

Observing Other Teachers “Mr. Jones”

February 12, 2013

***Name has been changed

It was the second day of Keystone testing, so I observed Mr. Jones today. I will admit that I was very interested to see him teach because he is someone I’ve become closer to while teaching here. I’m observing him teach Applied English IV (or English 12), where they are reading *The Tragedy of Hamlet* by William Shakespeare.

I’m was absolutely fascinated in his teaching style. My co-op was correct when she said he was one of the best. He had a great relationship with his students that was at once joking, but also strict. I immediately got the sense that they knew they could not get away with misbehaving in his classroom.

He has fantastic classroom management. The class starts off with a daily response prompt given by a student and that is what they work on while he takes attendance and make up work is checked.

I’m equally impressed by his classroom. He has a library, which I’m a huge fan of in an English classroom. His room also has touches of himself in it – from Steelers jerseys to pictures. It really makes him feel like a real person. He also always has his own renditions of projects hanging with his student work. I think the most striking part of his classroom is the ceiling. Throughout the room, ceiling tiles are painted like famous scenes from novels read during the class. They are absolutely beautiful and range from Greek mythology to Chaucer to *The Kite Runner* to *Beowulf*.

I can only imagine teaching Shakespeare, especially *Hamlet*, to Applied English students. However, he does it in a way that is perfected. After every page or so of students doing a reader's circle, he stops and puts the plot into plain words and explanations. They are tinged with humor, from sports references to celebrity humor. He did make them read aloud, which I was happy with because I'm firmly in the camp that Shakespeare should be read aloud. I liked that he stopped often because it helps them understand. He also tells them to make a note of things for the tests and homework questions – which is great for these lower level kids.

I hope one day to be like Mr. Jones, because it was so very natural to him that it was almost a work of art.