Overall Reflection

This clinical teaching experience was the best one I could have had. I couldn't have asked for a better teacher to be my guide.

The teacher, in my opinion, was amazing. The way she connected with the students, she knows them inside and out, she has several mental notes made about each child and how they learn best, and she has a genuine love and desire for learning and teaching. She truly enjoys listening to the students read original stories from their daybooks. The laughs, smiles and learning is truly genuine and ever present. I hope one day to be as successful as she is when I begin to teach as a profession. My clinical teacher has given me plenty of tips to help me to succeed and prosper, as well as opening my eyes to new ways of teaching and dealing with classroom management.

From a writing teacher's perspective, I learned some things I wanted to do, as well as a few things I didn't want to do. I enjoyed the way the students were excited to share their stories after they wrote them. All those who wanted to share (mostly the entire class) would raise their hands, and whoever she called on would share their story. The students were very quiet and respectful when others were reading, which is something I found to be surprising since they were so young. If someone had a story that was inappropriate in anyway, she made a "buzz" noise, pointed her thumb over her shoulder and the children repeated "If it's too gory, that's the end of the story, next!" This was her way of only allowing good quality literature to be read. I also found it interesting that the students actually wanted her to give them a prompt. One memorable prompt she gave was "BOOM!........". It was very interesting listening to the students creative stories. All were so different with that one topic. Some stories went to war, others to aliens, and others to silly stories about candy. The last thing I really enjoyed was that the teacher took time to write in her daybook along with the students during writing time. One thing I didn't like so much, but understand, was the amount of time they had for writing in their daybooks. She gave them 5 minutes to write, and then after the time was up, she called on people to share their stories. I understand that during a typical school day there are so many things to cram in, so maybe this is why their writing time is so limited.

Until I was able to participate in the IMB Clinical Experience, I had no idea what it truly meant to be a classroom teacher. By having this experience, I was able to basically be a shadow to my teacher and I got a firsthand look at what being a teacher is truly like. It is very busy, organization in addition to flexibility are keys for success, lesson planning becomes shorter and easier as time passes, and the students will love you even if you discipline them. So many valuable lessons learned, all in two weeks! Before clinicals, I was nervous to get in front of the classroom and speak, let alone teach an entire lesson. During clinicals I started warming up and feeling more comfortable. Now that they are over, I feel like I am more prepared to face teaching as a profession and to go into student teaching this fall.