Mentoring Project

October 29, 2001:

Today was my first day working with the children at ESP, an after school program. I was a little nervous at first, but the children took me in as one of their councilors. I worked with a fourth grader named Courtney. She was assigned a paper about her best friend. It turns out that her best friend is a cat; I love cats, so I could relate. I felt more at ease. First, she had to create a brainstorm outline. She had difficulty coming up with some topics to talk about. I gave her some suggestions and she was honest on which ones she liked. She decided that she wanted to do her paper on how her cat is funny, talented and what makes the cat her best friend. Once we got that down pat, every thing else flowed together nicely. She wrote her introduction and I proof read it, gave her some suggestions and then went on to the next paragraph. Courtney was an excellent writer. The only thing that she was really confused on was her commas. I think that all she need was a little confidence in herself and I felt like I was able to give her some. We didn’t get to finish the paper because her mother came to pick her up. She thanked me, and I told her that I would love to help her anytime.

October 31, 2001:

None of the children had homework today. It is Halloween and I think they would have been to distracted anyways to think about homework. The Fayette County Public Schools are not allowed to have Halloween parties, so they substitute it with a Fall Festival. The children were decorating the cafeteria when I came in. I decided to work with a small group of girls named: Diana, Morgan, and Karin. They were making black cats out of construction paper. Diana was having problems keeping her cat to stand up. I
showed her a little trick that I had learned when I was young. The girls decided that they wanted me to make one too. I did. They liked it and put it on the table next to theirs. We didn’t have a lot of time today, because everyone was going home to get ready for Halloween and the Fall Festival. I felt like I bonded with the girls, like they had accepted me.

November 2, 2001:

I brought in some library books today to read to some of the children. Gage, Chris and Courtney sat with me as I read to them. I wasn’t sure if they would enjoy it because they are in fourth grade and are use to reading to themselves, but they liked it. After I finished reading to them, I asked them to tell me what they had learned from the books and what they like the most about them. I received a huge response to this. They repeated some parts of the books. They had learned something from them. The other children noticed how much of a good time Gage, Chris, and Courtney were having that they wanted to participate too. I am glad that I chose some books that all age levels would enjoy, because my next group were first and second graders. Their names were: Diana, Beth, and Devin. It was quite interesting, because they seemed to point out different interest that the first group. I felt like they had received education out of this. They were to listen to a story, comprehend it, and reflect back to it. It turned out to be a great idea. The rest of my visit, I a boy prepare for a spelling test. His name was Eric and he was in third grade, the grade I would like to teach. First I had him look over the words and then I gave him a quiz. I would call them out and he would have to write them down. After doing this twice, I would have him spell them out loud. I felt like that if he
were to write them down several time then it would help him learn the words. I say a huge improvement on the third quiz. He went from having eight out of fifteen wrong on the first quiz to two wrong on the third. After each quiz we would go over it together and pronounce the words out loud. I told him that he should study a little bit more before he goes to bed tonight. I hope that he does well. I had a good day today.

November 7, 2001:

I looked for Erik today, but he wasn’t there. He must have already gone home. I met back up with Courtney today. She was working on the same paper. This time she was adding more details. A couple of time she got writer’s block so I asked her a few questions and it seemed to spark a thought. Before long we were finished and so was everyone else with his or her homework. Courtney showed me how to play a game. She was fascinated on how well that I picked up the game. I told her that it was because she was such a good teacher and she smiled. Time was up and everybody’s parents were there to pick them up.

November 15, 2001:

Today I had had a bad day at work, but as soon as I walked in at ESP, it left me. I saw Eric today and he informed me that he had earned an A on his spelling test and he thanked me. That made me feel good, like I had made an impact on him. Karin was doing math homework today; it was long division (something that I was never really good at but I thought that I would try helping her out). It was only one work sheet that consisted of fifteen problems. She did extremely well. She only got two wrong. We
went back over them and found the mistake. I didn’t point them out, so I let her find them. At the other table I saw Devin sitting by himself. I went over to him and asked if he was ok. He said no and informed me that he had gotten in trouble. He had smarted off to one of the councilors. I asked him if he could tell me what happened and why he said that. After he told me I asked him what he ought to have done different. We talked about anger management and how there are other ways to get handle things. I could tell that he felt bad for doing what he had done; maybe he learned something today about anger management. It was time to go and I said good-bye to the kids.

November 16, 2001:

Today was a short day and none of the kids needed help with their homework because they had already finished it. They were drawing and painting pictures. Diana said that she was going to paint a picture for me and I decided to do one for her. She was so creative. She painted a magnificent fall tree with beautiful colors. Underneath the tree sat a little girl selling lemonade (Diana told me). I had drawn her a picture of the ocean and the sea life in it. She loved it and thanked me. I told her that I would take home the picture that she gave me and put it on my frig. I think that it made her day. It was getting late, so I said goodbye. What surprised me was that they kids gave me a huge. I knew that I had come to the right place.

November 19,2001:
I knew that this was going to be my last day there and I wanted to make the best out of it. Courtney was having a spelling test the next day so I studied with her the same as I did with Eric; it worked for her too. She is a bright girl with a lot of potential. I moved on to see was Diana was doing today, nothing much, just playing a game with Beth. Karin was reading a book. I thought that this would be a perfect opportunity for me to see what her comprehension skills were like. I asked her what the book was about and why it was interesting to her. She told me it was about stars in space. Her and her mother a watched a meteor shower the night before and she wanted to learn more. I told her that it was great that she like to read books and how it would help her out for the years to come. I noticed that the children are being taught things at an earlier age than I did. Courtney told me that she received an A on her paper. She was so proud that she couldn’t wait for her mother to show up so she could tell her. I also noticed that Devin was staying out of trouble today. Maybe our talk helped him out or at least made him think about what he had done. Gage was making a Birthday card for his father. I watched and helped out with some of the spelling. I knew that his father was going to like it. It was time for me to go, I had finished my mentoring hours. The children seemed upset and wanted me to stay. I promised that I would come back if it was ok with the councilors. I had such a good experience. I want to go back at least once a week, because I felt like I had done something good, I had helped a child.