**Location: Dayton, Tennessee**

**School: Rhea County Academy (Christian School)**

**Teacher: Mrs. Robbins**

**Grade: 3rd and 4th grade combined classroom**

**September 15, 2009**

Today was my first day of practicum at Rhea County Academy! The classrooms are spread out and some of them are in a church building which is beside the main school building. This is a private, Christian school, which was very apparent as soon I walked into the classroom. The classroom I was assigned to do practicum in the basement of the church building. Grades 3 and 4 are in the same room with a total of 16 kids and two teachers. Including me, there were 3 teachers and 16 students! When I first entered the classroom, the teacher was reading a story. Then they proceeded on to science and then split up into math groups. Before each activity, there was a short “prayer time” when a student prayed a short prayer about the activity they were about to do. It was very unusual. I had never seen anything like it before.

**September 27, 2009**

I arrived at the school 15 minutes after school started this morning. The teacher first read a Bible story, which was about when Jesus and Peter walked on water. Then the students were told to split up into groups of two and practice their verses they had memorized for this story. The passage they were memorizing was over five verses long! Most of them already seemed to know the verses, so maybe they had been working on these verses for several weeks. I was impressed by how much they had memorized. It was math time next and they were learning their shapes. They were to write down 19 different shapes and draw each one. I didn’t even know half of them! Then they went to the playground, and when they came inside it was snack time. During snack time, the teacher always reads them a book while they eat quietly at their desks. Today she read a simple Spanish book to help the students learn some Spanish words such as grande (big), and el gato (cat). Then it was time for math. The grades were split up, third grade stayed with the main teacher, and fourth grade went with the assistant teacher to a different classroom separated by a moveable wall. I rotated between the classrooms and tried to help the students that were lagging behind. Some of the students started to cry when they got behind or didn’t get it. I helped one girl who was crying and after she understood it she stopped crying. The teacher said some of her students were previously homeschooled so it’s an adjustment for them to be in “real school” now.

**October 1, 2009**

When I arrived early this morning, they had just started a movie about Jesus’ miracles. The kids were amazed at all the miracles Jesus did, and it appeared that many of them had never heard of some of the miracles before. After the 30 minute movie was over, a guest speaker came and talked about her ancestors that traveled to Kansas many years ago. They are studying Kansas in social studies. Today I felt more useful in the classroom and had more interaction with the children besides just observation. First, I went with the assistant teacher and the children outside for recess. Then we came inside and they ate their snack as I read a whole chapter of *Little House on the Prairie*. Next I helped with their science experiments as they were learning about leaves and stems by looking at celery. The part I enjoyed most was when I took three of the math advanced children out of the room and we worked on their 9s multiplication tables. I had them for about 10 minutes before we were called back into the classroom. I enjoyed this time because I felt like I was really a teacher then!

**October 20, 2009**

I went back to the classroom today after being gone for fall break. I’m still trying to learn the student’s names, and I know most of their names by now but I’m still working on a couple. They are always excited to see me when I come in at 9:30 am! They squeal and yell “Hi, mrs. Amy!” I don’t know why they call me “mrs,” maybe it’s because the other two teachers in the class are married. I got there today during science time and the students were just finishing up drawing a picture of a plant. Then it was English time and I pulled out some students to help them with their new vocabulary words. They did a worksheet and I checked it and helped them with their errors. When it was time for recess, one boy did not have his worksheet done and couldn’t go out until it was finished. He started to cry but I helped him and we finished it quickly with no errors! I guess he was worried he wouldn’t be able to go outside and play. When the students came back in, it was snack time. I’m always curious to see what they bring because they often have nutritious snacks! Today one girl had a whole container of cantaloupe, others had jello, sandwiches, yogurt, and the list goes on! It’s good to see that parents aren’t sending sugar or unhealthy foods. During snack time the teacher read a chapter from the *Little House on the Prairie* book. The students always seem to enjoy this time because they are really quiet and seem to be paying attention. Next was math and I pulled two girls out of the group to help them with their multiplication facts before the speed drill. Every student is on a different speed drill according to their level. When they complete a level in a minute, then they move up in a level for the next day. There is a wide range of levels in the classroom.