

Drew Korte
Assignment 8
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Ethnography #3

On October 31st, PDI Studio 5 traveled to the Ark Community Charter School again to interact and observe the children while they engage in a variety of group activities. My group and I continued to work with the 5th graders as we presented them our latest design prototype. Our prototype was created to engage everyone in the group and to see their reaction to our learning system. The children's reactions to our learning device would help us learn more about their knowledge in our learning area and express the flaws needed to be addresses for the final project.

Before going to the Ark Community Charter School, each of us individually made a hypothesis on how the children would react to our learning device. The hypothesis was created to guide our day at the school and help us observe their response to our device. The prototype that our group created incorporated pop songs with New York school 5th grade curriculum English class concepts. The learning prototype we presented to the children was a PowerPoint with 10 popular pop songs and the lyrics of certain sections that were appropriate for the age level. One laptop had the presentation and the song lyrics and the other computer was cued with each song. Two identical arced playing boards were also made for two teams to use. The playing boards were divided into five sections, which paralleled five word types including nouns, adjectives, verbs, conjunctions, and prepositions. The presentation had four highlighted words in the lyrics of each song that needed to be marked on the board by individual markers. The song was played on the other laptop and the students needed to match the words with the word types. They had a little time after the song ended to converse with their teammates and finish up the round. The goal was for each team to learn as much as possible about the different word types while listening to popular identifiable songs.

I believed that most of the children would be interested and attracted to the music aspect of our learning design. The children expressed their interest in pop culture during the first 2 meetings at the school and by using popular music lyrics and by playing popular music I anticipated more participation and focus on the task at hand. The competition among the 5th graders would also induce more participation and motivate performing well.

At the charter school, my group of four moved to one of the corners of the room while the teacher split the class up into four smaller groups with an average of 5 kids per group. We had around 20 minutes for each group of 5th graders. From the beginning the children showed interest. They recognized that music was going to be played and looked excited and eager to see what was next. After a few minutes to explain the game instructions the game began. After the example round, the children understood how the game was supposed to be played and took off. First, the song was played and the

lyrics followed. The words highlighted in the text are correlated to the markers numbered 1 to 4 and represent different word types. The students placed the marker on the respective area of the board.

The game came easy to some and harder to others. In the first group, a boy with made this game look very easy. He took the game in his hands and killed it. Before the song clip had finished, the boy had finished the round and he was almost always right. On the other hand, there were students who seemed unsure about certain words and would hesitate answering. If the team didn't seem confident with one of the words, we would give little hints and steer them in the right direction to getting the answer. Most of the teams got better with the word types as the game rolled on and did better at identifying words. The students in groups one and two seemed to be enjoying the music and partaking in the game with their teammates.

The 5th graders shifted between the different groups and after each group, we would get a new set of electrified children. I noticed excitement in many of the children as they quickly scurried to a seat because they knew that they were going to be listening to music. The noise from other groups flooded the room and the children had a hard time hearing the lyrics from the songs. Students constantly said that they could barely hear it but worked through it and still had fun with the game. In the third and fourth groups, no one was a dominant player. This evoked team play and working together to get the right answers. In some of the rounds, I observed some students on each team were noticeably more quiet and worse with the word type concepts and were left watching the other teammates do the work. A problem that arose from the third group was that some of the students were not associating the words with the right number markers. The little numbers next to the words in our presentation were too small to read. For future, the words and markers should be associated with different colors to allow for easier recognition. On the other hand, the children in these groups had a little bit harder of a time associating the word types and one boy just threw them on the board because he realized that we were not keeping score. By not keeping score, we did not put any pressure on the kids and they were more likely to work it out themselves rather than cheating. Overall, the 20 minute time period was a perfect amount of time. For 3 out of the 4 groups we were on our last song as it was time to change.

After observing the groups of 5th graders, I was able to check my hypothesis. I was correct on the part that they would be attracted to the music and that they would be more likely to participate if it was a competition. The trip to the school gave our group good insight in regards to what our final learning tool should incorporate and what it shouldn't. Our observations with our prototype can push us in the right direction for what we want our project to encourage the next time we visit the school.