New Kid on the Block: How to integrate a new student into an already established community

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CONTEXT

As a 2010-2011 Professional Development Intern through Penn State University and State College Area School District, I have had the opportunity to teach in a second grade classroom. This class is composed of twenty-three students; 12 females and 11 boys. Each student is a unique individual. They all have different interests and needs that impact their daily learning.

Community building at the beginning of the year was of utmost importance to my mentor and me. Thanks to activities such as creating Me Banners, having Classroom Friends, conducting classroom meetings, and full class recess activities, the community established in our classroom at the beginning of the year was a strong one. No cliques seemed to form, and students were friendly with one another. We even had a new ESL student who, despite her struggle to communicate, was welcomed. It was quite apparent that students were careful of what they said and did to each other, seemingly conscious and aware of others feelings. We were very proud of this group of students and how they treated themselves, each other and their teachers.

MAIN WONDERING

In January a new student, who we will call “Sean,” joined my second grade classroom. Originally, the class was very welcoming and excited to have a new student. Many wrote letters to him before he arrived, and were eager to lend a helping hand when it came to teaching this student the routine of the classroom. However, it was not long before it was clear that this new student was not fitting in.
Sean displays some behavioral challenges. He does not always raise his hand, and often speaks loudly. He has trouble communicating what he wants to say, often stuttering or speaking out. It is evident that the rest of the class notices this. While most will not react, I have witnessed others raise or crinkle their eyebrows. It concerns me that, a class that has established such a strong community is proving to be inflexible when it comes to a new student who is slightly different than they are.

As I observed our class and Sean, in particular, I wonder if there is anything I can do, change or add to our daily routine in order to help Sean become a part of this strong community. This thought has led me to my main inquiry wondering: *What can be done to help a new student integrate into an already established community?*

**SUB QUESTIONS**

*How are students interacting with the new student?*

*Why is this community (of friendly students) not bonding with our new student as well as I thought they would?*

*How does the new student's weak social skills affect how students interact with him?*

*What type of community building activities do students respond best to?*

**DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS**

**Anecdotal Notes**

To begin my data collection, I wanted to gather a baseline of Sean’s daily interactions with students in the class. I started by taking anecdotal notes throughout the day. The reason for these notes was to record and notice tendencies
in how many, and which, students interact with Sean throughout any given day. I kept a close eye on Sean and any time I noticed him interacting or speaking with another student I took a note. If there was a time that he was not interacting with any student, but had an opportunity to I took note of that as well. I also recorded during what part of the day the particular interactions took place. I continued taking these notes throughout the entire inquiry process [Appendix A].

I wrote my anecdotal notes on note cards with the date on the top. I later typed these notes into a word document. I studied the notes from before and during interventions. I was looking for any changes in the type of interactions Sean had with students and for an increase or decrease in the amount of interactions. I created a spreadsheet with the date of each day listed. I then listed the students that he interacted with on that day [Appendix B]. I also created a chart listing all students in the class. I then recorded the number of interactions that each student had with Sean before interventions and after interventions [Appendix C].

**Survey**

I gave a survey questionnaire to my students in hopes of learning about the social relationships and preferences of my classroom. Specifically, I hoped to find out where Sean fit into these relationships and preferences. This survey questionnaire asked students to answer questions pertaining to different social situations with the names of students in the classroom [Appendix D].

When it came to analyzing the questionnaires, I sorted them into two piles based on answers. I looked specifically at the surveys on which Sean’s name appeared. Next, I sorted them based on whether his name was used as an answer
for a negative or a positive question. For example, did that student put him down as someone they did not want to sit by or someone that they did want to sit by? Based on the answers to these questions I was able determine who to conduct individual follow up interviews with.

**Interviews**

Throughout the inquiry process, I spoke with the school counselor. She gave me insight on the experiences she has had with Sean. I also individually interviewed Sean. After the first questionnaire results, I chose students who mentioned Sean in any of their answers and individually interviewed them as well. During these interviews, I asked students to elaborate on why they answered certain questions the way that they did.

The school counselor interacts with Sean often and was be able to offer an “outside the classroom” perspective. She holds a “friend group” that includes Sean and two other students in the class. After speaking with her, I was able to use her ideas for interventions to use in the classroom. I listened to the interviews of individual students to give me an idea of how they see Sean. I took note of the answers they gave for each question that pertained to Sean. I also used student interviews to learn what type of behaviors of Sean’s cause other students to not want to interact with him during the school day.

