

### Chapters 3 & 4

Chapter 3 and 4 focused on Transitions and care of Supplies. I believe transitions and supplies play a major role in a school day. The students are constantly moving from one activity to another, touching and handling supplies necessary for teaching and learning.

Three big ideas that I learned from the two chapters are:

1. *Think like a student.* As an adult I may know how to move from one place to another or be able to talk and clean up efficiently but I only acquired this ability after many years of practice. As such, as a teacher, I should look at stumbling block and understand the reason behind it and thereafter set my expectation. In chapter 3, the author says that, “children needed a social release after the mini-lesson before they started writing” (58); knowing this student need, it is wise to create that space and time for them to release that energy before having them begin a new task. The author strategically placed a pair-share right after the discussion and before she sent the students to write in their journals; she achieved both ends - social release as well as a hook into the next activity.
2. *Activate as many senses* of the students as possible when teaching an interactive modeling lesson. That is, while modeling not only ask them to see what you are doing right but also what you are doing wrong, what it sounds like, and feels like. The author in the book describe an interactive modeling lesson on, “Entering the Music Room Ready to Learn” (72). In this lesson, the 6th grade teachers say, “(we are) going to show you what it looks and sounds like” (72). At my placement this week the students were having a hard time sitting still during morning meeting. My CT asked the class if anyone had something they did this past weekend that they wanted to share. Eager hands went up. She asked Julia to tell us about her weekend and not to stop talking until the teacher asked her to. Julia began, everyone listened, in about a minute my CT began twitching, moving, looking around, stretching; modeling inappropriate behavior that the students were engaging in during the morning meeting. Julia was not able to focus on her story, had a confused look, the rest of the students at first giggled but slowly they too were not sure why The Teacher was behaving in this manner. After about three minutes she asked Julia to stop talking? She asked the class why they were giggling? The children quickly pointed out that she was funny. Was I funny? She asked Julia. No, said

Julia. For the next five minutes the students pointed out the inappropriate behavior and how distracting it was; Julia said she did not feel like sharing because she felt the teacher was not interested. My CT told the children that she was modeling what she sees them doing and that it is not only disrespectful but distracting to the speaker as well as everyone else. I am not sure if her strategy worked or not but it got their attention. What my CT did was activate more than one sense - generally they only listen when someone talks; in her modeling she got the students to see, think and listen.

3. *Care for and use classroom materials properly.* This may seem commonsensical but I have been in placements where the students have complete disregard for school supplies. When students are taught to value materials and the space they occupy there is an implicit message that their work is valuable as a result they, “take greater pride in their work and learn more as a result” (84). Learning this social (soft) skill sets the stage for them becoming global citizens. Once again, I draw upon my experience at my placement. The children eat their breakfast in the classroom every morning. While eating they are talking, holding the food away from the table, thereby spilling, and making a mess both on the table and the carpet. My CT last week told them (did not model, may be I should do an interactive modeling session on eating etiquette), how they should be eating - sit up and hold and keep your food on the table. If anything does spill, pick it up and put it in the trash. The entire breakfast time she repeated what they must do, correcting when she saw digression and complimenting when someone displayed the correct behavior. However, at one of my previous placement in a TK classroom the teacher had laid down the expectations clearly and the five year olds were efficient in cleaning up after an activity.

Two questions that come to my mind after reading chapter 3 & 4 are:

1. Transitions are difficult in my classroom. When I full time student teach later on, should I implement smoother transitions using interactive modeling?
2. Second questions is, how often do I model after teaching the first time? What if the students don't adapt to the new behavior?

One idea that I take away from these two chapter is “Keeping children engaged” (78) during a transition. The book gives example of keeping them busy when walking to lunch, asking them to count squares on their way to the cafeteria. Great idea, we have a bit of a walk to and from the playground and more often than not the students end up goofing around and breaking the line or bumping into someone and tripping. Ideally they are not supposed to talk while walking, but that does not work, however, having them think of something to count or look as they are walking may work.