

Due Date: Wednesday, April. 14, 2021

Exerpt from Assignment 1: (The Letter)

Dear Syd,

You are probably just beginning your career as a math teacher now, if so, congratulations! You made it! If not, I am sure you are almost there. Keep going! In your classroom, you are going to have many different students over the years. You are probably slightly overwhelmed, as a class of thirty different students means thirty different people all with unique needs. Let us talk about those few students you are teaching with ASD, as it is not only a possibility that you have such students but expected that you will. For these students to have a positive experience in your classroom, you may need to put a little extra effort into your planning. Knowing you, you are already putting a lot of effort into your lesson plans, but this may require just a little extra thought, creativity, and probably some research. I promise it will be worth it. Imagine a time that you were frustrated and worn out. I know that you would never want a student to feel like this and if you can avoid it with a little extra planning, I know you will. If a student with ASD ever comes into your classroom feeling this way or responds in such a way to one of your lessons, it is not personal. This student had probably been learning in one format all day with no break. Give them a break. Maybe they need to play a game instead of solving equations today and why would that be such a bad idea? We learn problem solving in so many ways, but if a student is not engaged in the problem, then they are not solving at all. Instead of an entire class of disengagement, plan a puzzle day or game day for whenever it is needed. If you make a plan that accidentally breaks someone's routine or schedule or maybe is just too frustrating, take a step back and let the student be heard and know what their needs are for the day. However good your intentions are, do not be offended if your plan does not match the students needs, just adjust. It will take some practice but figuring out activities and strategies that are well received by students with ASD and having them on hand can make the world of difference in your classroom. Let your students play, learn, and grow at their own pace and be only a gentle guide with good intentions, a well-rounded education, and always a plan.

Why did I choose to include this excerpt in my portfolio?

I decided to include my letter from assignment one in my portfolio because I think it is going to serve as a very useful tool to not only to show what I've learned from this assignment, but also how I intend to apply it in the future! I intend to keep every promise I make in this letter. Going into this assignment, I was aware that I would most likely have some students with ASD in my classes, but now I am now aware that this will absolutely be the case. I believe that this fact makes it very important for me to educate myself on the needs and preferences of these students. It became very clear to me after doing my research that like all students, all students with ASD are unique and will have a unique set of needs,

preferences, and abilities. I found this realization overwhelming at first, but I think that with the right attitude it does not need to be. I take the rest of my letter to remind myself of the type of attitude I want to have. I remind myself that, like all students, these students may be in need of a break and that is very understandable. I learned that it is particularly common for students with special needs to need a variety of formats to stay engaged and it is very possible that they have been sitting and listening to lectures all day previous to coming to my class. I would like to break this cycle for them. I have always wanted to include different formats and design hands on activities to include in my class and learning about how well students respond to this style of teaching has inspired me even further to do so. I believe that this letter is a noteworthy excerpt from my work because it sums up exactly how I intend to apply all I learnt from my research and findings in assignment 1 and it is a letter that I would like to look back on in many years and remind myself of my intentions.