Assignment 1
EDN470 PROJECT RATIONALE AND PLAN

Student Name: Sharon Gigengack
Tutor's Name: Rachel Drewry

2600 words-30 marks
Due: Wednesday 1st April

Please ensure Appendices A and B are attached
The Project Progress Report marks are allocated on the extent to which the student does not meet, meets or exceeds the following criteria:

1) A clear statement of why this topic is important, why you chose this project, and how you think it will improve your teaching practice

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2) The aims and focus questions are clearly stated

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3) The strategies/methods used are well connected to the aims and focus questions

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4) The main ideas of action research are discussed and used to justify the project approach (including strategies, items of evidence, and draft timeline)

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5) Demonstration of extensive use of relevant literature to support the project.

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6) Professional Presentation

Work is presented in a scholarly fashion using APA referencing, correct punctuation, spelling & grammar, clear headings. Assignment adheres to word limit, and includes a total word count (not including Appendices).

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General Comments:

Mark: 19/30

Hi Sharon,

Your plan is looking good. I've made some comments in your paper for you to consider as you move forward.

Please be in touch with any queries.

Cheers Rachel

- Your rationale and plan have been approved by your tutor
EDN470-Assignment 1

Project Rational and Plan

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C: Timeline

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Word count?
Project Title

Finding different ways to implement children’s fine motor skill practice through a play.

Rationale

I have chosen this topic to do my action research on because play or play-based learning is the central goal of early childhood education (ECE). Play-based learning is defined as “a context for learning through which children organise and make sense of their social worlds, as they engage actively with people, objects and representations” (Early Years Learning Framework [EYLF], 2014). Because play is central to ECE, I believe I should always be working towards improving the student’s provocations experiences and figure out how it can help students learn and grow beyond the four classroom walls. One of the reasons I chose to focus on fine motor skills is because in previous practicum experiences and in my workplace (see Appendix A); I have seen some children struggle with activities that involve fine motor tasks. These children would mentally be able complete the activity however it’s their fine motor skills which prevented them from doing so. (For example, I have seen children struggle with beading activities and become frustrated when they can’t put the beads on the string). Another reason I have chosen to create provocations that link play and fine motor skills is because motor skills can be developed with practice (Arthur, Beecher, Denah, Dockett & Farmer, 2012) and is not something students cannot overcome. Copple and Bredekamp (2006) state that four year olds should be developmentally able to have small muscle coordination such as using scissors, glue and paint brushes and that by five years old their interests in fine motor skills increase. Because I will be working with students who are approximately five years old in my field work, I have chosen to focus on fine motor skills. This topic was chosen over other because I believe I will see students improving their fine motor skills over the 30 hours I complete.
This is a research assignment that involves me as a pre service teacher to go into a school and implement my topic of ‘finding different ways to implement children’s fine motor skills practice through a play’ into a classroom. I hope to achieve this by scaffolding on my current knowledge of early childhood education along with research I will be conducting. I have created a timeline (see Appendix C) which I will aim to follow. In this I have stated when I will be completing the hours and what I will be doing to implement fine motor skill practice into provocations. I will be completing my 30 hours in three lots of 10 hour cycles at Rehoboth Christian College located in Kenwick. The school has a range of cultures and strives to glorify God at all times (Rehoboth Christian College, 2014). I plan to work with two groups of four students (eight in total) and I hope to have a range of abilities to see how these different ability groups perform the given tasks (my mentor teacher will assign these students to me on the 22nd of April). In the process of the three cycles, I will need to be continuously reflecting on my work by looking back on it and completing journal entries. O’Connor and Diggins (2002) states that “The first step in reflecting on your teaching is to look back on a situation and describe it.” (pg.19) and also that reflective practice involves three main parts; “stop to consider your practice and your reasons for it, think about it using a range of skills and tools, and change your practice using the understanding you have developed in reflecting” (O’Connor & Diggins, 2002, pg. 12). In between each cycle I hope to reflect on what I have just done and improve it for the next cycle. I must also “continually monitor students’ learning to identify needs and abilities” (Groundwater-Smith, Ewing & Le Comu, 2011, pg.65.) as a way of reflection.

By the end of this project, my goal is to achieve all my aims and answer my focus questions and by doing this, have different ways of implementing fine motor skill practice into provocations. I hope to have gained more understand of children and their development and also use any information gained for my future classroom.
Project aims:

1. Find useful and practical strategies that help me implement fine motor skills practice in play that can be used within the context of my 30 hours for this unit as well as my own teaching from next year onwards.
2. Educate myself on how important fine motor skills are within an early childhood setting so I can use this as a basis of my assignment.
3. Create provocations/sequence of provocations or play-based experiences that enhance children's fine motor skills.

Focus questions:

1. How can I create engaging and sophisticated provocations that provide students with opportunities to extend their fine motor skills?
2. How can I ensure I am always focusing on my project topic? Strategies to implement for better skills practice.
3. What strategies can I use to ensure I am completing reflections to a high standard that will enhance the students learning?

Keep your terminology consistent across title, aims, focus questions.
Project Plan

Strategies:

In order for this project to be completed, I will need to use a range of strategies so my project aims to be met and focus questions answered, along with my project title being achieved.

Outlined below are some of the strategies that I will be using:

1. Collaborating with my mentor teacher, other teaching staff and the students I am working with in order to achieve my goals of implementing fine motor skills practice into provocations. I will do this by regularly approaching my mentor teacher and other teaching staff for advice on my ideas and get the students to use my provocations.

2. Self-assessment strategies which I will use regularly to see if I am reaching or working towards my project aims and focus questions. I will try to complete a self-assessment at the end of every cycle so I can keep track of where I am heading. Brady and Kennedy (2012) states that self-assessment is “a process by which students develop insight into their own learning...” (pg. 76) which will help me improve my own learning.

3. Researching further into the area of fine motor development in order to extend my current understanding of it which. By understanding more about it, I will be able to put more thought and consideration into planning my provocations so the students can benefit from there.

4. Utilise resources the school already has so I can use these in my provocations. By doing this, it will give the students a range of items to use in the provocations so it is
not limited and their imaginations can control the result.

Are there any pedagogical strategies that you intend to use? Try to be specific about what you intend to do in the classroom.

Use of the Literature (provisional reading list)

See Appendix B

Proposed Items of Evidence

The evidence I will be using in order to support my research and findings for this topic are:

- Transcripts of interviews with mentor teacher-I will use this as a way of reflecting on my work and also as a way to plan for my next provocation/lesson. This links with the strategies of collaborating
- Journal entries-As I complete my 30 hours in the classroom, I hope to write journal entries for every time I complete part of my hours.
- Using checklists-checklists are very helpful in a prac situation because it ensures you have completed what’s required. I will ensure I use these as I complete provocations and also for meeting project aims and answering focus questions.
- Examining samples of students work-I will examine samples of work and compare these with the outcomes from my provocations.
- Observations-I will be observing in every cycle of my work as this a good tool to improve work. Observations can also be used for monitoring students work outside of my set provocations.
- Self-assessment-I hope by completing a self-assessment that I can improve the way I am implementing my teaching. This links with the self-assessment strategy.

Timeline

See Appendix C
References


