

# Joel Michael Pope

## Module 4, Units 1 – 3 Reflection

Classroom management is something I have always put much focus on in my reflection and development.

As can be the case for many of us, it is something I really struggled with when I first began teaching. When it feels like there is so much you must do in the classroom, it is easy to overlook or not begin to think about many of the great positives towards building a truly nurturing and inspiring classroom culture. For example, the collaboration with students that can be put into a strong classroom culture, the big focus on positivity and positive framing that can be so effective and the importance of really listening to students feel ownership.

I was able to develop an ability to manage a classroom to help me achieve lesson and teaching goals. However, it was through firm rules and perhaps being too strict with discipline.

Looking back, this did help me develop the confidence knowing I could manage a class to deliver material, which also helped me progress in my ability to actually teach and deliver content, and run activities.

Once I became more relaxed in the classroom and with my ability to “teach a lesson” it reached the time when I really did begin to develop a passion for both teaching, as well as a genuine love of being with children. I remember I realized this when going back to work after 5 months of lockdown in 2020.

Over the months and years that followed this, I began to develop much closer relationships with my students and to want to bring their interests, passions and ideas into the classroom. I would allow them to choose songs and other activities that they liked, lead games and routines and use other ways to express themselves clearly.

As I moved from being an English teacher to being a kindergarten homeroom teacher this year and spending much longer with one group of students, I have seen just how inspiring it can be to come up to agreements for behaviors and routines with students. Young children really can come up with great ideas and will be able to listen to each other for these great ideas.

Probably the biggest thing I have come to appreciate is that if students know and can see that you genuinely care about them and want the best for them, they will develop great trust and respect for you allowing you to guide them, even if you might make mistakes in the classroom, or sometimes run classes that don't go very well – teaching is always hard!

From doing this module so far, it has been really impactful to see teachers in some of the lessons I have observed, showing so much awareness of how students may be feeling on a particular day. I

care about my students and sometimes want to push them really hard, not always being sensitive to how they may be feeling on a particular day. It is something I am beginning to be conscious of.

In addition, as we have discussed, and I have studied norms, routines and transitions in more depth, I have come to realise, also seeing it more clearly to be the case in my own class, the importance of some differentiation and extra scaffolding here, based on the background, needs and emotional development of students for example. It is another reason why it is so important to know our students well.

In line with this, my biggest focus in general for the future with my classroom culture and management development, will be making all aspects as personalized as possible to specific needs of individuals.

I am excited to commence the final units of the module.