**Claims and Evidence**

**Claim #1**: Sean’s behavior affects how others interact with him.
Evidence A: On February 24, I recorded a situation in my anecdotal notes where Sean was interacting with a student. This occurred during recess. Sean was looking at and spinning the globe. Student 10 came over and was interested in the globe as well. After about two minutes of interaction, the two began arguing over what a continent and what a country was. Student 10 was correct, but Sean would not take into consideration her opinion; he was convinced that he was right and became extremely upset. I attempted to mediate the situation; however, it continued. Eventually, Student 10 had enough and walked away. Sean did not interact with anyone else that recess [Appendix A].

Evidence B: I interviewed three of the four students who listed Sean’s name on the survey as someone they would not want to sit by in the classroom. Each of those students listed his behaviors as the reason why they put his name down for that particular question. One stated that, “He shouts out a lot. It can be distracting is what it was.” Another said, “Sean sometimes gets a little too loud and I might not be able to work.” And the third said, ”I said an idea and he said no, and he just always goes with his idea.” As I have speculated, behavior is holding Sean back from getting to know his new classmates.

Evidence C: A student, who originally put Sean’s name as someone they would not want to sit by, changed his mind due to improved behavior on Sean’s Part. In the post survey conducted with this student I asked him to elaborate on why he answered the question the way he did. He proceeded to tell me that,
“Actually, I’ve changed my mind about Sean. He’s just been better now that he has learned to not yell out and now raises his hand.” This proves that not only the unappealing behaviors affect students’ interactions with him, but students also notice and respond to appealing behaviors.

**Claim #2- Sean is not a total social isolate. Students want to get to know him.**

**Evidence A:** After giving my class the questionnaire, four students listed Sean’s name for the question that asked to list classmates they would not choose to sit by. Two students listed his name as someone they would like to work with on a project. Four students listed him as someone they wish they knew better. Due to these questionnaire results, I feel that there are some students who want to get to know him. On the second class survey, one student listed him as someone they would like to work with and 6 students listed him as someone they would like to know better [Appendix E].

**Evidence B:** As I review my anecdotal notes, it is clear that Sean is beginning to participate during recess and play with one student in particular. Their play has been more than just parallel play. Those students he is spending more time and interacting with correlate with those who put Sean on their questionnaire as someone they would like to get to know. This gives me hope that there are students who genuinely want to spend time with him [Appendix A].

**Evidence C:** On March 24, the counselor came in the room to get Sean to conduct a Friend Group. He was allowed to pick a friend to join him. All students except for 18, 7, 1, 5, 20, 6, and 21 raised their hands to go with him. Sean chose
Student 12. He chose Student 12 because he had already chosen students 1 and 16 and wanted to be fair by choosing someone new. The amount of students that volunteered to attend this Friend Group proved to me that they want to spend time with and get to know Sean [Appendix A].

**Claim #3-** Since the implementation of morning meeting, job chart and table teams, Sean has had interactions with more students in the classroom.

Evidence A: I began my inquiry observations on February 14. My interventions officially began on March 14. During the month before interventions began, seven students had no interactions with Sean. After implementing interventions, four of those seven students interacted with him in some sort of way. This is an improvement from before interventions began [Appendix C].

Evidence B: Before implementing interventions, four students listed Sean as someone they wish they knew better. After the implementation of interventions, six students listed Sean as someone they would like to know better. This lets me know that since the implementation of class meeting, job chart, and table teams more students have an interest in Sean and getting to know him [Appendix E].

Evidence C: Before the interventions, Sean was content with sitting by himself at recess. In April (12th, 13th, 14th, 15th) Sean began playing with classmates during recess. This play was more than just parallel play. He and classmates were interacting and responding to each other [Appendix A].
REFLECTIONS

Throughout the inquiry process, I found it particularly frustrating when I did not see any major or immediate results. I had worked so hard preparing interventions, yet interactions with students had not changed much. Throughout the process, I had to constantly remind myself that this was not a improvement project, but a learning experience. If results were not positive and completely evident, then there was success to be found elsewhere. I found reasons, other than those provided by data, to feel positive about this inquiry.

