

To: Hailey Clark

Re: Internship Documentation #1

Hi Professor Clark,

Attached is my log from week 1 of my internship. You will find that the format is modified and expanded from the document that you gave us to fill out each week. I feel that this format better communicates my experience and I hope that you will accept it as my internship documentation in place of the original form.

Regards,

Maya Cole

Student Internship Weekly Reflection Form

Week: January 31st - February 3rd

Location: Pine Ridge Elementary

Supervisor: Reese Marshall, After-School and Pre-K Coordinator

Position: After-School Support Staff

Internship Description: Design and lead Social Emotional Learning (SEL) lessons in the after-school program with children in grades 1 through 5 who have been identified as needing extra support in this area.

BINGO Assessment: At the beginning of the week, I created a BINGO card with some things I commonly see in school and summer camp settings. This was an experiment to see how many of the things would happen in a week and if I could score a BINGO. I did not score a BINGO this week; however, I was able to fill in so many squares that I felt like I should share my progress. I have included some more detailed descriptions of a few of the more memorable BINGO squares below (in chronological order) to provide more context.

B	I	N	G	O
Kid tackles me	Kid says "Miss, Miss!" to get my attention because they forgot my name	Kid escapes classroom	Kid says "okay boomer" to another kid of their same age	Kid asks for a piggyback ride
"Gay" used as an insult	Chair thrown across room	Kid asks if I have a boyfriend	TikTok dance performance	Argument over whose older sibling is better
Kid asks to braid/play with my hair	Kid guesses my age and is at least 10 years off	FREE	Kid pretends they have no legs to avoid walking	Kid gives me a drawing or piece of art they made
Kid whispers loudly and is astonished that I could hear them	Roblox is mentioned	Kid asks if I have a husband	Kid asks if I have kids	Kid calls me old because I make a pop culture reference from the 2000s
Kid wedges him/herself into a cubby to avoid participation	Kid cries and gets over it within 5 minutes	Kid tells me a fake name when I ask what their name is	Questionable object found in child's mouth	Kid playing with slime or similar concoction

Kid escapes
classroom

Tuesday, January 31st

On my first day I sit at a desk in the front office to work on my online training. I am directly in front of the door to the office area, so I have a front row seat to all of the comings and goings of the staff. I put in both earbuds so I can lock in and focus on my training videos. A couple minutes in, I hear a panicked voice crackling through someone's walkie talkie and I take out an earbud to listen.

I try to piece together the staticky voice fragments to get a clue what is going on. I think someone is calling for my supervisor, Reese. Reese walks out of her office and says "I'm coming" into her walkie.

A few minutes later, she returns and tells me what happened. One of the preschoolers flipped all the tables in the classroom, bolted out the classroom door, and ran for the exit. I am in awe. Reese quickly reassures me that "it's not usually like this", as if she's afraid I'll make a break for it too.

She leaves to talk to another person in the office and I return to the training videos. I look up again when a teacher brings a small girl into the room. The girl stares at me blankly while gnawing on a fingernail. I wave at her. She waves back at me with her free hand, which has been liberally scribbled on with marker. Reese directs the girl (who she calls Shayla) to sit in the chair next to the door. Shayla obediently climbs into it and continues staring at me. I look back at my laptop screen but my eyes glaze over as I turn my attention to the conversation between Reese and the teacher. They are discussing the details of Shayla's table-flipping and attempted escape to write up in an incident report. They decide that the best course of action would be to call her caregiver and have her picked up early if possible. Reese makes the call.

Soon after, a woman with a large purse struts through the office door. She sees Shayla sitting in the chair, still chowing down on her fingers, and appraises her with one hand on her hip. Reese greets her and addresses her as Ms. King, who must be Shayla's mother. Reese calmly explains what happened. Ms. King pinches the bridge of her nose and shakes her head slowly.

"This is not like her usual behavior at all. We think she had a rough day at school," Reese finishes.

Ms. King turns again to Shayla. “Why you acting like this at school?” she demands. Shayla stares at her blankly. She has finished trimming the fingernails on her right hand to her satisfaction so she moves on to her left. “You acting just like your brother today.”

Shayla does not like this comparison. She flings her hands down in her lap and emits an unhappy “hmp” kind of sound. She looks towards me again to avoid her mother’s icy gaze. I keep my head down behind my laptop and pretend I am part of the desk. After a tense moment of silence, Ms. King says, “Let’s go,” and grabs Shayla’s hand. She thanks Reese, apologizes for Shayla’s behavior, and drags her daughter out the door with some difficulty as Shayla begins pulling away and making noises of protest.

Reese watches them leave and then sinks down in the chair next to me with a sigh.

“Well, welcome to Pine Ridge,” she says with an apologetic smile. “I’m sorry about all that interrupting your training. How are you doing so far? Do you think you’ll still be able to finish up today?”

“Yeah, I should be fine,” I tell her. “It’s definitely been interesting sitting over here.”

