Puppet Show Practice

I had the opportunity to work with April Cox in teaching 6 of the students a puppet routine. Let me tell you, it was a challenge! There is no documentation of these types of puppets ever being used with Deaf individuals using sign language. Two people bring each puppet to life. One of the people becomes the puppet’s arms and the other person controls the puppet’s head and mouth. Because the puppets have empty sleeves and no hands, the student can make the puppet sign using his or her own hands. We spent a few weeks teaching the students how to sign a song. We had to teach them to sign as though the puppet were their body; so signs that would be located at their heads, mouths, or shoulders had to be directed to that location on the puppet. At first, we had the students standing behind a curtain, because the puppets are only supposed to be a top half of a body. Because of the difficulty this posed to the students in holding the puppets up so high, and because of challenging height differences, April came up with a way to give the puppets legs and feet. This way, the puppets and their hands could be clearly seen without needing to hold them up over a curtain. The students could be seen, but they fell nicely into the background when they all wore black for the end of the year performance.
Duck Skit
This was hilarious! We were all practically rolling out of our seats during chapel this morning. Mr. Taylor led the devotion on this particular morning, and he performed a skit about an angry, attacking duck to illustrate the need for forgiveness. Seeing Mr. Taylor act like a duck was funny enough, but then he decided to call some of the students up to reenact the skit....to see if they were paying attention. After about 4 or 5 groups of students reenacting the skit, we were all rolling with laughter. As if this weren't enough, then the senior teacher and the nurse acted out the skit. Hilarious!
I taught reading comprehension - main idea today. Sometimes I wonder if the teacher thinks I'm crazy. Haha. She said she had nothing planned for the day, so I had the floor. I showed them some different postcards with pictures on them. I had them grouped by some similar theme. I asked them to discuss as groups what the main idea or theme may be among the pictures (such as nature, joy, etc.). Then we did it w/ sentences.

Later Ms. C was assessing the students. Well, kinda. She gave them an empty flow chart.

(like the one I used for teaching reading comprehension in sequencing) and wanted them to draw 3 pictures & write a story about it. Coming up w/ a story is hard for me! Hah - a good one at least. Anyway, they didn't enjoy it. I hope Ms. C doesn't think that assesses reading comprehension. Blc it doesn't at all. It's written expression & seeing if they can sequence events if anything.

Oh well!! I might talk to her about it -- it's hard to know when I am overstepping my boundaries. Amy was talking today about a lot of frustrations here - like the lack of a curriculum, their 'lazy' schedule, and lack of resources. So many of these kids have so much potential! They just need more motivation.

Today in chapel a teacher talked about how God feels good when we worship him. So that's why we should. Like God needs it or lacks something when we don't...?? Am I becoming a critic? : P dunno - being in a different culture & environment really makes you look at what you believe - which has been good, though hard at times.
"Play" restaurant
After several lectures to the students about proper eating etiquette (you know how little kids like to shove food into their mouths), the teachers decided to organize a mock restaurant in the cafeteria. The kids were taught about how to properly set tables, order food, and eat. The students set it all up on the scheduled day and were proud of their work! Some of the older students were able to be waiters and waitresses in the "restaurant."
Deaf Spelling Bee

Several of the Deaf schools from around the island came together for a Deaf spelling bee. CCCD didn't participate, but during one of the breaks, they performed a song for the audience with JSL. I was amazed at some of the words these students were asked to spell! Sometimes even with a simple sign, they would spell a complex word or synonym for the word. For example, one of the students spelled the word “concentrate” after seeing a sign that most commonly is known as “focus.” Whether or not they had a list of words to study from I am not sure.
5/24/08
In 3rd grade this morning the teachers were having them circle the correct pronouns for certain sentences and the sentences were not good. Blah. It just makes me sad. The kids had no idea what they were doing & the teachers were getting upset w/ them, just convinced that they didn't want to learn, as one said.

5/29/08
It's crazy how honest teachers are w/ their students sometimes. Ms. C prayed in class today that sometimes she felt like quitting and that she needs new ways of teaching, etc., cause some have been in her class for 3 yrs...

All the staff ended up hanging out in the cosmo room after school today. It's hilarious when they all get together. They all talk so fast & in Parei's talk - I can barely understand. They're so giddy & loud. Haha.

Got a lot of ants in my room today. Hope they leave.
6/10/08

I worked with Crystal again today. We had reading time, and I was very impressed with her reading. I have not much of an idea what she comprehends, but she can read about as well as the higher level kids. I only would have to tell her the sign for a word once & she'd remember it throughout the whole story. It's important to see, like in this class, it's so important to have high expectations of your students...

me & Crystal
I had the opportunity to work with Crystal, a 5th grader with multiple disabilities, for the last 3 weeks of my time at CCCD.

Reading was definitely one of Crystal’s strengths. She had an amazing memory and vocabulary base. She loved to read to me and to be read to. And although I spent weeks trying to help Crystal add 1+1 independently, I didn’t see my time with her as a waste. It was awesome to see her confidence increase and her eagerness to learn develop.

