

Adventures in a Grade One-Two Classroom

So being the nice person that I am (usually), I volunteered to cover Mindy's last period grade one-two class today. Admittedly with a certain amount of trepidation. (OK, let's be honest here ... fear). She had an appointment, and I had nothing to do, being Assistant Principal.

I even had gone to the nursing station the period before, to get my blood pressure checked. I'm not kidding! Although it *wasn't* because I was going to be looking after a grade one-two class ... really!

Anyway, there I was in the grade one-two classroom, alone with the kids, after Mindy had scribbled a few hasty notes on a piece of paper. The kids were supposed to do 'centres' first.

I need to point out here that Mindy is a superb teacher, and the kids in her room are remarkably well-behaved for scary little grade one-two kids.

A few were playing checkers. Another group was doing a number game. Everyone seemed to be having a good time. I was feeling confident. None of them appeared to have runny noses.

Everything was going smoothly. Except for one group of boys, who were supposed to be bowling and practicing their numbers ... somehow that centre turned into a game of hockey when my back was turned.

And two kids disappeared for about fifteen minutes. When I eventually noticed, (they're two feet tall and sneaky. Don't judge!) I was just about to panic. But then I found them in the tent at the front of the room ... reading books! Who knew!?

I noticed a little girl standing on a stool at the counter sharpening her pencil. Did Mindy allow them to do that? I have Jr High boys that I won't let use the pencil sharpener because they're always putting the pencils in backwards to see how much noise they can make.

Anyway, this little girl kept sharpening and sharpening, pulling it out each time to check on the sharpness. She never seemed to be satisfied.

Who was I to criticize? The quest for perfection is a noble thing.

The not-fun part happened when one student was heading across the room to get something, and tripped ... on the floor. He did a face plant right in front of me, and his front teeth gave him a bloody gash on his upper lip.

Who knew a little lip like that could drip so much blood!

Fortunately, his grandma was in the room next door, and she looked after it, so I didn't panic too much. How fortunate it was that I'd just had my blood pressure checked!

We noticed later that his socks were half off, and he'd probably tripped on one of them. That hazard had never occurred to me; I hardly ever have to check for that in Math 30. Well, Danny once ...

The irony? The kid who tripped was Mindy's son. The first time I get to look after her class, and her kid gets a bloody lip! I'm so embarrassed!

Actually, it was probably good practice for him. He went on to become a champion rodeo bull rider.

And I have this unanswered question that's bothering me. How on earth does anyone cope with this for a whole day? A whole year? I was a nervous wreck after just 40 minutes!

My admiration for elementary teachers, and anyone willing to substitute in an elementary classroom, just went up 100%. I think I'd last until lunchtime!

Give me unruly Jr. High kids any day!