Reese shakes her head in disbelief. “Really, that was out of the blue. Usually it’s Shayla’s brother who acts out in class. I think . . . well, recently they’ve been staying with their aunt– that’s Ms. King– and haven’t been able to see their mom in a few weeks. There’s some custody issues going on. That doesn’t excuse destroying the classroom of course . . . but I mean, you see where she’s coming from.”

Chair thrown
across room

Wednesday, February 1st

If anyone is under the impression that it is possible to be a fly on the wall in a room full of children, I will clear up that misconception right now: it cannot be done. I try to quietly sneak into the 1st-3rd grade classroom behind the kids on their way back from snack time, but they immediately spot me and a few of them run at me to give me hugs. One boy attaches himself to my leg in a death grip and declares that he is so strong that he can break my leg in half.

“Aidan, get off of her right now!” That’s the teacher. Aidan falls to the ground and sticks his tongue out, pretending to be dead. The teacher tells Aidan to apologize to me. Aidan instead screams and sprints across the classroom. The teacher apologizes to me and introduces himself as Mr. Gonzalez. I introduce myself and show him my roster of the kids I am going to be working with today. He calls their names out and directs them to come sit on the carpet so that I can do my activity with them.

We sit in a circle and I introduce myself as Ms. Maya for the kids who didn’t meet me at snack time. I tell them that today we are doing a get-to-know-you activity. Three or four kids interrupt me with burning questions. “How old are you?” “Are you married?” “Do you have kids?” One kid informs me that I look younger than her grandma. As a 22 year old college student, you can imagine this comes as a great relief.

I shut down the questions and start the activity, which is to trace their hand on a piece of paper and write a fun fact about themselves on each finger. I pass out construction paper and set out a bucket of markers for them to use.

One girl, Bailey, starts scribbling on other kids’ papers to antagonize them. She succeeds.

“Whatchu *doing*?” demands one of the kids. “Get out my space!” She snatches her paper back and shoves Bailey to the floor. Bailey stands up and shoves her back.

“Hey,” I say to them. “Hands to yourself please. Bailey, where’s your paper?” Bailey picks up her paper, rips it in half, and beams winningly at me. I patiently hand her a new paper and a marker.

“Green is ugly,” she declares. She tosses the marker behind her and grabs a purple.

“What’s something about you that you can write or draw?” I prompt her.

She taps the open end of the marker against her face, leaving purple dots on her chin. “Uhh . . . I like being boujee,” she says, and flips her braid over her shoulder. She carefully spells out “B-O-O-G-E-E” on her paper. Then a plastic cup hits her in the back of the head and she whips around to face her assailant. It’s Aidan.

Bailey snatches up the cup and throws it at Aidan, nailing him in the eye with deadly accuracy.

“Fuck this shit!” Aidan yells. He chucks the plastic cup at Bailey again but she dodges. Mr. Gonzalez sternly scolds him for language and throwing things. “I hate everyone in this school!” Aidan screams. “Everyone always doin’ too much!” To demonstrate how strongly he feels about this, he picks up a chair and hurls it across the room. It lands with a crash against a bookshelf and a plastic leg snaps off.

A chorus of “ooooOOOOH!” rises up from the other kids in the classroom. The excitement is high because they know he’s in big trouble. Mr. Gonzalez calls over his walkie for another teacher to come cover his class. When the teacher arrives, he pulls Aidan out into the hallway.

After Aidan leaves, I struggle to get the kids to participate in the rest of the activity. They are hyped up from the drama. Several kids crowd around the door, trying to jump up and look through the thin window into the hallway. They turn the handle, trying to open it, but Mr. Gonzalez has his back firmly pressed against the door.

I check my watch and find that it’s about time for me to leave. I say bye to the kids and give them fist bumps. Many of them ask when I am coming back. I say that I will be back

tomorrow, and tell them that I work here now so I will see them a lot.

Bailey comes up to me before I walk out the door. “We’re the bad kids, right?” she asks smugly, thinking she has uncovered a grown-up secret.

“No, Bailey, you are not the bad kids,” I reply. She raises her eyebrows at me skeptically. “See you tomorrow,” I say.

“Wait, you’re coming back?”

“Yes, I work here now,” I tell her again, and walk out the door.

I run into Mr. Gonzalez and Aidan on their way back into the classroom. “Wait, you’re leaving?” Aidan asks incredulously.

“I’ll be back tomorrow,” I say patiently. I hold out my fist and he punches it so hard that my bones resonate from the impact. Mr. Gonzalez frowns at him, nods at me, and directs Aidan back into the classroom.

Back in the offices, I run into Reese right away and she asks me how my activity went with the younger kids. “Um . . .” I begin hesitantly, shifting my feet. “It, ah . . . it was pretty chaotic. There were some . . . outbursts, and one kid threw a chair.” Reese nods, unfazed. “But I mean, I think some of them enjoyed doing the activity,” I add. “Several kids asked me if I was going to come back. Even after I kept telling them that I work here now so I will be here basically every day.”

