PRE-SERVICE TO IN-SERVICE: A THREE-YEAR CASE STUDY OF PRIMARY LITERACY TEACHERS

by

Lynn S. Segebrecht

B.S.Ed. University of Kansas, 1977
M.S.Ed. University of Kansas, 1981

Submitted by the Department of Curriculum and Teaching and
The faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Kansas in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

____
Arlene Barry*

____
Phil McKnight

____
Sally Roberts

____
Karen Jorgensen

____
Donita Massengill-Shaw

Date defended: June 25th, 2010

The Dissertation Committee for Lynn S. Segebrecht certifies
That this is the approved version of the following dissertation:

PRE-SERVICE TO IN-SERVICE:
A THREE-YEAR CASE STUDY OF PRIMARY LITERACY TEACHERS

Committee:

Arlene Barry *

Phil McKnight

Sally Roberts

Karen Jorgensen

Donita Massengill-Shaw

Date approved: June 25th, 2010

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this emic collective case study was to investigate the transitions of three effective teachers of literacy from pre-service to in-service teaching. As their university supervisor, I selected these students out of a group of pre-service teachers assigned to me for supervision during their eight-week student teaching requirement, based upon a number of criteria. Among the criteria was their demonstrated skill at teaching literacy to their students according to best practice in their assigned classrooms. This was demonstrated during my formal observations of them, required by the School of Education at State University (a pseudonym) for satisfactory completion of their student teaching. In addition, the three case study participants were also assigned to me for supervision the following semester for their 14-week internships. During this assignment, I continued to supervise and documents the practices evident in their teaching, retaining all artifacts associated with our professional meetings and conferences, as well as any extraneous communications.

Upon their acceptance of my invitation to take part in the research, I began collecting all documents and artifacts, along with field notes that I acquired as their university supervisor. I held interviews with them regularly, and encouraged their open communication and dialogue regarding their experiences. I was interested in documenting the characteristics of their individual transitions from student teaching to internship, to their first-year as in-service teachers, and then to their second year as in-service teachers, as evidenced in the data obtained. Each of the participants has experienced marked successes, as well as significant challenges, in their efforts to teach

literacy according to best practice to their students, despite a variety of assessment-related issues they have encountered. My research questions posed were the following: How do novice teachers handle the disparities between best practice taught in teacher preparation and the realities of the classroom as they transition from pre-service to in-service? What can universities do to assist future teachers of literacy as they transition from pre-service to in-service?

Within the vast amounts of data collected from the participants over a three-year period, unique and important insights have emerged to inform these questions. The participants' demonstrated growth, development, and expertise in literacy instruction provide important information regarding the nature of novice teachers' entry into the workforce in an assessment-driven school reform climate. The research discussed in the literature review aligns with the goals for best practice in literacy instruction, and the strategies demonstrated within that practice which the participants have exemplified in their classrooms. In addition, the participants' recommendations for support mechanisms for future literacy teachers are further substantiated in data reported.

This study contributes to teacher education research in literacy, largely because the information is presented from the perspective of novice teachers. The participants' clearly convey the scope of the knowledge they have acquired in their coursework and field experiences, the teaching and processes that they most value, as well as their insightful recommendations for equipping novice teachers with what they need most to survive their first two years in the workforce. The participants reveal their important findings that the teaching environments and the concurrent demands placed upon them have held a number of surprises.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	Page iii
Table of Contents	Page v
Chapter 1 – Introduction	Page 1
Research Questions	Page 5
The Problem	Page 10
"What Should We Do?"	Page 13
Encountering the Realities of Assessment in Education	Page 14
Choice of Participants	Page 16
The Stories Begin…	Page 18
The Questions: Straight to the Source	Page 18
Ad Astra Per Aspera: To the Stars…Through Difficulties	Page 20
Chapter 2 – Review of Literature	Page 23
Literacy Coursework and Hands-On Opportunities	Page 25
Induction Programs	Page 26
Assessment of Student Teachers	Page 27
"Now I see in a mirror dimly…"	Page 29
Experience: The Best Teacher?	Page 31
Variety in "Excellent" Teacher Education Programs in Literacy	Page 33
Pre-Service to Practice: New Connections	Page 37
The Role of the Cooperating Teacher	Page 38
Affective Skills and Predispositions	Page 43
The Study of Landmark Research in Literacy Education	Page 46
Landmark Research and Mandates for Teaching	Page 47
IRA/NAEYC Joint Statement, 1998	Page 47
Snow, Burns, & Griffin: *Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children.* NRC, 1999	Page 50
Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read	Page 58
Teacher Development	Page 61
Motivation and Teacher Effectiveness	Page 63
The Consummate Teacher Literacy Teacher	Page 72
Support for New Educators	Page 73
Adjusting (?) to No Child Left Behind	Page 77
Summary	Page 83
Research Question One	Page 83
Research Question Two	Page 85
Chapter 3 – Methodology	Page 87
Case Study Design	Page 88
Selection of Case Subject Participants	Page 91
Criteria for Selection	Page 92
Introduction of Case Study Participants	Page 96

Molly Page 97
Kelly Page 98
Lucy Page 99
Fig. 1: Time in Field with Case Study Participants Page 100
Data Collection Page 100
Interviews Page 100
Artifacts Page 105
Field Notes Page 106
Data Analysis Page 107
Emergence of Themes and Codes Page 107
Developmentally Appropriate Practice Page 107
Management and Motivation Page 108
Differentiation and Enrichment Page 109
Additional Emerging Themes Page 110
Support/Mentoring Page 110
Assessments/Pressures on Teachers Page 111
Case Study Validity Page 113
Triangulation Page 115
Interrater Reliability Page 116
Peer Review Page 117
Member Checking Page 118
Internal Validity Page 119
Human Subjects Committee Approval Page 120
External Reliability Page 120
Chapter 4 – Assertions Page 121
Question One: The Transition from Pre-Service to In-Service Page 121
Three Themes in Transitions Page 120
Research Question One Page 123
Developmentally Appropriate Practice Page 124
Motivation and Management Page 125
Differentiation and Enrichment Page 127
Molly Page 129
Lucy Page 151
Kelly Page 180
Subsequent Themes: Issues of Importance to
Transitioning Teachers Page 214
Assessment Page 214
Mentoring Page 216
Assertion One Revision Page 218
Assertion One Page 218
Assessments and Mentoring Page 220
Lucy Page 220
Molly Page 233
Kelly Page 241
Research Question One Page 244
Research Question Two Page 246

Emergence of Themes	Page 247
Fig. 1: Emerging Themes in Response to Question 2	Page 249
Theme One	Page 250
Theme Two	Page 257
Theme Three	Page 265
Theme Four	Page 269
Theme Five	Page 276
Research Question Two	Page 279
Research Assertion Two	Page 279
Chapter 5 – Conclusions	Page 281
Research Question One	Page 283
Response to Research Question One	Page 284
Discussion of Response	Page 284
Research Question Two	Page 291
Response to Research Question Two	Page 291
Discussion of Response	Page 292
Provision of Extended Teaching Opportunities in the Field	Page 292
Instruction Regarding High-Stakes Assessment and Enrichment of Assessment Curricula	Page 294
Additional Instruction in Management and Motivational Strategies Especially Through Observing Teachers in Classrooms	Page 297
Provision of Support and Mentoring through Field Experiences And, as an Option, Into the First Year of Teaching	Page 300
What, Exactly, is Effective Mentoring?	Page 300
Essential Elements of Successful Mentoring Systems	Page 306
Hope for New Teachers' Adjustment	Page 307
Conclusions	Page 308
Teacher Education Coursework	Page 309
Mentoring Programs	Page 313
Implications	Page 314
Directions for Research	Page 315
Limitations	Page 316
Concluding Thoughts	Page 317
References	Page 320
Index of Appendices and Appendices A-B	Page 330
Appendix A	Page 331
Appendix B	Page 336

Chapter 1

Introduction

"There is no one 'perfect method' for teaching reading to all children. Teachers, policy makers, researchers, and teacher educators need to recognize that the answer is not in the method but in the teacher" (Duffy & Hoffman, 1999, p. 10).

Every teacher knows what it is like to encounter an unforgettable student. It can occur for many reasons – that student's talent, sense of humor, knowledge, creativity, unique needs, or the challenges they bring to us. Often, a student is memorable for obstacles they overcome to reach their potential…perhaps against the odds. However it happens, that unforgettable student brings to their teacher a unique and valuable reward. Educators often say they remain in their profession for the rewards, but those rewards are not monetary. They are intrinsic, and they tend to remain in our hearts and our minds for a very long time. For twenty-one years, I have supervised student teachers as they step into the classroom to try their wings. I have experienced the rewards of watching their growth, and I am particularly moved when I see them work to their potential in their teaching.

The research presented in this emic (Stake, 1995) collective case study has centered on the growth and development of three such novice teachers, from student teaching to their own classrooms. Stake (1995) defines "emic issues" as "those concerns and values recognized in the behavior and language of the people being studied" (p.42). This case study is emic because the participants were assigned to me by the department, and I have chosen the collective case study method because each of their stories uniquely describes their transition from pre-service to in-service teaching. Pre-service teaching refers to all practicum and field experiences, including student teaching and internship.

In-service teaching refers to experiences in their own contracted classrooms. In the course of supervising them and watching them grow, they have become wedged in my memory, not only for what they have given to their students, but for their courage and determination in overcoming obstacles to do so. This research tells the story of these three memorable student teachers' emergence as effective literacy instructors in their classrooms, and it also reveals the nature of the struggles that were an inherent part of their transition from pre-service to in-service teaching.

I am interested in learning the reasons that qualified new educators from cutting edge programs are currently experiencing significant difficulties in these transitions, enough to heighten attrition rates of new teachers to around 50% (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Teacher education programs are searching for ways to instill the knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction, while also equipping new teachers with additional help to weather what awaits them in the "real world" of assessment-based education reform (Valencia, Place, Martin, & Grossman, 2006). "Best practice" is defined in the landmark research of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the International Reading Association (IRA) (1998) as "the best educational practices for young children, practices that are age-appropriate, individually appropriate, and culturally appropriate" (Quick, 1998, p.253). "Young children" is a term that traditionally encompasses preschool through "primary" grades, generally referencing kindergarten through third grade. Although the participants completed a required placement in an intermediate grade level (generally referencing fourth through eighth grades) for either student teaching or internship assignments, and a primary grade for the other, they are all now contracted primary-grade in-service teachers.

Over the course of the twenty-one years I have worked with student teachers and occasionally new in-service teachers, I have observed a number of different foci and strategies come and go in literacy instruction. I have seen some recommendations for "best practice" that have proven cyclical since I began this career. A major component of my work has always been the evaluation of student teachers' abilities to instruct literacy effectively, while creating the classroom climate and motivational tools that promote children's love of reading. This part of my work has become my passion within the scope of the teaching I do while supervising during field experiences.

Five years ago I approached the education professor who directed field experiences for State University (a pseudonym) to ask for his assistance in investigating changes in evaluation tools used for supervising student teachers in their field experiences. For some time, I had felt the need to find or develop a tool that would enable more in-depth assessment of student teachers' work in the classroom, and so I embarked upon a year-long independent study to analyze other teacher education programs' evaluation procedures. Under this professor's tutelage, I created new formative and summative assessments, based on common characteristics at multiple comparable universities. These new assessments were designed to provide additional feedback for pre-service teachers, while also evaluating aspects of their teaching not covered in the previous evaluations. These new documents closely align with state teaching standards and specifically target teacher behaviors that demonstrate "best practice," which I am defining for this study as developmentally, individually, and culturally appropriate instructional practice aligning with state standards which are formally evaluated in field experiences. A new section was added to the evaluations, entitled "Professional

Dispositions," which holds student teachers accountable for such affective traits as respect for all students, the ability to address individual and cultural differences in the classroom, and the exemplification of professional communication, appearance, and attitude (Segebrecht, 2007, Appendix A). An example is professional disposition number five: "The teacher candidate demonstrates respect for the dignity and worth of all students; the belief that all students are capable of learning" (formative evaluation, p. 4).

These new evaluation documents were adopted for use by the School of Education at State University the following academic year, and both verbal and written feedback from student teachers was consistently positive. Some pre-service teachers indicated that the evaluation of their professional dispositions provided them with valued feedback they were seeking. Both university supervisors and cooperating teachers are required to complete this portion and to discuss their responses with student teachers. It soon became apparent that the content of the evaluation as a whole was particularly valuable to the students in providing very specific feedback in regard to literacy instruction. This became evident in our follow up conferences, required after each of my observations, and including required input from cooperating teachers.

I began to notice that including these dispositions in formative evaluations frequently elicited a different type of conversation during the required conferences with pre-service teachers and their cooperating teachers following each observation than I had customarily experienced in former years. The pre-service teachers were now more openly expressing their reflections, needs, frustrations, and uncertainties, and seemed more willing to share their successes as well. All of this was taking place in discussions that arose within our evaluation conferences after my observations of their teaching. In

comparison to previous years of supervision using other assessment tools, I noticed an increasing number of statements described pre-service teachers' lack of confidence about teaching literacy in particular. Student teachers began to ask more questions, seek more help, and offer more in-depth descriptions of their strengths and weaknesses. I noted that often their expressed concerns centered on unanticipated changes in literacy instruction, particularly the impact of classroom assessments and scripted curricula. It was at this particular juncture that I decided to further investigate the transitions these students were making from insecure to competent literacy instructors.

Research Questions

Over the years, I have considered what, if anything, could be modified within the pre-service experience to offer more complete preparation, to instill greater confidence, and to better facilitate that transition to the "real world" for our student teachers (Clandinin & Connelly, 1986). This self-questioning, combined with the new information shared by my student teachers, evolved into two predominant research questions that I will address in this case study:

- *How do novice teachers negotiate the disparities between research-based, best practice literacy instruction in their teacher preparation programs and the realities of the classroom as they transition from pre-service to in-service?*
- *What could be done by universities to assist future teachers of literacy as they transition from pre-service to in-service?*

To answer these questions, I have looked to: (a) research literature, including important, comprehensive studies that have informed legislation, (b) exemplary teacher

education programs in literacy, (c) my observations during student teaching supervision and subsequent interactions over the course of twenty-one years, and (d) the suggestions, insights, and advice of the three pre-service and now in-service elementary educators I have come to know. The vast amount of data I have gathered from these participants has provided the framework for the emic collective case study I now present in these pages. This study makes a contribution to the current body of research in literacy because the perspectives of in-service and novice literacy teachers have seldom been investigated: "There are major gaps in this literature. For example, little is reported that examines the experiences of first-year or novice teachers…Where is the research of those consultants who do this work as a full-time job?" (Feiman-Nemser, 2003, p. 732).

For fall semester of the 2007-2008 academic year, I was assigned to supervise twelve State University pre-service teachers in their eight-week student teaching placements. Scheduling 36 visits in eight weeks with significant travel involved is invariably a challenge, and I was thankful as I made my first visits that all twelve appeared to be doing well initially in their placements. I continued to make the rounds observing everyone's initial lessons, but for three of these pre-service teachers, those visits were noteworthy. Each of the three taught literacy during my required observations, and their abilities appeared markedly unusual. They demonstrated instructional strategies, motivational skills, and general knowledge exceeding my expectations, particularly what I was accustomed to encountering in a first lesson during student teaching. Of interest, all three did so despite being assigned to teach unexpected, unfamiliar, and for them, disappointing, literacy curricula in their classrooms. These three pre-service teachers, however, found ways to infuse their lessons with the "best

practice" they had learned in their literacy coursework. Scripted and/or undifferentiated curricula came to life in their hands, and their students were engaged, maintaining focused behavior as they completed assigned tasks, activities, and collaborations As the three participants conferenced with me following their observations, they expressed their desire to transform their assigned curricula into something "meaningful" to their students. Their formative assessments (Segebrecht, 2007), which I had just completed, indicated they had done exactly that.

Since these three student teachers were also assigned to me during their following semester as interns, we developed a closer connection. They spoke honestly and openly with me about their classroom experiences, and they expressed their thoughts and occasional frustrations regarding the literacy curricula they were required to teach. Once again, two of the pre-service teachers' assignments required them to teach literacy instruction based on assessment preparation. The third pre-service teacher, whose assignment did not require assessment preparation (because of grade level), continued to infuse her limited curriculum with enrichment and differentiation she created to address those limitations. She demonstrated skills and knowledge that once again surpassed my expectations. The two who taught in an assessment-based environment continued to bring their motivational skills and enrichment ideas into their literacy instruction, again enlivening a dull curriculum. I wanted to observe whether or not they would continue to adapt their instruction as needed. They were facing circumstances demanding more of them than anticipated, and they were succeeding by bringing their knowledge and skills to the fore.

I began documenting the stories of these three pre-service teachers as they transitioned from student teaching to internship, and I continued to do so, from the fall of 2008 through the spring of 2010, in their first and second years as in-service classroom teachers. My objective in undertaking this research was to learn if their preparation in teacher education had equipped them sufficiently to deal with the hurdles they would invariably encounter in the classroom, first as a student, and then as an independent teacher. I documented their experiences, questions, and concerns, because they demonstrated unique skills that I had seldom seen in novices, from student teaching through their second year as teachers in their own classrooms.

Within that process of documentation, I began to learn specific elements of their teacher education program at State University that had helped to prepare them best for the transitions to field experiences and eventually to their own classrooms. They reported the preparational benefits they perceived from course content regarding specific literacy assessment tools such as running records, from professors' expertise with word work, and particularly, from the opportunities provided them to work with students in their literacy practica. They placed significant value upon their experiences in student teaching and internship assignments. I wanted to see how well the skills which I had observed them using would serve them in continued pre-service and subsequent independent teaching. My experiences with these three pre-service teachers were the inspiration and foundation for a longitudinal emic collective case study that would constitute my dissertation and hopefully contribute to an apparent void in professional literature. It is emic (Stake, 1995) because these three participants were assigned to me as students, and their talents and skills emerged within that experience. It is a collective case study, because it is the

story of the varied experiences of three individuals who possess unique combinations of skills and strengths. The study documents how the participants' skills equipped them to teach, and where obstacles emerged in their paths to independence. Their stories will inform teacher educators of their insights regarding what is valued and what is needed in order to achieve success as independent literacy instructors.

As student teachers, the three participants appeared to be unique literacy instructors for the following reasons: Molly (pseudonym used) had an exemplary knowledge of children's literature which she infused into the literacy curriculum and implemented across all other subjects with her students, effectively inspiring their desire to read widely. Lucy (pseudonym used), required by her district during her student teaching assignment to utilize a scripted curriculum to teach literacy, found unique ways to enrich the content and include effective differentiation for low achievers. Kelly (pseudonym used) taught the required pre-assessment curriculum her school had adopted, while effectively engaging students through her use of language and unique management strategies. Each participant's talents were unique among pre-service teachers. "When we have opportunity to choose the case, it is often more useful to pick the one most likely to enhance our understanding than to pick the one most typical. In fact, highly atypical cases can sometimes contribute to our understanding of other cases" (Stake, 1995, p. 134). In describing the struggles these novice teachers encountered, despite their strong evaluations in pre-service teaching, new light may be shed upon pre-service teachers' transitions to competent independent classroom instructors in literacy. This case study also draws upon the theoretical framework of transformative learning (Mezirow, 1991), described by Anfara and Mertz (2006): "[This theory] explain[s] how adults make

meaning of their life experiences, and how this meaning-making can bring about powerful changes or transformations in their view of themselves and their world…In short, transformation learning *shapes* people; they are different afterward, in ways both they and others can recognize" (p. 25). The reader will be able to observe the participants' changes, transformations, and growth, through each of the different experiences this research documents, through their words and actions, inside and outside the classroom.

The Problem

Over the twenty-one years that I have taught and mentored prospective teachers within their field experiences, I have observed that an increasing number of new in-service teachers do not feel prepared to teach literacy in their own classrooms for multiple, complex reasons. This perceived sense of being "unprepared" has been articulated by an increasing number of competent education graduates from State University's reputable program. In recent years especially, the majority of pre-service teachers assigned to me for supervision have informed me of their self-doubt and hesitancy in regard to teaching literacy during student teaching and/or internship assignments. A number of them have confided that this is largely because the pedagogy, theories, and strategies that they have learned in their coursework and tried to practice in their pre-service placements don't effectively translate to the realities and expectations of their assigned classrooms. They have reported to me in observational conferences that they find it problematic when their student teaching or internship assignments place them in a position where they are not permitted to utilize the best practice they have learned and are eager to implement with students. Sometimes this disparity occurs after

graduation, as they are caught in this conundrum upon receiving their first in-service teaching assignments. .

This phenomenon became problematic for a pre-service teacher who arrived in her internship placement at the beginning of spring semester and was immediately informed, "We don't teach reading until March. It's assessment prep only until then" (Kelly, formative observation conference, February 28, 2008). She was then handed a pre-assessment manual for literacy instructional time in the classroom and told to teach it as the manual specified. She characterized that moment not only as a problem for her, but a moral issue, when she had learned unmistakably in her literacy coursework that this directive violates "best practice." She had the skills and the knowledge, as well as the desire, to do what was best for her students, but as an intern, she was not allowed to make that choice; at least, not until assessments were over.

Over the years I have received occasional requests for help because the first job has landed one of my former pre-service teachers in an environment where they felt unable or (strongly) discouraged to teach to student need and according to "best practice," particularly in literacy. Their need for scaffolding to cope with this reality on the job was clearly indicated in those moments. This transition became increasingly difficult for some new in-service teachers when no person had been assigned to help them by their district or school, or university during their first year in practice. Likewise, the transition was equally difficult for new in-service teachers when a person was assigned who was untrained or ineffective in helping them work through their instructional issues. In the case of one of my participants, the person assigned to her as a mentor simply failed to show up. While notable teacher education programs may provide students with

relevant pedagogy and underlying knowledge to effectively teach their students, novice teachers can provide insights into additional information they find advisable to include. The preparation and skills demonstrated by the case study participants as pre-service teachers did not exempt them from encountering significant challenges in adapting their knowledge to requirements imposed on them in their first in-service classrooms. However, that preparation and those skills did enable them to incorporate the developmentally appropriate practice, differentiation, enrichment, and motivation to enliven literacy instruction. Because of their knowledge and skills, these particular novice teachers have a unique perspective, underrepresented in research to date: They have demonstrated how their knowledge and training is being utilized, even in difficult circumstances. And they have also revealed their insights regarding ways in which that knowledge and expertise could have been further enhanced, and challenges diminished, by additional provisions.

In addressing this expressed need of novice teachers, some teacher education programs are working to inform pre-service teachers of assessment-related policies and mandates, as well as associated curricular materials in circulation. The programs are informing them that the best practice they have learned can be difficult, but not impossible, to implement depending upon what their school or district demands. Teacher education programs can provide multiple opportunities, examples, and ideas for managing differentiation, motivation, and supplementation in a restricted, assessment-based school environment. In addition, they can help provide the scaffolding of a knowledgeable teaching professional. These are changes that have been successfully

addressed in some university programs, and they are changes that students have said are necessary.

In this emic (Stake, 1995) collective case study, I have explored how three novice teachers have been affected by forces outside the control of their teacher education program. These forces include compliance with district, administrative and government assessment mandates and implementation requirements for district-prescribed, scripted reading curricula. Each of their stories is noteworthy for the manner in which they encountered and complied with, or confronted, these obstacles to ideal literacy instruction, while successfully teaching their students despite the difficulties they experienced. All three participants have managed to implement sound strategies in literacy instruction in their in-service classrooms and have documented their students' significant progress. It is this progress which they profess to be the source of their hope and their motivation. They have fought their individual battles, and they have won, to different degrees and in different manners. It is important to reveal how and why they have overcome obstacles in their first two years as in-service teachers, as well as to hear what helped them do so. During these periods of transition, the participants' experiences, reflections, and classroom practices demonstrate what benefited them most, as well as what they found to be missing.

"What should we do?"

In the past several years, the obstacles within literacy instruction reported by the pre-service teachers I have supervised indicate their growing discomfort with the disconnect between what they have been taught is "best practice" in literacy instruction as college students, and what they are expected or mandated to teach as pr-service

teachers. These state and district expectations and mandates are strict and precise, my participants report, but to differing degrees. However, all have found that the decisions they make in their own classroom must be determined not only on the basis of what they have learned is best for their students, but upon requirements and accountability, with their credibility statistically determined by their students' test scores. They report that they have struggled to find a balance between the two.

I have developed a sense of urgency in documenting pre-service teachers' and novice in-service teachers' feedback and reflections regarding the specific knowledge and experience(s) that have proven most helpful in meeting their needs within their education programs. I have also learned where gaps and roadblocks have emerged for them, in their transitions from the college classroom to pre-service teaching experiences and subsequently to the workplace. Part of my research has involved an investigation of exemplary literacy programs in teacher education practices in various parts of the country. In this research, I have revealed the components of those programs, both in terms of pre-service coursework and the field experiences they provide.

