

November 14th-18th

This week was officially proclaimed “Semana de la Puertorriqueñidad” in the DEPR by the governor, Pedro Pierluisi. This meant that in all schools, the communities of educators, students, and parents were urged to celebrate the culture that represents us. At ELACS, on Monday 14th, the week of activities was introduced with a number of participations performed by students of all groups, from K-3 to 5th grade. I did not get to see any rehearsals from the kids which made the whole experience a total surprise. The principal divided the activity into two functions, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon. I managed to see my observation, activity, and practice group dance and perform wearing bright “jibaro” and Taino clothes. My practice group brought joy and proud to all of our hearts when they danced to “Que Bonita Bandera” and opened our precious flag on stage. They did open the flag sideways but that’s a minor detail we will not focus on. This day (Monday), the kids didn’t have any classes, it was a very irregular day at the school. I left at around 2:30 and very happy that I was part of the experience. When my practice group saw me recording their dance, they all got very excited.

The next day I began the last skill of my TWS and the last row of lessons that I’ll give the students before my practice is over. The kids were introduced to the writing process, slowly and very delicately. Considering that the students do not know what is subject and predicate in their native language, expecting them to write with acceptable language in English is very complicated and unrealistic. However, the kids surprised me and Mrs. Trinta. As I explained what is the writing process and the steps that they must follow, they followed along pretty well. I decided to “tease” their motives to be interested by letting them know they have a cool project at the end of the theme we’re working on. I told them they will write a letter which we will send somewhere far away. It worked and now I have their attention and you can see they are trying to learn this new thing with genuine intention.

On Wednesday, the kids began practicing the step of the writing process. This is when Mrs. Trinta and I realized how hard they are working, or at least the majority. I had them prewrite by brainstorming about a topic that I wrote on the board. Students were asked to come up with ten words or phrases that represented ideas that came to their minds when they saw the topic I wrote. They all wrote five or more. I was so happy I had to take minutes from the closing activity to address how well they worked. They were also expected to write two sentences using two of the words they brainstormed, however because of how challenging the first part was for them, I allowed fifteen minutes the next day for them to finish one of the sentences. Several students looked up words while they were home because when they had their papers back to finish, they quickly wrote the words they didn’t know the day before.

On Thursday, I had them practice revising and editing with a text that I designed with several grammar mistakes (from the few that they know). Together, we moved through the text and the students identified most of the errors I added. They had fun and so did I. At the end of the class, the students participated in the Student Assessment of a class for the second time and gave me their positive feedback, which I love.

Since the previous week, there have been different blooms of sickness within the students that is affecting the teachers as well. Covid-19, Mycoplasma, the flu, and laryngitis. My

C.T. and I got sick and tested negative for Covid-19. On Friday I had to excuse myself both from practice and work because I was not feeling well enough to speak. Overall, the week was awesome and I felt part so accepted by the students it gave me strength to keep on doing what I'm doing.