

Monday



Monday: Industrial technology in hometown district.

In near-city district, only 7th and 8th grade take this class- I think this year the teacher at one of these schools only teaches for four periods. What does he do with the rest of the day? In hometown district all three middle-school grades take this class. The other two districts I'm in don't have 6th graders in junior high (they don't call it middle school) so...

Anyway, I arrived at about 7:30 and headed across the hall from the office into the IT room. Dropped my stuff and looked for the plans. Dug around a bit on the front table- there were the seating charts, buried, but no plans. Hmm. Open his office door, looked, no plans. Right then. Fortunately I knew he had an assistant so I shrugged it off for the moment, though last time I subbed here the assistant was gone too so we watched videos all day. In other words, there was still a chance everything could go wrong. Ah, there she was walking in, and sure enough she knew what we were doing. Because she was there, the students would work on their projects or modules. For 6th grade, their work was enlarging drawings of cartoon characters by using a grid, which they had to draw themselves on the large sheet of paper. Tweety Bird, Marvin the Martian, Woody Woodpecker, Dumbo, Pink Panther, and more could be seen all around the tables. Students had to carefully draw the character making sure every line was in the correct grid box. It was interesting tho see the different ways students accomplished this. Most outlined then filled in the details starting at random spots, but there were a few who worked from top to bottom, filling in everything for one row before moving to the next. Several I couldn't tell as they were far enough along that they were going over it in marker

or even coloring. I was called on to do spot checks when students felt they were ready, so I had to compare their drawings with the originals and let them know if I saw something that wasn't right. The second period of this I actually had a line at one point waiting to be checked. As it turns out, 6th grade hands for the most part still aren't attuned to finer writing as most looked no better than I with my poor fine motor control could draw, but there were definitely a few exceptional ones and I said so.

7th and 8th grades were on modules. That meant that pairs of them were in different areas doing different things like building roller coasters and other objects with [K'Nex](#); working on computers on audio engineering, electricity & magnetism, and more; working with woods or plastics; and a number of other things. This time my job generally worked like this- I would see a help light on, go over to see if I could help, then ask the assistant when I couldn't answer the question. Seriously, I last worked with plastics and woods when I was in high school or lower, and I just didn't have experience with the software they use. I think out of a couple dozen help calls throughout the day, there were maybe three I didn't have to refer to the assistant- not that I should really call her that because today I was the assistant and not a very good one due to lack of experience.

During the middle of the day the regular teacher came in with several people from administration. Apparently he was trying to get the computers updated as they were about seven years old- a difficult proposition for this economic climate. I wish them well in this. Following the last class chess club came in, but I had no part in that so I bid them farewell.

On to Tuesday...