Encountering the Realities of Assessment in Education

My pre-service teachers often refer to the "real-world" emphasis upon assessment, teaching to tests, and dropping facets of their intended literacy curriculum to facilitate assessment preparation as phenomena for which they were unprepared. They express gratitude that they were taught the "correct" approach to teaching reading, but also realize that in most circumstances, teachers are no longer permitted to do what is "correct" in their classrooms. They want answers to the overriding question that can torment pre-service and new teachers: Is it ok to resist the pre-assessment curricula and

the scripted programs and do what is best for the students? Some of them feel they lack adequate background knowledge about assessment in general, and particularly those assessments most often utilized for high-stakes "rewards" and/or funding in various school districts (Wilson, Dellinger, Green Murphy, Hatfield, Long, & Fanitozzi, 2008). Some were unaware of what research had been commissioned or utilized to "inform" the passage of legislation from which the assessment craze in today's schools evolved. Some are disappointed and frustrated by being required to "teach to the test" rather than being allowed to utilize the pedagogy and "best practice" they dutifully studied in teacher education courses. Some express the desire to have had a chance to learn and reflect upon these choices and dilemmas that teachers face during their literacy coursework, so that they might have been better prepared to face them on their own.

As stated earlier, some pre-service and new teachers are encountering packaged and/or scripted reading curricula which their administrators demand (or "strongly encourage") they utilize verbatim, as instructed in the associated manuals containing rote, irrelevant, repetitive tasks and lifeless "stories." Finally, some individuals have reported their sense of helplessness when required to teach only pre-assessment strategies for the first six months of the school year. In the classroom, they are learning the necessity of covering material that will be tested, while still wanting to incorporate elements of best practice, such as motivating children to learn through motivating and varied approaches to the content being targeted. Lucy revealed what an assessment-driven curriculum required of her in her first year as a classroom teacher:

> *I was a rebel last year, and I didn't like the [scripted, whole-group only] curriculum, so I didn't [always] do it. But I didn't know any better…because you*

do have state tests in the end, and you do have accountability. I found myself being a rebel and loving it for the first couple of months, but [then] it's the third quarter, and here comes test time, and I had things I hadn't talked about yet for the test. And third quarter sucked. It was drill, drill, drill, and practice, practice, practice. However, I made that as fun and memorable as possible! (Interview, November 19, 2009)

While some pre-service teachers are placed in a learning environment for either their student teaching or internship (or both) where at least some of their students are at significant risk of failing assessments, other pre-service teachers are placed in classrooms where no (or few) students are at risk of failing. This fundamental difference in placements profoundly affects a student teacher's experiences, understandings, and their availability of opportunities to witness test preparation in the classroom. As documented in various empirical studies (Risko, Roller, Cummins, Bean, Block, Anders, & Flood, 2008), students have discovered firsthand that while schools located within lower socioeconomic, more multicultural environments tend to incorporate more lengthy test preparation, the affluent, more homogeneous areas generally do not, since their students reliably and consistently produce higher scores after the usual curriculum implementation.

Choice of Participants

Three years ago, as I neared the end of my doctoral coursework and continued to supervise students during their field experiences, I was assigned as university supervisor to Lucy, Molly, and Kelly; three pre-service teachers who quickly demonstrated strong skills and effectiveness in teaching literacy in their assigned classrooms. Their formative

evaluations, which I was required to complete at each of my formal observations, were unusual because of the number of "exemplary" ratings they received on standards-based performance criteria for their literacy instruction in their first observation during student teaching. They also received "exemplary" ratings in the evaluation of their professional dispositions demonstrated in the classroom (Segebrecht 2007) at the same point in time. As their student teaching experiences progressed, their consistency in utilizing these demonstrated skills in their literacy instruction became evident.

During that student teaching assignment, I made the decision to begin identifying and documenting the student teachers' actions, ideology, foundational theories, teaching strategies, and personal attributes for the purpose of delineating teaching traits and practices that characterized marked exceptionality in literacy instruction. Lucy, Kelly and Molly appeared to be appropriate choices for further investigation because of their multifaceted differences from each other and their singularity within their cadre of fellow education students that semester. Each had a unique approach and style, demonstrating consistent teaching practices worthy of documentation and description, while effectively engaging their students. Of importance, they found ways to incorporate best practice, as taught in their teacher education coursework, within the confines of assessment preparation and scripted curricula utilization. Their stories reveal the specific characteristics of effective literacy instruction that I recognized in these students initially, and demonstrate how these characteristics have played a role in their adaptation to their environments during the transitions to effective independent literacy instruction.

"The chapters of the case report might be identified by the issues, but even if the problems are not solved, in case study, the case needs to be larger, more

concrete, more engaged in natural life, than the issues themselves reveal" (Stake, 1995, p. 127).

The Stories Begin…

As their university supervisor, I hoped that immersing myself in these three participants' unique journeys to independent teaching would enable me to tell their rich individual stories. I will describe each participant and her experiences in a manner that sheds light on the particular qualities, skills, experiences, and knowledge that have contributed to the development of new teachers who are effective literacy instructors. I will share, from their perspectives, which elements of teacher education in literacy have contributed notably to that success. I will reveal their struggles and frustrations with factors outside their control in their individual schools, as well as how they dealt with them. I anticipate that the unfolding of experiences in their first jobs in the workforce might reveal some interesting developments that could inform teacher educators as to the nature of the transition to independent teaching from a new teacher's perspective.

The Questions: Straight to the Source

Several notable studies have reported the reality of "teacher shock" on the part of novice teachers in the workplace (Cochran-Smith, 2001; Gratch, 1998; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Fuller, 1969; Grossman & Thompson, 2004; Howey & Zimpher, 1989; Schlecty & Whitford, 1989; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004: Stanulis, Burrill, & Ames, 2007; Veenman, 1984; Wang & Odell, 2002; Wang, Odell & Schwille, 2008; Wang, Strong, & Odell, 2004; Wildman, Niles, Magliaro & McLaughlin, 1989). Other than Commeyras and Degroff's (1998) survey of a broad range of literacy educators before the enactment of No Child Left Behind legislation, however, I have not encountered recent research

addressing this issue in regard to literacy instruction in particular, constructed from the perspective of the new teacher. While an occasional study has researched new teacher actions under varying demands for reading instruction (Benton & Schillo, 2004; Valencia, Place, Martin, & Grossman, 2006), I have encountered none that have attempted to ask preservice and new teachers questions such as the following:

1. What in your teacher education program helped to prepare you to teach literacy successfully?
2. What in your teacher education program was needed to better prepare you to teach literacy successfully?
3. What, if anything, do you wish had been different in your preparation to teach literacy to your students?
4. What, if anything, do you need to know during your first two years of independent teaching from your teacher educators?
5. What are your literacy goals for your students?"

These are the questions I have posed to my case study participants at each phase of this longitudinal study. These questions constitute the framework around which I have constructed my interview questions, and they have become a foundation and reference point to frame my reporting of my students' experiences and to relay their stories fully, deeply, and accurately.

As per Creswell (2007), case studies often present topical questions as each subject's unique experiences unfold. These topical questions become critically important in eliciting information to inform the complete "stories" reported in many qualitative studies. Within my case study, I have obtained information, insights, and reflections

from each of my three participants based upon these additional guiding questions that Creswell suggests using:

> What are the experiences in this individual's life?
>
> What are stories that can be told from these experiences?
>
> What are some "turning points?"
>
> What are some theories that relate to this individual's life? (p.110)

Ad Astra Per Aspera: To the Stars… Through Difficulties

It is my goal, through the course of this three-year study, to uncover the deeper stories of my participants. In the 1990's, studies tended to look at teacher education programs as facilitators and encouragers of connection-building, reflection and learning by doing in classrooms, carefully guided by teacher educators and cooperating teachers (Risko et al., 2008). Since the turn of the century, however, the focus has enlarged to include closer looks at teaching in a diverse, more globally connected environment with intentional ethnosensitivity (Sleeter, 2001). The focus upon assessment throughout the United States over the course of the past ten years, however, has resulted in changes within schools that are unparalleled, many of which are antithetical to targeted outcomes of assessments, particularly for minorities and poor students: "Over time, the longer standardized controls are in place, the wider the gap becomes as the system of testing and test prep comes to substitute in minority schools for the curriculum available to more privileged students" (McNeil, 2001, p.3). This represents a situation which new teachers are facing, Kelly and Lucy particularly; one for which they say they were not initially prepared. Perhaps their stories and insights will reveal ways in which teacher education programs can continue to work at addressing this dilemma faced by many new teachers.

In this case study I present an authentic and vivid picture of teaching potential coupled with insatiable desire on the part of each of these three novice teachers to give their students the best they have to offer in literacy instruction in their classrooms. I provide a “thick description…[a] complete, literal description of the incident[s] or entit[ies] being investigated” (Merriam, 1988, p.11). It was my desire to contribute an accurate, discernable portrayal of what I observed initially as potential coupled with relentless drive to provide children cutting-edge literacy instruction, with all of the aforementioned components and ideals. I have revealed their personalities, abilities, successes, challenges, strengths, weaknesses, joys, and frustrations from their first days as student teachers, through their semester-long internships, and into their first two years as in-service classroom instructors. Each student is currently in her second year of teaching. Much has taken place, including significant hurdles, unique for each of them. Their experiences need to be documented and shared in detail to better inform and enlighten the teacher education community of the nature of transition in literacy instruction with all of the nuances entailed.

As their university supervisor for both student teaching and internship during the fifth year of their education programs, I have acquired a number of official artifacts in the process of evaluating their work. Each of these artifacts contains a record of our conference in regard to the particular observation it concerns, as well as documentation of specific feedback from cooperating teachers. In addition, I have recorded and transcribed copious field notes from eight-hour observations of these new teachers at work in their classrooms. I have obtained forms and notes from formal (official discussion after each observation, structured around the completed formative evaluation form) and informal

conversations (phone calls and email correspondence) regarding their teaching and my interviews of them during the past three years. I have retained emails documenting their questions and concerns. Of significance, I have established a positive, ongoing rapport and friendship with each participant that has placed me in the position of trusted mentor, consultant, and friend. In turn, they have continued to teach and inspire me more than I could have imagined.

"…and miles to go before I sleep…"
-Robert Frost

From my three case study participants, I have gained insights, requests, and potential solutions for the consideration of teacher educators who share my concern with providing optimal preparation to teacher candidates for teaching literacy effectively to children. As we all continue the voyage, individually and collectively, into the unknown waters that await, as education becomes more and more tightly (if not rightly) regulated by those outside our domain and expertise, may we carefully and thoughtfully consider some new, inspiring ideas that are not only notable, but sometimes remarkably novel and eye-opening. The time has come to turn away, momentarily, from the edicts and opinions of lawmakers, law enforcers, curriculum sales representatives, and assessment-driven administrators…and listen carefully to the energizing life force with potential to change the "mess" in public education that is the subject of much conversation and controversy. The time has come to listen to the talented, motivated, and inspiring cadre of novice educators in America.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

This chapter explains the need for my research. I have conducted an in-depth investigation of major studies regarding skills required for excellence in literacy instruction. The information drawn from these studies provides the framework for reporting my subjects' classroom practices. Consulting these bodies of literature and their inherent conclusions and recommendations for best practice provide points of reference in consideration of my research questions:

- *How do novice teachers negotiate the disparities between research-based, best practice literacy instruction in their teacher preparation programs and the realities of the classroom as they transition from pre-service to in-service?*
- *What should be done by universities to assist future teachers of literacy as they transition from pre-service to in-service?*

The studies cited in this review contain a substantial body of information that aligns with the conceptual framework of State University's teacher education program. This conceptual framework for State University's School of Education, which appears in our logo, course syllabi, and many places throughout our physical building, is comprised of "research, best practice, content knowledge, and professionalism." This conceptual framework guides the design of education courses in literacy, and is the root of any changes and alterations that are made within. Since educators propose to convey this to pre-service teachers, it is important to further investigate the elements of literacy instruction research recommends as "best practice." It is a somewhat nebulous term, subject to change over time, defined and substantiated by examining a variety of research

studies that have inspected and assessed effective instruction from many different perspectives. It is for this reason that my literature review contains reports of a number of studies that draw upon empirical research to define what the elements of "best practice" in literacy instruction really are. Included in these are landmark studies that have informed legislation that has significantly impacted the current educational climate as well as expectations for new classroom teachers. The current educational reform movement, combined with pressure for change from questionably informed entities, is at the basis of teacher education programs' efforts to comply with NCATE requirements. Through meeting these requirements, teacher education programs thereby substantiate best practice within our programs as well.

> After a decade of laying blame for the ills of U.S. education at the feet of teachers, reformers have shifted the blame to teacher educators, who get blamed for just about every problem in U.S. education and many in U.S. society. Teacher education is now the answer to two of the most important questions in the reform rhetoric: (1) What's wrong? And (2) how do we fix it? (Pearson, 2001, p.4 in Maloch et al., 2003, p.431)

Teacher educators currently find themselves at a crossroads. While classroom teachers find their professional expectations unquestionably altered by legislative reform and mandated high-stakes assessment such as No Child Left Behind prescribes, teacher educators are faced with the dilemma of providing students with a comprehensive research-based curriculum blending theory and best practice, while still preparing their students for the realities of the classroom, where they will inevitably find outcomes-based assessment to be the dominant guiding principle for instruction. Teacher education

programs have addressed this dilemma in various ways, and in literacy instruction, documented changes fall into the following categories: literacy coursework, hands-on opportunities, and induction programs.

Literacy Coursework and Hands-On Opportunities

The first type of change is the extension of students' literacy coursework, which has been undertaken in several major universities. Many have included additional hands-on teaching opportunities for students earlier in their programs as a component of literacy courses. Some of these programs have also provided their education students with the added option of graduating with a reading specialist certification as well as their education degree (Carr & Evans, 2006; Wang & Odell, 2002). This would qualify students to assume positions as reading specialists or reading coaches.

State University's teacher preparation program that serves as the site for this study is a five-year program that exemplifies this extension of coursework offered to pre-service teachers. The program is constructed to provide students with their bachelor's degree in elementary education at the conclusion of their fourth year, with the fifth year providing student teaching and internship experiences and fifteen hours of master's coursework between the two. The literacy coursework begins the first semester in the program with Literacy Instruction in Primary Grades, a class that includes a 20-hour practicum experience tutoring children in reading. The next literacy course required of our students, Literacy Instruction in Intermediate Grades, includes a 22-hour practicum with both tutoring and small group instruction in literacy. Both courses provide extensive modeling and practice of assessment strategies, planning, teaching and differentiation, as well as requiring in-depth reporting of how various tools are implemented and evaluated

with students assigned to pre-service teachers through the practica. The children's literature course that is required further informs pre-service teachers for the implementation of resources for these experiences with students during their practica and subsequent field experiences. This initiative to provide hands-on experience extensively and early in the program is not unique to State University, but rather a trend to be seen in a number of literacy instruction programs that have received high marks for producing effective new classroom teachers. Southeastern Louisiana University and the University of New Mexico have incorporated extensions to teacher education programs that provide additional coursework, easier access to graduate degrees, and additional hands-on experiences. These programs are described further in a subsequent section of this chapter.

Induction Programs

An additional type of change documented in teacher education programs is the incorporation of induction programs to provide pre-service teachers with support throughout their classroom experiences working with students and into their first year(s) on the job (Feiman-Nemser, 2003; Howey & Zimpher, 1989; Stanulis, Burrill, & Ames, 2007). In doing so, universities exert some control over the type and amount of support that new teachers receive in their first teaching positions, determined by their indicated needs. Some universities have developed partnerships with neighboring school districts for the incorporation of induction as a joint venture between the two. These various types of induction programs are described extensively in a subsequent portion of this chapter.

Assessment of Student Teachers

The third type of change reflected in numerous university teacher education programs across the United States, as demonstrated in their formative and summative evaluation instruments (Segebrecht, 2007, Appendices A and B), is an emphasis upon reflection and inquiry on the part of teacher candidates, particularly during their field experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 1986; Howey & Zimpher, 1989; Stanulis, Burrill, & Ames, 2007). In addition to adopting the new formative and summative instruments described in chapter one, State University has also added written assignments for student teachers and interns that incorporate different types of reflections upon their teaching and their experience in the classroom overall. Pre-service teachers must submit weekly reflections discussing whatever they choose about their work in the classroom, as well as a self-evaluation of their teaching as reviewed on videotape. In addition, they are assigned a project in which they choose one of their students to evaluate in depth, while providing differentiation as needed. All of these written reports are submitted to university supervisors, which has served to enhance communication between the two parties, and to better inform the supervisor about observations made while visiting the classroom to evaluate the pre-service teacher.

All of these types of changes reflect efforts on the part of teacher education programs to adapt to NCATE's directive: "teaching to standards" (Wang, Odell, & Schwille, 2008). Wang et al. (2008) interpret "teaching to standards" to include the following crucial elements within teacher education programs: project-style, learner-oriented instruction, construction of knowledge individually and collaboratively, learning viewed as active sense-making, the concept of teacher as facilitator, connecting learning with students' personal experiences, promoting deep understanding of concepts

(especially across the curriculum), discovery and sharing of ideas, and the concept that all students are able to reach excellence regardless of their background. The stories of the three participants' teaching experiences will reveal their knowledge of these various concepts as well as their efforts to incorporate them in their classrooms.

Wang et al. (2008) provide specific recommendations that are evident in several exemplary teacher education programs. While they report various alterations in teacher education programs that have been undertaken to more fully prepare students to teach to standards, none of these changes have proven to be a panacea to a problem articulated by pre-service teachers: Even in-service teachers feel inept at dealing with the changes that are being required of elementary classroom teachers, just as they are discouraged by having to eliminate valued curriculum components to meet demands placed upon them (McNeil, 2001).

There is little evidence in research of specific content added to teacher education programs to provide background information about such changes as high-stakes assessment and scripted curricula and the manifestations that new teachers will encounter in their first employment. Research reviewed lacks evidence that teacher education programs' content is changing to incorporate the careful review of commonly mandated packaged curricula and scripted reading programs that new teachers are likely to be ordered to teach in their first employment.

However, there are research studies that have carefully examined attrition in the schools (Jacob, 2007; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004) and report that providing training in reflective practice, mentored throughout and beyond the teacher education program, has a positive effect on teacher retention and first year success (Howey & Zimpher, 1989;

Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Wang & Odell, 2002; Wang, Odell, & Schwille, 2008). They report a 75% attrition rate for first-year teachers dropping by 30% for those first-year teachers who were participants in induction programs provided by their teacher education program after graduation. Their research indicates that 80% of new teachers elected to participate in a university induction program in which they worked closely with a mentor assigned to them.

"Now I see in a mirror, dimly…"

A common thread in research regarding needed content and potential change in teacher education programs is a renewed focus upon reflective practice. While teacher education programs may have incorporated journaling during clinical experiences for years, only recently has a more reflective stance become a standard component of pre-service classroom instruction as well. This raises the question: Does reflection actually improve teaching on the part of pre-service teachers? Of the many opinion pieces and narrative reviews that respond positively to this question, Clandinin and Connelly (1986) recommend continuous personal reflection and inquiry into the internal and external elements that collectively define experiences as necessary components of successful teaching. Similarly, Howey and Zimpher (1989) draw upon their experience in teacher education to emphasize the importance of incorporating inquiry and reflection into the total teacher preparation experience. They recommend extending the process into induction programs, ensuring that new teachers retain the necessary support to continue inquiry and reflection, with feedback provided, in their own classrooms. Feiman-Nemser (1979) persuasively echoed this call for greater incorporation of inquiry into teaching techniques, methodology, and pre-service teachers' peer-group reflections upon their

experiences with their students. She stressed that pre-service teachers must continually clarify their own values and purposes. She proposed that teacher education programs can promote this by applying it in teacher education coursework, in which pre-service teachers are required to follow up observations with small group sharing and reflecting.

Based upon a longitudinal study of elementary pre-service teachers' beliefs, understandings, and practices with struggling and non-struggling readers within the field components of two university reading education courses, Duffy and Atkinson (2001) claim that "teachers who do their own thinking will provide qualitatively better instruction than teachers who passively follow models or materials" (p.89). Duffy and Atkinson emphasize the importance of exposing pre-service educators to a variety of models and materials, so that they will have the necessary skills to evaluate packaged reading programs and make informed decisions. From a similar perspective, Valencia, Place, Martin and Grossman (2006) report their observations and findings from a longitudinal study of beginning teachers' use of curriculum materials: "At the pre-service stage, prospective teachers need to become familiar with and develop a critical eye toward curriculum materials," noting that the study and implementation of them is "rarely a priority in teacher education programs" (p.117).

The methods of teaching reading are based on a myriad of different theories, approaches, and instructional implications, occasionally conflicting. In their undergraduate reading courses, students are ideally exposed to many of these varying approaches to reading instruction. Their ability to reflect upon, assess, and construct their own instructional plans in their field experiences and beyond depends upon their careful consideration of what they have observed and learned in class, as well as in their field

experiences. Based upon their observations of preservice teachers' experiences during student teaching, Korthagen and Kessels (1999) conclude that teacher education programs need to minimize the teaching of "theory without practice" while maximizing field experiences that are directly linked to theoretical teachings; acknowledging the need for extensive training of university supervisors and cooperating teachers in building such connections.

Experience: The Best Teacher?

> Now I understand why so many people say that experience is the best teacher. While I seemed very confused and apprehensive about teaching a struggling reader [at the beginning of the semester], I soon learned that many things seem to fall into place once you have a student in front of you who must be taught. Although I believed that all of the things that we have been learning in class were true before the field experience, it was not until I was able to experience teaching a struggling reader for myself that I was able [to] understand the importance of all of the strategies that I have learned (Duffy & Atkinson, 2001, p.96).

Research in teacher preparation, particularly in the field of literacy, is calling for more frequent field experiences that begin earlier in the education program, allowing increased student practice in actual assessment, planning, and delivery of instruction to students in a variety of settings (Benton & Schillo, 2004; Clift & Brady, 2005; Danielson, Kuhlman, & Fluckinger, 1998; Duffy & Atkinson, 2001; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Iaquinta, 2006; Maloch, Flint, Eldridge, Harmon, & Loven, 2003; Risko, Roller, Cummins, Bean, Block, Anders, & Flood, 2008; Wilson, Dellinger, Green, Murphy, Hatfield, Long, & Fantozzi, 2008). The student quoted above encountered the experience included in this

reflection as part of a practicum in a reading methods course targeting the needs of struggling readers (Duffy & Atkinson, 2001). Extensive research studies conducted by Maloch et al.(2003), Clift & Brady (2005), and Risko et al.(2008) all provide empirical evidence that those students who experience additional practicum teaching demonstrate greater success in their own classrooms in the first year of teaching. Maloch et al.(2003) examined specific content of various teacher education programs in the area of literacy instruction, demonstrating significant diversity among programs in both literacy coursework and field experiences. This study investigated components of three types of reading coursework within teacher education programs and reported requirements in reading coursework and extensive teaching experience in the field of literacy prior to student teaching in a number of programs, further described in the following section. The study clearly documented the positive effects of multiple, extensive field experiences in literacy instruction. They summarize their research as follows:

> Our findings suggest that the provision of content through coursework and field experiences that are closely coordinated and carefully supervised and varied apprenticeship opportunities together may result in teachers who are more able to respond in knowledgeable ways to students' needs (p.452).

Clift and Brady (2005) published a comprehensive analysis of research focusing on methods courses and clinical experiences, concluding that pre-service teachers benefit from extensive field experience with students, accompanied by supervision and mentoring. Risko et al.(2008) analyzed 82 empirical studies of teacher preparation in reading, concluding that "prospective teachers' pedagogical knowledge was enhanced within structured teaching formats and sustained interactions with students, and that

application of pedagogical knowledge is enhanced with mentoring that includes feedback on teaching and peer coaching" (p.278). More and more teacher education programs are hearing this call to provide multiple hands-on experiences to their students, as demonstrated in the aforementioned changes in some programs to incorporate a greater number of mentored literacy-teaching experiences.

