

Engaging Students in Learning:

- Observation of Lesson Elements
 - Melissa told me that she has studio expectations for her classroom, but I don't see them displayed around the room. Melissa also doesn't really do any sort of structured classroom management strategies. I would say that the classroom functions pretty well because she is so interpersonal and approachable with the students. The students are also aware that they have work to do in the class, and they are invested in the creative process. I don't know if this is love and logic. I guess I'll have to ask Melissa when I see her next Thursday.
 - In both Sculpture 1 and Metals 1, there are a couple of students that don't care to engage in the activity at all. In Metals 1, one of the students chose not to engage because he didn't like the process of building objects out of metal. He preferred to work in wood. I tried to help him buy into the assignment by seeing if there were some gray areas between metal and wood construction, but he chose to play games on his iPhone and dismiss participating in class. In Sculpture 1, there are two students that have completely given up on making art because they're not good artists. Despite me trying to encourage them to build their artistic esteem, they still choose to blow it off and socialize with each other for the rest of the period. I asked Melissa how she planned to handle it, but she said that she's tried everything up her sleeve and has decided to throw in the towel, making sure that they lose participation points and assignment points. All three of these students are very nice towards me and are able to clearly articulate why they're not interested in the project. None of them were confrontational when I asked them to work on their projects, but they were definitely apathetic to the consequences.
- Analysis and Questions You Have
 - I'm a little concerned with the way Melissa chooses to let students not work on the projects and spend the entire period playing on their phones. The metals student literally comes to class and watches videos on his phone for the full 50-90 minute periods every day. I think this creates a complacent habit that it's okay for him to not use his time productively in the class, even if he's not worried about his grade suffering. If it were me, I would either differentiate to incorporate wood projects into his metal projects (or use wood as the construction material for the projects rather than metal) or I would hold him accountable to my studio expectations. I would also encourage the student to create his own assignments that would engage him. I don't know if Melissa's tried that already. All I know is that neither the teacher or the student gain any benefit from the activities if he spends every day during the semester watching videos on his phone.
 - As I stated above, students were overall focused and able to balance work with socializing. None of the students socialized to the extent of it becoming a massive distraction. Part of it could be their age, but part of it could also be that they are required to work with toxic and dangerous equipment. The metals

environment in itself creates an expectation that students are able to engage in a mature and appropriate manner. I think the flexibility of socializing with work time makes the art room a fun environment rather than a strict prison cell, which got students engaged. I have no idea how Melissa set her standards and expectations to make this happen.

- Reflection and Application
 - I've worked with teachers (both as a college student and a teaching assistant) that have set very strict "all work and no play" expectations in their rooms. I've also worked with teachers that had very flexible expectations for student engagement. I think there are a few major things that impact engagement in an art room. First, it's important to not remove the fun out of an art class, even at the college level. Students are drawn to art because it encourages them to play and take a brain break from their other classes. Second, teachers need to be tough but fair. I tended to take more risks and make mistakes in classes when I knew the teacher respected my character and trusted that I was a hard-working student, rather than bossing me around. Finally, tough but fair means that the teacher builds productive studio habits that benefit the students in the long term. Choosing to socialize for the rest of class because an art project is hard is not productive for creative problem-solving. Even if the student doesn't like art, it's important for them to develop those problem-solving skills that they can use in everyday life. The teacher is responsible for setting that expectation. These are things that I would consider in the foundation of my classroom management strategies.

Questions

- How can a teacher engage a student that has absolutely no interest in the project and chooses to play on his/her phone the whole time? What classroom management strategies can I set to prevent this from happening?