

Kindergarten Opening Materials Interview

Interviewer: Okay, so please describe the instructional materials that you're using for the lesson.

Teacher: The materials for them to be a self directed learner is giving them the opportunity to be self directed. We talk a lot about our GLO. I give them the time to practice and have them do things independently. We take baby steps in the beginning of the year, they do one step. Right now you got to see this is kind of like the end of year, the middle of the year, so they can do it all independently. A lot of the materials are ... One of the really really important things is modeling. A teacher modeling and even student modeling. I'll have students model how to do it correctly or incorrectly, so they're learning from each other. Then they're kind of measuring is what I'm doing what is being expected so they can see how I did it. They can measure their own abilities as opposed to mine and see where they measure up.

Interviewer: Why did you consider choosing these materials?

Teacher: I think when I chose this lesson I thought about when I was learning to be a teacher and I thought about how do people get 25 kindergartners, 25 5 year olds, to be independent enough where you can step away and take roll or deal with a behavior problem or talk to a parent. Because I had a parent come in and want to talk to me. If my students were not self directed and independent and they didn't have that routine in the morning they would all be coming up to me, talking to me, and I wouldn't I have that opportunity to talk to the parent or take roll. Them having that routine of doing the same thing every single day and they know the steps and they know what's expected of them helps builds that confidence with them too.

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I think simple things as like, "Oh, I have a paper for you," and having a spot to put the paper, like, "Oh, go put that in my mailbox." If it's a field trip form so I'm not collecting 25 papers. It's having that resource there that you don't really think about but I need to have somewhere in case they have a paper to give me. I found that even just having that mail box is a good tool for them to help them be independent and give the teacher time to do things that need to be done in the morning especially things you don't predict or that a kids crying because they miss their mom or they're having a rough day or a parent comes in with pizza orders and all that stuff.

Interviewer: What is it you like about these materials?

Teacher: I like that it builds a sense of community in my classroom. I think you could consider our morning meeting, like the circle, is a material and that practice of saying, Good morning," to each and everyone of their friends. That practice of sharing of what they have to say is important. I think those are important that they need to feel valued and they need to know that whatever they say their friends will be listening and I think if they are building those listening and speaking skills been there five years old then think about what they can achieve when they're older and they have more time to develop

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mentally and experiences and then they will have those confidence issues with listening and speaking and they'll be able to talk about more complex, more deep topics

Interviewer: How would you describe these ... Are there any changes that you would make to these?

Teacher: No, but I think there's a lot of changes throughout the year, so when we start out it's a lot of just practicing. We're going to say everybody's name. Everybody says everybody's name. We learn our names, so I think it builds on each other and it changes and it depends on the group too, what group of kids you have. We start out our morning meeting and we practice and we do it every morning. We build on it and I think one of the important things is they'll say, "Circle rules." You heard one little boy say, "Oh, but our circle safe." I said, "Well is it safe even though the cameras aren't here?" They were like, "Yeah."

[00:06:00] The safe circle is intellectually safe so they feel safe sharing but it takes a while to build that and that changes throughout the year too. We start out talking about maybe not as complex topics and then we start moving into more complex topics it will change. I don't think I would change anything about the specific lesson today but it's the way it builds on each other the scuffling, the way build on each other and how they can grow as thinkers. Also how grow as thinkers and also how they grow with their behaviors and their routines. In the beginning they can't sit there for that long they can't sit in there since it grows and it changes as they grow and change and as they have more experience with school. I think they're going to come in.

Interviewer: Are they?

Teacher: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. Maybe finish this last question.

Teacher: Okay.

Interviewer: I mean you kind of answered it but it's how you would describe these materials as [inaudible 00:06:32] and relevant to student's lives?

Teacher: It's all relevant because it's listening and speaking. It's every day conversation skills. It also thinking complexly and that concept of being able to question and being able to wonder. Today our conversation kind of went, "Well, he said sunny was bad weather." "Well, is sunny bad whether?" You hear them ... I asked them well he thought this and I thought this. Our opinions are different is that okay? Yes, it's so many lessons into one the. That idea of we are excepting other people's differences it's okay to agree to do disagree it's okay to be different but we're still listening. Those are life skills those are skills people need for their jobs their everyday lives matter what field of work you're in as long as the conversation skills how to have a conversation. The simple things as making eye contact when you say, "Good morning." eye contact that's a skill that we assume everybody knows but really we have to teach it if we expect them to do it

Interviewer: Cool, we will have to-