

3rd PFC

Post Interview

Interviewer: Now we're into the post, right? We'll talk about the lesson again. How are you effective in communicating the purpose of the lesson?

Teacher: I think the purpose it was setting the expectations in the beginning that this is time for us to be philosophical students and to be critical thinkers and them understanding what that meant. It did take a lot of scaffolding to get to the point that we're at now so they understand that and just having the expectations for the students and them knowing what we're hoping to get out of this. What the purpose is, is that we're hoping to be critical thinkers and stop and wonder and think about life and think about things. It could be something silly and it could be something that's, like today that's, "Why are we alive?" It's the different levels of the questions, but really just taking the time to stop and think because it's not often they get the time to stop and think. What was the question? Did I answer it?

Interviewer: It was about how are you effective in communicating the purpose.

Teacher: Okay, and I think the Good Thinker's Tool Kit guides the purpose throughout. They know that, "Okay, today we're really going to focus on giving evidence," and it helps them practice giving evidence or "Today we're going to focus on reasons," and it's going to give them that making sure that they're giving some reasons for their ideas. Schoolwide we use accountable talk, which is them just using the ... how adults speak. Kids have to have practice with that and agreeing to disagree and speaking in a complete sentence so everybody understands your thoughts because sometimes the kids will think that they're making a thought clear but we're all like, "I don't understand what you mean by 'stuff' or whatever it may be."

[00:02:00] Bringing in that accountable talk into P4C makes it spread through our whole day or even that fact that we try to use it through our whole day that they bring it into P4C also because it's not something I lay out, "Okay, we need to make sure we're accountable talk." It comes in naturally. The kids are referring to each other, like, "Oh, I like what Susan said," or "By the question that Susan, I thought of this." They're really taking that time to talk and make the connections with each other. That accountable talk helps in there too.

Interviewer: What part of the instructional practice do you think were most effective in supporting students to meet the objectives?

Teacher: Keeping it student led and student driven is making them interested and making them want to take part and making them want to be in the discussion that it's almost me taking a step back, which a lot of times isn't necessarily the best thing. Makes it more powerful for the students because it's not me giving them ideas that they have to think about. It's just genuine kid wonderings and they want to talk about it and they want to wonder about it and I think me taking a step opens it up to student learning. It's natural student learning and natural discussion. It's more

valuable than me standing in front of the room and generating questions. It's them opening up that questioning and it leads ... I see it in other subjects.

When we're reading, sometimes we can't even get through a chapter because they have so many questions and it's great and deep down, I'm like, "This is great that they're coming up with these questions," but then also as a teacher, I'm like, "We got to get through these chapters. We're not going to get through the book." It's seeing that carry over. I know that it is a powerful time for them because it's making them think deeper about everything, not just the question at hand. You can see it throughout their whole day that they're really taking time to question and wonder and think deeper because it's hard, hard these days with technology and video games.

[00:04:00] They're so quick to want the answer. They can go google the answer. That's why my favorite thing is that it can't be a google question. If I can type it into Google and get an answer, then it's not something that's valuable for our discussion. I think it's teaching them that there's more to just getting results quickly and getting an answer quickly. It's stopping and thinking and wondering. It builds that.

Interviewer: It's awesome.

Teacher: Hope I answered the question. I keep getting caught up in not knowing if I answered.

Interviewer: You're answering all the questions at once. It's natural. What role did organization and planning play in the lessons as far as planning classroom setup?

Teacher: Nicely, I don't have to plan a lot. It's that one time getting the materials ready but otherwise, this type of lesson is nice because it doesn't take a lot of teacher planning. I think it takes the routines and expectations being built. We definitely didn't do as deep of P4Cs in the beginning of year. It's that building of what's expected and the procedures and then as far as being organized and having things ready, it's just having the Good Thinker's Tool Kit out, having the Think, Talk, Listen ready, just having those materials, but once you make them once, it's how you use them and if you them. Other than that, it doesn't take much.

[00:06:00] There are times that I come up with a question, like we had some trouble with teasing and so I brought up the question of, "Why do people tease other people if everyone doesn't like it?" Sometimes I will have to prepare, which doesn't take a lot. I just see that there's a problem or something that I want the kids to think about and I generate the question. Otherwise, there's not a lot of planning. It's just let's pick a question out and besides procedures, that's it. It can be spur of the moment. Like I said, if there's 10 extra minutes, I can say, "You know what? We have 10 minutes until the day ends. Let's sit and do a P4C." That's the great thing about it is it's not a lot of planning.

Interviewer: It's awesome. I'm always trying to teach my students to find a method that can be repeated easily with new content. What role did behavior management play as far as expectations, procedures, routines, discipline?

Teacher: I think behavior management plays a huge role because you didn't see it very much. I think I had to redirect 2 kids and just say, "Make sure you're showing you're listening." It's having it already in place in the classroom. The kids know what I expect. You have to be consistent with it. There's no ifs, ands or buts. You know that that's not part ... That's not what you're supposed to be doing, then you have to move your clip down or there's going to be some consequence. Having those expectations already in place makes it to where naturally you don't have to have behavior management because it's already just set and in place and it's there. Just as the whole classroom, I mean that's one area that I feel confident in as behavior management but it's because you have to be consistent. It's 100% consistency.

[00:08:00] They know that this is what is expected and being clear and precise about it, the kids, they want expectations. They want to have those guidelines to keep it structured. Having it there and knowing that this is what's expected and we're all going to hold each other to it, the students are quick to give a little nudge and be like, "Make sure you're focused." We have a little symbol that they give each other to show, "Make sure you're staying focused." They hold each other accountable. I hold them accountable and then it leads to days like today, where I had to do one time where I ... Really, it wasn't necessary. It was mostly just because I think those kids needed to be a little more focused but they weren't hurting anybody in the fact that they were just not listening and talking to each other.

