

### **Comments by Ms. Bloom before the lesson:**

I think that most students will struggle with this lesson because they just don't know their basic facts, to begin with. A couple of the really high students will do well because they are very smart and actually care about doing well; they're just really good at math. I want to prepare them for the state test at the end of the year, but it takes all my effort just to get them caught up. I use lessons like the one you'll see tomorrow to prepare them for the state test.

It's difficult for me because this textbook we use is really geared toward the students who plan to take higher math courses in high school, and I just don't think it's necessarily appropriate for *all* students. Therefore, I find it necessary to skip some of the application problems or the student inquiry problems and go straight to the practice set. If I did everything they say to do in the teacher's manual, we would never get through the first unit. It reminds me of our 'old' textbook series...I'd never get to the "Challenging" problems; we struggled to move fast enough just doing Problem Set A in that book.

Sometimes I feel like I'm spinning my wheels because we can go over a lesson in class and the students seem to be getting it; even their exit slips show that they can do the problems we went over in class by themselves. But then tomorrow, they will probably act like they've never seen the material before. Believe me, I teach my heart out and use the formative assessment strategies we've learned about in PD, but a lot of my students just forget how to do it. I tell them they have to take good notes when I teach. I don't know how they expect to remember anything if they don't take notes.

I do think one of my strong points as a teacher is my classroom management. You will find that students will begin working on the bell-ringer as soon as they enter my class. I rarely have disciplinary issues, other than minor infractions of not bringing their book to class or not having their homework. Students generally raise their hands to answer questions and remain seated until granted permission to do otherwise. They are very respectful.

### **Lesson Summary:**

Students began working on the bell-ringer problem quietly and waited until the teacher prompted them to ask questions. Upon observation, some students merely copied the problem and turned their paper over and waited quietly. (The math problem was a review from the previous day's lesson.) Students asked questions of the teacher and she spent about 20 minutes answering questions until students appeared to understand (questions stopped). Papers were collected by Ms. Bloom.

Homework was then brought out by students and the teacher asked if anyone had any questions over any of the homework problems. Hands were raised immediately and a multitude of questions ensued. Ms. Bloom stated, "Most of you should know

how to do these problems since they are very similar to the practice problems we worked together in class yesterday. If you had given some effort and taken notes like I asked, you could have referred to them on this assignment." Some students commented that it was easy when they worked them together in class, and they thought they understood, but then after they got home they just forgot how to begin. A few stated, "This is too hard. We need something easier. I don't get it." After 20 minutes of working through homework problems, Ms. Bloom announced that she would go ahead and collect their work and would determine how to proceed with the material from that lesson tomorrow or the next day.

Ms. Bloom acknowledged the amount of time left in class and stated that it was very important to pay close attention to the notes she was about to give since this was an important topic on the state test at the end of the year. She said that they would begin the lesson today and would finish up tomorrow, and would not have homework for the evening. She stated, "I know that if you take really good notes, you all will do well. This is difficult material, but you can do it if you work hard. Some of you might have to work harder than others, but that's okay."

Examples were worked out by the teacher on the document camera and copied by most students. Some students asked questions of the teacher related to the material being taught. A few students sat quietly and doodled, but did not cause a disruption.

The bell rang in the middle of a sample problem. Some students closed their books and stopped working when the bell sounded; a few others waited until the teacher dismissed them.