

Journal entries for Mentoring Experience

Developmental Psychology of Children B

Your **WEEKLY** journal entries should be in **TWO** parts:

Part 1 document what you did, observed, and noticed.

Part 2 indicate your opinions, feelings, questions.

In addition to these entries I want you to focus on various aspects of our experience with elementary schools and children. Each week include one from the topics listed below. Or if you would rather make it a separate part of your journal each week you can do that too.

- 1) **Focus on your overall impression of school, teacher, kids.** Notice classroom set up, what is up on walls, schedule, rules and procedures. How did the kids treat you at the start? Did it change during this first 2 weeks?
- 2) **Focus on students-**Are the kids learning and acting like you expected? How do students treat each other and the teacher? What jobs does the teacher have students help with? Are there kids who are very popular/not popular? Are there students who learn quickly/slowly? Are there very social/quiet kids? How do boys and girls act~ together {separately? Are there differences between the boys and girls?
- 3) **Focus on how the teacher individualizes instruction.** How do they work with the quick learners? With those who have challenges? Those who are absent? What do they do when some students are done or ready to go on to the next topic and some who have not finished something or learned the concept?
- 4) **Focus on discipline** (what teachers do and say). What techniques do teachers use when kids misbehave? When kids are off task? When they want to get their attention? What kinds of incentives and rewards do teachers use?
- 5) **Focus on questioning.** How do teachers call on students? How do they get kids involved in their learning through questioning? What kinds of questions do they ask--higher order thinking skills? When do they ask questions? Do the students ask questions? How does the teacher handle a wrong answer to a question?
- 6) **Focus on the teacher.** By this time try to have asked the teacher about their background. If you have no time to talk while you are there then write out a few questions and have them write their answers. Find out how long they have been teaching, what grades they have taught, where they went to school. Ask them what they like best, what are the hardest parts, how would they change things if they could. Then you reflect on their style of teaching, their strengths and weaknesses as you have observed them. How would you do things differently if you were the teacher?
- 7) **Focus on instruction-- in reading, spelling, writing, science, social studies, math.** What techniques are used to engage students? Which techniques work? Which are not so successful? How does the teacher evaluate student work? How often? How are grades calculated? What does a report card look like? What does a teacher's lesson plan look like? What are some good short activities? What are some good projects you saw?
- 8) **Focus on the expectations you had for this experience and how it turned out.** Do you think you'd want a career related to children? What personality traits do you have and how would they help your career choice (whatever field)? What did this experience teach you about kids, the job of teacher, and the role of education, about yourself?

