

(Drama × 2) + Teacher + (Leader × 2) = Full Weekend

Definitely a full weekend this time around. My normal schedule is fairly busy as is, which is one drama and kid's leader for two services (one same service as drama). Then I go to the worship service during the first Sunday service. This weekend was also a teaching weekend for me and I filled in for another drama member as well. What's the difference between teaching and leading? Well, in a given service there are 30-40 kids in 4th/5th grades. That means several leaders are needed, at least one for every ten kids but the lower the ratio the better. These leaders lead discussion during small group time and of course all are on hand to assist whenever needed whether it be to take care of someone injured during game time, redirect wavering attention, whatever. There is only one teacher though who teaches the actual lesson during lesson time. Today that was me- I do it once a month typically. Today was actually probably the shortest lesson I've given in a long time, meaning more time for small groups. If only I could keep it short all the time that would be ideal. Moving through the Old Testament we focused on King Saul, and why he didn't have a true heart for God. Next week will be focused on King David and how his heart **was** for God. King Solomon will follow the week after. Of course today the lesson started with how Israel wrongly wanted a King in the first place so God gave them the type of king they thought they wanted- tall and handsome. Just like the idols thrust before us today. Unfortunately good looks on the outside don't equate to a good heart on the inside. Yes he did lead Israel to some victories, but he showed himself as one who shifted blame to others, was jealous, and was disobedient. Eventually God just removed his right to rule and selected a king for them that they **should have** wanted. I would bet that David would have been completely happy with just being a leader while God remained king, but

since the precedent was set David would inherit the title of king once Saul was finally killed. This last thought is my opinion of course, so if it is wrong then don't blame the Bible please.

The drama was about doing the right thing, in this case my role was typical of my real self- procrastination. My character knew he had to clean up the lab after a failed experiment, but let it sit instead for three days without doing anything about it, so now it's showtime (remember, imaginary TV studio with live audience) and the place still isn't clean! He almost gets fired when the studio owner calls and asks what's up...

Anyway, now I'm home and three hours later writing this up. Now if you'll excuse me I have some of [The Office](#) to watch- it is due today and I am not even finished with half the season! Good show, but it took a few episodes to get into it.

Expert or one-time-struggler as a teacher?

I have often reflected on teaching a particular subject I was good at in school- math. Face it, either you're good at math or you're not- it's just one of those subjects. If you get it then you're well on your way to high grades, but if you don't...

As a great student in math I have struggled to teach it sometimes. It's like, "Why don't you get it? I just showed you how to do it!" Even now, with all this sub experience, I often either go too fast and leave some students struggling or I take too long to teach it as if I'm afraid of going too fast. It's difficult to find the right balance. Okay, to be

fair as a sub I don't know the students, so getting the right balance is just not possible, but it doesn't stop me from wondering. Today I subbed in 6th grade, but this kind of goes back to last week too when I was in that 3rd/4th grade class for a few days and only taught math. Then, the teacher wanted one section taught per day if at all possible. Four days, didn't quite finish two sections. Well, three days really since there was no math on the last day.

Today was a little different- she assigned five journal pages out of **two sections**! Well, I guess she didn't really want me to teach it. I wound up just going over a few examples on the board from each section and letting them work, asking questions or work with a partner as needed. I think in this case working with a partner was almost mandatory since I didn't have time to teach full lessons. Did she want it done this way? I'll never know.

This makes me think of a proof that I am slow at teaching math: the University of Chicago math program. This seems to be used *everywhere*. Well, at least in elementary schools. This is a very structured program meant to be taught in about one hour. This includes a game included in most lessons, but I rarely have time for when I teach the program for some reason. It starts off with a "math message," which is a math problem that will lead into the lesson. This is followed by a full-group lesson that often involves some sort of manipulative which aids kinesthetic learners (touch), which believe it or not is most people. True, many can learn by seeing or even by hearing, but touch really makes a difference in many people. A Chinese sage once said after all:

I hear and I forget.

I see and I remember.

I do and I understand.

In any event, following the full-group lesson there are small group, partner, and/or individual activities (one of which is

the aforementioned game). I think I need a full 90 minutes to get through all of it sometimes!