Reflective Narrative Five: Critical Thinking

Students will apply critical thinking and scientific methods of thinking (including logical and empirical reasoning) to issues regarding children’s well-being

Throughout my academic career I have had the opportunity to grow in my understanding of critical thinking and scientific methods of thinking. There were opportunities that I have had through my courses that contributed to my growth in critical thinking. In my academic career I have grown from being subjective in my observations of children to thinking and writing in objective ways. I have also had the experience of writing a research paper in an additional course. Through these opportunities I have been able to apply critical thinking and scientific methods of thinking in my academic courses.

I have had multiple experiences in my academic career that has facilitated my growth in understanding. In my Child Development Practicum course and my Methods of Inquiry in Child Development course, I was able to grow in my understanding and gain experience in thinking critically and thinking in relation to scientific methods. In the Child Development Practicum course, I was able to practice taking observation notes objectively. I practiced taking notes of children without being without inferring or assuming that a child is doing something. This benefited me in providing a more conclusive write up of the child’s development. In an additional course, the Methods of Inquiry in Child Development, I was able to grow in my understanding of critical thinking through the research paper. In the research paper a group member and I were able to evaluate other research and determine areas that needed to be acknowledged or studied further. We were then able to complete a research paper, that acknowledges the areas that were lacking in previous research.

I have had a struggle within this area when writing out my findings. Though I have had practice writing literature reviews and research papers, I feel that I could still grow in this area. In order to grow in this area I plan to be up to date on current research. I also plan to practice writing literature reviews of research that I have read in order to grow further in this area.

In the child development practicum course it was required to gather observations, in relation to the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP), on a specific child and create a narrative that tracked the child’s development. This has helped me in my growth of thinking critically because the observation notes needed to be objective. This was something that was difficult for me because in my daily life I think of actions and movements of others and myself subjectively. However, through the course I was able to practice thinking of the child’s development objectively and without inference.

In the Methods of Inquiry in Child Development course, I was able to learn how to review research articles and gather information from the document in order to write a literature review. At the end of the course we wrote a research paper that addressed information that wasn’t present in the previous research articles. This was a valuable experience to have gone through since it provided me another opportunity to grow in thinking critically in relation to research. I was able to gather information from previous research and areas that were lacking. As well as, evaluating the research paper that a partner and I wrote and acknowledging areas that were not addressed or were lacking within our own research paper.