

Metcalf Observation Reflection 11/22

I came in when the students were presenting their light sculptures. Mr. Ingram had white paper put up behind them so the light reflections could show up better. The students had their netbooks out for note taking. As each child presented their piece, he was asking them questions like what they would change about it, or if they liked it. They all seemed nervous, and one girl was very quiet during her presentation. He had to work harder with her to get her to talk about it, but she said, "I don't know" to a lot of the questions. He was very patient with her, but he mentioned to us after class that she was usually negative and doesn't participate. He was ok with the students saying just a few words about their work and having a seat. Then they were supposed to answer questions on a file in their netbooks about another student's piece. During this part of the assignment the same student was saying that she didn't get it and that it was too hard. She also told him that her schedule was very tight, and she didn't think she would have time to do her homework. He told her not to get too hung up on one detail of the assignment that she was stressing out about and to do her best. I think she was probably testing to see how far she could push him because Peggy was out for the day. They use google drive for their assignments, and he showed us how he can type comments directly on the document. I learned that they are on a grading scale of 1, 2, 3, and 4. Exceptional grades, going above and beyond, would be a 4.

In the next hour I observed the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade design class. They were working on the prototypes of the same project I observed two weeks ago. At that point they were still in the "ideate" stage, or brainstorming. I got to see the whole structure of the class in a diagram on the wall. I asked a student, and she said every project is based around this flow chart: problems/ideas, research/empathy, define, ideate, select a solution, prototype, feedback, redesign. There were two other ISU students observing, and we were encouraged to walk around and help the students. While Mr. Ingram showed some students how to properly use the chop saw, the other teacher, Ms. Matejka, helped the students with their prototypes one-on-one. This project definitely incorporates math because I heard her explaining to a student how to figure out what a length of the other side of her triangular pattern. She was talking about the Pythagorean theorem, equilateral triangles, and other math concepts. They wrapped up the class by announcing when the final prototype will be due.

Then we went back upstairs for 6<sup>th</sup> grade art. Mr. Ingram spent a few minutes getting the class to settle down. He said things like "I can wait" and then patiently waited for them to give him their attention, which worked pretty well. They were wrapping up a unit on value with self-portraits in different mediums. Each student had a portfolio that included a pre-test, an experiment, a monoprint, a photo of a sugar portrait, and a pencil drawing. Mr. Ingram explained what they were going to do for the day, which was show a few examples and talk about them as a whole class, and then work in smaller groups to discuss what they liked and what they thought could be improved about each other's work. Before he showed an example to the class, he always asked permission from the student who made it first. I noticed most students did not want theirs shown, which is typical for this age group. He told them to give constructive criticism and not mean

criticism. The students said they did not like the monoprints as much because they were blurry and did not look like the person. Mr. Ingram pointed out that is part of the medium, and it is supposed to look like that. Then, he put up two portraits made by the same person and asked the class which one looked most like the student. Most of the students liked the monoprint better. I thought this was a clever way of getting the kids to change their minds about the medium. The assignment over break is to choose one of the mediums and create an even more detailed, improved version of their self-portraits. Most of the kids raised their hands to say they are going to use pencil. The least favorite medium was sugar. He showed a sugar portrait and asked the class was working well in it. They said the student was able to get good middle value by spreading the sugar out to create a grey color in some areas. Then they all shared their portraits with their groups. I noticed some students were not talking about their portraits until Mr. Ingram came around and prompted them with some questions. They mainly told each other which ones they liked best. At the end of class he asked if they learned anything from sharing their work with each other, and they all yelled no. He asked if they had any questions, and said if they thought of any as they were working over break they could email him.

The last period I observed was 5<sup>th</sup> grade, and they were working on nature-themed installation pieces. One objective is to make the piece at least somewhat abstracted. So they are not supposed to make a tree that looks like a tree, but to feel like a tree. In between classes, Mr. Ingram told us that only some of the students seemed to grasp this idea, while others were working representationally. This class had an aid for a student with a hearing impairment. Mr. Ingram was working with the aid to have the student finish his homework. The whole period was independent work. Mr. Ingram and the substitute for Peggy went around making sure they students were using scissors and other tools safely and answering questions. One of the students told us that they were given a budget of \$10 for materials for this project and that they could only use two different materials. I thought this is a great lesson to teach the kids, because it is a basic introduction to finances and managing a budget. At the end of the class, he had them come up to the front of the class to listen to directions of how to clean up. He put safety glasses on and said, "When my glasses are on, all eyes are one me" to get their attention.