

## Instructional Strategies

As an observer in a third grade classroom, where I witnessed the instruction of math, there were many instructional strategies being used. In a small classroom with a large number of students, meeting the needs of every student in a short amount of time is very challenging and oftentimes not possible. However, there are ways to combat this using a variety of teaching strategies. Over the course of my time in the classroom, I was able to witness pre-assessments, lessons, games, and final assessments.

While in the classroom, I was a witness to the math lesson each day. Every day, Mrs. Borden would bring the large group to the carpet and work through a few mental math problems, a couple number talks, and then would begin the lesson for the day. The students often did the math warm ups on a whiteboard. After an introduction to the lesson, the students would return to their seats and begin working through their math journal pages as a whole group with Mrs. Borden guiding them through the day's lesson. Following the lesson, the students would be split into three predetermined groups, and would rotate among stations. These stations included one on one time with Mrs. Borden, a game, and a page to do in their math journals.

Throughout these observations, there were a couple instructional strategies that stood out among the rest. I observed technology use often and also saw small group assignments being used. Technology was being used in the classroom each and every day, from their morning message to the lesson taught for the day. The smart board was used for mental math and math warm up. It allowed all students to see the problem clearly and have it right in front of them. Another place of technology use was in one of the stations. By allowing students to do something by themselves on their chromebooks, it gives them a sense of independence and that

the teacher trusts them. Also, this allowed students to stay engaged rather than always feeling stuck in the same routine day after day. The other instructional strategy was small group assignments. Mrs. Borden split the class into three different groups based on where they were at in their math ability levels. It also gave Mrs. Borden a chance to work with fewer students at a time to really engage and help them where needed. Both of the instructional strategies seemed very effective and appropriate for the group of kids. I think the small groups really helped the kids that were struggling, but also gave those higher level kids a chance to be independent as well. Mrs. Borden used technology as a tool to help walk her students through the math lesson by displaying the exact same math page the kids looked at in their math journals because it made it easy for the kids to follow, which is important.

One problem that could be associated with the small groups, is that students would not stay on task. However, the more important tasks like working through the day's lesson closer with Mrs. Borden had teacher guidance and the math journal page was to be done at their desk where there is less of a distraction. Yes, the game could cause the students to get off task, but it is a game so they are immediately more engaged. Also, just because the teacher isn't with every group, she is still paying attention to everything going on in her room. Mrs. Borden does have her groups set up so that she can maximize their learning.

Finally, Mrs. Borden uses multiple instructional strategies every day, but these were two of the most prevalent ones I saw while in her classroom. There is no perfect combination, but I do think it is more of whatever best fits the needs of the students and Mrs. Borden's class responded very well to these instructional strategies. As a future teacher, I think it is important to

understand that every class is different and each student will react differently to different instructional strategies.