I have gained invaluable experience conducting a teacher inquiry. This is the first major inquiry of any kind that I have planned and implemented. As a teacher I will always be noticing changes that will create wonderings in the classroom. I now have acquired knowledge and experience needed to explore any wondering that I may have along the way. Thanks to this inquiry project I have learned multiple ways of collecting data, planning and implementing interventions, as well as analyzing results and outcomes. This project was just the beginning. As I grow and gain experience in a classroom of my own I will continue to practice inquiry to enrich my teaching, using the foundation that this project has set.

One of my main teaching philosophies is the idea of a strong classroom community. I believe that community building should take place throughout the entire year and is crucial to student success. Through this inquiry project I have also gained insight on creating and maintaining a strong classroom community throughout the entire school year. I have researched new strategies and have experience implementing them in a classroom setting.
I plan on continuing with the interventions that I have implemented until the end of the year. I hope that, as more time is spent on morning meeting and table teams, the community will grow even stronger. As I begin to notice trends in Sean’s interaction I also hope to apply more interventions. I want to focus on his social skills, as they seem to be holding him back the most.
APPENDIX

A

2/9
Sean spent most of recess alone at his desk. No one bothered him and he did not speak with anyone else. Towards the end of recess 4 engaged him. Sean followed and did what 4 did.

2/10
Sean spent recess alone at his desk. No one bothered him and he did not speak with anyone else.
*Today I spoke with the school counselor about her initial meeting with Sean*

2/14
During writer’s workshop, 12 was in his group. Sean and 12 argued about what they should be doing during that time. They were at the picture files station. Later during writer’s workshop, 12 was talking to another student. Sean listened in and asked “what is an impersonator?” 12 responded with “I was just being sarcastic…”
Centers- 4 and Sean had a discussion about candy while at my center. This discussion was positive.
Fact Fluency- Sean and 4 talked about how many they missed (what percentage they got)

2/15
During writer’s workshop, at the sentence packet station, 2 initiated a conversation. 2 said, ”Look! Sean your name’s in this” Sean did not respond, let alone look at 2.

2/17
Math- 20
Today we had a toy party. During the toy party students had an extra recess with their toy. Sean spent this recess at his desk alone. 8, and 14 approached him to ask about his toy. He told them what it was. They walked away.

2/18
Centers- 4

2/22
Centers- 12 neutral
Math- Students were on IXL today during math. Sean was having trouble navigating the site, 5 helped him

2/23
Before centers began, Sean could not find his pencil. He was walking around looking for one when 3 helped him look and finally gave him a pencil.

2/24
At writer’s workshop, Sean spoke with Student 16 about what he was writing.
Centers—Again today during centers Sean was looking for a pencil to use. Student 8 gave one of his pencils to use.
During recess, Sean attempt to play with Student 4, only for about five minutes. He then went to the globe and was looking and spinning it. Student 10 came over and was interested in the globe as well. They began arguing over what a continent and what a country was. Student 10 was correct, but Sean would not have her opinion; he was convinced that he was right and became extremely upset. I had to intervene. Eventually, Student 10 walked away.
*Individual interview with Sean

2/25
At centers Sean spoke with 16.
Today at recess, I played with Sean at the globe. Others looked interested in what we were doing and joining, but Sean did not interact, talk, or even look at them. Towards the end of recess he rang the bell. As others (20, 12, 2, 22, 16, 11) were playing, he knocked over their carrels. The same boys then took over the globe as Sean played with it. Sean did not say anything to them, he just walked away.
During calendar time, Sean turned to 11 on the rug.

2/26
As soon as Sean walked into the classroom, 13 said “Good morning” to Sean. He did not acknowledge her at all. I told him that the polite thing to do would be to say “hello” back to her. He did not really acknowledge me either. When I told him again he said that he did say hello back.
During writer’s workshop, the class was at the rug, Sean seemed puzzled about something and spoke to 11 about it.
During Fact Fluency, Sean and 5 were comparing scores.

3/1
First thing in the morning, 13 said “hello” to Sean as he entered the room. This time Sean said “hello” back.
4 said “hello” to Sean as he made his way to his desk. Sean did not respond.
Today was crazy hair/hat day.
Sean asked about 16’s hat. 16 responded by telling him about it.
17 began punching 16’s hat. Sean told him to stop. He said, “Het don’t do that, he’s had that for a very long time.”
Sean told 2 that his hair looked cool.
During writer’s workshop at the carpet, Sean was confused as he answered a question. Some students around him (19, 3) corrected him.
During writing time- 4
Today during math the students worked with partners. Sean’s partner was 14. There was not much collaborative partner work between the two students. At recess, Sean was alone at his desk drawing. 9 asked to see his picture. At the end of the day as the class was getting ready for the buses, Sean took a glue stick that was on his desk and threw it because it was not his.