Variety in "Excellent" Teacher Education Programs in Literacy

As mentioned earlier, the variety between the literacy components of teacher education programs is noteworthy. Maloch et al. (2003), revealed significant disparity in the number and types of literacy courses required or offered, as well as significant variance in the number of hours students spent in the field for literacy-related practicum experiences. This is noted in regard to programs that have increased these components or have begun to offer different types of degrees depending on amount and type of literacy coursework and field experiences completed, as reported in the literature. Maloch et al.(2003) reported "differences in the understandings, beliefs, and decision making of beginning teachers from three types of reading teacher preparation programs" (p.431). The teacher education programs that were investigated are categorized as follows: (a) those that offer a degree in reading specialization (in addition to a general education degree), which require fifteen hours of reading and language arts coursework as well as 150 hours of field experience before student teaching, (b) those described as general education programs, requiring no more than six hours of reading coursework and 50-100 hours of field experience before student teaching, and (c) those described as "reading embedded programs," which require at least six hours of reading and language arts coursework, "attempt to infuse reading content throughout all coursework" (p.436), and

provide 150 hours of field experiences before student teaching. All of the programs were offered at eight colleges or universities "identified by the International Reading Association's National Commission on Excellence in Elementary Teacher Preparation for Reading Instruction as excellent in undergraduate reading preparation" (p. 431). The criteria utilized by the commission to establish "excellence" in a teacher education program in literacy instruction were the following:

1. special attention to reading within the teacher preparation program
2. service to and/or focus on minority populations
3. history of research and development
4. faculty active in teacher education research
5. history of success in preparing teachers
6. commitment to field-based practices
7. collaboration with schools (Maloch et al., p.437).

In addition to rating the 101 graduates (beginning teachers) on their confidence in teaching in their own classrooms, the commission's interviews were designed to "elicit teachers' beliefs and understandings about how best to teach reading, how their students were progressing, and the relation between their preparation programs and their instructional practices" (p.439).

The themes evaluated in observations of new teachers representing all of these types of programs were the following:

1. Instructional decision making (based instructional decisions on students' needs and growth)
2. Negotiations (worked within and around mandated curriculum)

3. Community (reached beyond existing school structures to build a support system for ongoing learning)
4. Valuing teacher preparation (mentioned specific features from their teacher preparation programs that they valued)

The responses and demonstrations of these themes by new graduates from both reading specialization and reading embedded programs were comparable, and both categories' percentage totals were significantly higher (ranging from 65 to 94) than graduates from the general education programs (ranging from 21 to 37). These findings further underscore the need for and appreciation of their extensive field experiences, as expressed by the new teachers at State University, as well as their described implementation of practices learned in their coursework (See chapter 4).

Risko, Roller, Cummins, Bean, Block, Anders, and Flood (2008) reviewed and critiqued 82 empirical investigations on teacher preparation for reading instruction. They discovered a common thread among those programs investigated: "University teaching practices that benefit applications of pedagogical knowledge [as demonstrated by new and pre-service teachers] provide explicit explanations and experiences, demonstrations of practices, and opportunities for guided practice of teaching strategies in practicum settings with pupils" (p.252). Among the studies they cite are Clift and Brady (2005), whose investigation found that teacher candidates benefit from mentoring and supervised teaching experiences, and Argyris, Putnam and Smith (1985), who claim that [a hands-on approach with students] "would assess both expressed beliefs and beliefs-in-use and congruence between the two" (p.276). Syllabi from State University's coursework align with this valuing of such practices from coursework to field assignments.

Massey (1990) studied teacher candidates' application of strategies and assessments learned in tutoring sessions in their subsequent student teaching assignments, and found that 88% of students repeated their use in their student teaching placements. L'Allier (2005) reported that students were more apt to utilize teaching practices that had been demonstrated in class and practiced in a field placement than students who had only read of the practices or read about them in addition to watching a class demonstration. In concluding their comprehensive review of empirical studies, Risko et al. (2008) remarked that the "impact of a teacher education program is stronger when [the program uses] a "learning and doing approach to teaching" (p.276). The common thread apparent in the studies is the emphasis upon providing significant amounts of student practice opportunities in the classroom. Interestingly, the graduate student groups represented in the study by Maloch et al.(2003) demonstrated more confident, student-centered teaching as they drew upon previous knowledge and experience from their teacher education programs that provided significantly more hours of field experience before student teaching than most general education programs.

If the research sampled is representative of current trends and foci, teacher education programs are currently being critically evaluated in terms of their ability to shape their students into confident, reflective, research-based instructors who demonstrate the ability and confidence to adapt prescribed curricula and federal mandates to their students' needs. Researchers (Anders, Hoffman, & Duffy, 2000) are calling for further investigation to expand upon the research currently available to answer questions such as: How can reading coursework in teacher education programs provide connections between content, goals, and implementation? How can teacher education

instruction provide practical precursors followed by rich, varied, supervised, mentored field experiences that offer students opportunities to emulate instructors' modeling of peer interaction, research-based inquiry, reflection, critical thinking, problem-solving strategies, and methodology in their own classrooms?

Pre-service to Practice: New Connections

> What teachers know and can do makes the crucial difference in what teachers can accomplish. New courses, tests, curriculum reforms can be important starting points, but they are meaningless if teachers cannot use them productively. Policies can improve schools only if the people in them are armed with the knowledge, skills and supports they need (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996, p.5).

Feiman-Nemser (1997, 2001, 2003) has conducted extensive research on teacher preparation and induction strategies for new teachers, particularly in regard to experience with students in classrooms. She proposes changes within the concept of a teacher education framework for constructing curriculum that promotes "teacher learning over time" (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p.1014). She references current recommendations for "content-rich, learner-centered teaching" (p.1015), targeting the development of pre-service teachers' problem-solving skills, critical thinking, and sociocultural awareness. Rather than standing at the front of the room and informing their students, she calls new teachers to act as facilitators of students' inquiry, collaboration, and purposeful exploration. Feiman-Nemser proposes that it is extremely important for students to question their own beliefs in regard to teaching, through every step of pre-service and clinical experiences. Based upon her observations and teaching experience with pre-

service teachers, she proposes that teaching is the only profession in which students enter their coursework feeling prepared, simply because they have been students themselves and assume that they will carry on the traditional teacher role as they have learned it from the other side of the desk. Feiman-Nemser writes that early in their pre-service coursework, teacher candidates must begin to think beyond what they have experienced as students themselves growing up:

> Teacher candidates must also form visions of what is possible and desirable in teaching to inspire and guide their professional learning and practices. They [visions] help teachers construct a normative basis for developing and assessing their teaching and their students' learning. Unless teacher educators engage prospective teachers in a critical examination of their entering beliefs in light of compelling alternatives and help them develop powerful images of good teaching and strong professional commitments, these entering beliefs will continue to shape their ideas and practices. (p.1017)

The Role of the Cooperating Teacher

Feiman-Nemser's research (2001, 2003) substantiates a need for further investigation into the provision of optimal field experiences for teacher candidates. In their comprehensive historical literature review, Anders, Hoffman and Duffy (2000) also address this need for further research:

> There are major gaps in this literature. For example, little is reported that examines the experiences of first-year or novice teachers. There is a mismatch between the amount of effort invested in in-service education and the amount of research being reported. Where is the research of those consultants who do this

> work as a full-time job? The distinction between training and teacher education needs to be examined. We know how to 'train' teachers (e.g., with specific behavioral outcomes targeted), but we need to know more about educating teachers (e.g., with the goal of conceptual change, enhanced decision-making capabilities, or strategic teaching). (p.732)

This call to enhance new teachers' decision-making skills speaks to the importance of student teachers' development of positive relationships with their cooperating teachers. While teacher educators present valuable, relevant information prior to the student teaching experience, new teachers consistently voice the importance of learning that skill in their student teaching experience, through the guidance, modeling, and feedback of cooperating teachers. It is not uncommon for even the most capable pre-service teachers to verbally express their insecurity about their skills and knowledge and to clearly state their need for specific feedback, including clear delineation of what they may be doing *right.*

Feiman-Nemser (2001) expresses her concern regarding the belief systems that cooperating teachers often suggest (or force) upon their student teachers, rationalized as the reality of classroom teaching in the real world. This issue calls for consideration from several perspectives. While university programs such as State University's may not have authority over school districts to request or refuse or investigate cooperating teachers with whom their students are placed for clinical assignments, they do have the authority to require cooperating teachers to complete a prescribed training course in mentoring before the university allows placement of student teachers in these classrooms. State University, as well as other programs, has been working to create online training

programs to be required of cooperating teachers before students can be placed in their classrooms. In addition, some universities have established mentoring programs for their first-year graduates in education to ensure that this concept of a teaching continuum is provided to new teachers when they obtain their first teaching positions:

For example, Villani (2002) describes training programs for cooperating teachers in several major universities, concluding that their implementation into teacher education programs has helped facilitate new teachers' relatively seamless entry into initial in-service positions. Howey and Zimpher (1989) closely examine the concept of mentoring within the context of continuing education provided by university programs, including the provision of research techniques for undergraduates to enable them to more effectively "learn how to teach on the job" (p.452). Such research substantiates new teachers' expression of their need for support in their own classrooms, which has been demonstrated in some of the case study participants' reflections.

Zeichner's (1999) research points to the importance of gaining information from pre-service teachers themselves within their field experiences and into their first inservice assignments. He believes that research will increasingly take the form of such case studies, with information and impressions being gathered directly from teacher candidates. He stresses that in doing so, researchers will obtain a clearer picture of field experiences, their connection to coursework or lack thereof, and the degree to which university programs continue to provide the necessary support of their students within these assigned classrooms. Zeichner perceives the need for research documenting students' reflections, experiences, and knowledge as they launch and settle into their professional careers.

Danielson, Kuhlman, and Fluckinger (1998) are education professors who conducted an empirical study of various methods of linking their coursework with their students' associated field experiences. These three colleagues are reading methods professors who have made the effort to present information based on constructivist theory which students are encouraged to reflect upon, discuss with peers, and subsequently form plans for implementation with children whom they teach once a week for a six-week period. The concept of enabling a situation where children depend upon regular instruction by college students has been a powerful learning tool for the teacher candidates, these professors report. The teacher candidates continually reflect upon their learning in the reading methods class to assess their students, construct their lesson plans, choose appropriate and motivating materials, and most importantly, create a powerful connection with their students. As they were constructing their knowledge of teaching throughout the field experience that was researched, their reflections were qualitatively analyzed and found to be significantly enabled: "Telling pre-service teachers to be reflective is one thing; encouraging and enabling them to be reflecting is preferable" (p.39).

Reflection can be encouraged through teacher education curricula as well, but in the classroom with children, students are given the opportunity to utilize this on a consistent basis, provided their cooperating teachers are modeling and encouraging the practice. Since it cannot be assumed that this is happening for them via cooperating teacher input, State University has begun requiring submission of weekly written reflections on the part of student teachers and interns, as mentioned earlier. It has been a vehicle for enhancing understanding of students' experiences in their classrooms, as

university supervisors read the submissions and are better able to address written content upon their visits to the classrooms for observations of teaching.

In their case study of a particular university teacher education program, Wilson, Dellinger, Green, Murphy, Hatfield, Long, and Fantozzi (2008) describe a teacher preparation program that provided multiple field experiences in reading methods courses, enabling students to assess, analyze data, and then design and assess instructional strategies that they implemented in classrooms. The outcome of the model was improvement in struggling second-grade students' reading abilities, bringing them to grade level, and demonstrating improvement in their comprehension skills, specifically. The teacher candidates not only received an opportunity to practice concepts they had learned, but also gained valuable insights into motivation and management. The authors identified motivation as the biggest problem the pre-service teachers encountered in working with their students. The importance to the pre-service teachers of experiencing issues in management and motivation and finding ways to work through them with the guidance and support of a cooperating teacher was emphasized.

This observation closely aligns with the work of Fuller (1969) whose proposed stages of teachers' development are often cited. She posits that the transition into independent teaching occurs in three phases. Pre-service teachers' concerns, not related to teaching, precede early teaching concerns and "focus on self or self-protection" (p.218). She describes early teachers as being primarily concerned with discipline and learning the parameters of their new school, while some time later they develop a great concern with their students and student learning (p.211). Class control is typically a matter of concern throughout the transition, as is their sense of self-adequacy, she reports.

Affective Skills and Predispositions

The work of exemplary teachers in the classroom comprises respected research such as that of Pearson and Stephens (1994). In their longitudinal qualitative study, the authors present an informative, practical, historical account of literacy instruction from the 1960's into the 1990's. The account is provided through the eyes of experienced classroom teachers, reporting the changes that led to teachers' new freedom to choose and implement curricula, which required the skill to motivate children within this environment. Affective skills and predispositions (teachers' motivational behaviors, personality traits, and professional qualities) took on greater importance. Teachers welcomed the latitude to incorporate curriculum as they saw fit to motivate children to read successfully, and their affective skills were essential in achieving that necessary motivation.

On the basis of their experiences and study of their students over time, the authors conclude that reading in the 1990's became a contextualized process and no longer an isolated curriculum within classroom settings. They stress the importance of creating and maintaining a language-rich classroom environment, with many reading materials available to all students at all times, incorporating writing with reading and teaching writing to an audience. Choices in reading, as well as place and pace, all matter significantly to these classroom teachers. They speak eloquently of the choices they have faced, the adaptations they have made, and the goals they continually have reflected upon and have re-evaluated in their classrooms. At the end of their thirty-year teaching journey, they found themselves at an eclectic juncture, where they had to choose good literature while infusing textual concepts to induce lifelong language and

communications skills. The authors note that writing at this time was highly valued and celebrated. Teachers acquired new freedom in the 1990's to adapt the literacy curriculum to individual and multicultural needs. Collectively, instructional practice at this time was characterized by certain motivational effort and content, requiring these affective skills on the part of teachers. These aspects of best practice in literacy instruction are still taught today in State University's teacher education program.

In 2004, Bohn, Roehrig, and Pressley conducted extensive research regarding effective classroom teaching, focusing upon their assessment of two more effective and four less effective first-grade teachers through the first days of the school year. Their study concludes, based upon their observations, with recommendations for what a teacher needs to do in the first few days of school to set the stage for successful teaching in the upcoming school term. Their findings indicate a clear connection between a positive, motivational environment and students' engagement and success in learning. The concern for positive role models in clinical experiences who demonstrate and facilitate motivation in the classroom has been voiced by numerous educators (Clift & Brady, 2005; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Healy & Weichert, 1990; Howey & Zimpher, 1989; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; Stanulis, Burrill, & Ames, 2007; Wang & Odell, 2002). Creating a positive environment and serving as a positive role model are now factors assessed during student teaching and internship in some teacher education programs such as the one at State University (Segebrecht, 2007, Appendices A and B), as these programs respond to this prescribed need to have such skills demonstrated and taught to pre-service teachers in their field experiences.

University teacher education programs are beginning to incorporate professional dispositions into formative and summative evaluations that are used to measure students' progress and competency in their field experiences (Segebrecht, 2007, Appendices A and B). This change was triggered partly by NCATE standards and partly because of an expressed need by State University supervisors to have some means to benchmark such professional dispositions. Dispositions are defined as traits such as work ethic, professionalism, and the ability to relate to students and respect individual differences. The content and evaluation of dispositions in each formal assessment that takes place during field experiences represent a notable shift from past evaluation practices of documenting mainly (or only) instructional skills. This indicates an important, evolving emphasis on affective skills in new teachers. The reflection, self-evaluation, and dialogue that have ensued between pre-service teachers, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors have prompted positive feedback from all involved in utilizing the new instruments I formulated. Pre-service teachers have expressed appreciation for the associated changes and the additional feedback they now receive, both during their student teaching assignments and after their completion.

The Study of Landmark Research in Literacy Education

In order that students may better understand changes in the education workplace that they will likely encounter in field experiences and their first employment, some teacher education programs are currently amending coursework to adequately cover the following: educational reform issues, contributing research, legislation, and ensuing effects that have altered the course of day to day school instruction (e.g., assessment preparation and scripted programs in literacy). Behind the inclusion of such studies is the

concept that an effective literacy teacher is an informed literacy teacher, who can substantiate and justify instructional decisions with the knowledge of best practice as contained in the following three studies, which have informed legislation. All three reports include findings of empirical research, combined with the input of educational professionals who have drawn upon their experience in working with students in literacy instruction.

Three major landmark research reports contain significant empirical research in the field of emergent literacy and beginning reading in particular. They are: The International Reading Association (IRA) and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Joint Statement (1998); *The Report of the National Research Council's Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children* (Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998); and Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read (1999). These reports provide directives that have informed teaching practices across America and have influenced accountability of teachers. There are elements of each that appear crucial for inclusion in teacher education programs, so that new teachers can be better prepared for the requirements that will face them in field experiences and in their own classrooms. Their content aligns with current research concerning what constitutes "excellence" in literacy instruction and literacy teachers, and there is also alignment present with the pedagogical knowledge and skills novice teachers are finding most important as they begin teaching in their own classrooms. Components from these three studies are evident in syllabi obtained from all literacy professors at State University for both graduate and undergraduate courses in literacy. The knowledge and skills that new teachers are identifying as those they most need and utilize align with the

findings contained in the following studies. The next three sections will enumerate important pieces of these studies to be considered for inclusion in literacy education to enhance pre-service teachers' preparation as per their voiced needs and concerns. (See chapter 4.)

Landmark Research and Mandates for Teaching

IRA and NAEYC Joint Statement, 1998

A widely referenced, comprehensive study conducted in 1998 by the International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Association of Educators of Young Children (NAEYC) provided clear-cut, research-based teaching implications for emergent literacy in the position statement:

> Although reading and writing abilities continue to develop throughout the life span, the early childhood years – from birth through age eight – are the most important period for literacy development. It is for this reason that the IRA and NAEYC joined together to formulate a position statement regarding early literacy development. The statement consists of a set of principles and recommendations for teaching practices and public policy. (p.30)

The relevant principles published within the report constitute "developmentally appropriate practice." These recommended principles of practice focus upon implementation of exploration with developmentally appropriate manipulative materials, provision of challenging opportunities for active participation with other students, adults, and materials, as well as opportunities to identify and solve problems that interest students, and implementation of a variety of teaching methods and materials that address diversity and promote small group work and communication among children. The report

calls for motivation within the classroom as well, emphasizing the need for language and literacy programs that allow "children to expand the ability to communicate orally and through reading and writing and to enjoy these activities" (p.69). The report states that children model their teacher's enthusiasm for learning, or their struggle to get through the day; thus underscoring the importance of motivation in the classroom. The authors propose that the concepts of promotion and failure be dropped. All of the aforementioned factors contribute to what the authors propose as constituting the type of environment most conducive to effectively teaching literacy to young children. Providing pre-service teachers with these guidelines enables their future implementation of strategies and content based upon researched "best practice," which may conflict with a mandated packaged literacy curriculum while still constituting an urgent need to enhance learning in the classroom. Knowing the study's recommendations may allow new teachers to substantiate their adaptations of curricula in their classrooms as warranted.

Within the posture of proposing the importance of "developmentally appropriate practice" with young children, the authors address the importance of providing phonemic awareness instruction in the classroom until a child demonstrates the readiness to move on to beginning reading instruction:

> Among many early childhood teachers, a maturationist view of young children's development persists despite much evidence to the contrary. The readiness perspective implies that until children reach a certain stage of maturity all exposure to reading and writing, except perhaps being read stories, is a waste of time and even potentially harmful. (p.31)

The report dismisses extensive whole group instruction and frequent drill and practice on isolated skills as ineffective and outdated, and instead proposes that "young children especially need to be engaged in experiences that make academic content meaningful and build on prior learning" (p.31). The authors call for improved professional development and teacher training that is consistent across states to better ensure the implementation of this directive. They claim, at the time of writing, that there were no uniform requirements or licensure standards in existence, potentially resulting in unsatisfactory and infrequent compliance.

Addressing confusion between the meanings of phonemic awareness and instruction of phonics within the community of educators, the authors provide a specific definition of phonemic awareness as follows: "Phonemic awareness refers to a child's understanding and conscious awareness that speech is composed of identifiable units, such as spoken words, syllables, and sounds" (p.34). The authors stress the need for kindergarten teachers to incorporate literacy programs that enhance phonemic awareness and vocabulary development at every opportunity, and to focus their language and literacy programs on the previously stated goal of allowing children to "expand their abilities to communicate orally and through reading and writing and enjoy these activities" (p.69).

The IRA/NAEYC report concludes with the provision of an insightful continuum of specific teaching strategies that mark effective instruction at the preschool, kindergarten, and first grade level, all centered upon the concept of furthering developmentally appropriate practice. The recommendations are accessible and appear helpful for classroom teachers' implementation. In providing teacher education students

with such specific recommendations and guidelines, teacher educators are also providing a foundation upon which pre-service students can document the supplements and revisions they may choose to incorporate in their own classrooms to the material that they may be required to teach. In addition, the practical and understandable information included in the report is accessible and useful for novice teachers in planning meaningful activities for prescribed curricula. The IRA/NAEYC joint statement presents a thorough review of research in the field to substantiate the authors' conclusions and recommendations for classroom practice. In particular, attention is drawn to the important research published "by an esteemed panel of experts for the National Academy of Sciences" (p.37), also landmark research in literacy with content that can significantly benefit education students in similar manner. This research follows.

Snow, Burns & Griffin

Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children

National Research Council, 1998

This research was carried out at the request of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs and its Office of Educational Research and Improvement and the National Institute on Child Health and Human Development. It is comprehensive both in its review of existing literature and in its translation of research into guidelines for teachers to implement in teaching literacy in their classrooms. The research was requested to address the needs of young children considered at risk for reading difficulties, examining related research from birth through third grade and providing implications for both regular and special education classrooms and settings. The committee advises, however, that their "recommendations extend to all children"

(Snow, Burns & Griffin, *Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children, National Research Council*, 1998, p.32), explaining that excellence in instruction is equally important for children of low risk for reading difficulties, while the need for scaffolding and additional support can be expected to vary. The report is organized around the following components: (a) description of the process of learning to read and of aspects of child development that are integrally related, (b) description of reading difficulties as they present in young children, (c) risk factors for difficulty in learning to read, (d) preventions, interventions, and instruction that can be implemented in terms of preschool, kindergarten and primary grades, (e) consideration of organizational factors involved, and (f) a thorough discussion of intervention strategies for children in grades one through three who exhibit difficulty reading.

This content is of particular importance to novice teachers who are dealing with tight curricular restrictions and programs containing little to no provision for extra support or teaching to children's needs, including preventions, interventions, and instruction. The background knowledge derived from this report could enable new teachers to provide necessary supplementation to programs as needed. Knowledge of the research also provides them with a legitimate source to validate their choices.

The report carefully explains early childhood development in terms of language acquisition through many sources and conditions, as well as the development of phonemic awareness as the necessary precursor to instruction in reading in an alphabetic language. In understandable terminology, the report defines crucial terms that are often confused by students and novice teachers, and citing research, describes the necessary progress of children's understanding and exhibition of readiness through various stages

before moving into the earliest reading instruction. Importantly, the report provides many helpful descriptions of factors within the home environment that support literacy development, as well as some that do not, which could prepare pre-service teachers to better address in the classroom those factors not present in students' homes in some cases. The importance of reading to children is documented through references to research, as is the necessity of exposing young children to multiple interactions with print and writing opportunities. A comprehensive, informative table is included that delineates "Developmental Accomplishments of Literacy Acquisitions" (p.10). The table progresses from a birth to three-year-old list to three and four-year-old accomplishments that enables educators to become better aware of important benchmarks in development and to develop a more thorough understanding of how to ascertain what may be missing for their students.

After a thorough discussion of aspects of comprehension skills and their development, as well as initial signs of phonological decoding and emergent literacy experiences in school followed by beginning reading, the report provides an extensive table of "Accomplishments in Reading" (p.80-83). Benchmarks for kindergarten, first grade, second grade, and third grade are included and clearly written. This information is comprehensive, accessible, and of unquestionable value for teacher education programs in preparing students to better understand accumulation of skills and teaching according to "developmentally appropriate practice" recommendations. State University case study participants have addressed the challenges they face in teaching students who fall within a wide range of literacy levels in their classrooms.

The report addresses a major pitfall in estimating the number of children in the U.S. who have reading difficulties. Designation at the time of the writing of this report was based upon testing that generally did not take place until fourth grade, and may or may not have accurately represented those children who were identified, leaving behind many primary age children with significant reading difficulties yet to be identified. In addition, many children at this time were not identified, because they missed an arbitrary cut-off for "distinguishing normal reading from reading disability" (p.93). Fluctuations in scores from one testing period to another further complicate identification and treatment for some children. The report looks carefully at alternatives:

> In endorsing an inclusive approach to the identification of reading problems…we are simply suggesting that in interpreting reading test scores it is sometimes appropriate to use criteria other than the national distribution to represent the expectations for achievement for some children (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, p.95).

This is valuable information for teacher candidates to acquire so that they are ready to identify and address problems both in their student teaching and in their own classrooms.

Of equal importance to students, the difference between norm-referenced and criterion-referenced assessments is clearly explained, as well as the limits of each in adequately identifying all students in need of support. In addition, an explanation is provided as to why the interpretation of test scores outside the national criteria is sometimes more appropriate due to vast differences within subgroups of students. Substantiated by research and recommendations of *The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP),* the report recommends that standards be established to determine what specific literacy skills should be obtained at a particular grade level,

specifying that testing should be criterion-referenced. In this way, identification of students who cannot demonstrate mastery of the specific skills they have been taught are more clearly identified in terms of what their particular needs or additional instruction and support may be. Furthermore, the limitation remains that only test scores of children aged nine and above are utilized according to NAEP standards.