It was definitely a challenge at first; none of the instruction was meeting Crystal at her level, and lesson accommodations and modifications were usually an afterthought, if they happened at all. As I got to know Crystal during the first week, I assessed her levels by working with her 1-on-1 on classroom activities. I came to find that much of Crystal’s reason for being behind had not as much to do with her ability as with the instructor’s failure to give her the necessary tools to build upon her prior knowledge.
6/11/08
It is finally a day w/o rain! So I am sitting outside w/ Jenny from the team that’s here. She graduated last year & wants to be an interpreter etc. She loves the language! Thinks it’s beautiful, etc. It’s great to have interpreters... but it’s also sad to see the students who get “signers” & not “interpreters”-people who can fully communicate the richness of the language. And I’m not saying that Jenny won’t be there, but you need to have a love & concern for the people, not just think the language is pretty. They need more than that...
Me and Joy
This girl is awesome. She just graduated with a degree in speech therapy. It was her first
time working with the Deaf outside of a school setting. She LOVED it. I wouldn't be
surprised if she goes back long-term.
Her being there was such a blessing to me during my 7 week stay. I had no idea who
would be there with me, so to have a girl my age stay for 3 weeks was amazing. We
were both able to be an encouragement to the other and to be there when the other
needed to vent, talk about what we were learning, do something silly, or bake some
sweets. I found a great friend in Joy.

Joy giving Shaniece an impromptu speech therapy session
Tyler & Jennifer
What a fun week. Tyler and Jennifer were a brother-sister group that came alone as a small team from Georgia. They came to do a little bit of construction and to share their drama talents with the kids. And boy, did they have talent. The students loved the performances that Tyler and Jennifer did at chapel. The two of them barely knew any sign language going into that week, but they practiced hard and were able to sign as they acted out the skits and songs. I had no idea going in to this trip who I would meet and what kind of relationships I would have the chance to make. It was such a blessing to be able to meet people my age...even just for the conversations that we could have together. These kinds of surprises supported me when I wasn’t aware that I needed it...I just knew that when they left I felt joy and sadness all at the same time...and knew that I was being looked out for.
Me with Jordan and Meagan Cox
These are the two kids of the U.S. missionary family that stays in Jamaica for the summer. They were great to play with...Meagan said I was one of her BEST friends! 😊
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL EDUCATION UNIT
RECOMMENDED LESSON PLAN FORMAT

DATE:

TOPIC:

FOCUS QUESTION:

LESSON DURATION:

CLASS or LEVEL:

AIM:

OBJECTIVES:

SUMMARY OF CONCEPTS TO BE TAUGHT:

ACTIVITIES:

Day 1:

Day 2:

Day 3:

Day 4:

Day 5:

CULMINATING ACTIVITY:

EVALUATION I: Outline the performance of students (individuals or big groups) in terms of achievement of stated objectives, content, and skill, behavior and outcomes.

EVALUATION II: Teacher's evaluation of overall presentation of lesson in terms of stated objectives, content, skill, materials, and student-groupings.
The nurse got a bunch of students together after dinner for an informal study session before exam week.
The testing is quite a bit different here... They stress studying so much. And the kids do study a lot. Basically memorization. But the schedule on testing week is just kinda loosey-goosey. We had our 5th grade tests moved to different days all the time. A lot of the tests aren't in what I consider to be "proper" English. Is it just Jamaican dialect? And the students really struggle to understand the tests, let alone answer correctly. But all I know is kids in America should be grateful. The kids here need to copy all their tests from the blackboard. No photocopies. I guess copiers + computers are a luxury. After exams they post the rank order of students + how well they did! They said it would encourage those at the bottom to work harder. Pretty different than our theory at BSV! Plus confidentiality issues. Leteshaw said his parents would whip him if he's at the bottom.
The week after exams...
Why this week existed, I'm not very sure. It was basically a week to play games, clean the classrooms and the dorms, play some more games, pack, and leave. Sleep in class, play domino tournaments, stay in another class, no problem! Some of the teachers weren't there anyway.
Several of the differences that appear between ISD and CCCD are much more concrete than others. ISD clearly has more resources than are available to CCCD, and this has a huge impact on the education and "lifestyle," so to speak, that the school adheres to. One becomes used to what one has, I suppose. Instead of running copies for students, using projectors, and following basal books like ISD, teachers at CCCD were accustomed to handwriting their lessons and simply writing on the blackboard what the students needed to copy onto their papers. Paper, pencils, and erasers were hot commodities at CCCD, and the students were taught to protect their materials and never waste. I found it frustrating at times trying to find books to use for reading lessons in their meager library and not having access to the Internet for ideas. While it can be nice to reference others' ideas, I also found it empowering as a teacher to find that I was capable of thinking for myself and of developing my own creative lessons.
ISD is a fully accredited school for Deaf and hard-of-hearing students in nursery school through high school. It provides services to approximately 370 students enrolled on campus and over 200 students through outreach services. About 60 percent of the students live on campus during the academic year. ISD offers a full range of social activities, including sports, clubs, and organizations.

