

9/14-16/16 - Teaching Reflection, team teaching,
during this session I team-taught with Angela, my first time as
an official instructor for Mountain School, I was quite nervous to
~~start out~~, but overall it seemed to go well.

Angela and I made a good team, with Angela's extroverted
personality and outgoingness, and my knowledge of local
natural history. Our trail group was an ethnically diverse group
of 5th graders, most of whom started out pretty shy. We began
by hiking to Buster Brown and playing a couple of games
which Angela organized. This seemed to help the students
become more flexible and more willing to speak up in the
group. Angela gave a lot of verbal encouragement to the
students in the beginning, which I thought was effective.
During the games I mostly helped out from the sidelines.

After games we moved into lessons. Angela talked about the
water cycle and forms of water, and I led the rock cycle lesson
with play ~~to~~ dough. The evening before I'd asked Lauren to
help me identify a metamorphic rock, and Wednesday morning I
brought it in my backpack and had it ready to bring out
during the lesson so I could show the students an example
of a rock like the one they made during the activity. After
the rock cycle, we had the students move over to the
Buster Brown overlook where you can see the lake, and I
talked about glaciers a bit. Angela and I had decided to
include this part because the school listed examples of
erosion as one of the things they especially wanted their
students to see. However, I tried to keep it short since I
had noticed before that this lesson is hard to make engaging. I
pointed out glacial erosion on the mountains and tried to
make the lesson more interactive by having the students
grind small rocks together to make "glacial flour." I was
concerned that the students might not be really interested and
sometimes seemed distracted, but later two of them mentioned

in separate instances that they enjoyed the rock lesson, so I guess it went alright.

Brother Day was my favorite day during this session. We did the LAWS and Seed Game, each one Teach one, microscope lab, and animal signs. Although I thought it went well overall, I had some trouble with each one Teach one this time. I think I didn't do a good enough job explaining it in the beginning—but Angela helped by describing the process more fully to the students after I had gone up trail.

Microscope ~~lab~~ lab was a big success. The students seemed to like looking at their objects, and afterwards I had time to bring out some specimens from the animal prep, which they really got excited about. It made me realize again that while some people don't like the thought of dead animals, these specimens are an excellent way to let students experience an organism close up and get excited about the diversity of animal life forms.

On Day Three we did the Web of Life, which I led; and the Silent Lake, which Angela led. It was the first time I had seen the Silent Lake done, and I really thought the activity went well. The students said they enjoyed it, and I was reminded that I want to do more to incorporate silent activities in the future.