This report reveals that at the time of writing, 1998, "25-40% of American children are imperiled because they do not read well enough, quickly enough, or easily enough to ensure comprehension in their content courses in middle and secondary school" (p.98). Because of all the limitations with assessment, the authors of this study find it essential to clearly identify the "predictors of success and failure in reading" (p.100). This information is highly important to novice teachers, as they meet requirements to continually assess, evaluate assessments, and address information obtained within current educational programs.

In addition to complete descriptions of physical issues that contribute to reading difficulties in young children, the report also provides clear benchmarks for predicting reading difficulties at a child's point of entry into the school system. Referencing specific research and assessments, the table (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, p.110) provides correlations identifying results of measurements of language skills and early literacy-related skills. In addition, the report provides statistical information regarding predictions of reading development in first grade based upon kindergarten assessments of letter identification skills. The authors include in-depth descriptors of various risk factors for both individuals and groups that could prove highly informative to educators of young children and to pre-service teachers in education programs. These include home

environment regarding literacy, children's opportunities for verbal interaction, use of another language/dialect within the home, and other risk factors relating to socioeconomic status, the home, the neighborhood, and the school.

Drawing upon historic research such as Chall (1967), Adams (1990), Gambrell (1995), and Ehri (1996, 1991), the report synthesizes findings from research studies and program results to assimilate a comprehensive list of instructional activities recommended for kindergarten. Also included is a complete evaluation of ten popular basal programs for their alignment with the aforementioned targeted content of a kindergarten curriculum. The general findings indicated some shortcomings: limited phonological awareness activities, no inclusion of segmenting and blending practice, insufficient strategies for manipulating language sounds that were also ineffective in meeting diverse language needs, and phonological activities requiring manipulation of single and multisyllabic words rather than "phoneme-level phonological units" (p.191). The report calls for more frequent and careful evaluation of basal programs. This aspect of the study is of particular importance in teacher preparation, as students are often caught unaware when their field experiences and new jobs require them to align their teaching to scripted or regulated basal programs that may or may not represent the "best practice" taught within teacher education coursework. Providing familiarity with such programs within literacy instruction of the teacher education program could enable students to develop strategies for evaluation and supplementation of the same or similar curricula they might encounter in student teaching or their first employment.

For subsequent grades, the report provides specific examples of "high quality teaching" in very specific classroom descriptions. Particular teaching strategies (e.g.,

word walls) are described in detail, along with illustrations of teaching strategies in classroom scenarios that specifically delineate the components of whole language instruction, embedded phonics, and direct code instruction. The examples are presented in such a way that classroom teachers and particularly teacher candidates could read and understand the differences in strategies and their implementation in a practical sense.

Most importantly, the report provides the following conclusions as to what constitutes "outstanding [literacy] teachers," further informing new teachers' effective practice:

1. creating a literate environment in which children have access to a variety of reading and writing materials
2. presenting explicit instruction for reading and writing, both in the context of 'authentic' and 'isolated' practice;
3. creating multiple opportunities for sustained reading practice in a variety of formats, such as choral, individual, and partner reading;
4. carefully choosing instructional-level text from a variety of materials, with a reliance on literature, big books, and linking reading and writing activities;
5. adjusting the mode (grouping) and explicitness of instruction to meet the needs of individual students;
6. encouraging self-regulation through cognitive monitoring strategies; and
7. 'masterful' management of activity, behavior, and resources. (p.l96)

The latter part of the report provides comprehensive guidelines and recommendations for preparing teachers for literacy instruction in their teacher education coursework and field experiences. In addition to providing a comprehensive table

describing "Teacher Preparation Needed to Provide Opportunities for Children to Become Readers" (p.285-287), the report underscores the need for supported clinical experiences as well as supported induction into new teaching positions. In reference to criticism of teacher education programs' failure to prepare students to teach literacy, the report concludes: "Even if sufficient course work with the needed content were available, the problem of transferring the knowledge to the future teacher's practice must be addressed" (p.289). Of importance to teacher educators in designing a literacy curriculum for pre-service teachers, the authors propose the following core requirements for "What Teachers Need to Know to Be Effective Teachers of Reading:"

1. Conceptual foundations—the reading process. 'Teachers must be provided with a solid foundation regarding the theoretical and scientific underpinnings for understanding literacy development' (p.12).
2. Knowledge of the structure of language, including knowledge of (a) the English speech sound system and its production, (b) the structure of English orthography and its relationship to sounds and meaning, and (c) grammatical structure.
3. Supervised practice in teaching reading (p.298).

In addition, the report provides comprehensive lists of recommendations for teachers regarding the "mechanics of reading," comprehension, writing, reading practice and motivation, and adaptations for English Learners. Requirements for education of early childhood and primary grade teachers are synthesized into a lengthy description of knowledge that should be required to teach. There are excellent provisions for evaluating interventions for their effectiveness, and a call for further investigations regarding the

setting of and teaching to benchmarks and standards, addressing variability and specificity.

In reviewing this comprehensive report, the many insights provided and substantiated by research in the field underscore the value of the recommendations it carries for teachers, teacher educators, and pre-service teachers. Inclusion of these particular points comprehensively informs teacher educators as to how literacy instruction can better prepare truly effective new teachers in such a manner as to avoid a period of "reality shock" documented in research (Veenman, 1984) and familiar to the education community as a whole. In addition, the content of the report and its associated recommendations serve as a basis upon which to build further research, such as the following report represents.

Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read

The National Reading Panel (NRP) was convened at the request of Congress to "assess the status of research-based knowledge, including the effectiveness of various approaches to teaching children to read" (NRP, 1999, p.1-1). The Panel was charged with providing a report that…

> should present the panel's conclusions, an indication of the readiness for application in the classroom of the results of this research, and, if appropriate, a strategy for rapidly disseminating this information to facilitate effective reading instruction in the schools. If found warranted, the panel should also recommend a plan for additional research regarding early reading development and instruction. (p.1-1)

In their review of the work of NRC (Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998), NRP determined that the report, while comprehensive in its content, “did not specifically address ‘how’ critical reading skills are most effectively taught and what instructional methods, materials, and approaches are most beneficial for students of varying abilities” (p.1-1). Due to the multitude of research available for study in the field of literacy, the NRP determined that they would review empirical studies only. The following subgroups for research were formed: alphabetics (phonemic awareness and phonics instruction), fluency, and comprehension (including vocabulary instruction, text comprehension instruction, teacher preparation, and comprehension strategies instruction). In addition, the group reviewed teacher education and technology in regard to literacy instruction.

Seven specific questions to guide their research were formed. In preparation for independent teaching, it is important for new teachers to be aware of the answers to the following as concluded by the NRP:

1. Does instruction in phonemic awareness improve reading? If so, how is this instruction best provided?
2. Does phonics instruction improve reading instruction? If so, how is this instruction best provided?
3. Does guided repeated oral reading instruction improve fluency and reading comprehension? If so, how is this instruction best provided?
4. Does vocabulary instruction improve reading achievement? If so, how is this instruction best provided?

5. Does comprehension strategy instruction improve reading? If so, how is this instruction best provided?
6. Do programs that increase the amount of children's independent reading improve reading achievement and motivation? If so, how is this instruction best provided?
7. Does teacher education influence how effective teachers are at teaching children to read? If so, how is this instruction best provided? (p. 1-3)

The NRP report carefully defines phonemic awareness and phonics instruction, differentiating between the two. It presents useful and understandable "implications for instruction," an effective evaluation tool for pre-service and new in-service teachers. Notable research is cited in conveying the importance and need for both phonemic awareness and phonics instruction, and specific directions are provided for choosing content, motivational strategies, as well as methods to analyze and evaluate different programs and techniques. In addition, the report reviews empirical studies which present the statistical results of types of instruction. The report provides specific guidelines for instruction at various levels, all written in a format that is understandable and useful for pre-service and new in-service teachers.

In addition, the report carefully reviews the importance of instruction in fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary as integral elements of successful literacy programs. Each of these three subjects is thoroughly reviewed, with research presented to substantiate the need for inclusion along with specific recommendations for implementation. Empirical studies are cited in providing statistical evidence of the consequences of inadequate instruction upon a student's long term literacy acquisition.

Guidelines are included for instructional and motivational approaches and methodology. These very specific research-based recommendations can prove helpful to both pre-service and new in-service teachers as they prepare lessons to align with best practice while still meeting their district and school requirements. Importantly, they provide a substantial framework for pre-service and new in-service teachers to continually review current research standards delineating what makes an effective literacy teacher. These components are included in State University's teacher preparation program, as evidenced in literacy course syllabi. Succinctly summarized, this body of research arms novice teachers with valid, substantiated recommendations for motivating and instructing students in their own classrooms.

Teacher Development

Summarizing empirical research regarding teacher education, the following conclusions were drawn in regard to effectiveness:

1. Interventions in teacher education and professional development are successful.
2. Teachers can learn to improve their teaching in ways that affect students directly.
3. These conclusions have been demonstrated in empirical studies regarding in-service teachers, although not specifically pre-service teachers.

The NRP states that teacher development could be improved through research that attempts to substantiate what interventions are most effective in teacher education, the need for extensive support for pre-service and in-service teachers on a continual basis for an extended period of time, and that teachers can be taught in pre-service and in-service

to improve their teaching. The report contends that "prospective teachers do adopt the teaching methods and attitudes they acquire during the course of their education" (p.5-13).

This last statement clearly speaks to the importance of relaying and evaluating both instructional and associated skills, as well as affective skills and predispositions. The call for substantial clinical experiences with children is also clear, as is the need for models of teaching, motivation, and practice reflecting positive professional attitudes provided by cooperating teachers who have been instructed in these expectations before their student teachers begin work in assigned classrooms. The report also substantiates the desirability of offering extensive support not only during the course of practica and student teaching assignments, but also into the first year of independent teaching. All of the above are worthy of consideration for incorporation into teacher education programs that endeavor to meet the changing demands of educational reform and its concomitant effects upon new teachers in their classrooms.

All three of these comprehensive reports (IRA/NAEYC, NRC, and NRP) are important inclusions in teacher education literacy programs for several reasons. First, they provide research that enables pre-service teachers to understand the development of different approaches to literacy instruction over a number of years. Learning of that development enables them to better grasp which methods have been dropped or altered along with some of the reasons why. Secondly, pre-service teachers can begin to grapple with the relationship between government, policy, and classroom instruction, becoming aware of the initiatives that were mandated and the research that was commissioned and prevailed as most influential at those particular times. Finally, the reports all contain

valuable insights into child development through important research that is reviewed, as well as recommended instructional methods, and programs that are also cited and substantiated by research. Exposure to these critical elements drawn from the reports provides teacher candidates with a broad overview of research, recommendations based on research, and some practical implications for optimizing classroom instruction. If relayed to pre-service teachers through their teacher education programs, the information included can contribute to better preparation of prospective teachers to enter their own classrooms, armed not only with textbook recommendations for "best practice," but a comprehensive knowledge of why literacy instruction has arrived at this particular place. The report can also provide a working knowledge of materials and assessments toward which novice teachers will find themselves directed on the job, thus enabling their enhanced preparations to meet the associated demands while incorporating necessary adaptations.

Motivation and Teacher Effectiveness

Earlier I mentioned the inclusion of a section of affective skills and predispositions as part of the new evaluation tools needed and developed for use with student teachers and interns in their clinical experiences at State University (Segebrecht, 2007). One of the areas deemed important for further and more complete evaluation is the pre-service teacher's ability to motivate students in the classroom. There are significant research studies that underscore the importance of motivation, not just in general terms, but specific to the teaching of literacy. Guthrie (1996, 2000), Guthrie & Wigfield (2000), Guthrie, Wigfield, & Von Secker (2000), and Wilkinson & Silliman (2000) represent significant empirical research investigating motivation in literacy

instruction, thus worthy of inclusion in teacher education programs. These studies are particularly pertinent to novice teachers, given the importance of motivation in classrooms where literacy instruction is often bound to packaged curricula or frequent drill and assessment, or "teaching to the test." Guthrie's (1996) study regarding intrinsic (internal, intangible) and extrinsic (external, tangible) motivation in reading observed the following motivators in students: involvement, curiosity, challenge, social interaction, compliance with teacher requests/expectations, recognition, competition, and work avoidance, which could fit into either category depending on the circumstances. He characterized intrinsic motivators as "imperative to lifelong, voluntary reading" and drew the following conclusion: "Strong internal purposes for reading are needed to persevere in learning complex strategies such as summarizing, self-monitoring and drawing inferences during reading" (p.663). He emphasized the power of integrated instruction (connecting literacy to other subject areas) to build motivation in young readers, claiming that in aligning motivational climate with instructional practice, teachers can enhance the development of long-term literacy engagement, a consummate goal of literacy instruction.

Guthrie and Wigfield's (2000) informative review of literature includes findings from their empirical research on extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. In this study, they distinguished different aspects of each for reading, including the intrinsic traits of curiosity, involvement and preference for challenge, as opposed to extraneous motivators such as fulfilling teacher directives or desiring external recognition, rewards or incentives. They conclude from their research that "engaged readers likely will have a

learning orientation toward reading, seeking to improve their knowledge and conceptual understanding as they read" (p.407).

Based upon their associated research, Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) recommend certain strategies for the development of self-efficacy in reading: using prior knowledge, searching for information, comprehending informational text, interpreting literary text, and self-monitoring, all of which contribute to motivating children to read, particularly independently. They discuss the benefits of collaboration with peers in motivating young readers, substantiated by research studies, an important point to be noted by pre-service teachers who may be paired with a cooperating teacher who does not utilize this practice. Guthrie, Wigfield, and Von Secker (2000) conducted an empirical study to determine the effects of motivation on specific aspects of children's reading and concluded that motivation predicted children's reading amount and breadth. This information is important to provide to pre-service teachers to prepare them to observe motivational strategies that work, as well as those that don't, in their student teaching and internship assignments. This knowledge can also facilitate their initiation of their own motivational strategies in teaching literacy to their students.

Guthrie, Wigfield, Humenick, Taboada and Barbosa (2006) conducted an experimental intervention investigating whether classroom practice can influence reading motivation, as well as whether children's motivation to perform stimulating tasks influenced their reading comprehension. They identified the following practices to increase motivation for reading and comprehension:

1. using content goals that provide a focus for “gaining meaning, building knowledge, and understanding deeply, rather than on learning skills or gaining rewards” (p.233)
2. implementing classroom choice for texts, tasks, and partners, choosing relevant reading materials, including opportunities for cooperative learning in reading, teacher involvement, “students’ perception that the teacher understands them and cares about their progress” (p.233),
3. rethinking the use of extrinsic rewards (with the warning that they may undermine development of intrinsic motivation), and
4. setting and emphasizing goals of mastery.

Clearly, providing pre-service teachers with the opportunity to observe such practices in practicum, student teaching, or internship assignments is an important ingredient to include in teacher education programs. Ensuring first that cooperating teachers will do so effectively, either by prior observation or required training, is an integral part of such a provision.

Pressley (2000) reports from extensive case studies of teacher-student interactions in the classroom that integrated balanced literacy instruction, incorporating several different instructional strategies and literature choices, provides effective primary grade literacy growth and development. He attributes its effectiveness in part to the motivational component inherent in the approach. Wharton-McDonald, Pressley, and Hampton’s (1998) longitudinal study of literacy instruction in first-grade classrooms specifically analyzed teacher characteristics and students’ literacy achievement. They concluded that the ability to motivate children is an integral element of the most effective

teachers' style, and also an integral part of balanced integrated literacy instruction. The report of this study, like many of Pressley's, contains excerpts of classroom discourse that could help pre-service teachers understand the work of translating theory into practice. His writing style is conversational, and the information he presents is accessible and understandable. Pre-service teachers at State University have expressed the value of reading "practical" research containing strategies and practices that are translatable to their own teaching environment. (See chapter 4.)

Wharton-McDonald et al.'s (1998) report succinctly and clearly presents the following high-achievement teacher characteristics: instructional balance, instructional density, extensive use of scaffolding, encouragement of self-regulation, high expectations for all students, and awareness of purpose. This may be the most valuable among motivational research studies for inclusion in teacher education because of its specificity, readability, depth, practicality, and motivational potential for teacher candidates. In essence, this report has the potential to move pre-service teachers to effectively motivate their students in the classroom while exhibiting understandable qualities characteristic of effective literacy teachers.

Taylor, Pearson, Clark, and Walpole (2000) also investigated effective teacher behaviors in their yearlong case study of 85 low income schools. The statistically significant effective teacher factors demonstrated in the study were "time spent in small-group instruction, time spent in independent reading, high levels of student on-task behavior, and strong home communication" (p.121). Instructionally, the following practices were determined essential for teacher effectiveness in literacy: supplementing explicit phonics instruction with coaching, involving teaching of strategies for applying

phonics to their everyday reading, asking higher level questions when discussing text, and providing students with opportunities to write in response to reading. “In all of the most effective schools, reading was clearly a priority at both the school and classroom levels” (p.121). The study emphasized the importance of providing authentic reading materials that also enhance students’ reading motivation.

Taylor, Pearson, Peterson, and Rodriguez (2003) identified teacher practices that encourage students’ engagement in high-poverty classrooms. This study reports their work with the Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA), and in particular, their findings regarding the use of higher level questioning in literacy instruction with high poverty students. Of significance, “all [nine] schools [in the CIERA School Change Project] were high poverty, with 70-95 % of the students qualifying for subsidized lunch. Across schools, 2% - 68 % of the students were not native speakers of English, and 67% - 91% were members of minority groups” (p. 7). A statistical analysis of variance of their coded observations of 88 teachers and 792 students in literacy instruction` led them to the following conclusions: (a) higher level questions contributed to students’ growth in reading and writing in grades 2-5 and to reading comprehension and fluency in grade 1 (b) comprehension skill instruction in grade 1 was associated with growth in writing, but telling was negatively related to writing growth (c) on-task behavior was positively related to comprehension in grades 2-5, and (d) coaching and students’ active involvement were positively related to growth in fluency in classrooms observed, grades 2-5, as was modeling to improvement in writing. Overall, “students improved more in comprehension and fluency when teachers were coded as asking a greater number of higher-level questions than other teachers. Students grew more in

writing when their teachers taught comprehension strategies and did not often tell students information" (Taylor et al., p.19). The emphasis upon the link between higher level questions and reading achievement is important partially because high-level questioning was not targeted as a major goal in the objectives that resulted from the NRP study (p. 4), and yet this presents a valid argument in teaching literacy to those students who are most at risk for meeting the demands and deadlines of No Child Left Behind. This is a disparity that new teachers need to recognize, so that they can plan to adapt reading programs to incorporate higher level questions if that is not included.

In summary, teacher education programs can benefit their pre-service teachers by providing information regarding particular programs and techniques that research indicates have proven successful in motivating children to achieve success in literacy acquisition in the classroom. The research cited provides significant information regarding particular strategies, programs, and dispositions that teachers have implemented and demonstrated in achieving "effectiveness" in their ability to motivate students to achieve success in literacy in the classroom. In short, the studies help answer the question underlying my research: "What could be done by universities to assist future teachers of literacy as they transition from pre-service to in-service?"

Wixson and Pearson (1998) present an in-depth analysis of the recent history of educational reform and the consequences of assessment mandates, as well as associated changes in literacy instruction that have evolved. They argue the need for new types of assessments involving teacher input and construction, and implore teachers to question the types of assessments they will utilize with their students. This is important

information to be relayed to teacher candidates so that they are prepared for the limitations that they will face on the job.

Allington (2002, 2006) has done extensive empirical research in the evaluation of teacher effectiveness and has witnessed many changes in literacy instruction due to the influx of frequent assessments. He contends that "assign and assess" methodology does not effectively teach and motivate students who would benefit more from open discussion, meaningful tasks, group projects and thematic instruction. Allington's ten years of carefully studying teachers whom he described as "effective" have convinced him that this type of instruction simply cannot be packaged or written into a script. He points to the paradox he perceives, that No Child Left Behind has called for a focus on increasing the number of effective, expert teachers, while the assessment-driven nature of the mandate has had the effect of widespread purchase of teacher-proof scripted curricula intended to raise test scores. Even though first-grade children are not required to take the same reading tests as students in the upper grades, he points out that some schools/districts buy these packages for K-6 implementation, and new in-service teachers are coerced into full compliance with the packaged program's curriculum. It is difficult for teachers to utilize reflective thinking, as instructed in their teacher preparation programs, because they are not allowed to "make curricular decisions about how to support young children as literature learners," (Quick, 1998, p.264) in the manner they were instructed in coursework and which research validates and recommends.

Allington (2002) identifies six traits of effective elementary literacy instruction which are highly applicable for beginning readers as well as those in upper grades: The traits he identifies include: (a) more guided and independent reading, (b) need for high

success reading, (c) "teaching against the grain" (finding ways to teach material in addition to packaged programs), (d) an attitude of "let me demonstrate," rather than "assign and assess," (e) more open questions (rather than targeted replies), and (f) meaningful tasks and group projects and thematic, integrated units that embrace diversity by eliminating the "worst to best" ranking on cookie cutter assignments. Allington's research is pertinent for inclusion in literacy study within teacher education programs for several reasons. His longitudinal study reveals traits that have proven effective over a significant number of years and through different trends in education. Also, it is of interest to pre-service teachers who are looking for a teaching "persona" to bring to their literacy instruction before working with children. In addition, he relates his practical suggestions based upon longitudinal work to current conditions, and specifically the current assessment demands placed upon public school teachers by federal and state governments.

Iaquinta (2006) quotes the NRP report, "Balanced approaches are preferable when teaching children to read," (p.413), stating that she has found that guided reading within a balanced literacy program has enabled her to conform to recommendations. She also points to the alignment of balanced instruction and the position statements by IRA and NAEYC (1998) and NCTE (2002). She cites empirical research (Juel, 1998) that "a child who is a poor reader in first grade is 88% more likely to remain a poor reader in fourth grade" (p.413). Iaquinta speaks to the effectiveness of guided reading to enable her students to move toward fluency effectively, and notes the program's matching of material, ability, and interests effectively. This study is pertinent to literacy education for pre-service teachers to better inform them about guided reading and why some

districts and teachers feel that the system works well for them in an assessment-driven school environment. There are numerous districts and schools that implement guided reading currently. Providing pre-service teachers with a working knowledge of current instructional practices and underlying foundations could allow them to arrive at their student teaching and internship assignments better informed and ready to teach literacy to children.

The Consummate Literacy Teacher

From the research reviewed, the consummate literacy teacher could be described as motivating, enthusiastic, empathetic, articulate, and creative. She is mindful of and attentive to individual differences and selects the most relevant literature for her particular students. She incorporates strategies of inquiry, reflection and critical thinking across her integrated curriculum. She continually inspires her students to utilize their own creativity in reading quantities of great literature, writing thoughtful, inspired responses reflecting their engagement with it, and demonstrating their knowledge of democratic proceedings in the microcosm of society within their classroom. In addition, she is well informed about literacy instruction, including current differentiation demands based upon learning levels and language proficiency. All of these elements would be demonstrated while meeting demands for conformance to standards and federal and state mandates, utilizing required literacy programs, and motivating students to score highly on assessments. She finds ways to supplement with creative strategies reflecting "best practice" as she learned it within her teacher education program.

How can teacher education programs in today's educational climate produce and nurture "consummate" new teachers of literacy who are equipped to meet the challenges

posed to them in their first classrooms? Focusing upon the voices of graduates who are now teaching in their own classrooms is critical in considering this question. Novice teachers are saying that they have discovered disparity between what is demanded of them in the work force, and the "best practice" they were taught in their coursework. While teacher education programs such as State University's provide a wealth of information regarding literacy in all of its aspects and teaching applications, some students still recognize a need for "something else." In bolstering literacy curricula with content that provides a hard look at current educational realities, and in providing extensive, mentored teaching experiences, teacher education programs can provide that "something else." Through incorporation of such changes, teacher educators can consistently convey one message as critically important: "Answers to questions about teaching reading are not in the search for the perfect method, but in the *teacher*" (Duffy and Hoffman, 1999, p.10).

Support for New Educators

Believing in their own abilities, trusting in the pedagogical knowledge they have acquired, and relying on their experiences as student teachers, even the best new teachers will face roadblocks in their first employment. Teacher education programs in some universities are creating and implementing mentoring programs that provide structured support systems for their new education graduates to help them successfully transition into their initial teaching positions. In addition to offering support, reports of successful mentoring programs for new teachers have demonstrated that their existence has helped with the growing problem of attrition. Current research reports that short term teacher employment is now a documented phenomenon through the United States, with an

estimated 50% attrition of new teachers over a five-year period (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). The majority of those who comprise that statistic are the most qualified among new teachers as per their teaching evaluations on the job (Jacob, 2007).

