

# Tutoring Log/ Log Composite

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## **Tutoring Log of Trevor Larson**

During my time at Mankato East I hope to watch and pick up on what teachers do well, and what they could improve on. I can pick up, and apply my observations to help better my future classrooms. I could see myself teaching high school later in my life. I enjoy working with older students, so it's a real possibility. My host teacher was Ms. Nelson. She teaches health, and also physical education. I am there most Thursday's, and also some Tuesday's mixed in. I am there for two hours at a time. The first class is full of juniors, they mainly lift weights and do cardio activities. The next class is freshman and some foreign exchange students. They are more of a health or physical education class. It will be a good experience for me just to see the differences between the two age groups.

### **Goals**

During my time with Ms. Nelson I hoped to pick up on many good teaching traits. I wanted to pick up on what teachers do in certain situations. Every student and every teacher is different so the more exposure I can gain will better me later. I know I have many things to work and improve on, hopefully I will be able to identify some of these deficiencies earlier in the process. One thing I hope to improve on was letting the students know what I expect or what the objectives are. Letting the students know what I want them to be doing and accomplishing can go a long way. I know from a student's perspective that not knowing what the teacher wants can be one of the most frustrating things. It also helps the validity of what the teacher is doing. I hope to improve in many areas, this is one that I will be focusing on.

### **Orientation**

My teacher who is allowing me to come and help out name is Ms. Nelson. She has blonde hair and is in her early 30's. She teaches physical education and health classes. She enjoys working with young people and seeing their growth. She likes to snowmobile and play and coach volleyball in her spare time. She wants me to be visible and involved when it calls for it. She admitted that often times the students will be doing the activities as individuals and won't have much interaction with the students besides at the beginning and at the end of class periods. Often times she will model how she wants things done then set them free on their own to practice.

### **Classroom/School Description**

I was able to observe in Mankato East High School. The school itself is a large plain colored building. It has no windows for the students which is a negative. The school has large halls ways, the lockers are all blue. The lunch room is a nice open area with many pictures of students involved and actively participating in various school activities. The school has two nice gyms which we will use, they are wide open with a track around them. It has a weight room, which is located next to the gym. The weight room is small, they had around five machines, and a couple of free weights. They also had a room called the mirror room, it has mirrors across one wall, with a rock climbing wall on another wall. These are the main areas we will use for class.

10/1

My first day there the freshman weren't having class for some reason. The juniors were in an actual classroom. They were filling out information about what their interests were outside of the classroom and what their physical activities were. The students didn't do much work, Ms. Nelson basically gave them this day as a catch up day. This gave me a chance to try and introduce myself to the students, and hopefully learn a name or two. Ms. Nelson tried to give me information on each student to help me interact with them. She seemed to have a good relationship with her students.

10/6

This was my first real day where the classes flowed like they normally would. The first hour class which is all juniors was in the weight room. Ms. Nelson gave them sheets to fill out with workouts that they wanted to do. I liked that she gave them the opportunity to make their own choices. If she would have handed them a workout sheet with no choices I think the students wouldn't have responded as well. Most of the guys in the class gave a good effort. The girls on the other hand, were often times on their phone and not really engaged in the physical workout. Some even made the comment that they didn't want to get sweaty, this baffled me as this is a physical education class. The freshman came in after the juniors left. The freshman went outside to the track. They were to run a lap, then do twenty five push-ups. They were required to do four laps of this. Most of the class groaned at the task, there were some students who enjoyed the activity. There was a boy who ran seven laps instead of the required four. This task took most of the class the whole time period. Lots of them walked the laps, others slightly jogged. I did not have much interaction with the students today besides giving them encouragement.

10/8

Today the junior class was doing a physical workout. They watched a video that was based on yoga and incorporated some other things into it. Some students were very engaged with the activities, others sat around and acted like they didn't care at all. Ms. Nelson, seems to have taken the approach that if they don't want to do it, they don't have to. I thought that she should have at least encouraged them to try. The yoga activity lasted roughly for a half hour, leaving about 10-15 minute for the students to basically sit around on their phones. I was not very impressed with the time usage for her class. She could have had something for them to do. The

freshman class had much more energy. They did the same lesson as the juniors, they just did it with much more engagement and enthusiasm. The freshman class does contain a more even balance of boys and girls. The freshman class does have some students who aren't the most engaged, but they still at the very least give an effort. The freshman class had some time at the end of the class, but they also played around with a ball and wasn't just sitting around.

