Research Project # 3 ~ Play Years Observation Project
Example of anecdotal observation documentation and analysis

Anecdotal Observation # 1 of 3
Observer: Student Name
10/20/12 at 10:00 am
Child’s name: Ana
Preschool Classroom from Observation Room at Cabrillo College
Age: 3 ½ years DOB: April 2009

Brief description of environment: Ana was observed in the Cabrillo Preschool. There were approximately 20 other children aged 2-1/2 to 5 years, one Master Teacher, two Interns, and three student teachers. The classroom is divided into various learning centers, both inside and out. During this part of my observation Ana was outside under an awning where I noticed a table with four chairs and a display of books on a nearby shelf.

DATA – Narrative anecdote
Ana brought a book to a table where a small group of children were gathered. “I have a story to share,” she said. Ana held the book up for the group to see and then set the book on the table and opened it to the first page. Ana pointed to each illustration and told a story based on what she saw in each picture. She pointed to the text and turned the pages one by one. When she reached the end of the book, she closed it and said “the end.” Then, turning to the children she said: “Does anyone have any questions?”

Analysis of developmental significance
In the situation observed Ana displays significant strengths in several areas of development. In terms of psychosocial development she demonstrates a positive sense of self through her initiative and awareness of her own skills and accomplishments. She displays social skills when she interacts with her peers, sharing space and materials, and demonstrating ability to engage their attention for a long period of time. Her cognitive development is evident: she remembers and imitates how her teachers present and read books to children. Her last statement indicates she has internalized what teachers do and say to students. It seems to this observer that she has developed a sense for order and sequence: that stories have a “beginning” “middle” and “end.” In terms of language development Ana speaks in complete and grammatically correct sentences. Her actions are also indicative of her emergent literacy skills and strong interest in reading books. When she points to words and pretends to read she’s demonstrating specific knowledge about print and the meaning of symbols.

DRDP – Some of the measures demonstrated and brief notes about each one.
Approaches to Learning and Self-Regulation:
ATL 3 – Imitation: deferred imitation of how her own teachers present and read books to children
ATL 6 – Engagement and persistence: completed “reading” the book all the way to the end, making up the story as she went along, did not skip any pages.

Self and Social Development (Psychosocial):
SED 1 – Identity of self in relation to others: sees herself as a reader who has answers to questions.
SED 4 – Relationships and social interactions with peers
SED5 – Socio-dramatic play: Ana has cast herself in the role of “teacher” and her peers as her “students.”

Language and Literacy Development:
LLD 3 – Use of expressive language: uses descriptive language to describe events in the picture book.
LLD 4 – Communication & conversation: speaks clearly, in full, grammatically correct, sentences.
LLD 5 – Interest in literacy: initiates literacy activity.
LLD 7 – Concepts about print: understands the conventions of book reading, turning pages, pointing to illustrations as she told the story, finishing by saying “the end.”
LLD 9 – Letter and word knowledge: demonstrates awareness that print carries meaning

Physical Development:
PD 4 – Fine motor manipulative skills: holding book, turning pages; also eye-hand coordination.