One of the potential problems with new teacher induction, from the perspective of new teachers, is that when the process is handled by the district alone, they are simply matched with a veteran teacher in the building. That teacher is expected to serve as a mentor, but often the only qualification is successful experience teaching in his/her own classroom. While this approach may work some of the time, what is missing from the equation is an assessment of how well the experienced teacher teaches adults (Gratch, 1998). Feiman-Nemser (2001, 2003) has addressed the need for requiring documentation of qualifications and/or training of mentors for this important position.

Concern with lack of qualified mentoring is documented in research from the 1980's, when studies often focused on new teachers and the trauma they experienced in their initial year in their own classroom, leading to ineffectiveness as an instructor. This syndrome was cited in research as "teacher shock" (Veenman, 1984). Veenman carefully investigated the "shift" that new teachers demonstrated, from a focus on instruction theory and practice to a focus on management, underscored by a lack of confidence and fear of failure. Clandinin and Connelly (1986) promoted the image of the "reflective practitioner," urging ongoing reflection on the part of new teachers to build confidence and effectiveness in the classroom. As teacher education programs in the 1980's touted the practice of teaching inquiry and reflection to children and employing instructional methodologies that nurtured these skills, it seemed natural to some

researchers to encourage new teachers to use those same strategies on themselves to move past their initial hurdles in the classroom.

Complicating new teachers' adjustment, however, were the manifestations of the 1983 publication by the National Commission on Excellence in Education, entitled "A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform" (Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin, & Bernstein, 1985). While the study looked at "effective practice in teacher evaluation" (p.62), the realities that surfaced were increased evaluation of teaching, introduction of merit pay, career ladders, master teacher policies, and the discovery of a general lack of comprehensive teacher evaluation systems or the results thereof. The competition that ensued for whatever bonuses could be attained did nothing to contribute to new teachers' sociocultural adjustment in their new school environments. Once the children arrived, and the classroom door was closed, a new teacher spent his/her day alone with the students, unsupported and often unobserved.

Toward the end of the 1980's, research investigated more closely the systematic structuring of teacher support programs. Schlecty and Whitford (1989) addressed the lack of human resource development programs in educational settings, in comparison to mentoring provided to new employees in other professions. Howey and Zimpher (1989) published substantial guidelines for transitioning new teachers into their first jobs with qualified supervision that would not only support and empathize, but "provide *necessary* extensions of pre-service education" (p.451). This study as well as the longitudinal research of Feiman-Nemser (1990) stressed the need for a conceptual framework, providing a "more coherent, continuing education program for both mentors and beginning teachers, together and independent of one another" (p.451). They proposed

that the responsibility of providing service to both beginning teachers and mentors should be a joint undertaking shared by districts, schools, and university teacher education programs. Howey and Zimpher (1989) provided an extensive model for supervision that is inquiry-oriented, reflective, and inclusive of instructional theory and methodology guidelines for implementation and evaluation.

In the 1990's, research studies began to investigate the specific traits and styles of interaction and guidance that effective mentors exhibit. Focusing more closely upon supportive interaction between teachers and mentors, Healy and Welchert (1990) proposed that the distinguishing elements of effective mentoring are "reciprocity and the accomplishment of identity transfer by both mentor and protégé" (p.18). This refers to the phenomenon that occurs in an environment where the pre-service teacher and cooperating teacher share ideas and reflections and learn from each other, as both demonstrate growth. Based upon research of teachers and mentors, they provided a description of personal characteristics of outstanding mentors to aid in better selection. They are "more likely than their marginal counterparts to relate to subordinates in a manner characterized by such elements as mutual respect, agreement about one another's roles, consistency, and informality" (p.19).

Gratch (1998) discussed the limitations of typical beginning teacher-mentor relationships and the need for more training for mentors, stressing the concept that both individuals should be modeling and learning together within a supportive, reciprocal framework. In addition, Gratch raised the need for consulting new teachers in all of this planning and implementing to identify their perceived needs, and to shift the focus to their input, a procedure I implemented in this case study. Wildman, Niles, Magliaro, and

McLaughlin (1989) reported the diversity of new teacher experiences and the need for observation of specific examples of mentoring to clarify what constitutes effectiveness. Their discussion of findings and conclusions based upon their longitudinal study of seventy pairs of mentors and novice teachers over a three year period stressed the importance of highly specialized induction.

Adjusting (?) to No Child Left Behind

A beginning teacher's perspective of this infamous 2001 federal initiative is unique. As classroom practices have been drastically affected (particularly by the transformation of school curricula to predominantly assessment preparation) and funding of services to children has been linked to assessment performance, the "reality shock" (Veenman, 1984) awaiting first-year teachers in the classroom has unquestionably increased. New teachers currently face the additional pressure of adjusting to the expectation to adjust instruction to testing. As Cochran-Smith (2001) reports: "Mandatory testing in grades three through eight has produced a manipulation of the [educational] system and a narrowed curriculum" (p.188). Some university teacher education programs are considering adding to their curriculum to inform teacher candidates, at least in part, of what awaits them, though documentation of such changes is scarce in research. Coursework in teacher education is gradually focusing on standards-based instruction (as per NCATE's demands), and more opportunities are being provided to undergraduates to practice assessment and observe the realities of implementing it in their field experiences.

Even with extensions to teacher education in place in some programs, researchers surmise that these changes cannot fully simulate the reality of new teacher expectations

encountered on the job. According to Wang and Odell (2002), this makes "mentored learning to teach according to standards based reform" imperative for new teachers (p.481). They point to the vast differences between students' conceptual understanding of teaching and the reality of reform-based teaching to standards in today's classrooms. Based upon longitudinal studies of new teachers' support systems, they regard teacher mentoring as an excellent strategy to implement in attempting to overcome these inherent limitations in teacher education. They emphasize that the mentoring process can become a transforming partnership between the mentor and new teacher: "[Mentors] should guide novices' discovery with principles rather than simply providing a repertoire of teaching knowledge to be accessed by the novices. Mentors are co-explorers of teaching practice, not evaluators of the positive and negative aspects of novices' overt teaching behaviors" (p.490).

Wang and Odell (2002) also provide a list of specific dispositions and knowledge that new teachers need to develop on the job, and propose that highly qualified mentors could have a significant impact in new teachers' success in their first year if they were to specifically target these particular areas:

1. a strong commitment to standards-based, reform minded teaching and its assumptions about knowledge, learning and teaching;
2. a deeper understanding of subject matter and its representation in relation to real teaching situations;
3. a broader knowledge of diverse student populations and skills in observing and interpreting their learning; and

4. a flexible connection between these dispositions and knowledge in various teaching contexts and for diverse student populations (p.490).

In addition, the authors stress the importance of developing highly qualified mentors who can effectively bridge the gap between teacher education and practical utilization of knowledge in the classroom:

> Mentoring programs with a critical constructivist perspective focus on finding mentors with relevant dispositions for, and commitment to, improving or reforming teaching and education, and with an ability to teach in the existing culture while holding an alternative, reform-minded vision. Such mentors have experience in inquiring into teaching practice and are able to work with other teachers and professionals in improving teaching and education for children (p.498).

Feiman-Nemser (2001,2003) has addressed the need to more thoroughly prepare teacher candidates for independent teaching: "If we want schools to produce more powerful learning on the part of students, we have to offer more powerful learning opportunities to teachers" (p.1013-1014). She contends that "sink or swim induction encourages novices to stick to whatever practices enable them to survive, whether or not they represent 'best' practice in that situation" in their new teaching environment (p.1014). In contrast, Feiman-Nemser proposes that teacher education programs can provide new teachers with the confidence to implement the learning received in training, as long as those students are "armored with the knowledge, skills and supports they need" (p.1013). In order to better prepare new teachers, she concludes that there are problems that must be addressed, not only in pre-service preparation, but also through extensive,

structured induction and professional development, beyond student teaching and into new teacher's first teaching positions:

> The charge of fragmentation and conceptual impoverishment applies across the board. There is no connective tissue holding things together within or across the different phases of learning to teach. The typical pre-service program is a collection of unrelated courses and field experiences. Most induction programs have no curriculum, and mentoring is a highly individualistic process. Professional development consists of discrete and disconnected events. Nor do we have anything that resembles a coordinated system. Universities regard pre-service preparation as their purview. Schools take responsibility for new teacher induction. Professional development is everybody's and nobody's responsibility (p.1049).

The importance of mentoring new teachers begins with pre-service field experiences. The university may send students into schools with little knowledge of the classroom teachers or their instructional procedures and programs that will serve as building blocks within a novice teacher's framework of conceptual knowledge and instructional skills (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, 2003). Cooperating teachers may be chosen by building administrators who are unfamiliar with the instruction and procedures occurring within their classrooms, and little thought may be directed toward their abilities to mentor young adults. Some universities are refused the right to request specific effective cooperating teachers, but instead are required to blindly accept whomever districts offer for this role. Consequently, incompetent instructors or ineffective mentors may not be discovered until a student asks for help in dealing with problems in the

assigned placement, at which point districts may make relocation of the student teacher difficult to implement. Worse yet, some students placed in negative or harmful environments may not feel entitled to ask for help or to let anyone know of their struggles. These are situations that I have occasionally encountered as a university supervisor over the past twenty years, and remediating such problems is difficult.

Universities approach supervision of students in their field experiences in different ways. In some programs, supervisors are chosen from a pool of graduate students who have received no training in mentoring and perhaps have little or no classroom experience but need funding for their coursework. Theoretically, a teacher candidate could spend a semester in a placement designed as the final preparation for classroom teaching that in actuality provides very little substantial support. Further compounding the potential problems in student teaching experiences is Feiman-Nemser's claim that oftentimes the coursework which preservice teachers have completed has demonstrated no connection to practice in the student teaching environment. This is particularly unfortunate in light of the fact that students generally anticipate their student teaching experience(s) with great expectations and high hopes for excellent modeling:

> Teacher education students regard student teaching as the most valuable part of their preparation. Still, they cannot count on regular opportunities to observe, analyze, and practice reform-minded teaching. At the same time, cooperating teachers often feel the need to protect student teachers from 'impractical' ideas promoted by education professors who are out of touch with classroom realities. When the people responsible for field experiences do not work closely with the people who teach academic and professional courses, there is no productive

> joining of forces around a common agenda and no sharing of expertise (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p.1020).

While this conundrum raises questions about reform at the level of teacher preparation, Feiman-Nemser presents the idea of building a cohesive conceptual framework that connects learning across the board: between teacher education coursework, to student teaching experiences, and especially to continuous inquiry and reflection upon teacher candidates' beliefs and experiences. She cites models for field experiences that have the potential to vastly increase the probability of valuable clinical learning for teacher candidates.

For example, Alverno College requires five semesters of some form of student teaching experience with variety among those field experiences incorporated and carefully controlled. In addition, cooperating teachers are required to have completed a preparatory course before students can be placed in their classrooms. Other universities, often with five-year programs, provide two clinical placements in different types of settings over an academic year. One of the marked elements of excellence defined in these clinical programs is the provision of periodic seminars during the course of student teaching in which students can discuss their experiences within their own peer group, sharing and eliciting valuable input and learning to utilize it in their classrooms.

Summary

In this chapter I have presented landmark studies that inform contemporary understanding of best practice in literacy instruction, including excerpts from which pre-service teachers can learn not only best practice, but how legislation has been informed by study. I have reviewed important research in the field that looks at literacy instruction

from different perspectives in my consideration of what exemplary literacy education can and should provide. I have looked at exemplary programs that have attempted changes to better meet pre-service and new in-service teachers' needs, and have carefully considered how all of these studies can help to inform new and changing provisions within teacher education programs.

Research Question #1:

How do novice teachers negotiate the disparities between research-based best practice literacy instruction in their teacher preparation programs and the realities of the classroom as they transition from pre-service to in-service?

The literature says research-based literacy instruction, or best practice, includes these key elements: (a) implementation of developmentally appropriate practice, (b) provision of opportunities for active participation and peer collaboration, (c) opportunities for problem-solving and critical thinking and encouragement of self-regulation, (d) implementation of a variety of teaching methods and materials that address diversity and motivate students, (e) incorporation of a variety of carefully chosen instructional-level texts and genres of literature, (f) differentiation of literacy materials according to student need, (g) provision of a language-rich environment in which students are provided many opportunities to express themselves through the spoken and written word, (h) provision of phonemic awareness and phonics instruction as/when developmentally appropriate for the student, (i) providing opportunities to read orally to children and to expose them to multiple interactions with print, (j) ongoing comprehension and vocabulary instruction across content areas, (k) integration of literacy across content areas, (l) implementation of multiple types of frequent assessment to

identify literacy problems and monitor all students' progress, interpreting said assessment beyond and outside of mandated assessments, (m) a knowledge of benchmarking and an awareness of predictors of success and failure in literacy, as well as an awareness of each student's individual risk factors, (n) effective management of resources, activities, and behaviors, and (o) differentiation and enrichment of literacy curricula as per students' needs.

Based upon review of all literacy professors' syllabi and students' feedback, State University's programs clearly provide instruction in best practice, with specific incorporation of strategies for its implementation in the classroom, as well as practicum experiences to practice instructional techniques and assessment. The case study participants greatly valued the literacy instruction they received and feel that their knowledge of best practice, along with the opportunities they were provided in their practica, student teaching, and internship experiences, prepared them well to teach literacy *according* to best practice. However, I have carefully looked at the realities which they encountered in their classroom experiences, and I have seen how best practice jibes with what pre-service teachers are actually expected to do.

Research Question #2:

What could be done by universities to assist future teachers of literacy as they transition from pre-service to in-service?

This literature review provided information to direct this second research question. The research says that universities should provide the following in their literacy instruction to pre-service teachers: (a) knowledge of best practice, including a strong conceptual foundation of the reading process and literacy development, (b)

knowledge of the structure of language, its sounds and meaning, (c) multiple, supervised opportunities to teach reading accompanied by frequent and meaningful feedback from knowledgeable professionals, (d) opportunities for regular reflection and associated feedback, (e) knowledge of multiple methods of continually assessing students' literacy skills and development, (f) knowledge of appropriate literature and curricular materials currently popular in literacy instruction, and (g) knowledge of materials and methodology to enable the incorporation of differentiation, enrichment, and motivation in a literacy program.

The participants' insights and information reveal their perceptions of the extent of preparation they received at State University in each of these recommended areas. As they transitioned from pre-service to in-service, the reader will discern the differences they encountered in their various settings, as well as additional insights and reflections that accompanied these various experiences. As the literature reveals, this is where the gap in research presently exists: feedback from novice teachers regarding this transition. Although some research has been conducted pertaining to the need for revision of literacy instruction within college education programs across several dimensions, there are no studies that have attempted to consolidate those needs and make a firm recommendation for change that incorporates study, field experience, and induction for new teachers. What is lacking in the literature, as affirmed in several studies included in this chapter, and what this study supplies, is research that investigates all of these components of teacher education in terms of their relation to each other. More importantly, there is a void of research that has addressed new teachers themselves to obtain fresh knowledge and ideas that can enhance teacher education programs and better ensure the eventual

independent success of new teachers. In doing so, the goal of creating a greater number of highly effective new teachers of literacy could well become attainable.

Chapter 3

Methodology

"Qualitative research assumes there are multiple realities—that the world is not an objective thing out there but a function of personal interaction and perception."
--Merriam (1988), p.16

Within the primary framework of qualitative case study, my research closely examines the processes inherent in the evolution of three novice teachers of literacy in the classroom, as evidenced by their transition from pre-service teachers to independent classroom teachers. My goal is to answer the following questions:

- *How do novice teachers negotiate the disparities between research-based, best practice literacy instruction in their teacher preparation programs and the realities of the classroom as they transition from pre-service to in-service?*
- *What could be done by universities to assist future teachers of literacy as they transition from pre-service to in-service?*

Because of the unique combination of factors each new teacher brings to the profession, three very different novice teachers were selected. I observed, interacted with, and came to know these female pre-service teachers over a period of three years, beginning in the fall of 2007 with their student teaching experiences during the fifth (professional) year of their teacher education program (initial licensure portion), and ending with their second year in their own classrooms. The qualitative case study framework is defined by Merriam (1988) as "an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single entity, phenomenon, or social unit" (p.16). This case study is

bounded by the time and place parameters of my three participants' assignments to me for supervision in both their eight-week student teaching and fourteen-week internship placements, and in their acceptance of my invitation to allow me to study their experiences beyond internship into their first and second years in their own elementary classrooms. The final two stages of the research are bounded by the parameters of each participant's individual classroom setting and the first year and second year time frame, the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 academic years.

In accordance with qualitative methodology, I have been following an inductive, heuristic approach in my observations and interactions with my students in order to gather copious, informative data about their experiences that Merriam (1988) describes as "thick description...a term from anthropology [that] means the complete, literal description of the incident or entity being investigated" (p.11). It is heuristic in the sense that I hope it may inform practice and necessary changes in teacher education. In conducting my research, I have attempted to immerse myself in each of my three case study participants' teaching scenarios while maintaining a posture of "waiting to see what emerges," rather than trying to prove or disprove any particular hypothesis by looking for specific or common phenomena between students.

Case Study Design

I have been investigating three pre-service students from the same large mid-western university program (called State University), a major public research and teaching institution, for nearly three years. The university has a population of approximately 27,000 and is located in a town of 100,000 and within a 40 mile radius of two large metropolitan cities. The populations of both the university and the surrounding

city are varied in terms of ages, ethnicities, and countries of origin represented. The State University School of Education student population is not as varied in terms of age, ethnicity, gender, and country of origin as the university population as a whole, however. Within elementary education, there is reliably a much higher population of females than males enrolled each year.

All of the case study participants were assigned to me for supervision during both their six-week student teaching program the fall semester of their fifth year, as well as the 14-week internship program in their final (spring) semester. At the time of this research, State University's teacher education program required four years of coursework and practica, at the completion of which the students received their Bachelor of Science in Education degree. The participants then completed a fifth year consisting of their eight-week student teaching assignment in the fall, 14-week internship in the spring, and completion of 15 hours of masters' coursework in the interim. At the conclusion of their internship, I have continued to observe and interview them in their first and second years as in-service elementary classroom teachers, investigating their experiences, attitudes, resources, and reactions during the first or second quarter of the school year and the final quarter of the year.

Through informal and formal interviews, follow-up conversations to 18 hours of observations, as well as incidental conversations, I have spent 25-27 hours with each participant. These hours have included significant time in conversation regarding their self-reported preparation to teach literacy over the three years represented in my research. This self-reported preparation was based upon their undergraduate coursework and their field experiences. Through interviews, I have elicited their self-appraisal of their

readiness to teach literacy independently through interviews, as well as their need for support during independent teaching. Often, the topic of support arose as a part of their expressions of frustration and fear, not knowing whom to consult for the answers they sought. Other times, their expressed need for support was a result of the questions I asked about district/school provision of some type of support. I have collected detailed information documenting the type of support each participant has been provided, and I have investigated connections between such support and these teachers' assessment of their qualifications, confidence, and success in teaching during the first two years in their own in-service classrooms. Finally, I have conducted and transcribed audio-recorded eight-hour (full day) observations of the participants teaching during the first semester of their second year of in-service teaching. I followed these eight-hour observations with videotaped interviews of my participants that document their ongoing insights, concerns, and reflections upon their students, school and classroom environments, and their professional journeys. I have continued our communication in 2010, with emails, primarily to include the participants in triangulation and member checking. In addition, I continued to ask for their reflections and updates as the year progressed, particularly as assessments drew near.

I find that my work to date aligns with Creswell's (2007) description of qualitative case study design:

> Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving *multiple sources of information* (e.g.,

observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), and reports a *case description* and case-based themes (p.73).

Creswell provides a helpful delineation and description of three different types of case studies: single instrumental, intrinsic, and collective or multiple case study, which he describes as follows: "The one issue or concern is again selected, but the inquirer selects multiple case studies to illustrate the issue…Often the inquirer purposefully selects multiple cases to show different perspectives on the issue" (p.74). My in-depth interviews, observations, discussions, reflections, and associated written accounts about my participants have revealed and documented a variety of experiences, reflections, attitudes, and perceptions among three in-service educators who are all involved in addressing the same transition but via very different experiences in the journey from the college classroom to their own classrooms and their own students. Creswell's words are proven accurate in terms of my cases "show[ing] different perspectives on the issue" (p.74).

Selection of Case Study Participants

"In choosing which case to study, an array of possibilities for purposeful sampling is available. I prefer to select cases that show different perspectives on the problem, process or event I want to portray" (Creswell, 2007, p.75). The three participants in this case study have embodied this preference of Creswell's. They reveal different perspectives on the problem(s) and the process that is of paramount interest to me: the difficulties faced by new educators teaching literacy in their own classrooms. As will be discussed in greater depth, the data I have collected indicates that these participants have evolved into three distinctively different in-service teachers during their first two years of

classroom teaching, documenting each participant's unique transition and adjustment process. Describing their experiences, as well as their insights and reflections about their teaching experiences, may shed light on the commonalities and differences among the participants, and raise questions regarding factors that contribute to a new teacher's development into a capable, independent literacy instructor.

Criteria for Selection.

The three participants were initially invited to participate based upon the following criteria:

1. They all met with success in teaching literacy in their field experiences, based upon the following determinants:

a. "Exemplary" (highest possible rubric indicator of performance) ratings were recorded, accompanied by written notes substantiating those ratings, on all formative assessments of standards-based criteria relating to literacy instruction during their classroom teaching. These were completed by me in the context of my official supervisory visits during both field experiences (eight-week student teaching and 14-week internship). As their university supervisor, I completed three supervisory visits during the eight-week student teaching assignment and four supervisory visits during the 14-week internship assignment for each student. One formative assessment (Segebrecht, 2007, Appendix A) was completed, discussed, and copies retained for each of my three observations of teaching for each participant. One additional formative assessment was completed by the cooperating teacher of each participant and returned to me at the midpoint of the

field assignment. The ratings and written comments contained in these evaluations were used as criteria for participants' inclusion in the case study.

b. "Exemplary" (highest possible indicator of performance) ratings were recorded, accompanied by written notes substantiating those ratings, on summative assessments (Segebrecht, 2007, Appendix B) of the same standards-based criteria as the formative assessments. The summative evaluations utilize exactly the same standards-based format to achieve greater internal consistency across raters. The forms are used to evaluate literacy instruction during the entire field assignment, and are completed by the clinical supervisor and university supervisor for the assignment.

c. Excellent verbal assessments of participants were reported during required conferences with cooperating teachers at each of my official supervisory visits. Three visits were completed during the student teaching assignments and four during internship. Five of these visits for each participant lasted approximately two hours in duration.

d. All assignments evaluated by the university supervisor and course requirements included in each field experience assigned to my supervision and evaluation were satisfactorily completed in a timely manner.

e. Establishment of positive rapport with students in the assigned classroom, with the cooperating teacher, and with me (in the role of university supervisor), was demonstrated during both field experiences, facilitating open, honest, in-depth communication among participant, cooperating teacher and

university supervisor (myself) regarding the participants' student teaching and internship teaching experiences.

f. A positive, motivating, interactional style with students, as well as a communication style fostering learning, motivation, and a sense of community within the classroom, were demonstrated in both field experiences, as documented by "exemplary" ratings on related criteria indicated in the formative and summative evaluations (Segebrecht 2007, Appendices A and B).

g. Ratings of "exemplary" were also achieved in the evaluation of professional dispositions as recorded in formal observations (Segebrecht 2007, Appendix A) during each field experience. Dispositions include, but are not limited to: (a) the ability to engage students, (b) the ability to motivate students to work to capacity, (c) the ability to nurture an interest in reading for information, research, and enjoyment, (d) the ability to model enthusiasm for reading and learning, and (e) the ability to receive and utilize feedback and demonstrate self-evaluation, ongoing reflection, and professional growth.

2. Each participant expressed an interest in participating in this case study and in the research being conducted regarding potential modifications in teacher education programs and their associated field experiences (student teaching, internship, and literacy courses' practica), as well as in mentoring provision and extension for pre-service and new in-service teachers to enhance literacy instruction for children.

3. Upon their graduation, each participant was either seeking employment or had already obtained employment within a 60-mile radius of State University. After being invited for the case study, they all confirmed with me that they received contracts in

public schools for primary-grade classroom instruction within this geographic parameter. This facilitated ongoing communication and observations in person. One participant relocated to a city approximately 175 miles from State University the summer before her second year of in-service teaching, but was able to secure a position at the same grade level she had taught the previous year. She was willing to have me continue to study her during this second year in her new assignment.

4. The classrooms to which these participants were assigned for both pre-service assignments and their in-service teaching positions together comprised a variety of socioeconomic, ethnic, and academic demographics. The data also revealed diversity in terms of administrative support and induction/support programs provided by schools and/or districts of employment, and all have been carefully described and documented. The classrooms involved throughout all stages of the case study represent five different school districts and a corresponding variety of literacy programs and personnel utilized at the schools for literacy instruction. In the pre-service components, each participant experienced one assignment in an early primary grade and another in a late primary or intermediate grade, ensuring variability in literacy instruction levels, which represents another criterion for participation in the case study.

