Field Experience Reflection Paper

I conducted my field experience at Rainbow preschool in South Whitely, Indiana. The preschool was located in the South Whitely United Methodist Church. The cooperating teacher that allowed me to observe and teach the students was Mrs. Traci Kreider. She has had 23 years of experience with early learners and was a great person to learn from and work with. I learned a great deal from her and will defiantly incorporate some of the knowledge obtained into my teaching philosophy.

This was a great experience for me, I learned a lot from the environment and interactions with the students. The classroom environment was very laid back at Rainbow Preschool, the teacher was always in control but the students were always able to say what was on there mind. Play was a big part of what the students did everyday, Mrs. Kreider always tried to have the students play and interact with each other as they were doing a task or assignment. She believes that students need to be social and not afraid to communicate and interact with there classmates. I believe that the environment was enriched because Mrs. Kreider had a teacher that was always in there to help her. Her name was Mrs. Hicks, with Mrs. Hicks being in the classroom everyday the 17 students were able to have one on one attention whenever they needed it. The preschool students ranged from the ages of three to five years of age. They all differed in their cognitive abilities making individual attention that much more important.
The student-teacher interactions I had with the students were interesting and gave me a better grasp on what they were thinking. I actually learned a lot by just observing and interacting with the students. It gave me a chance to kind of understand what they were thinking about and how they processed material. At fist when I started doing this field experience only a few students would interact with me and tell me things, once I started going more the students warmed up to me and talked and shared things with me. The last time I came to their class they were very sad to see me go, they all gave me hugs as I left and said good bye. It was really neat to see how attached they got in a short amount of time. I feel like I was able to help some of the students learn things and further their cognitive abilities.

As I observed these students and the program it made me think about how I could improve and change my educational philosophy. This was the first time that I have been around early learners this much and I learned lot from them. I learned that patience is a huge issue very and needs to be practiced and preached. At this early of age students don’t understand things like we do, simple things such as writing numbers or identifying letters are very difficult for them. This can be said for all ages though, this has showed me that students pick up things at different rates and as a teacher I need to be aware and give the students what they need to succeed. This experience was a great way to take a look at how others teach and how I can change my outlook on teaching students.

After reviewing this experience for a while I realized that I can take a lot away from it. I was able to make some developmental goals out of my observations. I will always try to be patient and give my students every opportunity to learn that I can, even if this takes longer to
get through the material the students deserve it. Also never lose the fact that play helps
students learn, even if they are in the higher grades.

I am grateful for the opportunity that I was presented to learn and observe a different
kind of learning and education. I was able to further my teaching education and take new goals
and ideas from the experience.