



November 10, 2023

Mrs. Besch Observation

Mrs. Besch – 5/6 Science

Students are taking a quiz as I enter the room. They are quietly chatting and Mrs. Besch is continually asking them not to talk. Evidence that there are not standards in place when taking a quiz or test. Scholars get up and go sharpen pencils, one leaves the room for the bathroom. I was not offered a copy of the quiz. One student raises her hand to express that she does not know this content. Mrs. Besch says that she was there last week and knew about the quiz. She is not wanting to take it, and Mrs. Besch encourages her to do her best. Another student pipes up that the girl was not in class. Mrs. Besch responds that she was in class and boy becomes argumentative, all the while he is back on two legs of the chair. Many are sitting on their feet. There is no ready position. Finally, Mrs. Besch responds with, “This is not up for debate” and everyone quiets down. Apparently there is a word bank on the test. *We can discuss the issues with matching questions and word banks on tests. Although Memoria uses a number of these strategies, they do not train a student to be responsible for their learning. We can discuss in relation to vocabulary and what a test looks like.*

1:10 two scholars are finished. Mrs. Besch tells them that they have to walk it up to the desk and put it in the pile. They return to their seats talking and continue to talk. Mrs. Besch asks them to be quiet. They are fiddling with pencils. *This is another procedure that is not in place. Every scholar should be bringing some silent reading to school from a provided classical book list. Anytime they are waiting for the next step in a class, that should be an instant indicator to pick up their book and read. There are many wasted minutes.* Mrs. Besch gives a 10 minute warning.

1:20 Conversation breaks out. Scholars have been sitting idle for over ten minutes. They ask if they can play tetras. Mrs. Besch says no, that they need to sit quietly. Margo is wandering around the room. We are still waiting for two girls to finish. Mrs. Besch says, “Margo, sit down, Margo sit down, then raises her voice, “Margo, SIT DOWN!” and the girl goes to her seat.

1:25 Mrs. Besch collects the quizzes from the two girls and hands out a drawing of a flower and notes that they are to put in their composition books. Notebook notes on right, drawing on left. Do not forget to update the table of contents. Mrs. Besch opens her book and tells the students they can “Follow along if you like” and not one student opens their books. She is reading aloud and they are putting their guided notes and illustrations in the notebook. Many are talking while she is reading. She explains the terms biotic and abiotic and tells them to put them in the blanks. Then says that the words “wind” and “water” go in the last two blanks. Scholars did not read through the notes together as a class. They were directed to close their notebooks and the class was divided in two sections and they went to a large piece of shower board where Mrs. Besch had a drawing of a flower. The teams started and the first to label every item correctly won. There was one boy on the team back by me that basically did the entire thing. *This is a great strategy if there is a process in place. Students should each have a different color marker and this activity should be premediated enough that each student is responsible for so many parts of the flower. Everyone needs to learn, not one student doing all the work.*

First team finishes and sits in their seats (the team by me). Mrs. Besch checks their work and announces them the winner. The other team quits the activity. She never checks their work to see if they were labeling correctly. There is no summary activity or closure to the lesson. *There has been no summary statement in any of these classes so far. Nor has there been any sort of exit ticket or conclusion to a lesson or objective to start a lesson.*