To have been assigned three student teachers who met these criteria, while unlikely, was certainly fortuitous. Because these students were assigned to me by State University's School of Education, our relationship was not solicited. Because three pre-service teachers met the criteria in question, I found an ideal opportunity for researching them individually but also bounded as members of a common group. Thus this emic (Stake, 1995) collective case study was initiated.

Introduction of Case Study Participants

In addition to meeting the criteria enumerated above, the participants were all admitted to the teacher education program at the prescribed time to begin their literacy coursework in their junior year. The education program is highly competitive at State University, and all admitted students had cumulative grade point averages in the range of 3.5 or higher. In addition, students were evaluated by program faculty on quality and content of their application essays. The program is rich with motivated students, and it is not difficult to find students within the teacher education program who meet those criteria. Each student in the School of Education is assigned to a cadre, a unique and supportive system which groups the same 25 individuals together for all education coursework. Since the program is constructed in such a way that our pre-service teachers finish with 15 hours of master's coursework completed, it is not unusual for our students to continue working to finish their degrees. Two of my three participants have finished, and the third is scheduled to finish within the next academic year.

Clearly, my position as university supervisor gave me access to many excellent students and motivated individuals within the group of student teachers and interns assigned to me each semester. Why did Lucy, Molly, and Kelly stand out from the crowd as exemplary literacy instructors in their field experiences, beyond the requirements of inclusion enumerated above? In addition to criteria, they stood out for their unique abilities with literacy instruction from their first lesson I observed through the continuation of my relationship with them. All three participants are "traditional" students in the sense that they are in their mid-twenties, Caucasian, and female, and they were all brought up in major metropolitan cities within the state where State University is

located. Two attended public schools in generally mid to upper class heterogeneous environments, and one attended parochial school, representing a similar socioeconomic status demographic. All three were single until 2009, when Molly was married, and 2010, when Lucy married. Although the similarities are evident, their personalities are not similar; nor are their teaching approaches. It is for this instructional diversity that they were chosen, before all of the similarities in their backgrounds were known.

Molly

Molly struck me as unusually knowledgeable from the beginning to the conclusion of this study. During my time in her assigned classroom, she consistently demonstrated and articulated a thorough knowledge of literacy pedagogy and theoretical foundations that she continually referenced in making instructional plans and decisions. She assessed and addressed her students' individual needs from the beginning of her placement. Her ability to differentiate for multiple students within a prescribed reading lesson exceeded my expectations, as was evidenced in her formative evaluations. She found and utilized a wide variety of visuals and hands-on resources for quick referents, as well as vocabulary instruction and connection-building (text to text, text to self, and text to world), throughout the teacher-directed lesson in her defined curriculum. What struck me as a unique characteristic, however, was the manner in which Molly integrated children's literature across all parts of the curriculum, demonstrating an unusual background knowledge of literary resources from early in her initial student teaching assignment. In student teaching and internship, she brought lessons and skills practice to life and engaged her students effectively. Additionally, Molly's quick, ongoing analysis of students' needs and abilities enabled her to adapt her teaching "on the spot" in a

manner that was both fluid and effective. All of this was accomplished with a consistently calm manner that instilled cooperation within her classroom environment, also evidenced on her evaluation forms.

Kelly

Kelly, my second case study participant, was “rock solid” in her demonstration of overall consistency, effective management skills, and upbeat interactions that engaged her students in the pre-assessment literacy drills she was required to implement in place of teaching literacy as she had anticipated. These skills of Kelly’s enabled her efficient assessment, motivation of students, and a rather traditional style of instruction effectively. Her unique qualities resulted in her students’ eager responses in class as well as their performance on associated tasks. Kelly taught “traditionally” in the sense that she followed the directions of her cooperating teachers with fidelity and a positive attitude, garnering high praise from both of her cooperating teachers and school principals. She demonstrated an ability to constantly assess all students’ levels of participation and understanding, and to move her instruction to opportunities and needs that spontaneously arose while still teaching to objectives and within curriculum confines as instructed. Importantly, her rapport with her students was palpable. They were consistently engaged during her teaching, even in scripted, pre-assessment “literacy” lessons. Kelly managed to motivate her students in unlikely circumstances and accomplished this largely by exhibiting genuine pleasure in interacting with them. Consequently, her ability to keep them engaged exceeded my expectations as university supervisor for student teachers and interns.

Lucy

Of the multiple strengths indicated in Lucy's formative evaluations, I chose her as a participant because of the unique manner in which she motivated her students with animation and humor. On my first observational visit during Lucy's student teaching assignment, she enlivened a rote lesson by appearing incognito as the main character of the day's "big book" lesson, with costume, voice and movements included in her instruction. Of note, the striving readers for whom she had been designated primary literacy instructor evidenced marked academic gains as measured by school assessment under her tutelage during student teaching. The motivational element seemed natural at first glance, but her plans revealed informed and careful assessment and reassessment of ways to adapt the scripted curriculum to the high-poverty, at-risk students' needs while motivating them to reach their potential. Each of the students she taught demonstrated engagement and responsibility throughout the lesson I observed, as well in the independent and collaborative practice opportunities that followed. The documented gains her students demonstrated, not only in the classroom but also on assessments, exceeded her cooperating teacher's expectations significantly. When a student reached an established goal in the school's ongoing reading assessments, Lucy literally did a back flip in the classroom to celebrate. These sorts of teaching strategies and outcomes were evidenced during her teaching observations in both student teaching and internship assignments. In both settings, her spontaneous comments and interactions with students communicated her enthusiasm for their demonstrated growth and success in literacy.

The following table illustrates the process through which I have met and interviewed the student teachers, from pre-service through their second year as classroom

teachers. It indicates the time involved in each step of our interactions and will help to clarify the ongoing process of my data collection:

TIME IN FIELD WITH CASE STUDY PARTICIPANTS

Observations #1 and #2 w/follow-up conferences Student teaching	Fall semester assignments August – October, 2007	2 hours each visit, Total 4 hours
Observations #1, 2, & 3 w/follow-up conferences Internship	Spring semester assignments January – May, 2008	2 hours each visit, Total 6 hours
1st year teaching visits and conferences	Fall semester: Oct.-Nov., 2008 Spring sem: May-June, 2009	1-2 hours each, Approximately 4 hours
2nd year teaching visit; Full day observation	Fall semester: Nov.-Dec., 2009	7-8 hours
Follow-up interview and conversation	(same day as full day obs.) Fall semester (Nov.-Dec 2009)	Approximately 2 hours
Additional phone and email contacts	Fall, 2007 - present	1-3 hours
TOTAL		**25 – 27 HOURS per subject**

Figure 1. Time Spent with Case Study Subjects

Data Collection

Interviews

> Much of what we cannot observe for ourselves has been or is being observed by others. Two principal uses of case study are to obtain the descriptions and interpretations of others. The case will not be seen the same by everyone. Qualitative researchers take pride in discovering and portraying the multiple views of the case. The interview is the main road to multiple realities. (Stake, 1995, p.64)

Specific inquiries aligned with my research questions were developed for each interview, to be administered at the end of the eight-week student teaching assignment, the 14-week internship, the first and last semester of the first year of in-service teaching, and the first semester of the second year of in-service teaching. As per Stake's (1995) recommendations, however, the interviews did not follow the same script for each participant. The guiding questions were consistently present, but many others arose based upon their responses, extending the interviews in spontaneous directions that held importance in portraying the participants' thoughts and experiences. "Qualitative case study seldom proceeds as a survey with the same questions asked of each respondent; rather, each interviewee is expected to have had unique experiences, special stories to tell" (p.65). The interviews actually ended up taking the form of both formal and informal discussions, depending upon the needs of the individual and the interview setting chosen by each of them. Some interviews occurred in the classroom after students were dismissed for the day, some in other locations including coffee shops and restaurants. At times it was important for a location other than the school to be selected to ensure the ability to speak honestly, openly, and without time constraints. At all interviews, as per Stake's recommendations (p.66), careful notes were taken, as well as summative logs following the interviews, all of which will be used to describe each student's unique "story." In addition, a final lengthy, in-depth interview was conducted and filmed, and all content has been transcribed and will be reviewed by each participant for accuracy and approval. This procedure was done in accordance with the recommended policy of member checking (Stake, 1995, p.115).

The questions that were uniformly included at each interview centered on specific aspects of literacy instruction and included some that elicited the participants' beliefs about their preparation to teach various aspects of literacy within each of the classroom environments to which they were assigned. The spontaneous questions that I included often asked the participants to explain or describe the various instructional strategies I had observed and why they had chosen them, as well as whether or not they consistently had the freedom to make such choices. During each interview, I also asked my participants to reflect upon the support they were (or were not) receiving.

Their recommendations were elicited in terms of changes that they would suggest for State University's teacher education program's content, coursework, field experiences, and associated projects and assignments, to optimally prepare education students for independent literacy instruction. As their surroundings and associated demographics changed, I questioned whether their suggestions might change, while perhaps also becoming more specific and detailed. I also wondered if their comments and suggestions would indicate a growing knowledge base, as well as the extent of the basic skills they possessed and acknowledged, crediting their literacy professors, at each stage of the interview process.

As the participants began their first year as in-service teachers, they were asked to respond to the same questions that I had asked in the previous interviews. I was interested in how they would assess their preparation at each stage of the study. Without question, their responses indicated appreciation and respect for the foundational skills they were taught at State University, in student teaching and in internship, and for resources they were provided and given opportunity to practice in their literacy

coursework and associated practica. All three participants felt that they had been provided with foundational knowledge that was essential to them in their literacy teaching in their classrooms, such as learning the components of phonemic awareness and phonics instruction, practice utilizing comprehension strategies, opportunities for hands-on word explorations, and assessment tools such as reading inventories. While there was significant variation among them in terms of the specifics they valued most, there was also variation in the participants' responses over time. In other words, the experiences they accumulated as the study progressed enabled them to recall different elements of their pre-service literacy instruction, as well as knowledge acquired through their field experiences, that became increasingly valuable over time.

Creswell (2007) provides examples of topical questions that have proven helpful in guiding my thoughts and reflections throughout my interviewing of the three participants. These questions have kept me tuned in to the bigger picture, as I continued to collect my participants' thoughts and reflections regarding their experiences as a whole, not just in regard to my specific questions asked at interviews during each stage of the case study. Creswell's questions are intended to cover "anticipatory needs for information" (p.110). The examples provided are the following:

1. What are the experiences in this individual's life?
2. What are stories that can be told from these experiences?
3. What are some 'turning points'?
4. What are some theories that relate to this individual's life? (p.110)

I intentionally kept these examples of topical questions in mind as I observed and interviewed my participants and composed my reflections upon my participants'

teaching. Creswell's questions have enabled me to allow myself occasional departures from a specific list of questions or strict adherence to an interview script, if an opportunity arose to learn more about the participants' life experiences and "turning points". Those departures from script, validated by Creswell, and also by Stake (1995, p.66), have enabled me to listen intently and purposefully to the deeper stories that surfaced within the participants' answers and reflections when questions were posed to them. Creswell's guidelines further helped me remain open to allowing my interviews to adapt to my participants' leads at times, listening carefully if they "rambled" and "strayed" from the questions I had posed or provided new direction. The resulting stories, insights, and reflections proved illuminating, sometimes shocking, and always informative and insightful. These "departures" proved necessary in formulating the participants' stories with authenticity and their voice.

As the participants' stories emerged, grounded in the unique events taking place for each of them in their particular classroom environment as pre-service and in-service teachers, it became evident early on that my organization in describing their experiences would become dependent upon the manner in which each individual's series of events unfolded. In adherence with qualitative research design, it was my goal to remain open and flexible, and to serve as a vehicle for clearly and accurately relaying their impressions, in their voices, each one unique and valuable in its singularity. It is my hope that their stories will provide a frame of sorts through which to view the many faces of the contemporary classroom, and within it, the continually growing, striving, and sometimes struggling novice teachers who diligently give their students their best effort in providing quality literacy instruction. In Barritt's (1986) words, I hope that my case

study will "…provide a voice for individuals not heard in literature…establish a new line of thinking…and [help educators] assess an issue with an understudied group" (in Creswell, 2007, p.102).

Artifacts

I have retained all artifacts, or copies thereof, from the three participants' student teaching and internship experiences for the purpose of identifying and referencing their initial strengths and successes. These artifacts include the participants' lesson plans given to me at each of my supervisory visits, as well as completed formative evaluation forms and summative evaluation forms for two observations during student teaching and three observations during internship. State University's School of Education requires that these two forms be completed by university supervisors at each observation and at the end of the field experience respectively, and by cooperating teachers at the midpoint and end of the field experience. In addition, university supervisors and cooperating teachers are required to discuss all formative evaluations with the pre-service teacher, and collect their written targets for improvement on the form at the conclusion of each conference. (These targets were intended to be revisited at subsequent meetings.) Pre-service teachers, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors retain a copy of each evaluation. I have also retained copies of my narrative evaluations of each participant in their official letters of reference, contained in a confidential file at State University's Career Center and forwarded to potential employers at their request.

More than 60 emails have been exchanged with the participants over the three-year period, strengthening communication and facilitating scheduling. Copies of all emails have been retained as artifacts for the purpose of perusing for content relating to

literacy instruction, reflections and insights, and requests for mentoring. Interestingly, some email content has reflected tones, moods, joys, and disappointments of the participants more clearly to me than personal interviews and conversations and has clarified some elements of the participants' stories.

I have received written thank you notes from two of the participants which I have also retained. These notes were sent to express gratitude to me in regard to my role as their university supervisor and they provide additional documentation of the participants' thoughts about mentoring, particularly in regard to the university's role in providing it during field experiences. They also provide additional valuable insight into these two teachers' attitudes and motivation to teach.

Field Notes

As described earlier, I have collected field notes from approximately 18 hours of observations of each participant's teaching. Those collected during supervision in student teaching and internship were formally presented to the participant on the formative evaluations. I have also retained all notes contained in my summative evaluations submitted for each of them. I have retained my notes from all interviews conducted during field experiences and the first year of teaching independently. I have transcribed my tape recordings of full-day instruction by each participant in their second year of teaching, accompanied by written notes and reflections accumulated during those recording periods. I have also transcribed videotapes from in-depth interviews following the full-day observations and recordings, and have retained the written notes and reflections I completed while videotaping. Analysis of these notes and the videotapes has

informed my understanding of the participants' growth, insight, and development over time.

Data Analysis

While attempting to create thick, accurate descriptions of each individual, I conducted a simultaneous cross-case analysis as themes emerged within my research materials. I color-coded various themes that I ascertained and endeavored to utilize the color-coding consistently and accurately to help facilitate the tracking of similar threads, ideas, experiences, reflections, and insights between participants. For ease in facilitating this cross-case analysis, I created boards upon which I have posted notes that are color-coded under sections delineated to each of my participants. As I continually perused my board and its notes, I found commonalities and overlaps that I might have missed without the use of this device. Creswell describes this process as "open coding, coding the data for its major categories of information (Creswell, 2007, p.64). This "constant comparative process" is defined by Creswell (2007) as "the process of taking information from data collection and comparing it to emerging categories" (p.64). Below are the three codes that initially emerged as I reviewed all of the information I had obtained from my student teachers, along with the observed instructional practices the student teachers demonstrated, from which the codes emerged:

Emergence of Themes and Codes

Developmentally Appropriate Practice

The first theme to emerge from my study of the participants' observation evaluations, artifacts, transcriptions of observations and interviews was that of developmentally appropriate practice (DAP). This theme emerged through the following

demonstrations of aspects of developmentally appropriate practice within their literacy instruction which I observed:

1. Elicitation of critical thinking
2. Building upon prior knowledge and experience
3. Language-rich instruction and environment
4. Vocabulary instruction and comprehension practices
5. Encouragement of independent reading
6. Infusion of literature across content areas
7. Phonemic awareness and/or phonics instruction as per student need
8. Building connections to literature
9. Providing opportunities for peer collaboration

The emergence of these practices within the theme of developmentally appropriate practice in literacy instruction aligns closely with recommendations in the research contained in the review of literature. I reviewed and color-coded these demonstrations of developmentally appropriate practice within my data as I examined all evaluations, additional artifacts, field notes, interview notes and transcriptions of full-day recorded observations and videotaped in-depth interviews.

Management and Motivation

The second theme to emerge was that of management and motivation. This theme, as demonstrated in the following practices of the participants within their literacy instruction, was also color-coded and charted from my examination of the data:

1. Participants' design and implementation of motivational strategies
2. Consistent and effective management of behavior, activities, and resources

3. Demonstrates respect and dignifies all students
4. Utilizes positive reinforcement appropriately
5. Facilitates students' literature choices

All data was color-coded and charted for these demonstrations of motivation and management within the participants' literacy instruction, as well as within the references they made to motivation and management in their interviews and conversations. Data analyzed were observation evaluations and notes, field notes from full-day observations and all interviews, transcriptions of recorded full-day observations and videotaped in-depth interviews, and all other collected artifacts for each participant.

The emergent theme of motivation and management, as well as the demonstrations listed, clearly align with the research contained in the literature review. The themes of motivation and management were examined collectively because of the high incidence of their joint occurrence. For example, in observations where highly motivating literacy instruction was noted, there was also effective and consistent management demonstrated. Concerns and ideas about motivation and management were often raised in tandem by the participants as well.

Differentiation and Enrichment

The third them to emerge was that of differentiation and enrichment. This theme surfaced frequently, not only in evaluating participants, but also in the concerns they articulated. As coded and charted in all of the same data sources enumerated above, the emergent theme of differentiation and enrichment was demonstrated within participants' literacy instruction in the classroom by the following:

1. Meets students' individual needs

2. Adapts literacy curricula and enriches content per student need
3. Incorporates frequent and varied writing opportunities
4. Incorporates mini-lessons and spontaneous teaching
5. Evaluates differentiation for effectiveness

The emergent theme of differentiation and enrichment aligns with research contained in the literature review, as the demonstrations of the theme align with some of the specific recommendations for best practice contained in the studies.

This process of analysis and discovery of emerging themes evolved similarly to that described eloquently by Creswell (2007): "The [qualitative case study] research develops *naturalistic generalizations* from analyzing the data, generalizations that people can learn from the case either for themselves or to apply to a population of cases" (p.163). Drawing from the writing of Yin (1994), I am fortunate, that as the "…investigator, [I have] access to a situation previously inaccessible to scientific observation…[and I am hopeful that] therefore…[this] descriptive information will be relevatory" (p.49). This has proven to be the case in the two additional codes that I have added later in my perusal of information.

Additional Emerging Themes

The two additional themes and their indicators that emerged in my conferences and observations of teachers were the following:

Support/Mentoring

In subsequent analysis of the data, support/mentoring appeared with considerable frequency. Unlike the first three emergent themes, this was not evidenced on observation forms collected, nor other associated artifacts, but began to surface frequently in

examination of interview notes, emails, thank you notes, and particularly transcriptions of videotaped in-depth interviews. In addition, the review of some addendum field notes from supervisory visits revealed associated content as well. The evidence in the participants' instruction and/or follow-up or their conversations appeared as follows:

1. Provision and availability of support/mentoring (or lack thereof)
2. Existence (or not) of mandated support/mentoring program
3. Need for support as a pre-service teacher
4. Need for support as an in-service teacher
5. Individuals involved in supporting/mentoring participants
6. Quality of support/mentoring received

The evidence of these points within the support/mentoring theme varied in its occurrence between participants and settings. Of note is the alignment, once again, between the theme and points within and the research contained in the literature review. It became apparent on close inspection of the data that there were many nuances within the occurrence of the theme in the multiple sources of data listed above.

Assessments/Pressures on Teachers

This second additional theme emerged in two distinct categories that also often surfaced in tandem: the incorporation of assessment in literacy instruction by the participants, and the pressure they sustained because of assessment mandates and pressure placed upon them in the schools. These two aspects of assessment arose in conjunction with each other and the participants' desire to incorporate effective assessment in their literacy instruction, while being required to teach to state assessments. The categories emerging within this additional theme are as follows:

1. Standardized testing and state assessments
2. School/district assessments in literacy
3. Participants' use of assessment by choice
4. Connections to coursework content regarding assessment
5. Demonstration of assessment of students in ongoing manner for purpose of differentiation
6. Assessment strategies chosen and utilized by the participants
7. Pressure to teach to assessments and participants' reactions to pressure
8. Variation in assessment procedures in different schools
9. Modeling of assessment procedures during student teaching and internship assignments

This theme and the associated elements indicated arose often in interviews, as documented frequently in interview notes, transcriptions from in-depth interviews, and some artifacts for concerns related to mandated assessments. Participants' desire and ability to implement effective, varying, ongoing assessment as a crucial element in literacy instruction were evident in the analysis of formative observations. In addition, participants referred to the value they place upon the assessment strategies and the importance of assessment in literacy instruction learned in their coursework, and this aspect of the theme emerged within examination of in-depth interview notes primarily. All of these occurrences were color-coded and charted.

As these additional themes emerged with repeated related references in my perusal of data, I recoded all materials to include these new categories in alignment with an inductive approach to case study endorsed by Stake (1995):

> Both categorical aggregation and direct interpretation depend greatly on the search for patterns. Often, the patterns will be known in advance, drawn from the research questions, serving as a template for the analysis. Sometimes the patterns will emerge unexpectedly from the analysis. (p.78)

Case Study Validity

Creswell (2007) endorses a number of strategies in case study research to ensure validity of the work. His first inclusion is the following: "Prolonged engagement and persistent observation in the field include building trust with participants, learning the culture, and checking for misinformation that stems from distortions introduced by the researcher" (p.207). I have worked to further the sense of trust, camaraderie, and friendship that clearly developed between these three students and me while I was their university supervisor during their field experiences. I always have made it a point to ensure all of my students that I am their advocate and source of support as needed, as well as their assigned university supervisor. However, it has been my experience over the 21 years I have served in this role, that some students are much more open to creating or allowing a relationship of that sort to develop within the framework of our assigned interactions than others. It is for this reason that I considered the development of this type of collegial, mutually trusting relationship to be a necessary component for consideration of a student teacher for inclusion in the study. These three particular student teachers appeared eager to develop that type of interactional pattern within our dealings, and this became clearly evident by the end of the eight-week student teaching period. It was at this point that I began to consider possible student teachers for inclusion, and among others to whom I was assigned at the time, Kelly, Lucy, and Molly

fit this particular requirement very well. They were eager for my feedback, did not hesitate to contact me for support or to have questions answered, considered implementing my suggestions in the classroom, and responded openly to my questions within the context of our post-supervision conferences. In short, they were warm, open, honest, engaging, and responsive to my efforts to connect with them in a manner that promoted the establishment of trust.

This trust became an essential foundation for the continuation of my research. It became increasingly important after being approached and accepting my invitation to participate in the case study that my participants trust me. When I told them as pre-service teachers that the notes I took during my observations, as well as the official formative and summative assessments and reference narrative, were open to no one else to read without their permission, they needed to feel confident and assured that I was telling the truth. They did, however, supply their permission for their stories to be shared in this study. During their first and second years of teaching, that trust had to be present and viable for them to speak candidly while being interviewed, filmed, or recorded. I further emphasized this confidentiality by always insisting during their first and second years as in-service teachers that they determine the time and place for our conversations and interviews, based upon their level of comfort and possible need for privacy in a setting other than the school. I believe that this helped to further their trust and confidence and promote the open, candid exchanges that followed.

I have also worked at building trust by purposefully attempting to be the best listener I can in all my interactions with the participants, but this is not something targeted only in the case study. I have always felt it both my professional duty and a

mark of excellence within my profession to hone my skills as a "good listener" to my students. This skill is validated within the context of case study protocol suggested by Yin (1994), who emphasized the importance of being a "good listener…[who will] not be trapped by ideologies or perceptions" (p.69) He provides the following recommendations to consider in becoming a "good case study investigator":

1. Be adaptive and flexible…Newly encountered situations can be seen as opportunities, not threats.
2. Have a firm grasp of the issues being studied.
3. Be unbiased by preconceived notions, including those arrived from theory.
4. One insight into asking good questions is to understand that research is about questions and not necessarily about answers. (p.69-70).

These guidelines have provided a helpful template and self-check throughout the research process, and have helped me in the continuous process of reflecting upon my methodology and self-evaluating the quality of my work.