The Indiana School for the Deaf sponsors outreach services throughout Indiana for parents, families, and local school corporations. These services include consultation, education and training, assessment, audiology, American Sign Language programs, and a Parent-Infant program.

The Indiana School for the Deaf was founded in 1843 by William Willard, the first Deaf person in America to establish a state school for Deaf people. It was at first a semi-private school that offered free instruction to any Deaf person in-state or out-of-state that sought an education. The following year, the Willard School formally became the Indiana School for the Deaf, the first state-sponsored school in America that offered free education to any Deaf student. From that beginning, ISD has developed into one of the leading Deaf Schools in the nation, rich in heritage yet always striving to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Technology: Technologies that enable or provide a true bilingual-bicultural environment are needed everywhere on the campus, and should be used all the time. Every opportunity that allow for true, equal accesses in resources by every single student and staff should be incorporated daily. The school’s use of video conferencing, web cams, ISDTV, digital cameras, visual presenters, digital video cameras, and more, enables true, equal access.
ISD is a Bilingual/Bicultural program. The goal of this program is to provide for early language acquisition and to facilitate the development of two languages, American Sign Language (ASL) and English. This goal is accomplished with the belief that for most Deaf students, American Sign Language is the accessible, dominant language used for communication, and thinking, while English is learned as a second language. By fostering competencies in these two languages and by providing an academically and culturally enriched learning environment, Deaf students will have the skills and attitudes necessary to function effectively with members of the Hearing Community.

Mission. The Indiana School for the Deaf Community promotes academic and social excellence for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students through a Bilingual/Bicultural environment.

Philosophy. The Bilingual/Bicultural Philosophy provides language acquisition and facilitates proficiency in two languages, American Sign Language (ASL) and English. By providing an enriched academic and cultural learning environment, our Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing students develop a sense of identity within the Deaf community. Students also develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to function effectively with members of a multicultural, diversified community.

Students enroll in the school as young as eighteen (18) months and continue to graduation. The school is committed to the academic development of each of our students. Through the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process, teachers and support staff strive to develop and implement a program designed to promote and develop each child's educational needs. The division endorses a bilingual-bicultural environment throughout the school. American Sign Language (ASL) is the language of instruction with written English strongly emphasized across the curriculum.

The school follows the rigorous Indiana Academic Standards. Students are assessed through the ISTEP+ and ISTAR given to all the students in the state of Indiana.
Typical ISD Day:

We had 4 rotations at ISD that each lasted for 7 weeks. This gave us the opportunity to spend time in preschool, elementary school, middle school, and high school. Though each of these classroom experiences was different, our general schedule remained the same.

For 4 of the 5 school days, I would begin the day with the students and would stay until about 1:00 p.m. Each of us 19 Ball State students had a different classroom placement in one of the four schools. After school, we also had regular university classes. Our professors were incredibly dedicated. Several of them traveled down to Indianapolis from Muncie to teach our classes once or twice per week. We also had the opportunity to have ISD teachers become our Ball State professors for specific classes, such as Deaf Culture and History. These classes were fantastic learning experiences, because we were getting an insider’s perspective on Deaf Education.

In addition to classroom time and our university classes, we were also required to complete 15 hours of volunteer work at the school every month. There were a variety of venues in which we had the opportunity to volunteer. A couple of different experiences were required for us to participate in, such as concession stand work and assisting in the after-school resource room. During the fall semester of our year at ISD, my friend Katie and I decided to design a preschool program involving art, drama, and dance. This was quite the experience, and it was a great way to get hands-on with the students and to learn about working with Deaf children. That was my main volunteer experience during the fall semester. During the spring, I also enjoyed being a timer and long-jump measurer at track meets, tutoring in an elementary room, and organizing the library.

The time that I spent with the students outside of the classroom was mainly for academic purposes, unlike at CCCD. The curriculum at ISD called for more homework on the students’ part, so in general, there was less time to socialize after school. Following volunteer work in the evening, our nights had basically been spoken for. We had our own Ball State homework and studying to complete, and we would sometimes gather in front of the TV to watch the latest episode of this-or-that before heading to bed.
Volunteering at the concession stand...
Looking back, it's funny to think about how I would get nervous about such a simple thing. Taking someone's money and giving them what he or she wants.

It had mostly to do with my signing skills in the beginning of the year. I was nervous about not understanding someone's signs...either an adult's or a student's. I was nervous about how, as a hearing person wanting to enter the Deaf community, I would be accepted.

I was warned before my first concession experience that some of the Deaf adults like to tease the new volunteers. They gave me a heads up that if someone signed "nurse salt," it meant that the person wanted a Dr. Pepper. And a "cold cat"...can you guess it? Yup, a hot dog. How they love to mess with innocent little hearing people! Of course, it was usually all in good fun. I did feel bad when I needed to ask people to repeat what they wanted. I suppose picking up a language is never as fast as one wants it to be.

