

5th Pfc
Pre-Interview

Interviewer: Why did you choose to teach this lesson?

Teacher: The reason I chose to teach a lesson on P for C, which is Philosophy for Children, is because I wanted to showcase this new [inaudible 00:00:10] of teaching. I've been a part of P for C for the last three years, and I've just noticed that my students are really engaged with it. It's a way to allow our kids the opportunity to think philosophically together, to practice critical thinking, to develop an intellectually safe community, and to be able to reflect on their contributions to that whole process. It's something I definitely wanted other teachers to see, because for me it was an influential change in my career, where I finally found something that I really enjoyed, the kids enjoyed, and it kind of sparked my interest again into teaching. I thought maybe that would be fun for somebody else to see.

Interviewer: What are the learning outcomes for this lesson [crosstalk 00:00:52] related to the larger [crosstalk 00:00:55]?

Teacher: Today we're going to do something called a plain vanilla, and that is essentially the kids get to pick a question that is anything that they've been wondering. My kids, throughout the week, if we're learning a subject or we're talking about something and they think of a question, a good philosophical question, they'll write it down and they'll keep it somewhere for these plain vanillas. It's a time where I don't give a stimulus, I don't give any content to base their questions upon, but it's a time for them to ask anything.

I'm hoping from the conversation today that the kids will be able to dig deep in their thinking. Come out with some new concepts and new ideas based off their friends, that they'll be able to use the good thinkers toolkit. Those skills that you'll see later, they'll be able to use those throughout the process. I also want to have them be able to reflect, because that's a big process for us, to be able to reflect to see what do we need to work on the next time we have P for C? Or the next time that will allow us to be more successful.

[00:02:00] One way I can do that is the kids will be writing, so at the end I can check their books to see if their thinking has changed, to see if they have new ideas, new questions, new wonderings, based on our conversation today.

Interviewer: Sounds good. How would you describe the lesson as meaningful, useful, or relevant to the students lives?

Teacher: It is most relevant to them because it's coming from them. The questions are their own. I sometimes will throw in my question. They vote on the question that is the most interesting to them. Right there that grabs their student engagement, right? It's their interest, their thoughts. They get to vote. Right away that snags the kids attention. Then they all will do a quick write, which will get them thinking about it. Because it comes

from them, it's powered by them. If it loses steam, we're able to kind of shift and move on to another question that was proposed by the kids.

Interviewer: What are these big questions that you're using to drive student discussion?

Teacher: The fun part is, is we don't know. The kids will make these questions up. I told them yesterday, so they've been thinking and they'll make them up. I don't know what will come out from them today. I know we've been learning about different subjects and topics, and it could be based on something we've been learning, and it could be based on something just about life. I won't know what that question is until that moment when they vote on it, and then it's kind of just figuring it out from there. But my role in all of this is not to facilitate. I'm a co-thinker, I'm a co-philosopher with them. All of us are thinking together in that moment. There hasn't been any prep, there hasn't been any pre-thought other than kind of right there where that question was posed.

Interviewer: How are you planning to check for understanding [crosstalk 00:03:46]?

Teacher: At the end of P for C, we always end with a reflection. That's one way that I can kind of gauge how they were participating in the process. Another way is again checking their writing. Some kids are not yet comfortable in our community, so maybe although they aren't sharing, they aren't raising their hands and kind of sharing their thoughts, if I can read their writing that's another way that I can see, "Were they understanding what we were talking about? Did they have new ideas? Did they think critically about it?" If it's not verbally, it's a written form.

Interviewer: How would you describe this lesson as engaging for students?

Teacher: Again, because it's a question that comes from them they are fully engaged by it. It's interesting to see when you shift your attention from being teacher lead to student lead, their interest and engagement automatically skyrockets because they are leading the conversation, they are the ones providing examples and questioning each other, and leading that. I just kind of guide. It's all about them, therefore they're typically engaged.

Interviewer: How do you plan to manage student behavior throughout the lesson, starting with expectation?

Teacher: We have community agreements that we always review prior to our P for C circle, and that kind of sets the tone and the foundation. They've been the same since the beginning of the year, so kids know. But I also sit kids next to me who might need a little bit more direction, that I can just tap or kind of get them redirected without having to interrupt the conversation that's going on in the circle. We have silent reminders that we do for each other. If my friend's talking, I can show them a silent reminder to keep them kind of managed, to do some student to student managing of behavior as well. Then we also reflect on our behavior at the very end, so that kind of helps them to think about like, "Were we good listeners? Were we respectful?" And puts it back on them. Kids will often give examples, "Well, we were talking to each other when we should

have been listening," and they kind of manage themselves in their own way. Yeah.

[00:06:00]

Interviewer: Awesome, thank you.

Teacher: Yeah.