My name is Beth Richey. I have been a preschool teacher for 17 years in Franklin County. Recently, I began teaching at the Northwest Technical Center in St. Albans, Vermont. In this position, I teach two sessions of preschool, oversee internships within my classroom for up to 20 Human Services Program High School Students, and instruct high school students in appropriate practice.

Our preschool is Curiosity Corners at the Northwest Technical Center. Our physical classroom is next to the Human Services Classroom in our building. This allows for the students in the Human Services Program to observe through our two way window and to participate in preschool classroom activities. We currently have a morning preschool session that runs from 8:15-10:45 Monday through Thursday and an afternoon preschool session that runs from 11:30-3:00 Monday through Wednesday. Each class has 9 preschool students. The preschool students within each class range from three to five years old. We are part of Maple Run Early Childhood Programs. Maple Run Early Childhood Programs is currently using a new Curriculum called Connect 4 Learning. We will use Science Lessons and activities from Units 1 and 2 and natural science classroom activities for our Documentation Panel exploration.

The question I am choosing to explore is: What will be the effects of using documentation panels on students understanding of and retention of science activities? I chose this question because I have never explored the use of documentation panels before in this way. I have seen them in other classrooms, and have noticed there were many benefits of having them. It is important to me to be able to explore this question, so I can see if the use of documentation panels promotes more retention of the concept taught. I am also interested to see if families become more involved in talking to their preschool students about what they have done in school based upon the documentation panels hanging in the classroom. I will also be teaching my high school students about how to make a documentation panel, the use of them, and the benefits of them. I will use interviews done by the high school students, parents, and classroom staff as evidence. The interview format is at the end of this document.

**Literature Review and references if used**
I was able to use several different references. I used *Worms, Shadows, and Whirlpools* by Karen Worth. In this book, Karen talks about how “Documenting what is happening helps children to see what happens over time and makes it possible to revisit activities quickly.” Children’s memories of the activity are triggered by the discussions around the documentation panels.
I also used *building structures with young children* by Ingrid Chalufour and Karen Worth. I found this book to be very helpful in describing how to make a documentation panel. The information helped me and it helped me to describe what a documentation panel is to my High School Students. It also gave me an already created document about documentation panels.

**Struggles (to arrive at question, to collect data, findings, etc.)**
I did not find it a struggle to arrive at a question for this action research. I did find it a struggle to effectively collect the data due to the storm we had in late October. Our family night had to be cancelled due to power outages. This meant that students recollection or retention answers were received in a different format than what was planned.

**Reflections on Action Research Process, separate from the topic**
I enjoyed the action research process, though I found through my action research that many new questions came to mind. Would a classroom website, facebook page, or other social media site attached to my classroom and what is happening in it, benefit the students and families?

**Changes You have gone through in the process; insights; inconsistincies**
I have become much better at preplanning my methods of observing, preplanning the way I am going to record observations, and making sure I have what I need to carry out those observations.

**Conclusions/findings; what I learned; interpretation**
I have found students are able to explain the concept taught better when a documentation panel is placed in front of them, than just talking about the activity that was done in the past. Students enjoy seeing pictures of themselves and explaining what is happening in the pictures. I have come to this conclusion, based upon several interviews of preschool students who are looking at documentation panels while being interviewed and some who were just asked probing questions regarding the activity or lesson that had taken place.

**Feelings intuitions not encountered in the study**
I will continue to do documentation panels within the classroom. The overall benefits outweigh the time spent on creating them. Students are able to share their knowledge in a more structured way when they have a panel in front of them.
Student were given fall items and asked to describe how they feel....
Students build structures in the block area….
Students are asked to describe how the bags feel…
Students explore their sense of smell. Students match the two that smell the same. Students also are asked if they know what the smell is.
Students are given solo cups to explore...
Students look at an item they have collected, describe it, and draw it in their science journals.
Use of Tools: Our Environment
Sense of Touch: What do you feel?
Sense of Touch:
How does the fall item feel?

Students were given the opportunity to feel different fall items and foods at home through sensory play.
This is a documentation panel.

A documentation panel is a group of pictures, creations, and or observations of your child’s learning. It is important to talk with your child about his or her previous learning to see what he or she has retained. To know what your child has learned, you could ask him/her any of the following questions:

Sample Questions/ Comments

- How did you know to...
- Why did you learn how to...
- I see that you are... what happened when you did that?
- What would you do next time?

When you have completed this with your child, please give some feedback related to the following questions:

What did you gain from this opportunity with your child?

Do you feel your child was able to give you more information about what happened during the activity when he or she had the documentation panel available to look at? Explain.

Yes. Seeing a picture probably helped him remember what the activity was and what was going on.
This is a documentation panel.

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- What would you do next time?

When you have completed this with your child, please give some feedback related to the following questions:

What did you gain from this opportunity with your child?

Do you feel your child was able to give you more information about what happened during the activity when he or she had the documentation panel available to look at? Explain.

He told me about the tower he made that day and tried to build on it. He made one tall and different kinds of block, found a solution, and built his tower that stood on its own.
This is a documentation panel.

A documentation panel is a group of pictures, creations, and or observations of your child’s learning. It is important to talk with your child about his or her previous learning to see what he or she has retained. To know what your child has learned, you could ask him/her any of the following questions:

**Sample Questions/ Comments**

- How did you know to…?
- Why did you…?
- I see that you are… what happened when you did that?
- What would you do next time?

**When you have completed this with your child, please give some feedback related to the following questions:**

What did you gain from this opportunity with your child?

Do you feel your child was able to give you more information about what happened during the activity when he or she had the documentation panel available to look at? Explain.