3/3
First thing in the morning, Sam made a comment to 11. During writer’s workshop, talked casually at his desk with 5, but not long. 11, 22, and 12 were writing a story together during writer’s workshop. Sean looked interested in what they were doing and seemed almost as though he wanted to join them. He looked at the group, but did not say anything. Smiled, talked shortly with 1 during writer’s workshop. At recess, Sean asked a group of student’s if he could play with them. They just ignored him. He walked away.

3/4
First thing in the morning, he spoke with 1. Sean initiated the conversation. He also spoke to 5 at his desk and initiated that conversation as well.

3/14
*Today the class began daily meeting
At the beginning of the meeting I made clear the expectations of every meeting. They are to participate, be conscientious of others feelings and be respectful. Today’s greeting was simply going around in a circle shaking the hand of the person next to them and saying, “Good afternoon, (name) it’s good to see you today.” I emphasized eye contact when doing this. Students did very well for it being their first time. There were a few who had trouble making strong eye contact and some giggles, but overall I was happy. At the end of the day, the announcement was made that buses had arrived. All students lined up except for Sean. 17 went over to him and helped him, “come on Sean buses are here grab your stuff.

3/15
Spoke to 10 as soon as he entered the room. As he made his way to his desk, he noticed that 5’s stuff was on his desk. He immediately pushed it off. 5 did not appreciate him doing this.

3/16
Today, the class sorted portfolio work. Sean was near 9 and 14 while sorting his work. He asked 9 a question, 9 ignored his question. We went on our Boogersburg one room schoolhouse trip today. Sean was well behaved for most of the time; however, the teacher had to take away his writing board because he was doodling instead of paying attention. A few minutes after she did this he began banging loudly on his desk.
3/17
This morning Sean was putting his book bag and coat away. Sean said “hello” to 4. During writer’s workshop, 13 asked Sean what he was doing.

3/22
*Implemented classroom job chart and table set teams
Sean was given a job. He was line leader. Students responded well to the chart and announcements of table set teams.
Today a student asked me if we will be having a class meeting everyday from now on. When I replied yes, she said, “oh yay!”

3/23
During morning work, Sean chatted with 5.
At the rug-10
During writer’s workshop games he had a positive interaction with 16.
At writer’s workshop, Sean talked to 9 and 10.
At the rug during the afternoon Sean shouted out, students around him (19, 3, 9, and 10 told him to “shhh.”

3/24
First thing in the morning, Sean said “hello” to 9.
While getting ready for lunch, 22 was at the beginning of the line. 22 remembered that Sean was the line leader, he said, “Sean you’re the line leader. Here, get in front of me.” As I was picking up the class from lunch again Sean was at the front of the line standing beside 22 and speaking with him.
He spoke to 17 and 20 during recess.
The counselor came in the room to get Sean. He was allowed to pick a friend to join him. All students except for Students 18, 7, 1, 5, 20, 6, and 21 raised their hands to go with him. Sean chose Student 12. He chose Student 12 because he had already chose 1 and 16 and wanted to be fair by choosing someone new. I found it interesting that he chose 12, because they tend to butt heads a lot.

3/25
During morning work- 22 +
16 entered the room and said, “I’m tired and sad.” Sean heard him say this and seeming concerned he asked “Why are you sad?” 16 did not answer him.
Today I conducted interviews with students that listed Sean’s name on their survey.

3/29
During centers, 1 gave Sean a scrap piece of paper to use for spelling. Sean took the paper but did not say thank you.
Made a comment to 16 during spelling center.
While at the rug, 20 made a small comment to him about an answer he gave.
During math, 4
While getting ready to go home, 5
17 shared at the end of the day. During this sharing, 17 talked about and showed a pinewood derby car. Sean raised his hand and added that he had made one as well. 17 told him that maybe he could bring it in some day.

I am continuing to talk up table teams.