Triangulation

"In triangulation, researchers make use of multiple and different sources, methods, investigators, and theories to provide corroborating evidence" (Creswell, 2007, p. 208). Inclusion of university artifacts such as the formative and summative evaluations required to be completed during the case study participants' field experiences will serve to authenticate their strong performances within these assignments. The assessment tool is utilized consistently with all elementary and secondary education students in my program (Segebrecht 2007, Appendix A). While these evaluations helped me determine whom to consider for selection in the study, they also serve as authentic

artifacts documenting the participants' work and validating their inclusion in the study. The additional artifacts I have included (formative and summative evaluations, field notes, interview transcriptions, full-day observation recording transcriptions, emails, and letters) include a variety of sources and methods for collecting data, providing the triangulation necessary to ensure validity in a case study. I have also retained copies of the formative evaluations completed by cooperating teachers and collected at the midpoint of student teaching and internship assignments for each participant in order to provide additional sources of information regarding the participants' work in those classrooms. It has been interesting to me to review these evaluations through my cross comparison with the students' evaluations of those cooperating teachers in regard to their support. These pieces of information will be revealed in the participants' stories. Field notes, too, contain various pieces of information that will help in constructing the participants' teaching lives. "For data source triangulation, we look to see if the phenomenon or case remains the same at other times, in other spaces, or as persons interact differently" (Stake, 1995, p.112). I also incorporated Stake's (1995) recommended methodological triangulation in referring to older notes (and particularly the formative evaluations) for comparison in the review of newer field notes and transcriptions of interviews.

Interrater Reliability

I have obtained interrater reliability by acquiring the assistance of a literacy professor in my department to code a 10% sample of each set of field notes and transcriptions for comparison purposes. If our coding is similar, this strengthens the triangulation process for my research. Our coding indicated a 95% interrater reliability.

Stake (1995) validates this as an essential element to incorporate in case study: "Since no two investigators ever interpret things entirely the same, whenever multiple investigators compare data, there is some theory triangulation…To the extent they agree on its meaning, the interpretation is triangulated" (p.113).

Peer Review

Creswell (2007) writes that "peer review…provides an external check of the research process (p. 208). He cites Lincoln and Guba (1985) who describe "…an individual who keeps the researcher honest; asks hard questions about methods, meanings, and interpretations; and provides the researcher with the opportunity for catharsis by sympathetically listening to the researcher's feelings" (p.208). I must credit my friend, Susan (a pseudonym), for her role in my work as my peer reviewer. Ironically, I got to know Susan through a poetry course we both took, a minor course for me. We were at comparable points on our Ph.D. pathway when we became friends, and we enjoyed keeping track of each other's progress.

When she asked me to review her dissertation proposal, I was happy to do so, although my review provided little in comparison to what her subsequent reviews of my work provided me. A semester or so ahead of me in the dissertation process, she brought the informed experience to her reading of my work that made those close readings and subsequent suggestions extremely helpful and valuable to me as a writer. She was not afraid to ask hard questions, and she helped me look closely at my research questions, encouraging my continual evaluation of how my work aligned with them.

I valued her suggestions at certain points in my work to make my message clearer and stronger. When she pointed to parts of my writing as effective, I felt validated and

inspired to forge ahead with diligence. Most of all, I value her sympathetic listening and her ongoing interest in my work, and in me. I agree with Guba and Lincoln that this type of listening is essential, but for more than establishing validity in case studies. It was essential to me in maintaining my focus and overall well-being.

Member Checking

Creswell (2007) states that "in member checking, the researcher solicits participants' views of the credibility of the findings and interpretations" and cites Lincoln and Guba (1985) who describe this process as "the most critical technique for establishing credibility" (p.208). I began member checking with the first interview of each participant and have diligently incorporated this in each one to follow. This was accomplished primarily by documenting key elements of the interviews through note taking and in the last three interviews, videotaping while simultaneously taking notes on major points. The note taking was followed by verbally repeating the essence of their comments to double check my understanding of their remarks. I also have been intentional about asking additional unplanned questions in interviews to help participants extend their statements as needed for clarification.

In addition, I informed participants that I would email elements of my writing to them periodically, asking them to add to or correct information as they saw fit to enable me to present their thoughts and experiences with complete accuracy. They all expressed their eagerness not only for these segments, but to read the dissertation as a whole. At its completion, I will email them the finished dissertation. This entire process reflects Merriam's (1988) description of member checks: "taking data and interpretations back to

the people from whom they were derived and asking them if the results are plausible" (p.169).

Internal Validity

Yin (1994) addresses the issue of establishing internal validity through pattern matching, explanation building, addressing rival explanations, and using logic models (p.41). I have been pattern matching since the first step of my research, in perusing formative and summative evaluations for patterns of excellence as determined by ratings of "exemplary" on the evaluation form's rubric. I have continued this process through the consistency I have utilized in asking the same set of interview questions of all participants, albeit with varied spontaneous questions added, at all stages of the research process. In their recorded responses, I have continued searching for patterns within each participant's remarks, as well as continuing the cross-case analysis of patterns appearing similarly from participant to participant. The coding process and board and note records have further enforced the pattern-matching process that Yin recommends. It is my understanding that utilizing a wide variety of sources including university artifacts, copies of emails, written notes from interviews, transcriptions of audio recordings from classroom observation, as well as videotapes and their transcriptions, represents the triangulation that is recommended for maximizing validity. (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 1988; and Yin, 1994)

The explanation building should become evident as the students' stories are told in chapter four where I present my results. It is in this section that experiences, reflections, insights, and ideas of each student are documented within their stories. The "replication logic" that Yin (1994) recommends to ensure internal validity is something

that I observed as the three stories were written, and I noted the occurrences and philosophies being replicated within my reporting of these teachers' experiences.

Human Subjects Committee Approval

In accordance with case study protocol, the Human Subjects Committee of [my university] has granted approval for my research (HSCL #18066), and all students have completed informed consent statements for human subjects' participation in research and have received copies of the same. I have retained all copies of this information within my files of artifacts. All forms are readily accessible if needed for referencing at any point.

External Reliability

Yin (1994) characterizes external reliability as determined by "whether findings are generalizable beyond the immediate case study" (p.41). He concludes that case studies "rely on *analytic* generalization: A particular result set [can lead to the formation of] some broader theory" (p.41). The replication logic he discusses will hopefully be evident as the content of these extensive interactions are told. Looking at the data I have collected, I can see such logic within these stories that are continually playing in my mind, begging to be written in full. The following pages present information that has kept me inspired and passionate about my research for nearly three years.

Chapter 4

Assertions

My purpose in conducting this emic (Stake, 1995) collective case study was twofold. I compiled data that could provide an understanding of the ways in which three pre-service teachers assigned to me have transitioned into effective in-service teachers. In bringing their experiences to print, in revealing their unique strengths and their commitment, an understanding may be reached as to the practices that enabled them to overcome the difficulties that the transition held for them. In particular, this work is intended to reveal how they dealt with the disparities they discovered between their knowledge of best practice and the real life situations awaiting them in assessment-driven school environments. Secondly, this data is intended to shed light upon how teacher education programs can and have made progress in assisting future literacy teachers through this transition from pre-service to in-service. The research questions that guided my work were the following:

- *How do novice teachers negotiate the disparities between research-based, best practice instruction in their teacher preparation programs and the realities of the classroom as they transition from pre-service to in-service?*
- *What could be done by universities to assist future teachers of literacy as they transition from pre-service to in-service?*

Question 1: The Transition from Pre-Service to In-Service

My multiple, triangulated data sources, enumerated in chapter three, have been carefully analyzed, cross-analyzed, and coded with interrater reliability, representing in their totality a rich story of how the three case study participants have maintained aspects

of "best practice" in their literacy instruction, from early in student teaching through their second year as in-service teachers. The artifacts included documentation of their strengths as student teachers and again as interns, enumerated in detail aligned with state standards on their formative evaluations (Segebrecht, 2007, Appendix A). Field notes, interview transcriptions, and transcribed recordings of full-day classroom observations document their first and second years in their own in-service classrooms. Conferences were an integral part of the follow-up to each of the observations listed, and field notes from each have been retained and analyzed for cross-analysis purposes. As I repeatedly analyzed and re-analyzed this information for insights into the specifics of their maintenance of effective literacy instruction within the confines each was given, three initial themes, each representing significant areas of challenge in transition, emerged from my participants' demonstrated teaching strategies as well as their comments and insights. As the analysis continued, and the cross-analysis was again completed, two additional themes emerged, indicated in both subjects' teaching practice and expressed by them in conferences.

Three Themes in Transitions

As described in chapter three, each case study participant emerged as a strong candidate during the process of being evaluated as student teachers under my supervision. Excerpts in this chapter will illustrate the participants' abilities to incorporate developmentally appropriate practice in their literacy instruction, beginning with the student teaching assignment and still evident in the second year as in-service classroom teachers. This evidence constitutes the first emerging theme, coded as "Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)." Secondly, each participant demonstrated a marked ability

to effectively motivate her students within each classroom evaluated (student teaching, internship, and her own in-service classroom), while concurrently maintaining effective classroom management. This effectiveness, demonstrated by participants and noted in field notes and evaluations, emerged as the second theme, coded as "Motivation and Management." Thirdly, each participant made notable efforts to infuse their literacy instruction (often with a required scripted or assessment-based curriculum) with enrichment strategies and differentiation based on student need, coded as "Differentiation and Enrichment." This noteworthy instructional practice continues in their present day classrooms as well.

Research Question #1

These three emergent themes and the data that support them inform the first research question, "How do novice teachers negotiate the disparities between research-based best practice instruction in their teacher preparation programs and the realities of the classroom as they transition from pre-service to in-service?" Based upon the data collected from multiple, triangulated sources, these themes together led to the formulation of the following assertion:

Assertion 1: Based upon research from NAEYC/IRA, NRC, and NRP, as well as numerous literacy experts cited in the literature review, novice teachers who demonstrate exemplary literacy instruction are able to:

- *Incorporate developmentally best practice*
- *Motivate students effectively*
- *Utilize effective classroom management*
- *Infuse literacy instruction with enrichment strategies and differentiation*

Each of these themes have been examined with substantiations of the case study participants' instruction examples, utilizing text from data acquired, in the form of their evaluations, their instructional transcriptions, and their conversations regarding the same. The evidence reveals the participants' teaching practices regarding DAP. They know it well, they use it continuously, and they trust in its effectiveness.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice

The International Reading Association (IRA) and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Joint Statement (1998) published the following statement introducing their comprehensive study outlining recommended principles for implementing "developmentally appropriate practice" (DAP) with young children:

> Although reading and writing abilities continue to develop throughout the life span, the early childhood years – from birth through age eight – are the most important period for literacy development. It is for this reason that the IRA and NAEYC joined together to formulate a position statement regarding early literacy development. The statement consists of a set of principles and recommendations for teaching practices and public policy" (p.30).

These principles are discussed in chapter two (p.22-25), and incorporate a number of instructional practices which underlie "best practice" as educators have referenced in the years following this report. As demonstrated by the syllabi collected from State University's literacy professors, these instructional best practices align with content of the teacher education program, and represent the valued content referenced by the participants. Among the principles listed are teaching strategies that align with content of the formative and summative evaluations (Segebrecht, 2007, Appendices A and B)

utilized in my supervision of Molly, Kelly, and Lucy during their student teaching and internships. These teaching strategies have been noted in my analysis of their ongoing literacy instruction, from student teaching through this, the second year of teaching in their own classrooms: (a) elicits critical thinking, (b) builds upon prior knowledge and experience (c) creates language-rich instruction and environment (d.) incorporates vocabulary instruction and comprehension practices (e) encourages independent reading (f) infuses literature across curriculum (g) incorporates phonemic awareness and subsequent phonics instruction (h) builds connections to literature (i) enables peer collaboration.

I have coded excerpts representing DAP throughout the data acquired from the different stages of the participants' teaching of literacy, including evaluations, conference notes of their comments regarding/demonstrating DAP, and evidence of its use in field notes and transcribed recordings. Examples of the specific elements of DAP noted and coded align with state standards and the content of formative and summative evaluations (Segebrecht, 2007, Appendices A and B). All case study participants have multiple examples of DAP noted and coded with the associated data which will be presented in this chapter.

Motivation and Management

Three landmark studies were cited in chapter two which have significantly informed legislation (e.g., No Child Left Behind), impacting instructional practice in the United States (e.g., testing mandates.) Of these three studies, the International Reading Association (IRA) and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Joint Statement (1998) summarized in chapter 2 (p.17-20), specifically states

that students model their teacher's enthusiasm for learning, or their struggle to get through the day. Emphasizing the need for a motivating classroom climate, the report endorses literacy programs that allow "children to expand the ability to communicate orally and through reading and writing and to enjoy these activities" (p.69). Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) conclude that "engaged readers likely will have a learning orientation toward reading, seeking to improve their knowledge and conceptual understanding as they read" (p.407). Wharton, McDonald, Pressley, and Hampton (1998) also report that motivation is an integral part of effective literacy instruction. The National Research Council (NRC) Report (Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998)'s list of "outstanding teacher" qualities includes the following that relate directly to motivation and management in teaching literacy:

- Encouraging self-regulation through cognitive monitoring strategies
- 'Masterful' management of activity, behavior, and resources (p.196).

The three participants' proficient motivation and management skills in the classroom are evident in the excerpts that will be included in this chapter from evaluation documents, personal statements, excerpts from recorded instruction, and information provided in interviews. Through these multiple data sources, it was evident by frequency of the topic and depth of participants' responses, and confirmed by an inter-rater, that motivation and management are essential components of their literacy instruction with their students. Data contains excerpts in which participants credit their literacy professors with course content regarding helpful motivational strategies, including their personal consultations with professors regarding instruction of students during practicum

experiences, as well as follow-up contact during in-service teaching regarding the use of word work as a motivational strategy in literacy instruction.

The demonstrations of effective management and motivation align with state standards and are incorporated into State University's formative and summative evaluations (Segebrecht, 2007, appendices A and B). These demonstrations with literacy instruction also reflect research studies such those enumerated above, and are listed as follows:

> Maintains motivational classroom climate and designs and implements motivational strategies according to individual needs; maintains consistency in managing classroom and student behavior; shows fairness and respect to all students; delivers dignifying responses to students; utilizes reinforcement for exemplary behaviors, implements student choice of literature; considers student needs and interests in facilitating literature choices; provides effective directions

The data obtained from the three participants will demonstrate which specific aspects of motivation and management have been utilized in their classrooms.

Differentiation and Enrichment

Differentiation and enrichment have become more difficult to implement in literacy instruction with the infusion of scripted and assessment-based curricula into schools. Both Lucy and Kelly have implemented a scripted curriculum in literacy, and Kelly was also required to teach only an assessment-based curriculum in literacy for most of her internship. This assessment-based curriculum contained scripted, daily mini-lessons which drilled the students on specific skills that would be tested on state assessments. No literature was included within the curriculum, and additional reading

curriculum was not taught until the completion of all the skills lessons and the assessments themselves, in late March. While Molly's placements provided different curricula than these two types, she was subjected to school requirements as far as implementation and departmentalization of other content areas. These regulations made it necessary for all three subjects to find creative methods for differentiating their curricula to match the needs of their students, and also for finding enrichment strategies and activities to maintain student motivation and achievement in literacy.

The IRA and NAEYC Joint Statement (1998) set forth a set of principles and recommendations for literacy instruction including that "young children especially need to be engaged in experiences that make academic content meaningful and build on prior learning" (p.31). The second landmark study, the NRC Report (Snow, Burns, and Griffin, 1998) included a list of qualities of "outstanding teachers," including the incorporation of a variety of reading and writing materials, provision of multiple opportunities for reading practice, careful choices of texts and instructional materials with literature included, provision of writing activities, and adjusting instruction to meet individual needs. Drawing upon associated research and aligning with the formative and summative evaluation forms (Segebrecht, 2007) are the demonstrations of effective differentiation and enrichment in literacy instruction. They are:

> Incorporates instructional techniques and strategies to meet individual needs, even with confines of scripted or pre-assessment curricula; incorporates regular writing opportunities that motivate students; incorporates mini-lessons and spontaneous teaching within restrictions of curriculum; continually evaluates differentiations for effectiveness

The three participants' incorporation of enrichment and differentiation emerged as themes on multiple occasions throughout the excerpts of recording of instruction, comments, and evaluations contained in this chapter. Of significance, this was accomplished within scripted curricula, assessment-based curricula, and pressure to teach to assessments as well as to meet school, team, and district requirements of various sorts. The emergence of these themes was coded for whole-group instruction, small-group instruction, and individual adjustments for particular students.

Because of the interwoven nature of these three emerging themes throughout the acquired data, the excerpts will be presented by participant with one, two, or sometimes three of the themes demonstrated simultaneously. To sift these out separately would require repetition and redundancy of the excerpts included. In the following pages, I will report the novice teachers' work and words to tell their stories of transition to becoming effective literacy instructors in their own classrooms.

"Actions speak louder than words"

Molly

As early as the third week of her student teaching assignment, Molly was already demonstrating developmentally appropriate practice in her reading instruction, effective management and motivation of students, and differentiation and enrichment of the literacy curriculum. It is important to note that Molly's cooperating teacher for this eight week assignment missed the first three weeks of her student teaching, due to bereavement. During her absence, the substitute teacher told me that she allowed Molly to do the majority of the planning and teaching, as Molly had requested. Despite her cooperating teacher's absence, Molly said that she felt comfortable being observed by me

during her third week in the classroom. The following lesson plan excerpt from this first observation during student teaching demonstrates Molly's intentional incorporation of developmentally appropriate practice. Also evident in this first observed lesson were elements of motivation and management and differentiation and enrichment of the curriculum of the content areas she successfully integrated. The following excerpts from her lesson plan reference her integration of math and science, with reading also infused by Molly:

> <u>*Background Information*</u>
>
> **The first thing we always do is check homework. Then students have immediate feedback, and any questions can be clarified before building on that knowledge.*
>
> **This lesson is a continuation from Tuesday, September 4. However, the overall anticipatory set was a comic strip-like story about the rainforest, and we read that on Friday, August 31. On Tuesday, we discussed population and samples. The students decided on their team 'recipe' for 'populating the forest.' Basically, they decided the colors and numbers of beans that they would place in a sack for another team to use in the lab. In the 'collect' stage of the lab, the groups will exchange bags and draw a sample of 10 beans, replace the beans, shake, and draw again (x3). After agreeing on a team 'recipe,' students created the 'draw' page of the TIMS lab. In this step, students draw a picture of the variables and materials that will be used in the lab. The students then collected the data from another team's 'recipe' of 'populating the forest' in the 'collect' stage of the lab.*
>
> **Students have had both guided and independent practice over the past week in*

both math and science on creating a bar graph. Thus, we will jump to independent practice for this lab.

Objectives

-Students will understand the importance of sampling and its connection to scientists' work in the world.

-Students will be able to make and interpret bar graphs.

-Students will be able to find the median and mode average.

-Students will be able to predict population characteristics based on samples.

-Students will perform and understand the (collection, organization-Tuesday), graphing, and analyzing data stages (Wednesday).

Anticipatory Set

Yesterday, we talked about estimating the number of bees on the estimation page. The next item that students will estimate is the black clusters on the bee estimation page. This ties into our lab and the story we read on Friday about Professor Alicia Robinson who was gathering data about the rain forest. Why was it important that she estimate instead of count each animal in the rain forest?

(Molly's lesson plan, observation conducted on September 5, 2007)

Molly's instruction during both her first and second observations of student teaching prompted my initial impression of her as an exemplary teacher, as my comments on the formative evaluations reveal. The second observation's lesson integrated literacy instruction with the students' current study of Native Americans in Social Studies. The following are excerpts copied from her second formative evaluation of student teaching (Segebrecht, 2007), which I completed during her lesson integrating literacy with social

studies. Although Molly never observed or received guidance in actual literacy instruction during this eight-week student teaching assignment, she effectively infused literacy into her lesson on her own:

- Opening discussion elicit[ed] students' prior knowledge and experiences and help[ed] them begin the process of connecting with the text.
- Great idea to incorporate literature that integrates well with your study of Native Americans. Wonderful text-to-self connections with…[associated] questions.
- …[Effective] eliciting [of] critical thinking, analysis, and reflections upon the literature.
- Great thematic integration. Your choice of literature was inspirational, and the painting [follow-up] activity was perfect. (formative evaluation, September 25, 2007)

The following excerpts are from a lesson plan for one of Molly's literacy lessons I observed in her first-grade classroom during internship the following semester. I observed Molly instructing two literacy groups at different levels. During the first group, Molly taught a lesson from her school's required literacy program, an expository, high-interest leveled reader written at the appropriate guided reading (benchmarked) level for a small group of children. The expository booklet discussed bridges, with some illustrations included, which Molly expanded upon with color photos of famous bridges she had pulled from the internet. She also added her own enrichment activities, identifying and discussing the additional pictures and incorporating a word web.

First Group: Level J

Book: <u>Building Strong Bridges</u>

Assess prior knowledge with questioning:

Have you ever driven or walked across a bridge?

Where was it?

How are bridges the same?

How are bridges different/

What else do you know about bridges?

Review high frequency and content words:

Support, arch, steel, suspension, pier, over

Show the front/back: How are these bridges alike?

Lay out bridge pictures [obtained from Internet and discussed] and brainstorm a word web.

Picture walk if time. (Molly's lesson plan, observation on April 22, 2008)

Both guided reading groups were timed, contained required content from the leveled readers, but also incorporated Molly's enrichment strategies, as indicated above. The second literacy group of the day was working on a fictional leveled reader. These students were also provided with additional enrichment activities, including Molly's activation of prior knowledge, elicitation of students' predictions, and a motivating vocabulary/language activity, as demonstrated in the following lesson plan excerpt:

Second Group: Level N

Book: <u>Cobwebs, Elephants, and Stars</u>

Assess prior knowledge with questioning and predictions:

What do you think this story will be about?

How are cobwebs, elephants, and stars all a part of this story?

How do you feel when you go to a babysitter?

What activities do you do here?

Fill out a vocabulary map together.

Then students will draw a word and create a vocabulary map for their word. We will share the maps, for they are common vocabulary words in the story.

Picture walk.

Begin reading if time. (Molly's lesson plan, observation on April 22, 2008)

It is important to note that although these particular guided literacy groups did not incorporate significant oral reading, Molly described her daily practice of providing extended silent reading time for all students. During this time, she regularly listened to every child read to her orally in order to assess their understanding and progress on an ongoing basis. She regularly changed literacy groups according to changes in both challenges and proficiency demonstrated. Molly described to me how she continued this practice during her first year as an in-service teacher.

In addition to her use of developmentally appropriate practice, the following comments copied from her formative evaluation completed during the internship observation described above also indicate her motivation of her students during literacy instruction:

- Excellent probing questions used to elicit critical thinking, comparisons, analysis, and generalizations.

- Great job with initial schema activation…students' bridge experiences! Vocabulary activity is motivating and appropriate – with elicitation of students' utilization of the words in sentences.
- The bridge photos elicited comments, connections and critical thinking and provided a perfect connection to your word web. (formative evaluation, April 22, 2008)

The incorporation of developmentally appropriate practice was evident in Molly's teaching in these lessons I evaluated in her student teaching and internship respectively. In addition, her instruction of the two literacy groups demonstrated her growing ability to infuse enrichment and multiple elements of DAP within a limited time frame of a single guided reading group. Molly was responsible for meeting with five literacy groups during a morning instructional period that was carefully timed, so efficiency was a critical part of instruction. As revealed in her lesson plans, as well as the accompanying formative evaluations, Molly integrated literacy across content areas and infused short literacy groups with schema activation and text to self, text to text and text to world connections. In addition, she incorporated language and vocabulary work through enrichment activities which she added to the class literacy program. She added literature and extraneous information and examples of vocabulary and content in a creative manner with regularity. All of these intentional inclusions on her part reflect the state standards and research recommendations which informed the description of developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) presented on page 8 of this chapter.

It is important to reveal how these same DAP skills are being similarly practiced in Molly's literacy instruction as a second-year in-service teacher. Over the course of the

past year, from the spring of 2009 to the spring of 2010, Molly has experienced numerous changes in her life, including a new marriage, a new home, a new city, and a new school. The new school has brought a number of changes as well, from her former public school district (as a first-year teacher) to a private parochial school with different curricula, assessments, and instructional procedures in literacy. Despite experiencing some frustration with the instructional restraints in this new environment, she continues to implement DAP, infusing it into her literacy curriculum effectively. The following is an excerpt from my field notes compiled on the eight-hour day I spent in her first-grade classroom observing and recording. My notes refer to a lesson she taught as part of a gingerbread man unit, adapted to her current curriculum from the previous year:

> *As students enter the room, Molly validates specific children who are writing in journals and reading. She turns the overhead on [preparing for the upcoming lesson] while children continue with their previous tasks. Again students are on task, all working. Molly smiles and softly instructs her students.*
>
> *Molly: I have a job for the first person who is down on the rug and ready to work. The students comply with quiet comments, mostly on task. They form neat rows [in front of Molly on the rug]. Molly speaks when they are all settled and attentive:*
>
> *Molly: OK! You asked me yesterday what these gingerbread men were for, and we've read all these gingerbread stories,[gestures enthusiastically to books on display] and it's getting to be almost Christmastime! [actually a part of this parochial school's religion curriculum] So… on each gingerbread man, we'll write the title because they're all a little bit different. And we'll write the main*

character, and they're not all gingerbread men. We'll write the other characters, because some of them have different characters. The refrain…you know in church [school chapel services and songs required for all students] we sing the refrain after each verse…There's a refrain in the gingerbread man books that you probably know. [Students join in on refrain.] 'Run, run, as fast as you can…you can't catch me, I'm the Gingerbread Man!' That's the refrain, but they're a little bit different in each book. And then we'll write the ending, because in some of them…he might live! This story is called 'The Pancake Man,' and when we finish, you'll get to work to put the parts of the story back in order. I have the parts of the story here in boxes and you get to cut them out and put them back in order! [The students were clearly excited.]

