Field Experience Protocol, Edu 235

Name of Tutor: Crystal Heckaman
Name of Cooperating Teacher/Supervisor: Bill Reichhart
Summary of Dates Attended: September 19, 2005- November 30, 2005

Educ 235, Hour: 8:00-8:50 am

Reporting Pattern:
Each Monday and Wednesday, I met with T.S. at Laketon Elementary School for after school tutoring. The first thing we did was prioritize the homework that needed to be completed. We would complete homework that included large, heavy textbooks first so that they did not need to be hauled home. We would then study and practice spelling words that were assigned for the weekly spelling test. If there was extra time after completing homework, we would play a game or read a library book.

Date:
9/19/05, 9/21/05, 9/26/05, 9/28/05, 10/3/05, 10/5/05, 10/10/05, 10/12/05, 10/17/05, 10/24/05, 10/26/05, 10/31/05, 11/2/05, 11/7/05, 11/9/05, 11/14/05, 11/16/05, 11/28/05, 11/30/05

Description of Tutoring:
Goal:
I had several goals for my tutoring experience, but the most important was to help T.S. develop good study habits and expand upon his reading comprehension. These skills are necessary throughout the remainder of all students’ academic experiences and should be emphasized more thoroughly in daily activities. I also wanted to find ways to motivate students that do not show a great deal of interest in school or enthusiasm to learn new things. A personal goal that I set for myself was to find creative ways to feed off of my student’s personal interests and integrate those things into educational experiences.

Activities:
After meeting T.S. in the library, we would discuss what homework needed to be completed for the following day of school. We would then complete the homework, which consisted of a variety of math problems, geography and history lessons about the United States, and grammar worksheets. Once all homework was completed, which didn’t usually take more than 20-30 minutes, we would study spelling words and I would provide T.S. with ways to break the words down into syllables or smaller words. We would practice saying the words, which allowed T.S. to hear the word while we practiced writing it. We also enjoyed playing educational games on the library computers and chalkboard.

Result:
I have noticed a gradual change in the way that T.S. has learned to manage our tutoring time together. By taking advantage of the extra time that has been set aside for homework, T.S. is able to spend time outside of school being a kid and not worrying about finding time to complete assignments and studying for spelling tests. T.S. has learned to sound out words to develop an understanding of phrases and sentences that are being read. By asking T.S. about personal interests, I was able to feed off of things the student enjoyed learning about and select stories that would explore their interests.
What would you change?
The main thing that I learned is that I am not cut out to work with elementary students. I am not geared to teaching students basic level information on a daily basis, however, if the occasional student needs assistance I would be able to help them. I have found that I have very high expectations, which is not necessarily a bad thing, but it can make my life and my students lives a bit more complicated.

I would take more time learning about my students’ interests and developing strategies of motivation that would engage them on a daily basis. As a tutor, I would also take the time to talk with my student’s teachers and discuss with them what is being learned in class on the days that I will be working with the student in order to better prepare myself for the tutoring session. I would also discuss with the student, his/her teachers, and his/her parents what subject areas the student is struggling with the most and if they know of strategies that seem to work the best for the student.

What did I learn?
I learned that the first step in helping students is to get to know them, through taking the time to discuss their interests and hobbies. The more you get to know a person, the easier it is to work with them towards daily goals. I learned to have patience and understand that elementary students have a very large range of knowledge and develop biases for certain subject areas based on many things, including the classroom environment and teacher’s style of classroom management.

Summary:
During my experiences at Laketon, I observed and took part in many different psychological theories used to further develop students’ educational experiences. One of the key theories that is emphasized to students in the elementary grades is Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development, namely the stage of industry versus inferiority, that occurs between the ages of six and eleven (25). By encouraging T.S. to complete his homework and sound out words in a book, I have helped to build a sense of industry.

By expanding upon T.S. background knowledge and asking leading questions, I was able to utilize Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development (49). This concept was useful after we had read through section of the history textbook and needed to answer questions from a worksheet. If T.S. was struggling to come up with a straightforward answer to a question, I was able to use what the student’s knowledge about what we had just read and expand upon those concepts to help develop the answer we were looking for to the question. Scaffolding, which provides hints or provides leading questions, was key to T.S. understanding of many of the spelling words that we encountered (49). By breaking down words into smaller parts, T.S. was able remember smaller words contained within larger ones which made learning a bit easier (ex. Carpet Æ car/pet; Remember Æ re/mem/ber; Appear Æ ap/pear)

We were able to, on occasion, use Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences (110) when studying geography lessons as well as spelling words. T.S. seemed to enjoy applying musical knowledge to create ways to remember how to spell out words. By developing a tune for each individual word, T.S. was able to vocalize the correct letters of the spelling words. We were able to expand T.S.’s spatial knowledge by creating large maps on the chalkboard for labeling states and capitals for parts of the United States. By developing an idea of the shape and location of each individual state in regards to the others, T.S. was able to correctly identify the states and capitals without a problem.