

# Avast, ye scurvy dogs!

On this official [International Talk Like a Pirate Day](#), I forgot one thing while subbing- I forgot to talk like a pirate. Despite my reminder to myself. I think the kids would have enjoyed it. Oh, well. Cleanup continues here on the home flood front- I finally ripped up the carpet at the foot of the stairs which has not dried since getting flooded. The other day I also discovered that the dryer did not in fact survive the sump-pump failure. It started once for a test run, but then once I put a load of clothes in suddenly the dryer wouldn't keep going once the start button was released. Later that evening, I came down to an odd smell, which after looking up the problem was probably a fried heat control board which is \$130. Sigh. At least the washer works so I only have to dry at the laundromat for now.

Today completed a week (well,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  days) of elementary subbing. Up until this week it was all middle school. Two days ago I showed up at a classroom expecting 4th/5th and it turned out to be 2nd. The teacher changed grades this year and her info was not updated I guess. I'm mad at myself about that day by the way. I overheard something from one of the kids and I said to myself, "blog moment." Now I can't remember what it was. Next time I will write it down I think. Anyway, an interesting thing happened that day. I walked in on a meeting- yes, even the elementary teachers sometimes have team meetings- they must time their specials to coincide- and one of the teachers mentioned that I subbed for her last year and the kids loved me, asking for me to sub again. And since the students were being tested, the whole reason a sub was needed in the first place in this case, and that teacher has two days scheduled *next* week to do the same, she took the opportunity to ask if I was available. Another teacher asked the same. One will be testing Monday and Tuesday, the other Wednesday and Thursday. So... long story short [too late] I have four

days in second grade next week. Will I survive? Well, you'll have to tune into the blog to find out. ☐

So... This brings me to yesterday, a half day of PE. Two mentally impaired classes where I really just helped the assistants work with the kids, and three 4th or 5th grade classes where the kids got to toss the pigskin around, preparing for the passing part of a pass, punt, and kick contest some time in the future, apparently sponsored by the NFL. A few of the 5th graders really had good arms- could throw pretty far.

Today was a mix. Between morning and afternoon I had 3rd-6th grade (one 3rd/4th multiage class, one 5th/6th multiage. They were at two different schools too, meaning I had to spend half my lunch leaving one school, travelling, and checking in at the other school. Fortunately the plans at the second school were pretty easy so I was able to go over them quickly. Nothing too special. A lot of worksheets in the morning and a lot of supervising while students read or wrote in the afternoon. Actually, scratch that- there was reading with a group for 45 minutes and during their independent reading time I did book conferences with a few kids so I did get to do some actual work beyond classroom management. Speaking of which, this was a slightly tough crowd to keep under control. Nothing like the ELL fiasco a couple of years back, mind you, but challenging just the same. Fortunately I did have help in the form of an assisatnt and a high-school helper. You know, why didn't I ever have the opportunity to go back to elementary school when I was in high school? It would have been fun I think, and a break from real schoolwork, though I suppose this high-schooler will have to write up her experience, or keeps some sort of log. That could take the fun out of it I expect.

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# Last couple days

My last post on my actual experiences with the kids was last week, so I guess it's past time to write about it again. I finished last week as a traveling social studies teacher on Friday. That's right, this district has a separate teacher do social studies for 1st-3rd grades. I'm not sure why. To get started, when I accepted the job online it showed what school the teacher works at of course. The school is located at the far end of one of the further districts from me (read: at least a half hour drive), but this was the school one of the kids in my church group attends so I thought I might see him, and so I accepted it. As it turned out, the system I believe lists the school at which a traveling teacher works at the beginning of the week. However, this was Friday so all bets were off. I actually wasn't aware it was a traveling job when I signed up, so I didn't think anything about it. Now, I was at my Thursday job when I accepted this job (no, I wasn't looking when I was supposed to be teaching so just take those fingers off the keyboard and read on! ☹). By the time I got home there was a message waiting for me from the teacher telling me that I would be at a different school in the morning, and yet a *third* school in the afternoon. I wouldn't be at the listed school at all. I am glad I listened to the message and didn't go to the original school. We all know I have gone to the wrong school before...

To make things short to move on to this week, the day went okay. Second grade was working on tourist booklets for their town, with an attractive front, facts about the town on the first inside flap, and pictures on the rest. Being second grade, they needed help on the spelling of course. Also ideas for facts and pictures. Being the town that had the first

store ever in a major restaurant chain, that was prominent on several projects. 1st grade listened to a story on safety. Dinosaur boys and girls were featured in this story. Hmm- so **that's** why dinosaurs became extinct- they broke all of the safety rules! ☐ 3rd grade were learning about Chicago history and we worked on a timeline of major events in Chicago history.

Monday was one of those days of subbing for a teacher who was still in the building. She is a resource teacher for grades 1-4. Of course this was just one day so for all I know she may have 5th and 6th grade students on other days. She had to do some testing so that's why I was subbing for her. There was one first grader who was pulled out three times for this this teacher, and apparently at least once more for another. It would seem he doesn't spend much time in his classroom, at least on Mondays. He was pretty unhappy when I pulled him once right after the other teacher brought him back. I really hope this level of disruption is actually helping him. The morning was spent with three reading groups of different grades, and a push-in where I went to the classroom and worked with small groups of students. They were reading plays (leveled for their reading level of course). Drama can often be favorite moments in teaching and today was no different. In the afternoon I had one pull-out (the first-grader) for math and other than that I was helping out in classrooms as needed. They started the fourth-graders on algebra, using hands-on equations. This is a program using manipulatives on a "scale" to solve equations by balancing the two sides. I didn't have any algebra until I was in junior high...

Today as I mentioned last post was a half day for me. Fortunately it gave me time to get assignments for later in the week in my downtime. I had PE at a school that I have had many problems at. It's an all-year school that actually has classes from 8AM to 4PM. This long day probably contributes to the problems I have had. The first two classes were

4th/5th grade classes. The first class had a new teacher. Actually, the teacher started the year as a first grade teacher (had been one for at least the few years I have known of her). Apparently the 4th/5th grade teacher moved a couple months ago and the school switched the 1st grade teacher and hired a student teacher to replace the 1st grade teacher. I compared two class lists, and it looked like two of the more "lively" students were gone as well, but they might have been moved to another class for all I know. We played speedball in the three classes I had (40 min classes by the way, not 30 min). The two 4th/5th grade classes did very well. The 3rd grade class was a different story. They played like everyone wanted the ball rather than just wanting to play to win. Once one student had possession of the ball, most of the rest of the class surrounded him or her, pretty much preventing the student from doing anything other than handing the ball off to a teammate. After awhile some students just quit playing- this wasn't a game of good sportsmanship. I actually had to stop the game and have the kids spend the last five minutes sitting down. The nurse came in and yelled at them too (one of the students had run out of the gym to her office toward the end- he had pulled a girl's hair and then she tried to get him back. Sigh. When I told the gym teacher about the morning (he arrived before I left) he knew right away who that student was...

So, that was my last few days. If you're still awake, now is the time to leave comments (hint, hint!). Until tomorrow then.