

**Reflect on 3 things you learned or gained insight to through working with your cooperating teacher. Think about teaching strategies, classroom management techniques, student engagement, student relationships, classroom organization etc. Be complete and detailed in your reflection of the topics you choose.**

Working in special education is an experience like no other. It really is a different world and to see that in a middle school, when life is already tough on kids, it was a very unique experience. One of the biggest things I learned in special education was that it is important to still treat them as eighth grade students and you ask them the same questions, but you speak to them in a slightly different way. Ultimately, it is just taking a different approach to the same material. This is something that definitely takes practice and is a special skill that some people seem to be really good at. Another important thing that I learned is to not worry about the schoolwork as much as building relationships and working through daily challenges. Of course, school is still important and they have to do the work, but it is important that you don't force a kid into doing an assignment if they aren't in a good place emotionally or mentally. The result will not be ideal and it rather is best to just take time to work through the situation and then focus on the assignment at a later date. Lastly, I learned that special education has the ability to build some really cool relationships. Yes, content specific teachers can build relationships, but a special education teacher has the ability to get to know their students on a more personal level because they are working through more than just assignments and tests. They are dealing with the student and all of their needs and who they really are as a person. None of these kids are bad kids, they just may struggle with certain situations a little bit more than a typical student. Special education was a good experience and I was able to learn so much, but it takes a special person to take on the challenge. Knowing myself, I know that special education is not the place for me, although I wouldn't change the experience at all.

**Reflect on each of your two lesson plans by answering the following questions:**

- **What was the objective of the lesson?**
- **In general, how successful was the lesson? Did the students learn what you intended them to learn?**
- **To what extent were the lesson goals and objectives appropriate for your students?**
- **Did you make any modifications/adjustments to your plan during the lesson? If so what were they, and what motivated these changes?**

#### **Small Group Lesson Plan (Solving Systems of Equations by Graphing)**

The objective of the lesson was to have the students solve systems of equations by graphing. I would say that overall the lesson was successful because the students seemed to do their assignment fairly quickly. Yes, I do think the students learned what was intended because they did multiple examples and seemed to pick up the idea pretty quickly. The lesson goals and objectives were appropriate for the students as it followed their math curriculum, but it may have been too much planned for one day. I would have tried to do a little bit less and explain things a little bit clearer. There were no changes made during the lesson because this lesson was created hypothetically. I ran out of time to teach an actual lesson.

**Large Group Lesson Plan (Solving Equations with Absolute Value)**

The objective of the lesson was to have students continue to work with absolute value and solve equations. I would say that the lesson overall was very successful in that the students made comments like “this is easy.” They were doing well with the examples and asking some good questions. Yes, I do think that the students learned what was intended because they were aware that there was an added step to the process now, but they were still doing the problems correctly and getting the right answers. The lesson goals were appropriate for the students because they followed the math curriculum. Also, there was plenty of work time so it wasn’t a rush to fit everything in all at once. I did not make any adjustments to the lesson, as this lesson was created hypothetically because I ran out of time to teach an actual lesson.