

“Top Ten Things I Learned from Practicum”

1. **Relationships. Relationships. Relationships.** The way I saw this was by how many students came into Mrs. Brenden’s classroom when they had free time just to come and talk to her. Having relationships with students allows the students to trust you better and they are more open to ask for help when they are struggling.
2. **If you do not know how to award points for a problem, whether it is on homework or on a test, be consistent.** The best way to give points is to be consistent on everyone’s problem. If you are not consistent the students will see that, because they always compare scores, they will start to complain that it was not graded fairly.
3. **When writing lesson plans the standard is not always the thing that is focused on.** When a group of teachers get together and talk about the year and how they are going to teach things they do not always go off of the standards. Mrs. Brenden was telling me that they focus more on what knowledge the students need for them in the next math class they are taking.
4. **You need to always be flexible.** When you prepare a lesson some days the class will go smoothly and you do not have to change the lesson, but some days you need to be flexible and be able to change the lesson on the fly. You also have to be able to change your week around on the order of how you are going to teach things if something comes up.
5. **You need great communication with the other teachers in your field.** If you are in a bigger school you will more than likely have multiple teachers teaching the same subject and you have to be able to communicate with them to figure out how much time to spend on each topic. You also will help each other sometimes figure out the best way to teach a lesson.
6. **You have to be able to modify your lesson plan for students who have a different needs and backgrounds.** In a couple of the classes there are people who are culturally diverse and Mrs. Brenden has to explain the concepts in a different way for those students to understand.
7. **Always ask questions.** If you do not know something ask somebody so you can get an answer. Never stop asking questions to gain more knowledge.
8. **It is alright if you do not know an answer to a question.** If a student asks a question and you do not know the answer it is perfectly fine to tell the student, “That is a good question, let me find an answer to that question and get back to you.” When you tell a student this they will see that you care about their question and they will want a response so they know the answer as well.
9. **Praise your students often and mean it.** When a student gets a right answer give the student a small praise and mean it so that the student knows you care about them and they know they did it right. This goes back to having good relationships with your students because this will strengthen your relationship tremendously.

10. **When teaching go slower than you think you should.** This is very similar to public speaking where you have to talk slower than you think you should. You need to talk slower so that the students understand it better and can comprehend the concept better. If you go too fast they will try and keep up with writing notes and lose focus on what you are saying.