As part of our requirement to fulfill a certain number of volunteer hours at ISD, a friend and I decided to organize an after-school preschool drama/art program. We met twice every week with about 20 preschoolers and came up with a variety of crafts, dances, and drama workshops for the children to take part in.

It was an awesome experience and was always worth the work to see the precious smiles appear on the children's faces.

Putting this program together was definitely a challenge in the beginning. Our sign skills were limited, as were the kids'. Communicating the various activities to the children often took a few repeats, and we would need to get some help from the dorm moms to get them to pay attention to us.

At the end of the semester we put on a little performance for the dorm moms and even invited the parents to come. The students performed a dance for the audience, made Christmas art, decorated cookies, and performed a short skit.

Resource Room
All of the BSU students were required to volunteer once every week in ISD's resource room, which is like a study hall for the middle and high school students. This was a great opportunity to get to know the students outside of a typical classroom setting. That year was our first year actually teaching, so helping out in the resource room was a good starting point. Of course, instead of teaching, many of the students just wanted you to spoon-feed them the answers. Teaching them skills to find answers on their own was more difficult, but it was certainly more rewarding for all of us in the end.
Middle School – Applied Curriculum

This was the first 7 weeks of my sophomore year of college... and I was thrown right in there. We all were. I spent my first rotation in a middle school applied curriculum classroom. This is a classroom for students with severe disabilities who required more 1-on-1 attention. I had previously interacted with individuals who had disabilities, but I had yet to go through methods courses to learn about working with and teaching those with multiple disabilities. I pulled up my bootstraps and attempted to involve myself as much as I could with the students and their learning.

The time that I spent in this classroom, especially during the first few weeks, was a great awakening to how much I still had to learn in terms of how to teach, manage a classroom (or one student!), and develop my sign language skills. It was a great place to start in order to quickly get over some of those initial awkward-interaction feelings.

There were four adults in the classroom at all times: the teacher, two paraprofessionals, and me. As for the students, two of them were Deaf-blind. It was the first time that I had seen accommodations made for students with that disability, and it was a great experience to be a part of their learning. We made worksheets with extra-large print, color coded their materials, and signed in their hands so that they could feel what we were saying. The rest of the 6 students included those identified as having Autism, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, and severe mental disabilities.

The classroom teacher was great about slowly releasing me to work more and more with the students. The levels at which the students were taught varied according to each student’s specific needs, which was why 1-on-1 instruction was so vital. Whole-class teaching was rarely used, although the class would come together between subjects for activities such as snack time and ASL class.

The students’ schedules were also individualized, and they were posted at each student’s personal work station. The schedules were made up of Velcro pictures that were placed in a specific order. Every time they completed a task, they were to remove that item from the schedule and move on to the next activity. Some of the students took their schedules very seriously, while others were still being taught the concept of how to use one. Almost everything in the classroom was labeled with its English word, and the teacher made it a point to expose the students to as much language as possible.

I enjoyed rotating around and working with different students 1-on-1. I was introduced to a number of different math manipulatives to use to practice math with the students. Repetition was a “must” in this type of setting, and I came to appreciate the amount of patience that my teacher and the aides had every day.
One of the struggles that I had in this class was that the teacher always talked to me. Haha...I mean, voiced with me...you see, she was Deaf, but for some reason she would always use her voice with me and with the other BSU students, too. It may have been easier for her considering our developing ASL skills, but I wanted so badly to improve my sign language that it could become very frustrating.
Preschool

Oh, the 3 and 4 year olds. You gotta love 'em, even with all their hitting, crying, and begging. 😊

This was a fun class, one that kept you on your toes. I was in the class with a teacher and an aide in this class also, and even with the 3 of us, having 7 little youngsters to watch over at once was a big task!

Classroom management was also a huge component of my practicum experience in preschool, though in a different way. Instead of helping the students to stay focused during a lesson, we had to watch each student at all times to make sure they weren’t causing trouble with each other or with anything that could potentially hurt someone.

Preschool was obviously a lot different than my middle school or elementary school experiences. In preschool, children learn through play, without even knowing it. We designed games and experiences for the children that were developmentally appropriate, could spark their imaginations, and that could help them build on their skills.

It was amazing to see the amount of sign language that some of these children already had at 3 years old. There was a clear difference between those whose families used sign language constantly at home and those whose parents had not even begun to learn.
High School

The 7 weeks that I spent in the high school language arts class was the most rewarding experience that I had in an ISD classroom. By the end of the year I had more experience, better sign, and more personal initiative and assertiveness; this surely helped me to become integrated in this class more quickly.

