

Reflection- Classroom Observation #3

Course: Middle School- Technology Education Exploratory

Lesson: Machine Safety

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In my opinion, my third lesson went great. My first thought was how I was going to be able to present knowledge of sanding machines, which is boring yet important to a middle school student in an exciting way. Other than a demonstration, I hit a writer's block. Then an opportunity came along that helped me with my observed lesson and became a more effective tool from the first class rotation I had taught.

A week prior, circumstances had changed the available time I had with the students, it was getting nice outside, and it was the last class of the day, so my students had been getting restless. I figured there was no point in starting any new material, so I gave them a thumbnail sketching assignment. I wasn't specific, and I didn't give the students any limitations, but they had to design vehicles of their dream cars. What differed from my first opportunity to assign this activity was that I didn't wait until I finished the CO2 Car Design Unit and I didn't give any limitations. This allowed students to get a feel for thumbnail sketches and open their minds to endless possibilities. Later, they would be asked to modify their designs to meet limitation requirements.

On the day of my observation, I planned on covering safety rules, but I started out allowing students to go to the front of the room and show off their car designs, and I was able to point out positive ideas that I could generate discussion from. When we were finished, I presented safety rules on different sanding machines by demonstrating the rules with the machines in the lab. The students were able to try out the machines and had so much fun. I believe that I was able to break up ideas, make the class fun, raise the students' self-esteem and enforce the idea that they would be using the machines to build their cars.

From my supervising instructor's perspective, I can see where he might have been confused by the show and tell activity, but I needed to fill class time with productive material and not spend the whole period talking about sanding machines. I had planned for a written assessment, but ran out of time. They were given that assessment the following day.

Planning and preparation for this lesson went from extremely difficult to extremely easy, and I plan to look for more opportunities that will break up content and get the students engaged in material that may be boring to middle school students.