

Spring Round Reflection 2

During my last round, students participated in a simple activity that introduced them to the concept of positive and negative space. I started the class by defining what positive space and negative space is, then I showed a few different examples printed from the internet. I used those images to facilitate a discussion about what could be positive and negative space within those images. Then I modeled how to create examples of positive and negative space by drawing, cutting paper, and using my body. Students organized themselves into small groups to create their own examples of positive and negative space. At the end of class, each group presented a couple of their examples to their peers.

I planned this activity to include group work because my students have spent most of the year doing individual work. It has been a challenge getting students to work together on single projects. So I wanted them to have more exposure to group work in my classroom, albeit through a low-stakes activity. I also intended the group work to be a sounding board between students so there would be less pressure than working alone, especially on the first day back at school and the first day of a new project.

Initially, students did not seem to be discussing their ideas with each other. Most students were working individually despite sitting in small groups. After some prodding, I did hear some students showing each other their work and asking questions. One of the observation notes I received suggested that I could have given each group one sheet of paper, instead of giving one sheet to each student. That way students would be better equipped to work together as opposed to resorting to their inclination to work individually on their own papers. I agreed with this suggestion and gave one sheet of

paper to each group of students in subsequent classes that day. Those other students seemed to work more collaboratively because of it.

After the observed class, I feel confident that my students have a strong understanding of positive and negative space. The discussion at the beginning of class proved successful in initially exposing students to the concept of positive and negative space. Several students were verbally engaging in the discussion and answering my questions correctly. Even during the activity, I saw all the groups drawing many very creative examples of positive and negative space and labeling their examples correctly. A few students struggled to identify if it was possible to have positive spaces on top of positive spaces. I think this was mainly due to students confusing themselves with what part of their drawings they wanted to focus on. Depending on how much detail they focused on, their perspective on positive and negative space would change. After explaining this to a few students, they seemed to grasp the concept more.

I did not have enough time to post the Spanish translated definitions of positive and negative space on the wall before class started. However, I believe that my variety of examples to explain positive and negative space at the beginning of class served its purpose of addressing the needs of my ELL students. Although they did not engage in the discussion very much, they were able to produce accurate examples during the group activity. I will refer the Spanish speakers (who make up most of my ELL students) to the translated definitions on the wall during the next class as a refresher for the group activity. Overall, I think the variety of examples I showed were beneficial to all students' understandings.