt every single day while the student next to them wore a different Under Armour outfit each day. With this, however, it is important to give each student a chance for success as they all have the ability to succeed and do great things.
- B. No matter what, bullying is always an issue and will continue to be. As a teacher, it is important to be able to recognize what is going on outside of the classroom and not within an eyesight. As fifth graders, I noticed that some of the “jock” students were a bit more harsh to the other non-athletic students. With this, it is important to engage all students so they all have the opportunity to interact with one another. As a teacher, it is important to gauge the students as they enter and exit the classroom. Do they look afraid or frightened? Do they look as if they are nervous or worried? Do they appear to be bothered? As the students in the classes seemed to “click” as a family, I

did not observe any type of extreme bullying episodes. There was one episode, however, that one student decided to poke fun at another student for not completing their homework. This was handled with myself interfering and instructing the student that was poking the fun to take care of themselves and not worry about everyone else.

- C. A positive learning environment is something that I find key to a successful classroom. There are many ingredients that go into making a thriving learning environment. Whether it's your first year in education or your twentieth, the first days, weeks, and months of the school year are the time to create the learning environment you want for your students to feel safe to gain an education. Giving small, but generous encouragement is vital to a student's success. One student in the first period is a special education student who is out of the classroom for half of the period. With this, when he returns to the classroom, it is important to ensure that he understands the directions and that the teacher gives appropriate instruction and guidance before he has a meltdown due to anxiety. The student is intelligent, however, guidance is vital. Another student in period two is currently being evaluated to be placed into special education. The focus element of the student is lacking tremendously. With this, it is important to keep him into your peripheral vision at all times. If the student is off task, redirection is important. However, it may seem to be continuous and repetitive, the student will finally realize that the work needs to get done. At some points, I will have the student sit at a table by himself facing the wall so there are no distractions. With this particular student though, I learned that if you tell him that he cannot go outside for recess until his work is done, the focus will all of a sudden

appear. A positive learning environment is not only vital to student academic success. A positive learning environment is vital to creating a positive life for the student as the student may be struggling outside of the classroom door. For example, my mom works with one of the students' moms. With this, my mom filled me in on her home life and what was going on at home. The student's father is apparently a drunk and never at home. With this, her parents are now in the middle of a divorce and the father wants nothing to do with his daughter. Her mother is now having a hard time making ends meet. It is important to note, as a teacher, that school may not be at the top of their list. School may not be the only thing on their mind. It is important to give appropriate feedback and understand that the student may not be up to par during the difficult times.

- D. As stated earlier, there was not much diversity in the two classes during this clinical. As there was one minority student, the students treated him with the utmost respect as they would any other of their peers. However, this gave me the sense of respect. I am unsure how I would feel if I were the only minority student in the grade, let alone one of the few students of another culture in the entire school/district. After all, Colossians 1:16-17 states, "For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together."