

REFLECTIVE E-MAILS

The Observation Period

Some interns have trouble expressing their ideas during the first few days when they are mainly observing. “I haven’t done anything, so how can I reflect on my actions?” is their stated or implied question. Here are some ideas/ questions that might be helpful in guiding your entries the first few days.

- What kind of school do I want to teach in? (Age of students, country, large or small school/town, socio-economic backgrounds, etc.)
- What kind of teacher do I want to be?
- What is the atmosphere of the classroom? (Physical, learning, emotional aspects). What does the teacher do to maintain this atmosphere?
- Does the teacher have a teaching style that fits my model of the kind of teacher I want to be?
- What are the qualities I admire about this teacher or the best traits I can emulate? How would I do things differently in my own classroom perhaps?
- What do you anticipate will be difficult for you? Will some things be harder because you are following in the teacher’s footsteps?
- What are the behavioral and learning characteristics of individual students? Sometimes it is helpful to pick out one student and keep track of what he/she does. How much of his/her time is engaged in learning activities/socialization? How does his/her behavior compare to others? Does the behavior meet your standards for acceptable behavior?
- What kinds of lessons/ activities would you like to teach to take these students from where they are to a more advanced place?