

# From kids to kars.. er, cars

It looks like this may truly be the end for the summer, but it is also a beginning. I was able to secure jobs for the last three days. I even had a job for this morning, but I canceled it when I was still awake at midnight and it required an earlier start. I stupidly took a nap yesterday afternoon so that affected my being able to get to sleep. Monday was an extension of Friday as it was a two-day assignment. It was a light-duty assignment since it was an assistant position. I was pleasantly surprised though to find the assistant I subbed for had a paid lunch-duty assignment, so the lower-paying assistant assignment was offset a little by this. Too bad my Wednesday assistant assignment didn't have such a thing. It's the end of the year though, so I take what I can get. The two assistant assignments differed somewhat in that the first was there for a group of five kids (four actually since one has been out of school for the last couple of months) while Wednesday my attention was focused on just one boy with autism. For the first I was on hand for the rest of the class as needed, which wasn't much being the end of the year, and for the second I stayed around this one boy, but did help his neighbor too who needed it at times. Across from him was another boy with albinism- the second I met this year. As seems to be standard with this condition, he had vision problems which required extra-large textbooks and he had to wear sunglasses and a hat outside. There really wasn't a lot of academic work being done on these last few days as the grades had already been turned in. There was a lot of cleaning and turning in books and extended recess times. There was a lot of letter writing in one of the classes (imagine writing a letter- at least half a page each- to every student in the class. They were doing only five a day, but still very monotonous. They also did math speed drills, practicing the times tables. I also did a lot of copying. Well, at least I was paid. It was also a rest in a way which

is perfect for this time of year. Tuesday was completely different. You already know about the fire, but aside from that it was a very normal teaching day with math, reading, and so on. I didn't do much teaching though- a lot of facilitating. Get them started on something, and off they go as I walk around keeping them on task. I saw one of my now-former weekend kids, but only for math. The teacher I subbed for did advanced math.

As I write this I am still trying to secure a job for tomorrow, but I won't be surprised if nothing turns up. One district is already out of the running. Monday however, I start on something new. I will be training to take pictures of cars for ads. Actually, I think I mentioned this in another blog post so I won't repeat it, but now I have signed the contract and have an official starting date. He is even allowing me to do my usual week at camp, which is coming up in less than three weeks. Training can last three weeks to three months depending on how quickly I learn the ropes. This should become my priority over subbing, but I will probably still do maybe one day a week, more in winter if there are less cars to do. I will see.

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## Has it really been that long?



Well, it's been awhile since my last work-related post. I finally got season 4 of [The Office](#) from my library and have been watching it. For those who don't remember back that far □, Ryan, who was the temp at the Scranton, PA office is now Michael's boss, and is trying to make many changes to the company to bring it more up to date with the times. Oh, and

he is making Michael's life miserable. I watched the first five episodes so far, and was pleasantly surprised to find that the first few were 40+ minutes. I thought at first these were two-part episodes combined into one, but apparently they are actually extended versions of the original episodes. There are supposed to be five of them out of the fourteen episodes on the DVD set and I saw four of them. The fifth episode was the normal 20+ minute length. I am guessing the season finale will be the fifth extended episode.

Anyway, on to work. Today was a difficult day with a pleasant ending. I substituted for 3rd-grade ELL at the school that made the local paper a few months ago for its supersized 3rd grade classes with 30+ students per class. As far as that went, I prepared myself for it. It turned out to have 24 students- 23 after today as it was one student's last day. For some reason that student is transferring to another school in the same district. To any who didn't catch it, this was an ELL class, which I'm guessing is why the class was a normal size. I bring up ELL because while I prepared myself for a supersized class, I forgot to prepare myself for ELL kids. Fortunately most of them understood English to a point, and there was an assistant who spent most of the day in the class to translate when there were difficulties in understanding. However, the behavior in a few of the kids was just off the wall. As I have mentioned in the past, ELL kids can be challenging when it comes to behavior, and these kids were no exception. Again, I think this is due to us being too soft in this country as compared to other countries like Mexico. And I especially am more easygoing than other teachers. I would like to think I have gained better management habits, but I know I am still kind of a soft teacher, at least when I am in a good mood.

In the end, I did make sure to point out the kids I had a problem with in the note to the teacher, so something will happen I'm sure. So what was the pleasant end? Well, a 4th-

grader from my church is apparently a student at that school. As I was lining up the kids for dismissal, he spotted me. A few years ago I had a student who showed some major excitement when he recognized me when I subbed in his class, with a very excited, "Hey! I know you!!" Well, that boy's record for excitement was just broken today by this other boy. He shouted to everyone who could hear, "Hey, you go to my church!!" which was repeated a few times, once to his teacher. When I failed to come up with his name right away, he happily offered it, not disappointed at all like a few others I have run into. I should remind you that I am not that great with names at all and this year I lead a fifth-grade small group so he isn't in it. Tomorrow night I will make sure to give him some extra attention.

This week I was was in middle school only one, which was just an okay day in Spanish, with two 8th grade, two 7th grade, one 6th grade, and a 7th/8th combined class (which I thought kind of strange for a Spanish class). The other days were strictly elementary. The music class was a highlight of my week. Normally these can be difficult classes behaviorally, but it was a rather pleasant day. The teacher left plans that were clearly meant for the Friday before break with some of the classes having a Christmas-y theme, but since that turned into a snow day she apparently thought it would be just fine for the day after break. Three of the classes watched part of the Nutcracker while coloring Nutcracker pictures. It was in one of these classes I ran into a rare occurrence- an [Albino](#). Okay, that term was politically incorrect. I guess I should say he was [albinistic](#). I joked with him having hair blonder than mine was at his age (I had very light blond hair once- it has since become almost gray. Yes I have some grey hairs now, but most of it is still blond when looked at closely. It was pointed out to me that he had a vision problem which is often an effect of the condition and when I looked at his eyes a certain way I noticed some red which I think may also be common, though seeing red in pupils apparently is not.

Well, time to head back to Scranton, PA- I only have a week on this DVD set. Later!

EDIT: Whoops, forgot the title!