

Communication

As an observer in a third grade classroom, I witnessed communication between many different people in many different ways. The neat thing about teaching is that there are different tools you can use in your classroom as forms of communication that wouldn't always work outside of school. I plan to take some of the things that I saw and use them myself as a future teacher.

On a daily basis, I saw Mrs. Borden greet her students with a smile and always say "Good morning." When it comes to the structured lesson, she speaks to her students by using their name and asks them questions in a friendly manner. With nonverbal communication, when Mrs. Borden asked her students questions, she would ask them to respond by giving her a thumbs up or raise their hand if they knew the answer, depending on the situation. Other times, she would only need to give a student a certain look before they knew they needed to change their behavior. When she was grading, a star meant the students got 100%. If they got any wrong, she would simply circle the number of the question they got wrong, and the students knew that they needed to fix those answers.

For Mrs. Borden, it is important to greet her students and call them by name because it helps to build those trusting relationships. The nonverbals of giving a thumbs up and raising their hand allows students to remain quiet so other students can continue to think hard about the problem presented to them. By giving her students a look saying they needed to change their behavior it saved both the teacher and student the embarrassing feeling of being called out amongst classmates. When grading, the circle and star are a quick and easy way for the teacher to get their point across to the students in a respectful manner. All of these communication tools,

allow for communication to happen without disrupting the learning of other students. These tools are simple enough for third graders to remember, but still are effective in communicating accurately. All of these communication methods are important to building relationships.

Another important piece to communication is how the teacher communicates when students give incorrect answers. Mrs. Borden did a nice job of telling her students that the answer isn't quite right, but to keep thinking hard because they are getting close. This positive twist on a wrong answer, makes the students more likely to answer again in the future, even though they aren't always 100% right. While in Mrs. Borden's classroom, we communicated mainly through email which worked very well. Also, while the students were at specials, we made sure we carved out time to discuss how things were going from my perspective. Also, upon my arrival she made sure to talk me through their day and what it was going to look like. This was helpful for me because I then knew what to expect.

One problem I saw in communication was between Mrs. Borden and her cooperating teachers. There was miscommunication between which cycle day it was, and although it wasn't a huge deal, one way to fix this would be to keep track of cycle days by writing them directly on a calendar. This helps to burn it into the brain and also creates a visual to look back to in case the problem ever arises again.

As a teacher, it is important to communicate both verbally and nonverbally with students and anyone else that may be in your classroom. The most important thing is that whichever communication methods one uses, they must be effective. Fortunately, the placement I was in had a teacher that communicated well not only with her students, but also with me, which helped me feel more comfortable in her classroom.