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Borders in Play

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Reflection: "Describe the CEL Project"

SPAN 380

Professor Clara Román-Odio

Samuel Canseco

10-11-17

The CEL Project takes place at Columbia Elementary School in Mount Vernon, Ohio. The CEL project spans from September 26 to October 17th. I am currently taking part in the CEL project with Eduardo Vargas, and together we are teaching a group of six kids. The kids we are currently working with are: Shawn, Kiedis, Riley, Ellie, Dalton, and Reece. All our students are kids full of energy that are constantly ready to learn. Our objective for the CEL project is to teach and review "plot, sequencing, inferring, interpretation, vocabulary... etc.". Also, many of the stories that we are presenting to the students have borders, and we want to educate the students that being "different" is something that many people experience. From short stories to poems, the idea of being "different" is a theme that the novels present in a positive way. Another objective that we have is to make the students at Columbia feel as if they are alone for comfortable with the border that is presented to some of them. The novels did an spectacular job with discussing differences between people, and offering solutions that then clear the borders that some people may experience. At the beginning, some of the students thought it was funny to make fun of someone for being different, but their opinions changed after reading and discussing the novels. The students not only learned about the borders that some people have to deal with, but they also learned grammar, poetry, comprehension, etc. I discovered that most of the students are very into the reading, but some are shy to speak out. As time went on the students began to

become more comfortable with us. The trust of students is crucial when teaching them because as soon as we started to have inside jokes and creative activities, the students opened up to us in a way that made it easier to get their attention. What Eduardo and I did in order to gain the trust of the students is that we opened up to them and told them how we have borders too. We made the lessons fun and made sure that they participated at all times. Fifth Graders tend to get distracted easily, and we learned that making the lessons active and exciting led to a successful day that was both filled with seriousness and excitement. At first I thought it was going to be hard to get the attention of these kids because after we meet with them they have lunch.

Although it has only been 3 weeks of seeing the students, they are becoming more aware of the readings and the new concepts. We want to continue teaching these about the positive outcome of being nice to one another, and it is evident that these lessons are working. One of the students is afraid to speak out and at the most recent meeting, the students were encouraging her to speak up and read. After she proceeded to read, the students then cheered for her and made her feel good about herself. Before they would criticize the student for not reading and speaking, but they then learned to care for others rather than putting each other down. The teacher does not partake in the activities, and that allows for the students to open up to us in a way that they do not with their teacher. Although the topics at hand are serious, we try our best to present them in a way that is both fun and educative. I can not wait to go back and continue teaching the kids about personification, borders, comprehension, analysis, inferences, and other topics. These students are all bright and it is obvious that they care so much about school despite the fact that some may have issues back home. They put everything behind them and open up to us as much as possible when we see them.