

My Patriotic Class!!

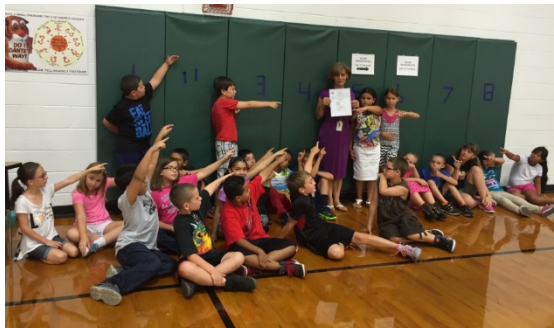
This year we kicked off the year starting with civics and government! The first thing I did was to create a list of jobs based on what we have for positions in our Nashua, NH government. I took those job titles and made them a little more kid friendly and gave a job description that was adapted to classroom needs. I tried my best to set up our classes like Rebecca Valbuena showed us from the NHICE workshop this past summer. The workshop was a great inspiration.

Since I have three different classes to teach, I wasn't sure how I was going to set things up, but it worked out beautifully. First I gave out copies of all the job descriptions to the students to put into their social studies notebook. I had each class fill out applications for the positions they were interested in. After I read all of the applications and chose the cabinet members, I handed out business cards that had their job title and duties on them.

So that the students had a good understanding of our government here in Nashua, I put up a photo of the Mayor and her cabinet with all of the job titles and their names. This was added to our bulletin board along with the title "We the People of Grade 4", as in the photo below. Later I added all of the job titles with the students' pictures posted next to their jobs. The students who were voted to be on Student Council (1 student per class) I used as the Aldermen of 4th grade.



What was great about starting the year off with civics and government was that voting for Mayor happened to be in September. The students were allowed to go into the gym where they were holding the voting. We were able to witness, firsthand, the para from our classroom go into the voting booth to vote. It was a great experience for the students to see the process in action!!



As our class progressed, we learned about how a bill becomes a law and actually went through the process in class. We had 4 bills pass!! And there was one bill that made it through both Senate and House and landed on my desk (the Mayor), but sat for the whole 10 days before it was vetoed. It was so fun to have the students come in every day and remind me that I only had so many days left. The danger in that is if you actually don't veto it before the deadline!!

The activity of using the class jobs on the basis of the government has proven to be engaging for the students. It is a great way to get them involved! We will continue to use these class jobs throughout the year. I plan on having them reapply for a different job at each report card time. This will give the students plenty of time to be used to their jobs and train the next person in their wake.

I am very thankful for the workshop provided by NHICE. It was refreshing to see something geared towards social studies – an area of curriculum that gets little attention.