

Edu 301 observation and interview

[Profession](#), [Teacher](#)



Observation and Interview Karen Negele EDU 301 Online Professor Renee Greer December 6, 2011 Observation and Interview Classroom Observation

Upon walking in to Roger Beadle's classroom, any person can see that it is set up with the students in mind, having tables versus desks which suggest that group work is done frequently and the walls are covered from top to bottom in examples of the students' work from throughout the year. He uses a variety of approaches to encourage the students to respond and participate and the student responses are woven into each of the lessons. Students participate as both learners and teachers. The students never hesitate to ask for clarification on a concept or statement and always respectfully challenge Mr. Beadle or the other students by sharing their points of view or beliefs. Overall, Mr. Beadle sets the tone of a highly respectful attitude by eliciting courteous remarks, speaking directly to the students appropriate for their grade level and maturity, and modeling positive behavior during debates or when an opposing viewpoint is offered. He also ensures that cooperative learning takes place in the class by having students share their thinking in large and small groups. The constructivism philosophy seems to be the core of Mr. Beadle's teaching. The students are as much in control of their education as he is, meaning that he may present the lesson and its objectives, but in the end the students direct their learning by asking questions, discovering new information and applying it to the lessons, challenging each other, and sharing their views and beliefs of the subject. His classroom set-up is flexible and changes as necessary for each lesson that he gives. The students are motivated by the satisfaction of learning and being able to apply the material they learn to their lives as Mr.

Beadle always makes it pertain to their lives in some way to ensure that they understand and can retain the information. He participates in the discussions, but more to keep direction than to inform so that the students can explore and find out on their own or in their groups. Mr. Beadle definitely reflects that the students are the center of his teaching. The majority of the classroom is comprised of students in the third and fourth grade level. There are twenty-one students of which there are twelve boys and nine girls, with two of them being special needs. The disabilities include a student that has attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and the other has shown signs of autism but has yet to be formally diagnosed. There are three students that speak Spanish at home, but all the students speak English fluently. The students that speak Spanish as well are from Mexico and came to Michigan with their parents when they were infants, but still share their culture and language with the other students which enriches their experiences. The classroom is a diverse one in which all the students learn and interact with each other in positive ways. Roger Beadle is a formal teacher in many ways, but there was one thing that I noticed about him that set him apart from most others. He does not use a traditional grade book that one would expect to see in the classroom. He uses more of a journal type that has each student on their own page so that as he evaluates and grades each student, he can reflect on their work as well for better notes to later use to specifically inform the parents as to what and how their child or children are doing. It is a very informal method, but the students appreciate it as they get to have copies of their pages and the parents are also appreciative as they can readily see what and how their child is doing without much effort. It is

easy to read and understand and has notes to state where the child needs added help and where the student's strengths are. While Roger Beadle is mainly student-centered in his teaching, there are some things that an observer would see that could be considered more teacher-centered. Mr. Beadle clearly and concisely introduces the major objectives of a lesson, and effectively summarizes the way that he will present the new material within the context of pre-stated objectives. Major ideas are clearly presented to the class at the start of a lesson, prior to discussions and student group work to assure understanding of the major concepts. Class time was used effectively for making major points and for drawing logical connections between the generalities and specifics of the material. A number of teaching technologies, including handouts from transparencies, board illustrations, and sometimes computer simulations, are used. Roger Beadle checks at intervals to make sure the students understand the concepts. He asks the students how the new concept relates to a prior session, or simply questions, " What does this mean? " Students feel comfortable interrupting for clarification or to share an understanding about the concepts presented. Mr. Beadle uses a variety of instructional strategies to accommodate different ability levels and different learning styles. This is extremely important being he teaches a multi-age class. In addition to using handouts, board illustrations, and computer simulations, he has the students working in small groups on problem solving. Also, the students, who quickly understand the concept, are asked to share their findings and the process of their discovery with the other students. If any of the concepts or parts of the concepts needed re-explaining, Mr. Beadle will use analogies and associations other than what had previously

been introduced. The enthusiasm he shows for the subject is also shared by the students. All of these characteristics of his teaching show that he is much more student-centered than teacher-centered. Teacher Interview When asked what he believes are the most important character traits for a teacher to have, he responded quickly stating, " I was always under the impression that since the best teachers that I ever had growing up were compassionate and caring towards me and all the other students, and made me feel like I was just as important and welcomed as all the other students, but still managed to make a personal connection with me" (R. Beadle, personal communication, December 6, 2011). Mr. Beadle also believes that not only is that important, but a great teacher will also inspire and never let their students settle for anything less than their best, are demanding and push hard for the success of each student, have a great sense of humor, and extensive knowledge of the subject matter. Many rewards and challenges are present in education. According to Roger Beadle, the word " teacher" just doesn't begin to describe what is entailed in teaching. Many times teachers are also nurses, psychologists, recess monitors, social workers, parental counselors, secretaries, copy machine mechanics, and even almost literally parents, in some instances, to our students. If you're in a corporate setting, you can say, " That's not in my job description. " When you're a teacher, you have to be ready for everything and anything to be thrown at you on a given day. And there's no turning it down. Adaptation is the key to overcoming any challenge that may come your way in or out of the classroom. " The challenges vary from day to day and the rewards are simply too plentiful and great to put into words" (R. Beadle, personal communication, December 6,

2011). The biggest educational issue that Roger Beadle says most effects the classroom is the No Child Left Behind Act, specifically the assessment aspects. He feels that there is too much based on the tests and other assessments that are required by the states and federal government. There is more teaching to these assessments than there is actual gaining of new knowledge that is meaningful and useful for the students. According to Mr. Beadle, " When a teacher's performance is primarily evaluated by their students' assessment scores, there will not be an accurate portrayal of the teacher's abilities and the way that they handle their classroom or students. It does not show that a particular teacher was actually the key to a student's improvement or downfall. It simply tells us whether the students can memorize information and regurgitate it and how well they test" (R. Beadle, personal communication, December 6, 2011). The local Intermediate School District organization has many policies regarding the many issues that are prevalent in the local and surrounding schools including policies on preventing and responding to violence, prayer in schools, bullying, and more. They also provide training to help teachers act out scenarios so that they can gain experience in dealing with these issues first hand. Other services of the organization include teacher in-service days that allow for teachers to attend seminars on the current regulations for assessment and other topics. They provide the information that teachers need to apply for grants and other funding to improve their classroom and materials available for their students to better improve the overall learning experience of the students. According to Roger Beadle, the in-service days are extremely useful for updating teachers on new or altered regulations, training required or available, and

funding information (R. Beadle, personal Communication, December 6, 2011). Lastly, Mr. Beadle was asked, at the end of the day, what the most fulfilling part of his job was. " The most fulfilling part of my job is at the end of every lesson when I get the first hand experience of being a part of the students success and seeing it in their faces that they feel great about themselves because they mastered yet another concept. There is nothing greater than seeing the look of confusion transform into a smile like a light flicked on in the darkest of rooms making it the brightest" (R. Beadle, personal communication, December 6, 2011). With that I observed a slight tear start to form and fall from his face and this enormous smile light up his face like that was the most awesome sight in the world and he was currently reliving it. References Armstrong, D. G., Henson, K. T., & Savage, T. V. (2009). *Teaching today: An introduction to education 98th ed.*, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/ Merrill. Johnson, J. A., Musial, D., Hall, G. E., & Gollnick, D. M. (2011). *Foundations of American education: Perspectives of education in a changing world (15th ed.)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.