This specific language arts class was designed for those who were behind in English reading and writing. And looking back, honestly, it makes me sad to think about how much teaching didn’t take place in there. Each day began with a newspaper article that the students had to read and answer questions about, and then the rest of the period was devoted to spelling words. Where was the meaning? The comprehension, expression, and critical thinking that they would actually use in the real world? I’m not sure.

This class was rewarding because of the amount of interaction that I was able to have with the students, and it surprised me. I had expected to enjoy teaching the younger students more, but this seemed to fit too. I admired the teacher for treating me more like a teacher than the others did; she handed lessons to me almost right away, and I was forced to become comfortable in front of the classroom quickly. I enjoyed the opportunity to have more serious conversations with the older students, and they were patient in helping me to improve my signing. The thought that I was only two years older than some of those students could have easily made me nervous, and I had to work hard to maintain appropriate teacher-friend boundaries and gain their respect.
Me and the high school language arts class...
I spent 7 weeks with this preschool class.
Students...
The experience of living at both ISD and CCCD was the most important part of my being able to develop relationships with the students...relationships that could go beyond teacher-student level through a trust that had time to build. I came to find that this happened much more naturally at CCCD, where my time was not so strictly programmed and academically driven. In both experiences, however, it has been these relationships that have had the largest influence on my growing passion for the Deaf and love for their hearts. Though the members of the Deaf community do share a common culture, I believe it is a huge mistake to apply a "cultural blanket" to all of them while disregarding the special characteristics, gifts, and passions that each unique individual has to offer. Isn't this what all of us want? To not be stuck in some box and only be expected to fill whatever space is available inside those walls? As I was able to get to know the students, (certainly some more than others) I came to realize many of the potentials and gifts that these students had cooped up inside. They just needed someone to affirm them, encourage them, and enable them to develop and use their special talents. Sadly, the busy lives that teachers lead often leave student relationship and trust development in the dust.

So, why is it that the average level of reading achievement for Deaf graduates is 4th grade? There have been long and extended studies that have aimed at answering this question, and all for good reason. And I certainly do not claim to have all of the answers. I just know that these students have passion inside, however deep it may be hidden through years of suppression and doubt. They need to know that they can and be given a reason to. A reason that is better than filling out a worksheet.
Chanoy quickly became one of my best buddies. He was 16 years old and was immediately eager to get to know me. He lost part of his hearing when he fell off a roof at the age of 6. Chanoy enjoyed using his voice whenever possible and would often walk around campus singing at the top of his lungs. Chanoy wrote me many letters during my time there and even sent me a couple of letters after I returned home! I appreciated his friendship and his respect of me when I taught his class. He would often urge others to pay attention to me and would pray for me in front of his classmates during devotion times.
A group of students performing a song during chapel.

5/29/08
Yesterday in chapel Charney prayed, "And that he was learning from me. So sweet. And Nancy really thanked me for interpreting for her during their team Bible study. It's cool to see how - I dunno - I'm making a difference here. To have affirmation. And from places I didn't even know I'd be needed."
Miss miss miss miss miss

to

you

Dear Krista
I miss you Krista you only Teach For Students thank you for Teach For Person I missly he say you only quiet you are beauty girl woman I will Pray For you Krista I wish you stay he love you Krista also he say I crying he say Because you only smile he lovelly lovelly you he say I lovelly Sooo much much!!! miss I need you stay stay here at school I cry cry much I think that you so Pray For your Family I love you and Friendly May God Bless to you he say goodbye goodbye goodbye miss to you Krista I will Pray For you Krista.

your friend
Chanoy Callum

Please write back soon

he say i will you will sing for
Dear Krista

Thank you for your letter. I am happy with you. I really miss you so much. I hope that you go to America. Also, miss you are everyday. I love you much. I hope you pray for your family and friends. I so think you are beautiful. My friend and I play and talk. Everything is happy. He said I am going to America. Soon I never know meet them. Wow, I like your face. Beautiful. I hope like this. Friend, who is friends and family. Thank you so much. I hope hope lovely you to all time. May God bless to you. God say friend.

Your smile!

Chany

Please write back soon.
Dear Krista
I miss you. Krista you only Teach For Students Thanks you for Teach For Person I miss you. He say you only quiet you are beauty girl woman. I will Pray for you Krista. I wish you stay he love you Krista also he say I crying he say. Because you only smile I lovely lovely you he say I lovely sooo much much!!! Miss I need you. Stay here at school I cry cry much I think that you so Pray for your Family I love you and friendly May God Bless to you he say goodbye, goodbye, goodbye miss to you Krista I will Pray for you Krista.

Your Friend
Chanay Callum

Please write back soon.

He say: I will sing for you!
"Bye'm Bye"

Bye'mbye, bye'mbye, Stars Shining,
Number, Number one, Number two,
Number three, Number four, Number five, oh, my! Bye'mbye bye'mbye,
Oh my! Bye'm bye.

