My Mentoring Project

My mentoring took place at the Madison Towers Apartment building in Richmond, KY. Madison Towers is an apartment complex primarily for retired people. One of the employees, Mrs. Patsy Eaton, gathers up all of the neighborhood children and organizes a tutoring session for them. The neighborhood is low-income housing and most of the children living there are from broken homes or have various problems or distractions impeding their learning.

I began my mentoring project on April 1. It was primarily an orientation session, as I was introduced to the volunteers and the children, as well as informed about the guidelines of the tutoring sessions. The children that I would be working with were Karla and Devona, who were sisters in the first grade, and Jamarr, a fifth grader. I primarily worked with the sisters, as Harold, another mentor, helped Jamarr mostly.

Karla and Devona were bright children, but were having trouble in school because of family problems. All that they needed was attention and someone showing that they cared. I primarily helped the sisters with their spelling words and math, simple addition and subtraction. I felt proud to have helped Karla turn her grades around as Mrs. Eaton told me that Karla was making “D’s” before I began helping her and was now making 95-100% on all of her homework and tests as of my last day. Devona was making good grades prior to my arrival, so I cannot take any credit for her grades except for the fact that she kept them up under my guidance.

Some of the things that I had the girls do in addition to their homework were things that reinforced what they were learning. The three of us, me included, wrote their spelling words five times each and would make up sentences using the words to illustrate
that the children knew the word and what it meant. For math, we used real objects, like paper wads, to visualize addition and subtraction. Those were the primary lessons that I worked on with them. At the end of each session, I gave the girls a written assessment over both their spelling and their math. I would not let the girls leave until they got 90% of the answers correct.

As far as Jamarr was concerned, I only worked with him on two occasions. One time was review on the multiplication tables. Jamarr now can recite the multiplication table from 0x0 to 12x12. I cannot take much credit at all for that as Harold worked diligently with him to get him to that point.

Overall, I really enjoyed working with the children on such an intimate level. It was fulfilling to see the children reach some of their potential. I know the children enjoyed it as much as I did, as they more than likely do not get as much attention as they need, particularly from a male adult. I recommend doing an activity such as this to anyone who feels like being charitable but does not have money or resources to donate.

The mentoring project fulfills New Teacher Standard VI: Collaborates with colleagues/parents/others. Criteria 1, 2, 3, & 4.

I chose this entry for inclusion in my portfolio because at this point in my educational career, it is the only collaboration project I have done. Thus, it fulfills New Teacher Standard VI. By doing this project I feel that I have shown the ability to work with children and make a difference in their lives and possibly their outlook on school and education. This project shows that I have the ability to reach children and to relate to them, as well as having the knowledge of basic teaching methods to help them learn an idea or concept.