3/31
17 said “hello” to Sean. Sean responded but it was hard to tell what he said. Sean argued with 11 while at the rug during writer’s workshop time. It seemed to stem from a difference of opinion and Sean did not want to hear what 11 had to say. During the writing portion of writer’s workshop, 5 helped Sean with his work. At snack Sean spoke with 1. Sean initiated the conversation.

At math, Sean worked with 17

4/1
Students were given the opportunity to share their work from writer’s workshop. 17 shared a story that he had written. In 17’s story one of the characters was Sean.

I am really beginning to notice table sets working hard to earn points. Any time I mention that there are points to be given out, students hurry to their seats and put up a quite sign. They hope to be the first table quite and working in hopes of earning a point.

4/4
4 said “hello” to Sean as soon as 4 walked into the classroom.

During writer’s workshop, the class was at the carpet. Sean argued with 6.

Math- 5

4/5
During morning work, Sean was talking to 1, 17, and 5. I did not catch exactly what they were talking about, but 17 left and came back. When he came back, he said to Sean, “you’re not the smartest boy in the world.”

During math, 5

4/8
At snack, Sean argued with 5 about the food he had brought. 5 said that he had crackers; but Sean quickly responded in a frustrated tone, “they are bagel chips not crackers.”

4/11
During snack, Sean spoke with 4 about what they were eating.

At the end of the day, 20 was sharing with the class. When it came time for comments or questions Sean, along with other students raised his hand. 20 called on him.

22 and 7

During math, 4

4/12
During the class meeting new jobs were given for the following week. Sean is the floor cleaner. He smiles wide when I announce this.

4/13
This morning, during morning work, those at his table (1, 4 and 5) were all having a conversation about the sports on their desks. During recess, Sean and 4 played the entire time. More than just parallel play, they were playing make believe. At class meeting, “I’m actually glad she will be moving because she’s been really mean to me lately,” to 5. Today, at math, Sean was a partner with 1. Sean said something and 1 told him, “Sean don’t scream.”

4/14
During recess, Sean played make believe with 4. At the class meeting, Sean asked a question, clarifying why 5 was moving.

4/15
During recess, Sean played with 4 again. At the end of the day, Sean was walking around grabbing things off the floor. It did not register with me what exactly he was doing, so I questioned it. Then I remembered that he was the floor cleaner for the week, and said to myself, “Oh he’s the floor cleaner.” I told him good job. 2 was near me and heard me and said, “Yea, he’s doing a good at his job.”
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D

1. List two classmates you most like to sit by in the classroom. Why?
   ____________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________

2. Write the name of two people you would most like to work on a project with in our classroom.
   ____________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________

3. List two classmates you would most like to hang out with on the weekend.
   ____________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________

4. List two classmates you would not choose to sit by in the classroom. Why?
   ____________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________

5. List two classmates you wish you knew better.
   ____________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________

6. List two students who you would enjoy sitting by during lunch.
   ____________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________

7. List two students who you enjoy playing with during recess or outdoor games.
   ____________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________
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**INQUIRY BRIEF**

**Context**

As a 2010-2011 Professional Development Intern through Penn State University and State College Area School District, I have had the opportunity to teach in a second grade classroom at Ferguson Township Elementary School. This class is composed of twenty-three students; 12 females and 11 boys. Each student is a unique individual. They all have different interests and needs, which impact their daily learning.

Community building at the beginning of the year was of utmost importance to my mentor and me. Thanks to activities such as creating Me Banners, having Classroom Friends, conducting classroom meetings, and full class recess activities, the community established in our classroom at the beginning of the year was a strong one. No cliques seemed to form, and students were friendly with one another. We even had a new ESL student who, despite her struggle to communicate, was welcomed with open arms. It was quite apparent that students were careful of what they said and did to each other, seemingly conscious and aware of others feelings. We were very proud of this group of students and how they treated themselves, each other and their teachers.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Someone you would like to work with on a project</td>
<td>2 Students</td>
<td>1 Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone you would like to know better</td>
<td>4 Students</td>
<td>6 Students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rationale

After Christmas break my class got a new student who we will call “Sean.” Before this student arrived, we were told that he had some behavioral/emotional and social problems. For those reasons, we were unsure of how he would fit into our class, but we remained optimistic that he would be okay due to the type of kids that make up our classroom. We hoped that the strong community that had already been established would welcome him and help him with any problems he may have adjusting and fitting into the class.

