

# DAVE JOHNSON

DOMAIN: 4

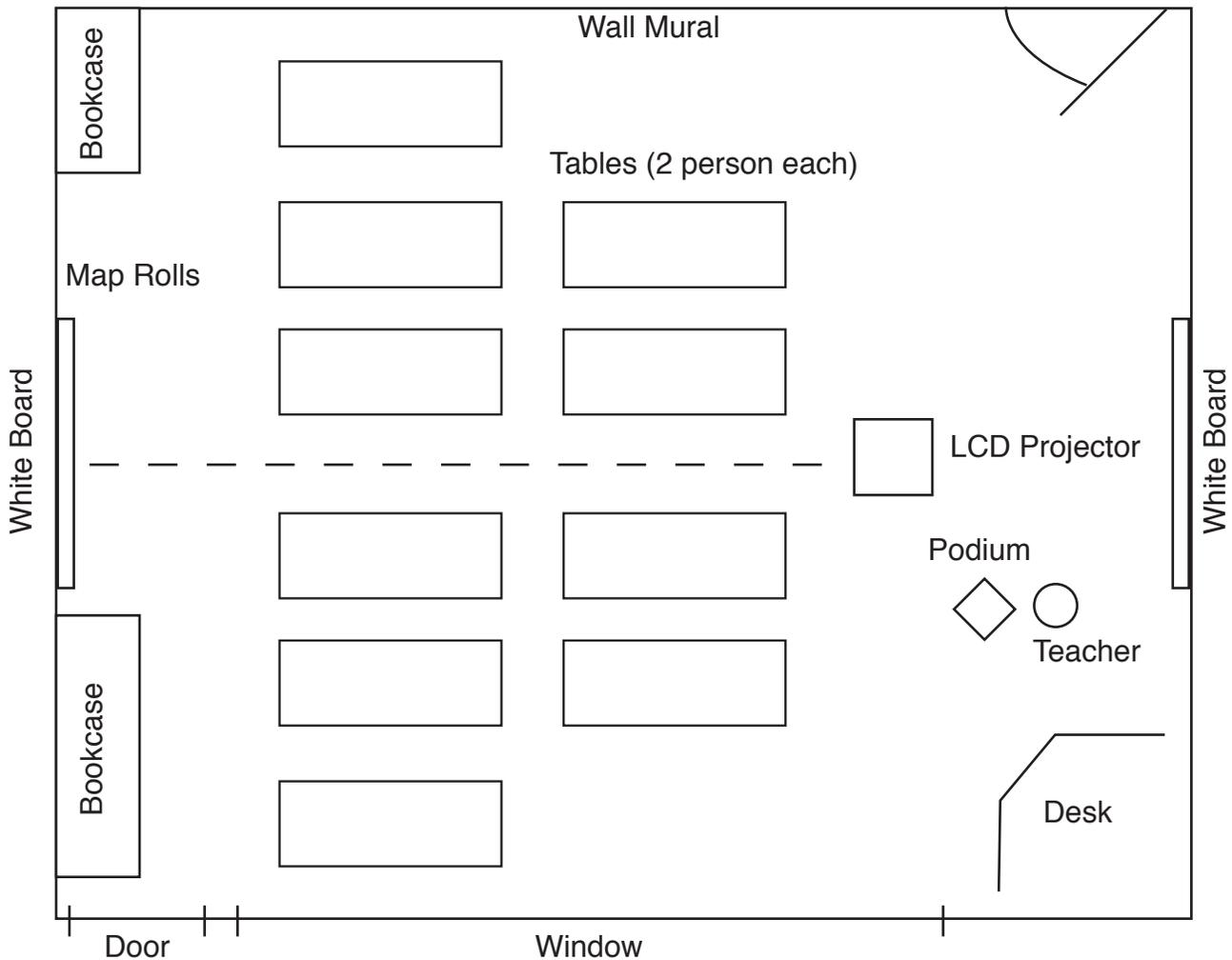
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT -  
CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

**DESCRIPTION:** As a student within the ABCTE program (<http://www.abcte.org/teach/idaho>), I discovered the program does not have a practicum or classroom observation program. I created my own. While going through the academic stage of the program, I contacted as many local teachers as possible and asked if I may observe their class. I chose a variety of ages and disciplines so to have a wide range of experience. The following is one of the observations I was blessed to conduct.