I

Miss Miss to
You Krista I love you

I

Smile!
Krista Haddix

Hello Krista How are you? I am Fine so also me Sorry because me write for you right I have e-mail chcallum@yahoo.com he say why not come here on visit with me you must he say please you come here you ok! So also and he say not have number address only Box I was worry with because I need see you you know where Barrett town right I was playing with my friends he not deaf only talk that you understand his name Akiem I was want you with me God Bless to you Friendly

your truly

Chancy Callum

Please write back soon

Please give me number plane?
Dear Kirsta,

Hi everyone. How are you? I am fine so also I wish you a Happy Birthday to you. Thank you for lots of time. We always love getting your letters. You are such a sweet woman. It's a blessing for us to know you. We are so glad you like school. It was really fun to hear about your family. Thanks so much for telling us! Here are if you look at map, you can see where we live. We live in Fort Canada USA. What cities do your families live in? We are really beautiful. Please you can give your address and say and tell me. God Bless to you Kirsta.

Please Next.
HAPPY Birthday to U
Chancy Says: Happy Birthday that year A Beauty also I hope see Birthday and How old are you? and Teachers say: Hello Hello, Hello, How are u and HAPPY Birthday to you!
"This is the Day"

This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made, that the Lord has made. I will rejoice, I will rejoice and be glad in it, and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made. I will rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.

"Open the Eyes of my Heart"

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord. Open the eyes of my heart. I want to see you. I want to see you.

To see you light and lifted up, Shining in the light of your glory. Pour out your Power and love as we sing holy, holy, holy. Holy, holy, holy. Holy, holy, holy. Holy, holy, holy. I want to see you. See you.

Your truly

Channoy

Callum

Please back

Write Soon.
5/31/08
The past couple nights have been great hanging w/ the kids. I feel like I'm finally totally out of my shell + that the kids are warmed up to me too. I feel like I've actually been laughing + having fun w/ them.
Some of the teachers invited me to hang out w/ them in their apartment the next time they play games or something?! Thank you Doc for sustaining me.

6/1/08
Michelle Fynn came & talked to me today - saying she was sad + missed home. And that friends were mean. It was cool to see her confide in me like that...
Me and Shanique
One of the sweetest girls I met. She was always all smiles and questions. The first time I used the sign for “cool” with her, I discovered that it wasn’t a JSL sign. I explained to her what the word meant, and from then on she used it alllll the time. Precious.

Wadia and Yanique studying hard for exams on a beautiful evening
Alicia
This is an ambitious girl! She will graduate next year and wants to go to the U.S. to go to a Deaf college. She said she knows she'll still have to go to high school in the states, but she's ready and determined to reach her goal.

Letshaun
One of the mission groups donated a bunch of clothes for the students to take. It was basically free for all, and it was so cool to see the kids get so excited about getting some new clothes... even though most of them were used. Some of them took more for their baby brothers and sisters than they did for themselves.
me and Odene, one of the hardest-working students.

6/27/08

The students all left at different times throughout the day... sad to see them go, but I think it would have been harder for me to leave them all at once. They're so precious. I feel like it was easier to actually make friends w/ the students here than at ISP-like they were more open to it.
Performing a dance taught by a ministry team
These kids love to dance! A ministry team came to CCCD to give drama, dance, and craft workshops. At the end of the week, the students showed off their skills with a performance for the team.
HANDS ALIVE!
2007
Young Deaf Arts Festival

High School Talent Show
Tuesday, March 20, 2007
Sponsored by Student Life

The students at ISD love to express themselves artistically as well. They practice for months in advance to prepare for the annual Hands Alive! competition. It was awesome to watch their performances and the pride that they take in their gifts.
Unlike CCCD, the students at ISD have the
opportunity to compete with other public
schools in athletics. The Deaf community
takes great pride in its athletic achievements,
and having dedicated athletes was a definite
priority at ISD. During the year that I
lived at ISD, I enjoyed volunteering at
several games and cheering on the Deaf Hoosiers.
Staff...
Staff at CCCD

CCCD at Montego Bay has 1 teacher for each grade (although there is presently no second grade level). Mrs. Russell, the principal, oversees and directs all the happenings at CCCD.

The 2 cooks at CCCD make 3 meals for the 53 students every day, and the 3 dorm moms spend every day watching the students outside of school hours. CCCD has a campus nurse, secretary, maintenance man, and housekeeping ladies. The small staff allowed me to get to know everyone on a more personal level, which I loved.

CCCD also has a number of U.S. staff and board members that help run the 4 CCCD campuses in Jamaica and coordinate short-term work teams. All of CCCD is run by outside financial support. This puts a huge limit on their ability to afford licensed, experienced teachers. Many of them are "trained on the spot" to be teachers and to use Jamaican Sign Language, or JSL.

The teachers have tight relationships with one another — definitely more so than you tend to see in the United States. They have weekly meetings and devotions in which they spend time in worship and discussing a Bible passage. It became clear to me as I participated in these meetings that their shared beliefs were a main component that gave them unity.