10/15

Today was unseasonably warm so Ms. Nelson decided to take class outside. The junior class has the option of either playing capture the ball, or some other game which they didn't choose. I noticed that the students were much more engaged when they had the opportunity to pick. There was still of course some students who dragged along, but for the most part everyone did a good job. I could tell that the students enjoyed the class because when it came time to be done, nobody wanted it to end. This was by far Ms. Nelson's most effective day of teaching. The freshman were supposed to be swimming, but she moved them outside also. They played ultimate football which seemed to be a popular choice amongst them. This was a good activity to keep everyone engaged and moving. One thing I noticed was that Ms. Nelson gives the directions right away, and then doesn't do much else with the students after that. On one hand I feel that she does a good job making directions clear and easy to understand, but I felt she also still needs to be engaged and with the class. Often times she wouldn't be paying attention to the class.

10/22

Today was an odd day, the periods were off for some reason. When I arrived the class was already half way done with their lifting worksheet. Some of the guys were just stretching because they had a football game that night. Ms. Nelson accommodated them very nicely I thought. The girls don't take lifting that seriously. Some don't want to get sweaty, or have to change clothing. One thing I have noticed is that the students don't come ready to class. Often times they would have to ask if it's ok to go to their locker to get something. I believe this is a habit that she needs to squish. The freshman then came in and again some of the boys didn't lift because of the football game. She also gave the girls the option of either lifting, or jogging laps. Most of the girls all chose to jog. Unlike the junior girls, the freshman girls did the work that Ms. Nelson wanted. My job for the day was to stay at the finish line to make sure they did the correct number. There are many days where Ms. Nelson will give instructions and then let the class go about on its own. Today was the same story. There are often times when I feel like my time is being wasted just because there isn't a ton of interaction between the Ms. Nelson, myself, and the students.

10/29

Today was another day where the schedule was different. The football team had a playoff game so they were holding a pep fest when I arrived. The class was sort of in the same area, some of the students ventured off on their own. I figured that the class would sit together as one, but Ms. Nelson didn't really set down the guidelines. The pep fest lasted basically the whole period, there was about give minutes left after it concluded. Ms. Nelson then let the

students go early which she isn't supposed to do. Ms. Nelson has a good relationship with her students, but at times it can be too much like friends, instead of a teacher-student relationship. The freshman then came in for their turn. They had the option of playing two different games, neither of which they liked. They complained so much that she actually took away the game idea and made them do cardio instead. The students were not happy with this, but they realized their error which was good to see. This was the first time that I have seen Ms. Nelson have a little fire in her belly. Her students responded by giving their best effort during cardio. I don't believe that Ms. Nelson should have to get mad in order for them to truly try. She should set the pace or tone for the class more often.

11/5

Today we finally jumped back into the normal routine. The junior class was performing physical activity from their Nike application. The application has sets of workouts that they model for the students to do. Almost everyone was busy the whole time. It helped in my opinion that Ms. Nelson got down and performed the activities with them. The continuity she had with her students today was great! I believe more teachers should do this, actually doing the work with the students will encourage them. She allowed for them to have a break midway through the workout, some needed it, others are in good shape. I like how she accommodated the less in shape students by allowing breaks. I could see that some students were stressed about the workout, the breaks alleviated that for many. My job for the day was to walk around and practice classroom management. It wasn't too difficult of a task as the students were engaged with the application. The freshman class then came in and played a game called Pole Ball. Many of the guys liked the game because it was very physical, some of the ladies did not want to participate. Lots of times the ladies don't want to play or perform an activity and Ms. Nelson lets them get away with it. I was glad to see that she held firm and made everyone at the very least be out there and look like they are doing it. She did have one exception because a girl suffered a sprained ankle so she had a worksheet for her to do. This was encouraging because she hadn't provided the students anything to do when they aren't participating.

