

9/19-21/16 — Teaching Reflection, team teaching.

This session I taught with Lauren, leading a trail group of mainly 7th graders. For some reason I found it a little harder to get into the spirit of teaching this group than was the case for previous groups. Monday started off very rainy, and the weather made everyone a little less cheerful than they might have been otherwise. However, I think part of my feeling about this group had to do with the age of the students, and it made me realize how much I enjoy teaching 5th graders. This session's group was a good group of kids and there were many positive things about them, but they lacked some of the innocent receptivity to information and ideas that 5th graders seem to have. They were at the age where they are starting to become cynical about the motives of adults, and are starting to use swear words and sexual innuendos. Overall, I just didn't find them as fun to work with and had to push myself more to give all my energy to the lessons.

With that said, there were definitely some good things about this trail group. They were able to handle more in-depth information during some lessons like the geology and water cycle sections. During the plant Each One Teach One, they were better able to retain information and I was able to go into more detail regarding some interesting facts about the plants. There were also some great personalities. My favorite student was Jacob, the youngest of the group. He was so outspoken and seemed to really take the lessons seriously, and his brash confidence was inspiring.

On Day One we did a night hike in the evening, on the Peninsula Trail. The route took less time than I had anticipated, so I tried to slow the hike down by periodically stopping and urging the students to engage in a silent listening activity. The students had a hard time staying

quiet, but it was obvious they were trying and they seemed to appreciate the activity. It reminded me again of the importance of incorporating silent practices into Mountain School. The students often find ~~these~~ these activities challenging and sometimes don't want to begin them, but they always seem to appreciate it afterwards and to really get something out of it.

Lauren and I experimented with giving each other breaks instead of both teaching the whole day. We split up the evening ~~time~~^{time}, with me doing the skull program and Lauren going to campfire. I thought it worked really well, and it was ~~an~~ amazing what a difference finishing the evening just an hour earlier made. On Wednesday, Lauren offered to let me have the morning off so I could go meet my next trail group. This was really nice, especially since my new teaching partner, Ash, was sick that day. But I wonder if, for a trail group I was more attached to, it would be hard to leave them for their final morning of Mountain School. I'm still getting a feel for what's the best way to divide up duties on team teaching days.