Kayleen Malizzi

SPE 240

September 12, 2014

Teacher Interview

I decided to interview my Aunt. She has been a teacher since 1999, basically since her Children were able to talk and walk. She is a bit different than a teacher at a public or private school although her standards and curriculum remain the same. My Aunt is a Homeschool teacher. Which lead me to my first question. “Why/ or How did you come to want to be a Homeschool teacher?” She said that one of the main reasons for wanting to teach Homeschools was for her children. Her children were above average in both reading and vocabulary, so she pulled them out of school because they were getting bored and not really learning anything new to challenge them. She said, “She was not turning down the teachers of her children in any means, but she felt that since her children were not really getting that challenge in the public classroom it was time to pull them out and try something new. So, she decided to do Homeschool. Of course, before she made the decision to do so she received the proper education and background to make sure she was following all the state standards of any other grade level of her children. She was also a part-time nurse in the midst of teaching, so she had to make sure the two wouldn’t interfere. My aunt made sure that she put her children first and then work came second. She did this by doing schooling from 7:00 in the morning and making sure it ended at 12:00pm, so that she was able to focus on her children first, and after not having to feel rushed to her nursing job. She said, “This was a challenge at first just because everything was so new, but I am a strong Christian and I put my trust in the Lord to guide me through.” “He did thankfully and I am so blessed to still be teaching!”

My first classroom management question that I asked my Aunt was, “How do you enforce discipline in your homeschooling career?” She replied, “Well, one of the most important parts of having discipline present in your classroom is to enforce it on the very first day of class. By doing this, I believe it sets certain boundaries for your students, and it shows your students that there will be consequences (both good and bad) for following or choosing to not follow the rules.” She added, “Also just because you went over the rules, guidelines, or procedures on the very first day doesn’t mean it is going to continue to work out in your classroom.” “I had to continue to follow up with my simple procedures to make sure my children were really getting all of the daily routines.” She also stated that it was difficult at times and she is glad she used discipline. She said that it was a challenge at times because if a child were to act up or decided they were not going to follow the rules, it was only her at home to handle the situation face-to-face, opposed to being at school where you have the help from the administration if things do not turn out the way you thought.” This reminded me of what we went over in class when we we’re all passed a sheet of paper with a list of what is a discipline and what is a punishment. I remember going over in class that a consequence can be both a good and bad thing. For example, little Bobby wanted to play a game on the class computer. My rule for getting to play games on the computer were: first you had to make sure all of your homework from the lesson was finished. Second, you had to read or write for ten minutes. After, if all of those tasks were done then you would have to check in with the teacher. If all the work was done you were able to play the game, but if there was something that was left unfinished you were not able to play the game until your work was complete. Your students have to be able to have that practice because it teaches them self-discipline. Your students should know especially by the end of the year let alone the middle of the year that if they do not get their work done there will be a consequence that follows.

My third question that I had asked was, “Since you are a homeschool teacher to your own children, was there any types of boundaries that had to take place to make you more of a professional?” My Aunt replied, “There were some boundaries I had to set like what you said before in you classroom management question. I had to set certain disciplines for my children otherwise it would have made the teaching at home very difficult. I love my children with all of my heart, but I know and I they knew because of the strict enforcing of the rules that when it was school time it was school time and when school was over then I was a mom again.” “When my children were little it was clearly more of a challenge because they referred to me as mommy for everything and then to suddenly change that bond to teacher it didn’t click into their little minds right away, but I continued to practice and practice continuously with them and eventually they got it all down!”

Since My Aunt was a homeschool teacher I knew that she clearly didn’t have to contact any parents via email or phone because it was only her children. But I also, found out through a little research that Homeschool children are still allowed to participate in public school activities such as PE, Music/Choir, Band, and sports. So, I asked my Aunt if she made this possible for her children. She said that at first since homeschooling was so new to her and her children that they were just going to focus on academics. Although, when the kids started to get into their upper elementary, early middle school years they wanted to start getting involved with what all their friends were doing. This included playing piano, cello, violin, and sports; soccer, jump rope team, volleyball, swim team, and rodeo. My Aunt said, “I liked to keep the children busy both in and out of school to push them to do their very best. I wanted them to know that they could achieve anything they wanted as long as they put their minds to the test.” And she said, “And that is what they did and they worked just as hard as any other student going to a private or public school.” From reading in the text and from listening to classroom conversation, I made a connection. I agreed strongly with my Aunt’s belief that she told her children. She said, “I wanted my children to know that if they put their mind and whole heart into something they can achieve whatever they wanted.” This is a great attitude and mind set to teach to your students. It also shows your students that you believe in them and it boosts their confidence. If your students know that you believe in them even though times may get rough they are going to succeed in your class. Your students will work hard because they want to show you that they can be the best.

Overall the interview went very well. I learned a lot from what my aunt did as a homeschool teacher, even though, there were some differences the disciplining and classroom management all had the same connections and expectations. From doing this interview I feel more confident in my knowledge of how important the use of classroom management is in a classroom or in this case a home. I enjoyed this activity and I hope to continue my talk with local teachers to further my education on how to manage a class, so that I am well prepared for when it is time for me to play the teacher role!