Guiding Question: How might community building strategies in small group work foster development of student social awareness?

PROCEDURE

Focus Area: Student social awareness (understanding other perspectives/building empathy)

Strategies Explored:
- Students will work together in a small arbitrary group to create a shape that has three levels.
- Students will work together in a small arbitrary group to create a shape that has three levels and depicts a specific emotion (proud).
- Students will work together in a small arbitrary group to create a shape that has three levels, depicts an emotion and includes all of the elements of a tableau (levels, face front, dynamic body position, relationships, facial expression).

Projected Outcome: Students will work together in small arbitrary groups as the challenge increases.

Performance Indicators: Students will demonstrate respectful behavior when working in small groups and all members will participate.

Sources of Data/Evidence Collected:
- Counting students who are or are not exhibiting a behavior.
- Teaching artist journaling after teaching.
- Photo documentation of student work.

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FINDINGS

- On October 23 all of the students participated, demonstrated respectful behavior and were able to cooperate in groups of three to create a three-level shape as evident in the photo documentation:





- On November 18 all of the students participated, demonstrated respectful behavior and were able to cooperate in groups of three to create a shape that showed a feeling (disappointed), but most of the groups were not able to show the feeling and include the three levels as evident in the photo documentation:





- On December 9 the students cooperated and were able to work together in small arbitrary groups to create a shape that had three levels, depicted an emotion and included all of the elements of a tableau (levels, face front, dynamic body position, relationships, facial expression).

Reflection: The strategy of scaffolding skill building was successful, but in the future, I would spend the first workshop just working together to create a three-level shape. I would wait until the second workshop to introduce adding an emotion to the three-level shape. I would break it up this way because they are just starting to work in small groups at this grade level. Also, there are many students who are multi-lingual learners in this class and they would be more successful if they could spend more time on each element that I introduce.

Next Steps: My action research question is based on what the classroom teacher is working on so I expect I may change it in the future. I would like to include the teacher more in collecting the evidence (counting students, taking photos, videotaping) to make sure that I do not miss anything. I also may try to videotape the whole class using a tri-pod.