Reese nods again. “Yeah, we’ve had a lot of staff turnover recently in after-school,” she tells me. “The kids are used to people leaving.”

Kid wedges
him/herself into a
cubby to avoid
participation

Thursday, February 2nd

With the help of Ms. Conner, the after-school teacher for the upper grades, I get the 4th and 5th graders rounded up and seated around the big circle table. I explain the hand tracing activity to the kids, and by the eye rolling I can already tell that they think it's stupid. In hindsight, I should have chosen different activities for the older and younger kids, but I'm stuck with what I have now so I have to own it. As I pass out papers and markers, one boy named Danny slides out of his chair and lays on the floor facedown. He rolls himself across the classroom and rams into the wall.

"Come be a part of the group, dude," I call to him. He groans and rolls himself back to the table. "Hey Danny," I tell him, "This is just so I can learn a little bit about you. You can work on it somewhere else in the classroom if you don't want to stay at this table." Danny side eyes me but picks up a marker and starts tracing his hand. I give myself a mental pat on the back for convincing him to participate.

After a few minutes of giving some of the other kids ideas for their fun facts, I glance over to check on Danny's paper. I see that three fingers have words written in them. They read, "I hait scool", "Im board", and "I dont care". He sees that I'm looking at his paper and scoots his chair back from the table with a screech. He shuffles across the classroom and expertly pretzels himself into one of the empty cubbies. I go over to him.

"What's up, Danny?" I ask him, kneeling on the floor next to his cubby. He eyes me, visibly annoyed. I hold up his paper. "I saw you wrote some things on here. But I don't see anything that tells me about you." His eyes are closed now. "Is there anything you like to do? Like a sport or a hobby?"

“Nothing,” he says, and repretzels his body in the cubby so that he faces away from me.

“Okay,” I say, standing up. “You can come back to the group at any time.”

The rest of the activity with the other kids runs fairly smoothly, compared to the previous day at least. Danny never comes out of his cubby. I fist bump all the kids before I leave, and when I get to him, he ignores me and pretends to be asleep.

I return to the offices and sit down at Reese’s desk. She turns to talk to me, but is immediately summoned away by her walkie to deal with yet another crisis. I start typing up notes from the day while I wait for her.

Out of the corner of my eye I note Ms. Connor walking into the offices. I look up briefly and nod at her.

“You did really great with the kids today,” I hear her say. I look up from typing and see that she is talking to me.

“Me?” I ask, to clarify.

“Yeah,” she confirms. “I thought I would have to step in, but you did great keeping the kids engaged. Danny especially, that’s the longest time I’ve seen him stay at a table for an activity.”

This is news to me, as Danny spent half of the time facedown on the floor and the other half wedged in a cubby. But I am genuinely warmed by the encouragement.

“Thank you,” I tell her.

She sees my confusion. “I know it doesn’t seem like he did much, but trust me, that was progress.”

Kid gives me a drawing or piece of art they made

Friday, February 3rd

Before I leave Pine Ridge for the day, I enter the supplies room to laminate some materials for next week's lesson. I glance around the room while I wait for the laminator to warm up. There are boxes of different craft supplies stacked neatly on the shelves. In one corner, I see that someone has artfully arranged a stack of foam letters to read "FUCK". It seems that one of my coworkers either had a rough day or felt like leaving something for the next person to cheer them up. From my experience thus far, I conclude that both possibilities are equally likely.

As I am walking out the door, I hear a voice call out "Miss, Miss!!!" I briefly reflect on the fact that after a whole week I have learned more than sixty new names and yet some of the kids still don't know mine.

I turn around and see Bailey tearing down the hallway and waving something in her hand. "You forgot the drawing I made you!" she scolds me.

She shoves it in my hand and flings herself onto my legs, nearly snapping me at the knees. I stagger back against the doorframe and awkwardly pat her on the back. It suddenly dawns on me that against all logic, Bailey has grown on me. Like a fungus. Mr. Gonzalez appears in the hallway, looking for her, and she quickly runs back to her classroom without a backwards glance.

"Thanks Bailey!" I call after her.

I look at the drawing as I walk out to my car. The lines are nearly indecipherable and I realize my child-drawing interpretation skills are a bit rusty. It appears to be two people, one brandishing a long stick-like object above the other's hands. Maybe it's Bailey doing my nails. Or possibly cutting off my fingers. It could be either one honestly; this week she attempted both.

To: Maya Cole

Re: Internship Documentation #1

Hi Maya,

I did not have time to do more than briefly skim through your journal entries, but it seems to me that you are getting a lot out of your internship so far. I appreciate that you are keeping a journal of your experiences, and I encourage you to continue it for your own personal benefit. However, I do not have the time to read a novel like this every week. I will accept it as documentation for this week, but please use the form I sent you on Monday for all future documentation. Your entire form should not exceed one (1) page. A paragraph will be sufficient for describing your takeaways.

Best,

Professor Hailey Clark, M.Ed.