

A STUDENT'S COLORFUL WORLD IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL

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**Abstract**

I explained my observations of a student's day in this paper. I expressed a student's environment, relationships and responses to different subjects in secondary school. I tried to find out which study habits the student had, what her interests was and how it affected her education and her point of view.

*Key Words:* student's day, student's interests, study habits.

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### **Introduction**

The purpose of this article was to explain my impressions of a student's day. I observed a student, whose name is Nehir. She was at 5<sup>th</sup> grade in Bilkent Secondary School. During the day, I attended lessons with her and observed her participation into lessons, her comments and her relationship with her teachers and friends. Nehir and I talked about both school activities and after-school activities in some break times.

### **One Of The Most Colorful Day In My Life**

Social Studies was the first lesson that I observed Nehir who was sitting in the front row. In first five minutes the teacher wanted from a student to read a part in textbook in front of the class. She also wanted the other students to listen their friend. While the student was reading, Nehir did not follow from the book, she just listened with a full concentration and I think she tried to understand the story. When the teacher asked about it, Nehir raised her finger immediately and answered. It was also a revision part of the last class.

After that the teacher explained what the new topic was and what they would do during their blocked lesson. The new topic was *Turkish War of Independence*. This lesson was the most interactive social studies lesson that I have ever seen in my life. The teacher was telling the subject such as a story as if states were humans. The teacher usually cut the story in a key point and asked students what could be the next. In such times Nehir usually raised her finger and if she was given a hearing, she said reasonable things. The teacher used a world map while mentioning the places of the states/regions etc. Nehir always followed the teacher while she was telling, asking and using the map.

It was interesting for me to see a mathematics problem was solved in this lesson. The teacher explained the *industrial revolution* with these words: "...Before industrial revolution, I am capable to produce one board marker only in one day; but after the revolution now I am

capable to produce one thousand board markers in one day. However my country's need for board marker was two thousand in one month! Then what will I do with these 28000 board markers?!..."

The teacher wrote keywords and short sentences on the board while she was telling the subject. Then the teacher constructed a diagram from her writings on the board and gave time students to copy the board. It took 25 minutes to tell the subject with examples, using a map and board, asking, giving enough time for students' ideas/answers/questions and it took almost ten minutes for students to copy the board.

At the second part of the lesson, logical operators (such as and, or, if... then...) were used frequently. Cause and effect relations were discovered by the students. Nehir was also made good comments such as: "... I think England did not want Ottoman to go to the war because they were afraid as if other states won and took some parts of Ottoman instead them." Students made brain storming about reasons and sides of World War I. The teacher gave feedback to students such as "Well done! What wonderful ideas!" and motivated them to say their ideas. Although a noise occurred during brain storming, interestingly Nehir listened each of her friends' ideas carefully.

The third lesson was Visual Arts. It was elective. The class was so colorful and light-well. Everything in it was easy to use for students. I sat on the next chair of Nehir and she told me how the lesson's organization was. For example in the last class they had studied lines, shapes and patterns. Nehir's artwork included some triangles/arrows/circles etc. and their shifted version. It was also nice to see for me that geometry was in a student's artwork!

By the way I had a chance to have a talk with Nehir while she was painting. Nehir's favorite lesson was music because she had already had some piano courses. Her music teacher in school let them to play the different instruments and make their own melodies. Nehir thought she

was not so good at visual arts but nevertheless she was happy showing her artworks to me. Additionally, she told me that: "Last year in the first period I had some problems with Turkish lessons. My mark was 72. But then I believed myself and managed to get 98. This time I had a problem with mathematics. In fact I love it but when I could not do a division exercise I give up immediately. I want to use a calculator. I cannot do this in the class but I am checking my homework by a calculator." First I thought her perception of success was getting high marks mostly. But at the same time I observed that Nehir enjoyed learning/trying new things and because of this she participated all classes during the day. In my opinion, she wanted to use a calculator to make an exercise easier if it was already challenging for her; also in order to go on with other different exercises.

While we were talking Nehir explained me her one week. She had piano courses once a week. She stayed at school on Tuesdays and Thursdays for basketball training. Other days when she went to her house she had a rest and had dinner. She said she loved studying in her room. She did her homework according to an order. Which lesson was emergency and had to be ready for the next day, then she did it first. Sometimes doing the following two days' homework gave her time to listen music. Also she added if there would be an exam she was using the documents on moodle.

In the fourth lesson all 5<sup>th</sup> grades had Turkish exams. The fifth lesson was Turkish also. Nehir sat at the back row this time. The class discussed about exam when the teacher came. Nehir said there were some challenging questions but she did the exam. The teacher explained their homework also reminded the quiz on next Monday. It took almost five minutes to explain this part.

There was a book which the class read it. The teacher had prepared a booklet for students and distributed them. This booklet included characters of the book (with small pictures and some

gaps near them). A summarize part and *A Letter For The Writer* part were considered by the teacher. There was exciting news also. The writer would come to the school for chatting with students and he would sign their books. Additionally, some letters of students would select as a present for the writer. When Nehir learned this, I saw her excitement. This part took ten minutes.

During the rest of the lesson Nehir was very active although she looked tired and sat at the back row. Her materials were ready while most of the students did not take their worksheets to the lesson. Nehir did not need teacher's explanation to get worksheets to the lesson. She thought it was her responsibility.

The next lesson there was a try-on for 29<sup>th</sup> of October, Republic Day. Nehir took part in *Heroines Team* as Nene Hatun. Then they watched a video about Turkish republic.

The last two lesson was English. The teacher reminded the last class by asking questions and Nehir answered lots of them. When the teacher said "Good, well done" she was happy and eager. Then the teacher organized groups and the groups began to work about last chapter. There was a table about the chapter. Group-mates discussed what was appropriate for each part in the table. I observed Nehir's group. First they thought a few minutes on their own then they said their ideas, showed what they wrote in their tables etc. Nehir always helped the others. There was a big noise during the group work. Surprisingly Nehir did not care about it. She just did the activity and obeyed the teacher's instructions asked something to the teacher and consider on it.

I observed Nehir in break times also. Nehir's relationship with her peers was very nice. She talked in a calm way always and could communicate with each student. But something took my attention. I observed other students in pairs or threes however Nehir was not together with same students and sometimes she preferred to stay alone. I did not think she was unhappy but it was different and interesting in my opinion.

At the end of the day, I thanked to Nehir for this lovely day and she gave me a big smile as a response. Then we said goodbye to each other. It was nice to have such a colorful day.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this article was to express my experiences and ideas about a secondary school student's day. I learned this I should be ready for different students' different needs in the same class and I should have some different plans for different situations especially to keep their interest. To provide this I must collaborate with other branches to prepare rich lessons. I learned in these ages students have more curiosity and energy. I could turn these to advantages by using appropriate activities. However I should always be aware of the whole class and each student.

"A Bilkent student does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do. On my honor, as a Bilkent student, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this academic work."

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