



Between Desks and Lesson Plans: A Teaching Internship Reflection

My name is Anjali Ramnarace, and I am currently in the third year of my undergraduate degree, completing an Honours Specialization in English Language and Literature, with a minor in Geography and Environment. As part of my academic journey and my long-term goal of pursuing teacher education, I completed a teaching internship that became one of the more formative experiences of my university career. More than fulfilling a program requirement, the internship offered insight into the realities of teaching and helped me better understand myself as both a learner and a future educator.

I completed my internship at Cleardale Public School during the first academic term, from September to December 2025. My title during the placement was Teaching Intern, and the students referred to me as Miss. A. From my first day in the grade 7 classroom, I felt both excited and nervous. While I had spent years studying literature, writing, and theory, stepping into a real classroom made teaching feel tangible in a way coursework never had.

My primary role was to assist students in achieving their learning outcomes. This included supporting students with questions during lessons, assisting with classwork, monitoring the classroom alongside my supervising teacher, and continuously observing and learning about my future profession. I often worked one-on-one or in small groups, helping students clarify instructions or build confidence in their work. These moments helped me understand how essential individualized support is, particularly for grade 7 students who are navigating increased academic expectations and social development.

One of the most pleasant surprises of my internship was how quickly I formed meaningful connections with students. I initially worried that, as an intern, I might struggle to build rapport or feel out of place in the classroom. Instead, I found that students responded positively to consistency, patience, and genuine interest. Over time, they became more comfortable asking for help, sharing ideas, and engaging in discussions. This experience showed me that strong relationships are at the core of effective teaching and that respect is built through everyday interactions rather than authority alone.

Another unexpected aspect of the internship was how much I learned from the students themselves. While I entered the classroom expecting to support their learning, I quickly realized that learning was reciprocal. Students' questions, creativity, and perspectives often challenged my own thinking and reminded me that education is an ongoing process for everyone involved.

In addition to supporting daily classroom activities, I had the opportunity to participate in running several activities with the class. This allowed me to practice stepping into a leadership role and gain insight into the behind-the-scenes preparation involved in teaching. The most significant of these experiences was planning and leading a blackout poetry activity. My supervising teacher encouraged me to run at least one activity independently before the end of my placement, and although it pushed me outside of my comfort zone, I agreed it would be beneficial.

Running the activity from start to finish was both exciting and challenging. I struggled at times at to clearly communicate what I expected the final projects to look like and to assess the students' prior understanding of poetry. Afterward, my supervisor provided constructive feedback, highlighting areas for improvement such as clarity of instructions and checking for understanding. While this feedback was partially hard to hear, it turned out to be one of the most important learning moments of my internship. It taught me that teaching involves reflection, growth, and a willingness to improve.

Perhaps the most important lesson I learned was that even though I was one of the adults in the room, I was still very much a student. I learned daily from observing my supervising teacher, classroom experiences, and from the students themselves. There was rarely a dull moment, and I was able to create meaningful memories and connections that reinforced my desire to pursue teaching.

If I were to offer one piece of advice to students considering an internship, it would be to embrace discomfort and be open to learning rather than striving for perfection. Internships are not about having everything figured out; they are about growth, reflection, and asking questions. Some of the most valuable moments come from challenges and mistakes, and those experiences ultimately provide the clearest insight into whether a profession is the right fit.

Overall, my teaching internship at Cleardale Public School was a deeply rewarding experience that strengthened my confidence and clarified my future goals. It confirmed that

teaching is a profession built on relationships, adaptability, and lifelong learning of values I hope to carry forward as I continue my academic and professional journey.