Originally, the class was very welcoming and excited to have a new student. Many wrote letters to him before he arrived, and were eager to lend a helping hand when it came to teaching this student the routine of the classroom. Though many wanted to help, none really bonded with the student. As a result, this student does not have many close friends. He has not formed a solid relationship with anyone in the class. Sean often spends most of his recess alone. This student often has trouble communicating what he wants to say, often stuttering or speaking out. It is evident that Sean’s classmates have noticed this. While most will not react, I have witnessed others raise or crinkle their eyebrows. It concerns me that, a class that established such a strong community is proving to be inflexible when it comes to a new student who is slightly different than they are.

It is hard to adjust to a new school when arriving halfway through the year, and the fact that our new student missed about four or five days of school due to an illness shortly after first arriving, does not help. Also, if he does have social issues, it
will make adjusting even more difficult. Having been in the position of “new” student twice during elementary and middle school I know how difficult it can be to adjust to a new surrounding while making friends. As I observe our class and Sean, in particular, I wonder if there is anything I can do, change or add to our daily routine in order to help Sean become a part of this strong community.

Main Wondering

What can be done to help a new student integrate into an already established community?

Sub Questions

How are students interacting with the new student?

Why is this community (of friendly students) not bonding with our new student as well as I thought they would?

How does the new student’s weak social skills affect how students interact with him?

What type of community building activities do students respond best to?

Data Collection

Anecdotal Notes

I will be taking anecdotal notes throughout the entire inquiry process. The reason for these notes is to notice tendencies in how many, and which students interact with Sean throughout any given day. I hope to be able to view changes in the
number of times per day that students interact with him and that he interacts with students. I will be taking these notes on note cards on a key ring to keep them bound together and easily accessible. The date will be written at the top right corner of the note card.

Interviews

I will speak with the school counselor. The counselor interacts with Sean often and will be able to offer an “outside the classroom” perspective. She holds a “friend group” that includes Sean and two other students in the class. I would like to know how he interacts with these students during the group time. I also look forward to hearing any suggestions or ideas she may on activities that emphasize community building.

I will also interview Sean. I am interested in getting his opinion on how his transition is going. I would also like to learn more about him in general and his interests and a one on one interview is the best way to do this. I have conducted an initial interview on February 24. I plan on interviewing him two or three more times before the inquiry processes ends.

Observations

Observations will come in different forms during my inquiry. Aside from observing Sean and taking note of his interactions with classmates each day, I will also use video recording and have my mentor or Professional Development Associate observe activities that I conduct with the class. The video recording and
observations by my mentor or Professional Development Associate will take place mostly during the class meetings that I conduct. These observations will allow me to analyze class participation during particular meetings. The level of class participation will help me determine which activities they respond best to.

Reflections

I will maintain weekly reflections in reference to observations I am making in the classroom regarding Sean’s interactions with other students and his behavior. I will also reflect on observations made during class meetings and how students are responding to their new classroom jobs.

Survey

I will survey the entire class at the beginning of the inquiry process, and then again at the end of the process. Survey questions will focus on classmates. More specifically, it will be geared towards finding out who students like to spend time with and enjoy being around, and who they would rather not. I am interested in finding out which students put Sean’s name down and for which questions. Based on survey results, I will then interview students to gain a more in-depth understanding of why they answered survey questions the way they did.

Timeline

Week 1 February 7-11
• Begin inquiry planning. Collect wonderings pulled from reflections, as well as, observations.

• Categorize wonderings. Narrow down and finalize, choosing one that I feel passionately about.

• Begin inquiry brief and annotated bibliography planning. Write and begin the search for sources.

Week 2 February 14-18

• Begin data collection: observe student interaction. Record Sean’s interactions with others in the class.

• Continue research for brief and bibliography. Search online, as well as, text for sources that focus on community building in an elementary classroom.

• Speak with school counselor, Kerry Weissman, regarding her initial meeting with Sean. Discuss his friend group also.

• Inquiry brief and annotated bibliography draft due (2/18).

Week 3 February 21-25

• Continue data collection. Record interactions of Sean with classmates. Classify interactions as positive or negative and take note of who is that initiates the interaction.

• Speak with Sean- interview on (2/24). This is an introductory interview, so it will focus on getting to know him. I want to know his hobbies, and what interests him so that I can incorporate those things
in my interventions. I will also focus on learning how he feels about his classmates.

