November 21th-25th

Thanksgiving Week went on very quickly. According to the DEPR, students only had classes on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday until 11:00am; Thursday and Friday were free due to Thanksgiving Day. This week my C.T. had to stay home under the meds and instructions of her doctor because her asthma worsened her previous flu. However, I had three classes prepared and my Special Project's Hands-on phase would take place during Thursday and Friday.

On Monday, to my surprise (not really), my practice group didn't have classes, so the class I planned was postponed. I stayed at Mrs. Ruffat's working on the remaining classes I had to plan and designing the instructions for the students' final project. On Tuesday I had my group, but maybe only half of it. During weeks like these that are abnormal, absences shoot to the skies. I gave the class either way because I had to. Other students are responsible for collecting the work and material they missed while they were absent. The class went nicely; I was working with one of the InTASC principles and the artifact which was any kind of hands-on activity. Students had to color, cut, and paste while following other more complicated instructions. Time was managed perfectly, and all students finished the task within the timeframe given to do so.

On Wednesday, my second surprise, again, classes were only until 11:00 am so I did not have my practice group that day. I had planned a cool activity where they would watch two videos about the history of Thanksgiving and then complete a fun handout. Instead, I stayed at Mrs. Ruffat's where she had a nice get-together with her group. They had all sorts of fruits, snacks, juices, candy, typical Puerto Rican holiday songs, and no classes. I stayed there all morning and at 11:00 am, teachers had a Thanksgiving lunch at the lunchroom. When I got there, it was all nicely decorated, the buffet was ready, and all the teachers were ready to eat. Mr. Martinez, the school principal, gave a speech, emphasizing the funeral acts of a kitchen lady's mom. I sat with the school guardians; they became my closest colleagues after my C.T. We had the typical dinner with "arroz guisado con gandules, ensalada de coditos, y pernil". They pulled out the karaoke and Mrs. Ruffat sang to songs such as "La Bomba" and other Puerto Rican numbers. Mr. Cuevas, the guardian, also took part in singing while the rest enjoyed. It was a very nice experience, the food was awesome, and I really did love the opportunity to be there.

The next day, on Thursday, my mother and I began the tedious phase of my special project: painting. We got almost everything we thought we needed and drove to the school early in the morning. I began tracing with pencils the lines of the art piece and helping mom at the same time. We worked hard, under the sun. We had a cooler with cold drinks and snacks and music to be comfortable while working. I couldn't have done that without my mother. That first day, which was Thanksgiving Day, was a little heavier for mom and I. Dad is out in United States and my brother was spending the day with his partner. It was just the two of us. However, we managed. My practice supervisor visited me after midday and convinced me to go home and return once the sun was set. I found light reflectors to help me see while painting at night, but that didn't work the first day because the cord extensions were not enough. The next day, Friday, I had to go to work at Burlington, so we didn't work on the project.

Saturday came by and I was determined to finish the project no matter what, who, or whatever. We went to Walmart to get the plants, soil and ice before arriving to the school. Mrs. Trinta was waiting for us at the school to open her classroom and help me get a paint can that was in there. She left quickly and mom and I got to work again. That day we stayed until 8:00 pm. My practice supervisor visited during the morning and then came back in the night to give me a couple more flower plants and help around. My father-in-law, who's a police sergeant, came in to check on us and helped me connect the light reflectors. We couldn't finish everything, but only minor details were missing. On Sunday, I called Burlington to announce that I would be an hour late and that way, I could finish the project, change clothes, and clock in.

It was a weird week at school, but I finished one of the biggest projects from my practice requirements and it was a success.