Some of the staff members are graduates of CCCD who have had no further education. About half of them have pursued or are pursuing further education, but CCCD can't afford to require it of their teachers because of their meager salary. Several of the teachers live on campus in staff apartments. Many of them are young, too...around my age. Mr. Reid, the "senior teacher," is 25 and has been a teacher at CCCD for 6 years now. 6 years! And let me tell you...these people like to have fun! Singing, dancing, playing games, you name it...it is always a ball hanging out with them, and it felt so good to be included in their group...as an equal. As a teacher, not another student. And, surprisingly to me, even to be looked up to, asked questions, and wanted in the classroom. About halfway through my time at CCCD, I started to get teased by some of my co-teachers...this is when I knew I was really accepted and liked. (Isn't it funny how that works?)

Although it was often difficult for me to see the students' education suffer due to the teachers' lack of training, it was incredible to watch the teachers care for the students and to relate to them as friends in a way I never saw in the U.S. They stayed after-hours to play games with the students, braid each their hair, and help them study. And the teachers were actually interested in the students' personal lives. Mr. Reid often had the older students over to his apartment on the weekends to hang out. Finding the teacher/friend balance is definitely a challenge...at least for me. Maybe because I had never personally experienced it on that level. But it seemed natural to them, and the students appeared to be motivated by their relationships with the teachers to do their work well and to still respond to them as authority.
Mr. Taylor spending time with some of his students
Me and Amy
Amy became one of my best friends during my time at CCCD. She was a teacher’s aide in a Deaf class in Illinois when she fell in love with CCCD’s Hands in Praise team when they came to tour in her area. Amy is Deaf, and she felt a strong pull to go and work alongside the CCCD staff in MoBay. She packed up all of her things and arrived in Jamaica in January of 2008.

Amy was a huge support to me and gave me a lot of tips when it came to this new cultural lifestyle that I had just entered. She was one of the only ASL signers, so I was comfortable talking with her as I was still getting used to the transition to JSL. Amy was very encouraging, always just telling me to “go for it.” I think she liked having me around, too; she would just talk and talk and talk...literally for hours. She said that it was nice to have someone around with the same cultural background...and to just be able to vent to someone every once in a while. I didn’t mind. And in many ways it helped me to see that some of the things that I felt in my transition were normal. Amy always included me in whatever was going on, and we were even able to go on some “beach dates” together. “It’s always important,” she said, “to get outside of these cement walls once in a while. That’s right—we were enclosed in cement walls with rebar and broken glass at the top. And the guard dogs and night watchman made sure that no one got through the gates.

All of the kids loved Amy. She was a great help to those teachers who were not yet fluent in sign, and she was always goofy with the students, which they loved. She shared with them a game from her school days in which everyone signed with only fists or with a specific handshape. It was hilarious!

Amy’s important tips 😊:
Go with the flow, don’t expect thorough communication, spend a lot of time with the kids (that’s why you’re here!), don’t eat too much rice and potatoes
Me and Glenford
I was shocked that he actually remembered me! I had met Glenford, the campus maintenance/upkeep man, a few times when I had done missions in high school, and he actually remembered me and my team. Glenford, who is also Deaf, is the longest serving member with CCCD at the MoBay campus. He does just about anything and everything that needs to be done on campus, including mowing every single square inch with his outdated rider mower. I can remember bursting out laughing when I saw Glenford mowing out in the rain...steering with one hand and holding an umbrella with the other. I have met few people that work as hard as this man.
Me and Ms. Cottrell

Ms. Cottrell is the 3rd grade teacher at CCCD McBay. She is Deaf and is a graduate of CCCD. Ms. Cottrell has not had further education, but she is able to relate to these students in a way that many of the other teachers are unable.
6/12/08
It really bugs me when teachers get upset or worked up at class so just start talking—and the kids are supposed to understand?

6/15/08
This morning I went to cosmetology class and Mrs. Sandra was like, "You want to take over today?" Haha. I'm glad I can laugh about it. She gave me notes to review with them, which I'd never seen. It went good, though, and they actually paid attention to me. Unlike Mrs. S, I didn't need to scold once. I think they know more than they're often given credit for—just cause they struggle putting it into English.
Me and Ms. Alethia Clarke

I loved working with Ms. Clarke in her middle school classes. She was working on finishing up an online degree and said she could use all the help she could get. During my first day observing the classrooms at CCCD, Ms. Clarke came up to me, exasperated, wanting help figuring out a new lesson plan layout. She told me that she needed help teaching reading comprehension. This brought a little smile to my face. I had just finished two classes on Deaf reading comprehension in the past spring semester. I agreed to help her out and ended up spending most of my first four weeks with her 6th to 8th graders (who are typically 14 to 18 years old).