Week 4 February 28-March 4

- Continue collecting data, but begin to analyze it. Notice the types of interactions Sean is having with his classmates. Also, begin to notice trends in who Sean is interacting with most.
- Conduct classroom survey (3/4). Every student present will complete the survey. Questions will focus on figuring out which classmates students prefer to spend time and work with.

Week 5 March 7-11

- Spring Break.
- Construct job chart.
- Begin planning first week of class meeting. Focus on activities that would typically be done at the beginning of the year and provide students with a chance to know each other better.
- Sort and Analyze class surveys. Record those who have listed Sean in one or more of their answers.

Week 6 March 14-18

- Begin to implement class meeting during the afternoon time that is typically used as “Calendar Time.” All students must participate. Record or have an observer take observational notes of student participation.
• Begin to implement “class jobs.” Make sure Sean is given a job for the first time.

• Continue to collect data on Sean’s interaction with classmates. Focus on who he interacts with and the type (positive or negative) of interactions they are.

• Begin to interview students who listed Sean in their answers as someone they would not like to sit by or spend time with.

• Speak with Kerry Wiessman for second time. Discuss any differences she has noticed with Sean, and also ask how his “friend group” is coming along. See if I could possibly join a “friend group” session.

Week 7 March 21-25

• Continue with daily meetings. Introduce a puppet that is a new student in Hilda’s class. Puppet can ask for advice on making friends.

• Second interview with Sean. Ask again about friends that he is making. Note if there is any difference in the people his lists as his closest friends.

Week 8 March 28-April 1

• Continue data collection and analysis during the regular school day, as well as during the class meeting. Look for changes, and more interaction amongst Sean and the class.

• Begin Inquiry Paper draft.
Week 9 April 4-8

- Continue with data collection and observations in class and during class meeting.
- Inquiry paper draft due.

Week 10 April 11-15

- Interview Sean. Attempt to find out if anything has changed. New friends? Enjoying class more? How does he feel about the meeting and jobs?
- Continue data collection and analysis. Make sure that class meeting is being observed or recorded.
- Once again conduct same class survey that was give in March to all students.
- Work on Inquiry Presentation.

Week 11 April 18-22

- Continue data collection and analysis
- Interview students who mentioned Sean in their class survey. Also, interview students who mentioned him in the first class survey, but not in the second.
- Practice Inquiry Presentation

Week 12 April 25-29

- Inquiry Conference!
- Final inquiry paper due to PDA
Week 13 May 2-5

- Continue with daily meeting intervention.
- Revise final inquiry paper

Week 14 May 8-12

- Final inquiry paper due to Bern

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY


This website is designed specifically for teachers. I found it to be a great resource for the type of interventions I will be doing during the inquiry process. It lists games, greetings, closings, and acknowledgements that can be used during morning, or any type of, meeting. This website is easy to navigate, as activities can be sorted by grade level, type of activity, academic skills, or risk-level continuum. As I searched through the greetings, I found one that I will use with my class. It is called, “Greeting: One Minute.” During this greeting, a student stands in the middle of the class circle and has one minute to greet as many students as possible. When applying this to my room I would make some adaptations. Due to the time constraint, instead of one minute, students would get 30 seconds. I would also spread this greeting out over a span of three or four days, as it would take too much time to let every student do it at one meeting.


I stumbled upon this site while searching for ideas for a job chart. I am going to introduce class jobs in order to create responsibility roles in the classroom. I was advised by the school counselor to create jobs and allow our new student to be in charge of a job or two so that students can see him being responsible. As I searched for ideas, I found this site. It lists many unique themes and ideas for jobs charts. I liked the “Busy Bee” idea. I think that this particular theme could possibly work well in my classroom and with Sean, because he really seems to enjoy nature.

Northeast Foundation for Children.

This book will be a great resource as I attempt to implement a daily class meeting. This book lists an abundance of ideas for this particular area. A daily classroom meeting is one of the interventions that I hope to implement during my inquiry. I believe that by adding a daily meeting with community building activities, students will continue to strengthen the bond they have with each other and also form a bond with our new students. One activity from this book that I will definitely use is called, Can You Guess? During this activity, students write three facts about themselves on a note card. Note cards are pulled at random and facts are read. Classmates attempt to figure out who the facts are about.