11/12

Today was a great day. The juniors came in class with lots of energy and were engaged right away. She decided to skip lifting today, instead they played volleyball for the whole time. The class contained many volleyball girls who loved to play. Their enthusiasm fed onto the other students. The games were highly competitive and great fun to watch. The students also achieved the goal of getting a solid workout in. Sometimes it's good just to play games that get the students blood flowing without them even knowing. Those activities can sometimes be the most rewarding. Ms. Nelson and I were the referees or judges during the games. It was nice to be able to assess them without them even knowing, it was a very informal assessment. The freshman came in and also did the same thing. They weren't quite as enthused about playing volleyball, but they still gave a good effort. They stretched first then jumped right into playing. Ms. Nelson allowed for the students to pick their teams, they of course chose boys vs girls. This was an interesting dynamic because some of the girls played volleyball and wanted to beat the boys. This made for a competitive game to say the least.

11/19

The juniors had an informal assessment today. Ms Nelson had them try and do their max weight at what ever lifts they had been performing. She never told them that it would be graded or count for anything, so I think some of them didn't actually give their best effort. I think some of the students caught on that this was being graded because she actually made everyone lift. Some of the girls complained because they didn't want to get hot. Some even acted like they were lifting just to do nothing when Ms. Nelson wasn't looking. I was walking around trying to spot everyone, and keep everyone busy. It can be a tough task because the way the weight room is set up everything is spread out. The freshman were also informally assessed, they were testing their heart rates though. The objectives for them was to have them run intervals and check out what their heart rate was each time. This was an interesting activity because the students noticed that some students heart rates were much higher or lower than others. Ms. Nelson recorded everyone's results and then showed the results without names. She then had the students write a journal about why the results were so spread out. I thought this was a good activity for them to really think about physical fitness.

12/1

Today was a great day for the juniors. I took half of the students and went outside for a easy going run. They really liked running outside instead of being indoor running circles. Some students stayed inside with Ms. Nelson to run because they thought it was too cold out. Giving them the option was empowering to them. She gets better effort and engagement when she offers them a choice. I believe sometimes it's good to have the students feel like they are the ones in power. She does have a good way of sensing when she needs to take charge of the class and when she should let them decide. The freshman then came in and had an abundance of energy. They were flying off the walls making it hard for Ms. Nelson to explain the game they would be playing. She grew so frustrated that she made the students run a couple of laps before she would explain any further. This caught their attention and calmed them down. She let them also choose what game they would like, the only catch was that the game had to be highly moving and cardio based. When ever the students hear cardio they instantly moan and groan. Little did they know that some cardio based games can be fun.

12/3

Today was a strong day because Ms. Nelson was gone. Her sub was a younger fellow named Will Johnson. Will I think was a little scared of the kids because of how diverse they are. I am not sure if Ms. Nelson didn't have anything prepared for them or he didn't want to do it but all they did was watch a movie. It wasn't even a movie that related to physical fitness. The juniors were all on their phones and not paying attention. In my opinion this class period was a wasted one. The freshman came in and instead of watching the movie they had a study hall. I was happy to see that some students used the time to work on other school work. The juniors should have taken a page from their book. I walked around and helped the freshman anyway that I could.

12/8

Today was an interesting day because the juniors were writing a paper to compare and contrast what healthy people look like. Some students wrote about how much they should weigh, while others talked about how to eat healthy. This was a good lesson to teach the students about being healthy, it also gave them a break from doing the same things over and over again. At the end of the class the students had to tell their top three ways to get healthy in order to leave the class. This was almost like an exit card which I really liked. It helped give closure which in many cases she hasn't ever had much before. The freshman came and did a similar activity but they journaled about healthy living habits and the effect they can have on students years down the road. This showed them why they should be active and what happens if they do or don't eat healthy down the road. Lots of students take for granted that what you do now affects you in the future. Ms. Nelson used the exit card again to end the class.

12/10

Today was a sad day because it's my last one here. I have grown to like these students and have gotten to know them personally a little bit. Ms. Nelson gave me the chance to choose what we did in both classes. Myself being a former athlete, chose floor hockey. Lucky for me it seemed to be a popular choice. Girls and boys both played hard and had fun with it. The freshman came in and did the same thing. They had fun playing and worked hard. The last five minutes I was there I sat with Ms. Nelson to discuss what I learned during the time I had spent with her and her classes. It was good to get closure and end on a high note with Ms. Nelson. I thanked her and both classes for having me with them. I learned many things which are all important lessons for me going forward. I hope to apply what I learned to my future classrooms.