Yeah, it's having those already set expectations that are in there that leaves the behavior management to be minimal during the P4C circle, during the whole day. It makes it to where I don't have to do it as much. I guess, also, I did show a little bit when they're writing and acknowledging the kids who are doing what they're supposed to be doing, instead of acknowledging the kids that aren't doing what they're supposed to be doing, so trying to say like, "Oh I see that Joy is already ready. Her book's out. She's started. She's writing," trying to focus on the kid that's doing the right thing. Kids want to please you. They want you to notice them so if they see you noticing someone else, they're going to do what that kid's doing so you notice them.

Interviewer: I agree and I think behavior management is as much as positively obviously [crosstalk 00:08:52].

Teacher: Oh yeah, as much as you can to focus on the positive, definitely.

Interviewer: That first thing people overlook, they're like, "Is that a behavior?" or "Is that behavior management?" Of course it is.

Teacher: Oh yeah. That's like with the clips. The fact that they can go up, it drives their day. If

they can get that clip up. All I do it write, "Awesome," in their planner if they get an awesome. They work so hard for it or I say, "If the class is above good, then we can have a dance party." I think that's a big thing. When I was kid, it was, "You turn your card to yellow. You turn your card to red." It was down and only down. Having that up is a motivator, for sure.

Interviewer: How do you think the lesson went with regards to student engagement?

Teacher: I think it went well. The students were interested in the topic and I think if it did start to drop down, that another student brought it back up. I think when they refer to each other, that it brings ... Sometimes if somebody shares, they share and they're done. They may quickly zone out because they'd have to share what they were thinking but the fact that the kids are good about saying, "Oh, what Susan said made me think of this," then that makes Susan go, "Oh, they're talking about what I said."

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If somebody else also was thinking that thing, we have the snap, so that's a quick way for them to say, "That's what I was thinking," or "I agree with that." It's just a quick acknowledgement instead of them having to say but it also keep their attention because they're wanting to listen, like, "Are they thinking what I was thinking?" They want to get that chance to snap, so it acknowledges the speaker and it acknowledges that they're listening and that they're focused. I forget the question.

Interviewer: How do you think the lesson went with regards to student engagement?

Teacher: Oh, okay. Yeah, so I think the students were engaged. You could see it by their hands being raised, by them wanting to answer more than once. We actually have a struggle with that. I find myself wanting to raise my hand more than once but it's hard with almost 30 kids. You want to try and give everybody a chance to speak also, so we try and do the rule of try and make everybody who hasn't spoken get a chance to speak, then we can start over again. I get it too, where I'm like, "Oh, what that kid said, I want to say something about it so bad," but it's them. You can see it with their hands raised. You can see it with them being attentive and listening and referring to each other. That's how you can tell that they were engaged. I think they did a good job staying engaged.

In regards to if they were to stop being engaged or I've had a time where we were only 10 minutes into it and I could just see the kids falling down, then I try and jump and get something to maybe pique their engagement more, or we can agree as a group, "Let's move on. Let's pick a new question." Having that option is a way for me as a teacher to be able to keep the engagement going because sometimes that was almost an hour and the kids still had things they wanted to share, or I guess 45 minutes.

Sometimes they can go over an hour and sometimes after 10 minutes, they're

[00:12:00] losing it, so having those options of me as a teacher changing the subject flow, staying on the same subject but prompting a new wondering about the subject. The fact that we as a group know that, "You know what? We're not really getting anywhere with this," or "We're done with this," then we can change the subject.

Interviewer: It's a good way to assess the value.

Teacher: The value, definitely, yeah. We did one on school dress code but they all had the same thought, so it died really fast. Usually there's one or two kids that's like, "I think we should have uniforms," or whatever, and then it gets that argumentative piece in it but everybody was just like, "No, I think there does need to be a little bit of rules so things don't get crazy but I think we should have freedom of choice," and then it was over and so we had to move on.

Interviewer: How do you think the students found the lesson, meaningful or relevant?

Teacher: They definitely find it relevant because it's them generating the questions and it's them taking the discussion where it goes. It's totally open to them. They get to choose if it stays right there or if it veers off a little bit. It's relevant in the fact that it's what another 8-year-old was wondering about and they voted on it so they got ... This was the first time that it was pretty evenly spaced out for voting but usually it's overwhelmingly more than 20 kids want to do that topic. Even today with that, you could tell that they were all into it and they were all wanting to talk about it. I think the fact that a peer came up with the question makes it relevant for them and then what else? Was it relevant and ... ?

Interviewer: Meaningful or relevant.

Teacher: Yeah, and meaningful.

Interviewer: How would you like to develop this in the future?

Teacher: I'm currently working on trying to make it more embedded instead of having our P4C time. I think it will get easier as the kids move up, like next year's kids will have had 2 years of P4C but even as a teacher giving that time, it's hard to get that time to put it in after we're done reading or building it in naturally. I would like to build it as more of a natural practice in my classroom than just a scheduled time.

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Interviewer: Yes, I agree. It's a good instructional strategy integrated throughout.

Teacher: Yeah, and especially with common core. They're wanting you to think deeper about things and what better way to do it than tie it into the curriculum.

Interviewer: Yeah, totally. You can see it. It's value.

Teacher: Hope you didn't hear my tummy growling in the microphone