The data collection seminar on Monday, February 28, 2011, left me anxious. I left feeling as though I was not collecting enough data. It also left me wondering what to do with the data I have been collecting. I decided to read a couple sections on data collection in one of our inquiry texts, The Reflective Educator’s Guide to Classroom Research. In this text, I found an abundance of information that not only helped to ease my nerves, but also provided me with great ideas regarding data collection. Chapter five discussed and compared data collection to a jigsaw puzzle. This idea made sense to me. On page 119, it states that you know that the different pieces you are putting together will result in a picture, but you are uncertain of what it is going to look like in the end. Directly after, it states that the directions to completing this puzzle indicate that there are more pieces in than you will need. As I “cook” the data I have collected I am finding that not all of it is needed. Reading about that exact thing in this text reassured me that my data collection, to this point, is okay and that things will make more sense at the end of the process.


This blog gives a great idea for a friendship lesson. It is one that I think I could modify and use during one of the class meetings. It lists a book to be read to students titled How to Lose all Your Friends, by Nancy Carlson. This book describes what not to do in a friendship. After the book is read students brainstorm what to do in order to keep friends. A list can be made for students to reference. I think this would be a good opportunity for students to role-play as well. Overall, I feel as
though this blog entry provided me with a useful resource that can be applied to my class meeting.


http://www.primaryteachers.org/developing_a_classroom_community.htm.

This website is a good resource for anyone looking to enhance community building, as well as implement classroom jobs. These are two areas that will be interventions used during my inquiry. This site lists books that would be helpful as well. This site is particularly useful in that it provides several visual examples along with text. I am actively trying to decide how I want to present and display the job chart in my classroom. I found it useful that examples of several different job charts were available on this site. Job charts need to be appealing to students and I thought Pug Paws was a fun way to differentiate the chart.

7. (K. Wiessmann, personal communication, February 8, 2011).

I have spoke with Ferguson Township Elementary School's counselor twice. When a new student joins the school, the counselor will meet with them, and eventually form a Friend Group to help the new student socialize and get to know their classmates. I was able to speak with the counselor before she met with Sean. She offered a number of useful suggestions regarding his social interactions with other children. She believes it would be helpful to put him in positions that would allow him to be seen in a responsible role amongst his peers. I am taking this suggestion and implementing it in my inquiry through the addition of a job chart in the room. Our second meeting occurred after her first meeting with Sean. She was pleased with how well it went, but did state that she could see a few things potentially holding him back socially. She noticed many of the same tendencies that Mr. D and I have as well. I plan on meeting with the school counselor as Sean's Friend Group progresses. She will be a key informant throughout this process.


http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=XGNjNgIiFZ0C&oi=fnd&pg=P R11&dq=preventing+a+child+from+becoming+a+social+isolate+in+the+clas sroom&ots=vnJAj8c8ps&sig=amgD-W_rvPeW6q26EgzB- yN2LxQ#v=onepage&q&f=false.
The title of this resource caught my eye. The words that stuck out to me were “helping” and “find social success.” Regardless of the rest of the title, I thought that this may have some helpful insights and ideas. I was right. Community without doubt has a social aspect to it. The fact that this book focuses on students with learning disabilities also relates to my inquiry. It is not confirmed to what extent, but Sean does have some kind of social/learning disability that is holding him back. There was a section in this resource about inflexibility that really reminded me of Sean. We have experienced some of the behaviors associated with inflexibility. This book will help me better understand Sean's behaviors, as well as give me ideas on how to address his behaviors in a social setting.


During my first interview with Sean, I learned that he loved Magic Tree House Books. I had heard of these books, but had no idea about the content of them. Though Sean told me a few facts about the books, I decided to do research of my own. That is when I found magictreehousebooks.net. This site was extremely helpful. It has information about the author, lists all of the books, summarizes the series, and also suggests that the books be used as educational tools. I learned that most of these books have animals in them; one even contains dinosaurs. Based on Sean’s love for nature and dinosaurs, it is clear why he enjoys these books so much.


I interviewed Sean for the first time on February 24. I used the interview as a chance for him to get to know me and, more importantly, for me to get to know him. During this interview I learned valuable information that I will be able to apply in my inquiry interventions. Sean loves to read. His favorite books are Magic Tree House books. Another favorite of Sean’s is dinosaurs. I am going to attempt to incorporate one or both of these in my interventions. During this interview I also learned who in the class Sean considers to be his best friends, and whom he feels do not treat him nicely. I plan on interviewing Sean again as the process continues.