Standard 5:  Learning Environment.  A teacher must be able to use an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create learning environments that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

**Indicator H: A teacher should establish a positive climate in the classroom and participate in maintaining a positive climate in the school as a whole.**

**Artifact:** Included is a getting-to-know-you lesson entitled “Who’s the Suspect?”  This lesson addresses this indicator because it is intended to establish positive interaction between students and facilitate discoveries of similar interests that could develop into more meaningful relationships. *(On the lesson plan submitted, the student teacher used margin notes to locate and identify relevant sections of the plan.)*

**Rationale:**  The classroom is not the only place one can find getting-to-know-you activities, but it is one place that they can become key to developing an effective and encouraging learning environment.  The nature of this activity is to create a structured way for students to interact with one another and find out more information about them.  Students participating in this activity found a lot of similar interests with their classmates that they were later able to discuss during free time.  I, too, participated as a way for me to spend one-on-one time with children talking to them about their interests, but it allowed me to also see how students’ eyes lit up when discovering that someone else liked the same thing as they did.  The energy level in the room was high as students’ excitement grew.

Laying the ground work for positive, structured interaction and cooperation becomes invaluable as students transfer their skills developed during this non-academic social growth, to activities where team cooperation relies on their success in learning the material.

I believe it is so important for social interaction to be a part of the learning environment because if student can get along, they can learn an infinite amount from each other.  They can learn sharing resources and ideas, study habits, how to ask questions, how to think about things in a different way and expand their minds.  Other students in the class are one of the most important resources a classroom can have.  Positive social interaction requires students to respect one another, listen to their ideas.  Together, they can do something even better than they could do on their own.