DATE: 5/5/11

CLASS: MRS. MUGELSTON'S LATIN CLASS  
Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy

## CLASS SETUP



**CLASSROOM:** This class is the most creative, impressive classroom I've observed. It was pristine and structured. She teaches Latin and Ancient Cultural Studies and has costumes and other related material in tupperware containers in the bookcases along the wall; a Roman house machette on the top shelf, pillars, plants, and a painted/fresco wall mural that filled one entire wall.

**TEXTBOOK:** Aenid and a Latin Grammar (Wheelstock)

**CLASS SESSION:** The following describes the class session time period.

Her class is treated like a game - each side of the whiteboards were considered teams (the competed between each side of the room).

She started the class with the Pledge of Allegiance IN LATIN!

The students stand to do the Pledge - then they remain standing and sing a declension.

She appointed one student from each side of the room as "Judges" (although she called them this in Latin). Each side of the classroom takes on a team-like spirit and compete, singing the same declension in unison. The Judges determines who did a better job (they get loud at this time, but they are ALL involved and animated - great use of competition).

The students remain standing while she calls attendance - they must all respond "hic" then sit down.

I noticed when they get too talkative she tells them all "takate" ("silence" in LATIN).

The students got their homework out and the same appointed student "Judges" collected them (interesting use of the student "aids" throughout the classtime). Then the students began working on quietly translating on another worksheet the Judges passed out. The teacher walked around and helped when necessary. She has a great rapport with the students - she joked with them constantly. You could tell this layed back style was receptive and comforting to the students (they enjoyed themselves - and so did I).

While they worked I took a glance at the books in her bookcase at the back of the room. I noticed she had obtained Latin books and textbooks as well as "Winnie the Pooh" in Latin! She even had a copy of Harry Potter in Latin for the students to read. She also had a copy of the Aenid I looked through - published in 1998 by Bolchazy-Carducci in Wauconda, Illinois. This is a great rendition because it has a lexical note section on each page with unfamiliar Latin terms at the bottom of the page. It also has a small grammar at the back of the book. What a great tool!

I overheard one student talking about an essay they have to work on (completely in Latin).

After the students worked on their translation, each student passes their work to a neighbor to correct the translations. One person is acled on to chose the "Arena Victims" to read the sentences in Latin and then the translation in English. This was a great way to have several students both read in Latin and check their work at the same time.

I was substitute teaching on this day so I only had a few moments to sneak in and then sneak out - so I was not able to see how she concluded her class.

**OBSERVATIONS:**

I was told that Mrs Mugelston is a wonderful teacher - and I saw it first hand.

The first major observation I noticed was her classroom management style. She had fun with her students and you could tell they enjoyed their time in class as well. To take such a potentially boring subject like Latin and make it a "party" was amazing. And yet, she held a tight rein on her class. Only a few times did anyone student act up slightly (but not really - they just were speaking out in context making jokes) - but her sense of humor kept them on track. I noticed that a sense of humor in the class does not necessarily imply a lack of leadership - on the contrary, it can direct it in a pleasurable way. And only twice did she have to calm one student down verbally but kindly - and they reacted with respect.

The second major observation was her classroom arrangement and style. She had taken the time to not only have student painted murals on the wall - but she did some interior decorating herself (with spot wall painting, plant life and pillars - she even had a special, large rug in the center of the room). The room felt warm and inviting - almost like a living room with desks! With a little bit of creativity and artistic flair, she showed me that a classroom can be an environment that will only enhance the learning experience!

The third and last major observation was the student participation. She used ancient Roman terms and titles ("Judges", "Arena Victims") that kept the "Roman environment" still present in the class while using students to conduct some of the teaching activities, such as choosing who to read and passing out work. The students looked eager to participate - it was not drudgery to them.

I was highly impressed by this classroom experience. I could learn much from Mrs. Mugelston!