Teaching reading comprehension to a group of Deaf Jamaican teenagers is definitely different than learning the theory in a college classroom. It was a challenge. They had never heard of a “main idea” before. Much of the “teaching” that I saw at CCCD...well...really wasn’t teaching, but a form of assessment. The reading comprehension lessons that these kids had been exposed to consisted of reading a story (usually out of a Jamaican leveled reader booklet) and answering the questions that were listed on the blackboard. When Ms. Clarke found that they couldn’t answer the questions on the board, she became frustrated that they couldn’t comprehend the story...when they could sign it just fine.

I tried to remember everything I could when coming up with the first lesson to teach the students. I came up with a lesson on the book Harry the Dirty Dog and taught the comprehension skill of sequencing events with a specific graphic organizer. Ms. Clarke had never seen teaching done like that before, she said. I realized after a week or so that she thought all reading comprehension should follow the framework that I used for Harry the Dirty Dog. I explained to her that reading comprehension, as I was taught, has many different facets (such as main idea, sequencing, compare and contrast, predicting outcomes, cause and effect, and character traits)...and a teacher should be creative in teaching them!

I was also able to learn things equally as important from Ms. Clarke...I saw in her a passion that she had for her students and the desire that she had for them to learn. She took responsibility onto herself for the students’ education and was able to relate to them in an amazing way. We both fought back tears as we said our goodbyes.
After being in the classroom a little bit now, it's easy to see that they have quite bottom-up teaching. A lot of copying from the board. A lot of the same stuff you see in America, actually. A lot of assessment happening, not much on teaching. One of the teachers, Ms. Clarke, wants me to start teaching reading comprehension and helping in her class. Good thing I had ya class on that last semester!
me and some of the ISD high school staff
Experiences with Staff - ISD

At ISD there are strict requirements as to the level of professionalism and training that a teacher must possess, as is true of most schools in the United States. A degree in education is required, preferably a degree in Deaf education. Because ASL is the primary language used at ISD, they see fluency in this language as imperative for all teachers.

ISD has more students, more extra-curricular activities, and more resources, so they naturally have more teachers than CCCD. Many of the classrooms also have the luxury of having a teacher's aide; this gives them an extra set of eyes and hands in the room, especially in the younger grades and in the applied curriculum classes. The teachers are separated by department (preschool, elementary, middle school, high school) and then by grade. The class size is very similar to CCCD's; each teacher is usually responsible for 6-9 students. Each department has its own principal, and there is one superintendent over all of ISD. The teachers take on coaching positions among other after-school positions. In addition to the full-time classroom teachers, ISD also has part time staff that is available for after-school tutoring. Maintenance staff, athletic directors, meal staff, dorm parents, and special service providers are only a handful of the other roles that are to be filled at ISD.

ISD also has a school board, whose mission is "to provide the leadership, vision, accountability, and advocacy to ensure the fulfillment of the ISD mission statement."

During the time that I spent at ISD, I experienced a mainly professional relationship with the teachers and other staff. I came in as a Ball State student with limited knowledge and for the purpose of participating in a particular program, so it made sense that they treated me as a student...though I admit that there were times I wished to be given more responsibility...to be trusted and stretched even further. I felt as though the teachers at ISD were also my teachers, not necessarily co-workers. I had some very friendly relationships with the staff at ISD, but we rarely discussed life outside of school and didn't spend time together outside of the normal school day. All of this was completely normal to me, and I think that these types of relationships were appropriate to the situation and program in which I was involved. I learned a ton of valuable information from the staff at ISD about being a teacher for Deaf students. From everything that I saw during those 8 months, I also tucked in my memory the things that I never wanted to do...or become. It was all part of the learning process and becoming the teacher I want to be. I was able to take my gained knowledge, insights, and, well, probably new biases with me to CCCD...and to start a new stage of my growth as a teacher and person.
I certainly hope not. It sounds cliché, but I feel as though this is still the beginning. I haven’t even had my own classroom yet, but now I have a better idea of what kind of educator I want to be. Yes, I have learned a ton through my courses, assignments, and experienced professors, but nothing could take the place of the time that I spent living in these communities.

It’s so interesting to see how the process of change occurs. As I entered ISD and then CCCD, I knew that I would change; yet I did not have to force it and could not prevent it. It just happens bit by bit, like the brushstrokes on a painting, until something beautiful appears.

And what exactly was it that changed me? There is no doubt that it was the people. Whether it be students, co-workers, friends, or custodians...those I agreed with or disagreed with...those younger than me or older than me...or those with the same or different cultural background...they all were all part of this little journey that I have taken. We pass by many new faces every day and thousands by the end of one year, let alone a lifetime. Whether we notice it or not, our “painting,” so to speak, changes with every interaction. Better to take time to notice, I say. And the beauty of it is, we all have something different to learn, somewhere different to go, and something different to contribute to humanity.
The situations found in many of our American schools and in those outside of our borders are often devastating. And though this is much of what I found, I also found hope. Through people that truly cared for the people in their classrooms. And not just about names and numbers. There are so many Deaf students in our country and around the world who need teachers like that. I hope and pray that, as I continue to grow, I will not forget these experiences. But most importantly, that I will not forget the people...or their hearts.