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Peer Teaching Reflection

 I was able to learn many from my peer teaching experience. While there were things I would change, do different, or add, there were also things that I liked and will continue to use in the future. I was also able to see things in other classmates' peer teachings that I would also like to incorporate into my future lessons. Overall, I would say that my peer teaching went well. While there were mistakes, I feel that I improved significantly from the last time that I did peer teaching.

Some things from my lesson that I thought worked well was my teaching persona and the environment I created. I kept an exciting and playful personality that was able to attract my peers but also create an effective learning environment. I believe that it is important to have a good teaching personality no matter the age level. It can be very difficult for students to learn if there is no engagement. While the teacher’s way of expressing this may be different throughout the grade levels, the energy involved should stay the same.

Another thing that I feel that I did well with was having clear expectations and creating an environment for students to understand without having to guess what I am talking about. For example, something that I wanted to make sure was done well was directing when the students were supposed to sing, and when they weren’t. To do this, I made sure to make clear signals of when to breath before they sing, and using gestures to show when they start. Without this, it could drag the lesson along and waste time by constantly figuring out when to come in and having to start over, as well as make it easier for the children to lose interest and disengage.

Something that I would like to do better for next time is work on creating more effective ways to reinforce the concepts. Since my peers were all college music majors, learning how to sing dotted notes came easy to them. However, if I were actually teaching this to elementary students, they most likely would not have grabbed onto the concept as easy.

Something I might do differently would be simply having visuals. Figuring out the duration of a dotted note does require some simple math. For example, it might be easier to show how a dotted half note breaks down into 3 quarter notes. Echoing the sound I give them isn’t difficult, but it doesn’t ensure understanding of the musical notation. This is why some type of visual could help reinforce understanding.

Another thing I could have done was reinforce ‘TAKADIMI’ more. I think more repetitions and variations of dotted notes could have been helpful for building a natural sense of the rhythm within their bodies. The way that I had them use the “dancing spiders” was to get a feel of tempo in their bodies without having to make a sound for the tempo. This is important when it comes to learning how to sing dotted half notes. I believe that with more repetition, this would be very successful in an elementary setting.

Overall, I am happy with my peer teaching. I am able to take what I have learned and put it into future lesson plans. My peer teaching was not perfect, but I still feel that I improved significantly from my last attempt, as well as left feeling successful.