Student: Are you going to read ALL of those books?

Molly: We will! We'll read all of those! OK, so this is our first one. You can see the cover over there, so you can remember which book goes with the gingerbread man. So our first thing that we need to write is our…

Student: title!

Molly: Our title! And when we have a title, we always…

Student: capitalize!

Molly: Capitalize the first letter, and we underline it…the first letter of each word. OK?

[Molly begins to read.]

Molly: So, who is our main character? Can we tell from the title?

Student: the pancake

Molly: The pancake! Do we have another main character that we can add up here? [Molly is writing the main characters on a laminated gingerbread man form as the students contribute their names.]

Student: the pig

Molly: The pig! I'm glad you caught that! Donald?

[Process continues. When finished naming characters, Molly continues reading the story.]

Molly: Here we go! Who are we adding now?

Student: Add the fox.

Molly: We can add the fox! So far we have a refrain, but it's not

'Run, run, run as fast as you can…' Did anyone catch it?

[Student answers.]

Molly: Right! And he lists all the animals he ran away from…So I'm going to list them! [And she reads aloud as she writes the refrain.] Good listening, Claudia! OK, let's see what happens at the end. If you think he should jump on the fox's nose, thumbs up. If you think he should not, and should find another way, thumbs down. [She reads.]

Students: I'm right! I'm right!

Molly: Did he jump on the fox's nose? Did the fox eat him? What was our ending? Ohhh, I LIKE handraising! Joe is raising his hand. What happened, Joe?

Joe: (indiscernable answer) [Molly writes the ending while reading the words.]

Molly: Let's review, so when you cut these out, you'll know just how they go. What was the very first thing that happened?

Student: (indiscernible answer)

Molly: Whom did he run by next? (Students respond.) Do you think you can remember those things if they're written down before you? When you get your paper, you can sit down at your desk, and the directions say… [and she reads.] So, first you can cut out the boxes, and then you can cut out these and put them in order. I would put them down first and THEN paste them. Can do? If you choose to work on the floor, it is ok if you work quietly with the people around you. If you need to ask a question of someone, you will use a …

Students: Whisper!

Molly: Right! And I should be able to hear the music that I put on. I'll put the book right here in case you have a question. OK, you may go work.

[Students are working busily, quietly interacting as needed. They are very much on task, directions understood. Molly circulates, quietly commenting.]

Molly [to me]: This activity was from my last school. We have actually the same series for the big books that we had last year, but I'm doing this instead right now. [She adds something to the effect that the big book series gets dull, and she hopes this is motivating. She discusses having "too many kids." Molly seems troubled with having so many students in her class, especially in the sense of not being able to meet their individual needs to the extent she would like because of the number. It bothers her that she is limited to teaching only one literacy leveled group through departmentalization every day and is not able to hear other

children reading in the same context. Yet she is still responsible for their overall evaluation in literacy and for conferencing about it to parents. She then helps an individual student with the sequencing task. She scaffolds, rather than tells, always.]

Molly: What would be first? Then where did he go? [The classroom noise is getting louder, but it doesn't appear at all chaotic. It is purposeful chatter, about reading primarily.]

The lesson conducted above clearly indicates the presence of developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) in many of the subcategories represented in her instruction: (a) Molly incorporates many visuals, as is shown in this lesson. She is careful to point to words she has written as she reads them orally to scaffold learning for individuals who need it. (b) She substituted this lesson for a standard big book lesson with similar skills instruction because she wanted to use an alternative that was more motivating to children. Their enthusiastic responses during the lesson and during their individual work time indicated that it did prove motivating. (c) Molly incorporates spontaneous teaching as opportunities arise, building off of students' comments and activating schema regularly, both before a lesson and before associated individual assignments. She elicits connection-building, prediction, evaluation and synthesis regularly. (d) Molly continually evaluates her differentiations for effectiveness, as in her ongoing verbal assessments during discussions and instruction, and her purposeful assessment of individuals during independent work time. (e) She encourages peer tutoring through permitting students to work together within the constraints of classroom rules.

The lesson also reveals Molly's continuous use of motivational techniques and consistent management strategies in her classroom. Particularly noteworthy, and difficult to convey in these passages, is Molly's presence. Whenever she speaks to her class, all conversation immediately stops, and all eyes are focused upon her. This type of instant reaction in a very large first-grade classroom is not the norm, particularly when the teacher has a rather diminutive, soft voice, as Molly does. These students have an unusually clear understanding of classroom expectations, in terms of behavior, work ethic, and interactions with each other. I noted the manner in which this instant reaction repeated itself throughout the school day. Despite this phenomenon, Molly expressed her frustration with their behavior to me during her break for specials: "I can't pull them back to read individually [with Molly] because they [whole group] can't handle it." She seems deeply concerned about her management of behavior, which aligns with Fuller's (1969) work declaring management to be novice teachers' major concern. However, contrary to what Fuller says are traits teachers develop in later stages, Molly is already working to meet individual student needs and differentiating the curriculum to this end.

Another aspect of Molly's literacy instruction truly surprised me, particularly because Molly is a novice teacher. She has developed work stations for her students to complete in rotation that are unlike any combination I have seen before, even from veteran teachers. They include a word work center with several options for manipulating letters and words to create patterns, phrases, and sentences. The students can also practice writing in sand, on a dry erase board, and by manipulating letters on the floor. Molly attributes her inclusion of this center, in addition to daily word work with her reading group, to a particular literacy professor at State University who introduced this

concept in class. Next to the word work center is a poetry center, with a combinations of books, folders, and activities of different sorts which require some type of creatively written response. The multi-level group I saw rotating through this station was created for the purpose of allowing students to scaffold one another's learning as needed.

Another center was designated for creative writing, with a creative bulletin board that held story starters from which students could choose if they needed ideas, and a special suggestion for that particular day: a letter to Santa, with certain elements of letter writing modeled. Students at the table were collaborating with each other, showing classmates their work, asking them to read parts they were proudest to share. It was enjoyable to watch their enthusiastic sharing of ideas, as well as the strong text that some produced. While this content would be inappropriate in a public school, Christmas was very much a part of the curriculum in this parochial school. All students in the classroom are Catholic, and all observe Christmas with their families.

Across the room is a listening center, with an engaging set of illustrated books which children held, intently following what was being read over the tape recorder using headphones. This was also followed by a written response from the students. As I watched them, the students smiled at one another and giggled over funny parts of the book, while still maintaining their focus and never appearing to lose their places as they read. Some students mouthed the words; others whispered; most pointed to the words that they heard being read.

At the art center, students created their own gingerbread men, decorating them with purposeful collaboration while dispensing advice. This station provided an extension for Molly's lesson described earlier. Students were required to write and attach

their own mini-stories to their decorated gingerbread men, in which they included specifics about the particular gingerbread man they had designed. The students' descriptions of their gingerbread men included such factors as physical traits, favorite things, favorite places, family members, types of homes, to name some that I noticed as I observed the students at work. The students then concluded their work at this center with *Guess me if you can!* They were engaged and purposeful as they completed their work, eagerly sharing with one another, as they followed the developmentally appropriate practice of reading their own writing aloud. The word choice and invented spellings [a term for young children's spelling exactly what they hear, unrestricted by what is "correct"] varied significantly from child to child and indicated the adaptability of the task to multiple levels of literacy and writing abilities.

At a nearby math center, a money worksheet was provided for students to complete problems, utilizing pictures of different assortments of coins. Of importance, Molly didn't wait to teach money at the prescribed time of year the curriculum might suggest. Instead, she incorporated this instruction every day in the interactive calendar activities, along with place value concepts, weather, counting by 5's and 10's and numerous reading tasks. These students were remarkably familiar with the different coins, their value, and how to "add up" money sequentially from quarters, to dimes, to nickels, to pennies. This is notable in the sense that the skill is a difficult one for children to grasp in first-grade. Molly's daily incorporation of it through the calendar, however, made it entirely possible for these students to complete the tasks independently and confidently. Of importance, she taught literacy skills within these math concepts, including written labels and descriptors for all elements.

The center that most surprised me was the library center. Molly had accumulated a rich selection of quality children's books that were arranged very deliberately according to a color code. Each student had a stick with their name on it, for the purpose of inserting to keep the place in which they had found the book and to enable them to return it to the proper spot. The colors for the books' arrangement aligned with their readability level. Molly had performed an assessment on each of the books in her collection to determine their readability level, and the books were color-coded accordingly. Each student, upon rotating through the library center, was given a color of books from which he could select. This was not rigid; Molly changed color assignments for students often, as she listened to their reading in the center and determined an alternate placement was necessary. The students in that center were not required to read aloud, but developmentally, first-graders tend to do so, and Molly knew this to be the case. She would watch and listen as the students in that cozy section of the room read quietly, orally, often stopping to make a comment or share a segment of a book with a friend close by. The students were perched on rockers, bean bags, and some stretched out on the carpet. There was one coded section of books that represented expository selections, and students were given time to switch from fiction to expository, not only knowing of the different placement of those books, but also the meaning of the terms.

Taking a moment to chat after rotating through all the centers, Molly spoke to me again of her frustration in having so many students assigned to her classroom this year. The noise level during centers bothered her, but in walking around and observing, it became quickly apparent to me that the noise was both purposeful and task-oriented. Students were focused on their work, and their interactions with others at their centers

were meaningful. Often, scaffolded learning was taking place. Interestingly, the tasks required of students at these different centers worked for everyone, despite their differing abilities. The open-ended nature of the work allowed it to be differentiated according to students' abilities, and the collaboration taking place filled in any gaps that arose. It was very clear that, in addition to the fun the students were having, a lot of learning was taking place.

Molly expressed significant concern about the school's departmentalization of reading instruction for first grade. Students were divided rigidly into reading groups, and the composition of those groups was not really open to change when indicated. The eleven students who were assigned to Molly for literacy instruction meet in her classroom every day within specific time constraints. Before her students gathered on the morning of my visit to her class, Molly described this group of eleven children to me as "wild." She remarked, "This is the loudest reading group you will ever see." I responded, "You can do it if anyone can." She answered in a very serious tone: "No, I can't. You'll see."

> *[Her reading group comes into her room in shifts, and they clearly know their task upon arrival. They sit down at the kidney shaped table, where Molly waits, smiling, to greet them, and they proceed immediately to read silently (which amounts to whispers) until Molly begins instruction. The demographic of the group is representative of her class as a whole: There are ten present, five males, five females, comprised of nine whites and one Hispanic child.]*
>
> *Molly: Thank you for reading while you're waiting! Go ahead and close your books, 4,3,2, books should be closed, 1. [Students have all complied with her request.] Today we're going to talk about problems and solutions. What's a*

problem? [Students provide some great, substantial answers…and Molly scaffolds extensions of their responses sometimes.] OK! If you're really anxious about something…or stressed about something… Keep thinking! We'll come back to that! I like that one! If you're lost, that WOULD be a problem! What would a solution be? [Conversation continues with a few other students providing examples and Molly acknowledging and validating every response. She maintains constant eye contact with the students, and smiles continuously, genuinely. I find this particularly noteworthy, given the frustration she has expressed to me with the structure of this grouping system, the limitations placed upon her, and her difficulty implementing best practice, particularly in regard to continual assessment of her students outside of this group.]

Molly: OK, let's think about the three little pigs. Have you heard that story? There are the three little pigs and the big bad wolf, and one pig has a house made out of…[Student: straw!] Straw!...Bricks!...Sticks!...And the big bad wolf comes to the straw house, and he blows it down, and he comes to the stick house, and he blows the stick house down…That's a problem, right?! [Student responds.] And that's the solution, right? Let's read our story about Josh, and we'll see if we can figure out his solution. [Molly sets the stage for students' purposeful reading.]

Molly: Brendan, would you start us today? Open to our title page, and we'll read our title page and then Brendan will start. Books flat on the table… Pay attention because you never know when it's your turn! [This refers to the popular literacy instruction practice known as "popcorn reading," taking turns reading orally but in no prescribed order or sequence.] According to developmentally

appropriate practice, Molly provides phonics-based scaffolding to her students only when needed. She gives an appropriate clue, but never "tells" a word. This works, as children do self-correct and strategically "attack" new words, rather than guessing. When one child reads "roll up cattle," Molly responds, "OK, think about that. They're supposed to 'roll' up cattle. Do they roll up cattle?" This helps the child self-correct, substituting 'round.' Molly responds, "They round up cattle! That makes sense!" [I see differentiation happening within Molly's individual efforts for scaffolding individual students. The current system in her school restricts her to this, but she implements it often and well. After each child reads, she reinforces them with 'good job' or 'very good' or similar reinforcements.]

Molly: Very nice job! Everyone did a very nice job! OK, close your books. What was the problem for Josh? [Student responds…she helps him extend the response:] He didn't want…even more than that…[Student responds.] He didn't need them. How did he solve his problem? [Student responds.] He decided to wear them, and they weren't too bad after all! Pass your books around. When you get your paper, turn it over. [She goes through a written activity with them that is associated with the text, scaffolding their answers in a matching task.]

Molly: Now, close your eyes, think in your head of when you had a problem. Maybe you lost your shoes. Maybe you were locked out of your house. Maybe your brother or sister were not sharing with you. So, think of your problem, and then think how you solved your problem. Maybe you washed your shoes? Or maybe…you used your words and shared. So, do you all have a problem in your

head? Would you like to share your problem? [This is one of many instances of Molly's infusion of her own problem-solving activities and elicitation of critical thinking within her literacy instruction. A student shares his problem.] Oh! And what did you do? [student response] Good, I'm glad you didn't! [Student shares.] OK, what did you do?...Good! Thank you, Josh.…Ok, that's good…[inappropriate language from a student within his 'problem' sharing] Oh, you know what I think? I think that's probably something we shouldn't say at school. You can just say that he kicked you…Perfect!

Molly: [transitioning to written assignment] First, think of a problem, and you can either draw a picture or write a few words about your problem. And then…think of a solution, and you can draw a picture or write a few words about how you solved your problem. Take a few minutes to jot down your problem. My brother hit me…or I lost my socks…or whatever your problem is. Then write your problem. [Students work diligently. Molly directs, in a soft voice, as needed, always scaffolding, never just providing 'answers.'] OK, so write that down, or draw a picture. [After completing this task, she instructs students to find a place on the rug to begin their daily word work, something Molly has inserted into the reading program, as per her instruction regarding it at State University from one of her literacy professors. The strategy she incorporates here is often referred to as "making words."]

Molly: You'll need to look for these letters. Take them out,, and then zip the bag, so the rest of the letters don't fall out. G L A N B E P T F Z Take those letters out of your bag. [Students do so. Molly gives individual comments and

further instruction as needed. Students begin working independently. They seem focused and engaged with a pre-determined task. They clearly know what is expected of them and appear motivated and eager to do their work. Note: Molly continues with her motivational techniques, consistent classroom procedures, routines, etc.]

Student: Do we have to do it in order?

Molly: No, you just find those letters and put the others back in.

OK! SPPPPRRRREADDD your cards out on the floor, just like Brenna has hers out! With your letters that are spread out in front of you, make the word 'glad.' [enunciates slowly:] GL-AD. How do you spell 'glad?' [response] GLAD! Now, you are going to put an e on the end. And what do you have? [response] GLADE! Now, you are going to change the g to a b. And what word do you have? [response] Blade! What is a blade? [response] A blade is the sharp part of a knife or scissors or saw. What else? [response] Or like a blade of grass! OK. Change the a to an e, so move your e where the a is. Take your b away. Put an f in its place. What do you have? Madelaine, what does fled mean? [no response] Let me give it to you and see if you can figure it out. 'She fled away from the pool.' [response] Close! A little more than walk. [response] Run! Or get away quickly. Change your f to an s. [response] What is a sled? Allie, what is a sled? [response] Something you can pull in the…[response] Snow! OK, change your e to an a. [response] And NOW change your d to a p. OK, change your s to a c. [response] Alright! One more word. Your last word!... Change your c to an f. [response] OK! Pretend you are a bird and SHOW ME what it

means to FLAP! [Students enthusiastically demonstrate.] Put your cards back in your bag. When your cards are back in your bag, slide your finger to close it. If your paper is on the table, grab your paper, and you may go back to your classroom, or you [students in her class] may work on your journal. [Students collect their things and move back to their classrooms, while others return. Molly comes over to me, sighs, and says, "There are too many kids in that group." And I am sitting there, smiling, taking in, trying to accurately record, the scope of all that she has taught and practiced with these students in a very short time.]

This segment of instruction illustrates how Molly continues to implement developmentally appropriate practice (DAP), in spite of any difficulties imposed upon her by the departmentalization of literacy instruction and its concomitant time restraints. She enriches curriculum with daily word work which her students enjoy, and she differentiates quickly and effectively at every indication of need. I counted seven times in ten minutes that Molly changed the course of her lesson slightly based upon student response and the need indicated. She provides phonics skills instruction in an ongoing manner, but only the skills for which students have indicated their readiness, and only *when* they have indicated the same. I have observed many first-grade teachers over the course of my career, and I taught first grade for eight years. Based upon my 21 years of experience supervising pre-service teachers, I found it unusual for a teacher, and particularly a novice teacher, to design and implement word work daily practice as Molly has. While this practice was commonplace thirty to forty years ago, it is seldom seen in first-grade classrooms that I observe. In incorporating this word work, she gives breadth to her literacy instruction. Together with multiple, ongoing writing opportunities, this

practice provides first-grade students with the skills to not only read, but to construct written language that they can read. Furthermore, she has helped them to value, and to know that others value, their written language.

Clearly, motivation is key for Molly, every day, every moment, for every task. Molly's work brings to mind the research of Wharton-McDonald et al.(1998), listing high-achievement teacher characteristics: instructional balance, instructional density, extensive use of scaffolding, encouragement of self-regulation, high expectations for all students, and awareness of purpose. Despite the restrictions and requirements of her different instructional environments, Molly has consistently embodied every one of these attributes in her literacy instruction. The instructional segments provided in this chapter illustrate their presence, and substantiate my reasons for choosing Molly for this case study. The degree to which she demonstrated these principles of effectiveness was marked even in her first field experience, and she has clearly continued to develop and refine these skills over time.

"Good teachers, effective teachers, matter much more than particular materials, pedagogical approaches, or 'proven programs'"

(Allington, 2002, p.740).

Lucy

Immersed in her Muzzy Monkey persona complete with lifelike props and a convincing monkey voice, Lucy monkey-hopped and monkey-swung through the maze of small desks in her first-grade classroom, broadly smiling and tapping chldren's shoulders along the way. Every student was silent and immobilized, breathlessly waiting for the day's literacy lesson with Lucy. The children mimicked her monkey moves as

they eagerly joined her on the rug to begin daily phonics work on the letter “m.” In a single, short moment, reinforced by Muzzy Monkey’s intentional smile, they were focused and absorbed in their monkey literacy tasks, expertly differentiated for them by Lucy. She proceeded to lead them through a series of activities as “Muzzy Monkey,” never breaking character.

In the front of the room on an easel sat a strikingly ordinary “big book” story, one small part of a repetitive, scripted curriculum adopted and mandated by the district. To my surprise, however, the story within its pages came to life as the main character, Muzzy Monkey, played by their student teacher, Lucy, engaged and captivated the children to the point that I truly suspected they believed they were part of the events unfolding on the pages before them. Garnering their attention appeared effortless for Lucy…but it was not. Every detail had been planned, prepared, reviewed, and carefully enacted. She had morphed convincingly into a monkey, motivating her most compromised young readers to success in reading, enjoying, and truly interacting with print and language.

On that particular morning, I had to consciously remind myself to continue writing my formative evaluation of Lucy. As her university supervisor, I was there for the first observation of her student teaching, but I was so mesmerized by her ability to transform an ordinary scripted lesson into such an adventure that I had a hard time concentrating on state standards and aligned practices. It was one of those moments I wished I could film and make available as an example to other pre-service teachers. I was a bit stunned at the fact that this was Lucy’s first observation, and her first week of teaching literacy in this class. How does a novice teacher master all these skills so early?

While Lucy's lesson plan for this first student teaching observation cannot reveal the nuances of her teaching style and motivational techniques, it does demonstrate her intentionality in packing a morning's prescribed literacy lesson with multiple skills concepts and elements of developmentally appropriate practice. All of this transpired while Lucy was teaching the scripted literacy curriculum, adding her own enrichment strategies and unscripted variations:

Introduction:

Warm up: *Review previous day's lessons by practicing rhyming. Read off Animal Rhymes sheet and have students complete the sentences aloud with teacher.*

Initial Consonant Substitutions review. Write /s/ on the board and review Monday's letter of the day. Use students' names and substitute initial sound with the letter /s/. Lead into the name game. Name game using /b/, /f/, /m/. Give students 1 minute to share the name game with a friend.

Activities:

Phonemic Awareness:

On board, write the words: seem, melt, flip, fill, tap, and rat. Replace initial sound with new sounds to create new words, some being nonsense words. Use /f/, /s/, /d/, /b/ and /n/.

Segmentation:

Clifford activity! Have students repeat only final sound of the word.

Example: Teacher: Beach: Puppet: /ch/

Have students model this with words listed in [curriculum].

Stretching

Phonics: *Today's Letter is M!!! [This was the basis for Lucy's "Muzzy Monkey" costume described earlier.] Show the picture of the letter card and turn it over. Read the monkey poem to the students. Write letter on board and have students trace in the air the letter M. Students' names and letter M. Thumbs Up/Down game for listening to the sound of M in [curriculum]. (initial and final sounds)*

Little Books: *Students read as a group two times. Have students use phone to read silently several times.*

New tricky words: and, I, and make. (Write on board and discuss)

Big Book: *Review first half of book. Have students retell to teacher and predict the next part of the book. Finish reading story.* (Lucy's lesson plan, observation on September 11, 2008)

Looking closely at the lesson's content, numerous elements of developmentally appropriate practice are apparent. Lucy found a supplementary rhymes activity using animals to fit with her monkey persona to motivate her students to begin work, reinforce prior learning, and activate schema before beginning new instruction. She helped students make personal connections from the beginning of the introduction, substituting their names to make the previous day's "sound" connect again in nonsense nomenclature. Peer interaction reinforced learning and added practice opportunities throughout the lesson. The drills intended to enhance phonemic awareness included nonsense words to

further motivate students and maintain their focus and optimal effort. Monkey poetry was infused to provide children with alternate content aligning with a motivational theme and the targeted /m/ phoneme of the day. Handwriting practice was infused to vary the presentation and reinforce the sound and connect it to print. Practice was further provided with a subsequent game before introducing new vocabulary prior to actual reading. The prescribed curriculum provided very little actual reading opportunity for students, so Lucy enriched the content with the use of AVC pipe "telephones" through which all students whisper-read, listening to themselves individually. The total time each student spent reading was increased exponentially from what the curriculum prescribes. At each step of instruction, differentiation occurred according to student response, whether verbal or written (on whiteboards). Pacing was customized to need, and this group of predominantly striving readers required constant adaptations from the script to ensure understanding. Clearly, assessment was continual and intentional. Motivation was intentional throughout the morning. Students demonstrated focused, on-task behavior throughout instruction and transitions, largely due to their complete engagement with the lesson's content.

The following points were made on the formative evaluation for her first official visit by me, her supervisor. They substantiate Lucy's incorporation of developmentally appropriate practice, motivation and management strategies, and differentiation and enrichment to a scripted curriculum:

- You ask excellent probing questions and present information in an engaging, spontaneous conversational manner.

- Your visual aids are most helpful. Excellent idea to have kids use “air” pointer fingers to construct letters with you corresponding to sounds.
- The approaches you are utilizing teaching letters and sounds with many visual and auditory resources definitely keep learning accessible for everyone.
- Wonderful job encouraging careful observations and critical thinking. I loved your review of sight words and associated sounds and your enthusiastic comments and encouragement. Picture walking is a great idea, and helps incorporate prediction effectively.
- Good idea to incorporate pointer fingers [for oral reading] and reinforce students’ effective use of them. This is an excellent device to help you continually assess everyone’s participation.
- Ongoing effective assessment and provision of scaffolding as needed.
- You engage your students effectively and enthusiastically. You, reinforce and nurture them, while keeping expectations high and consistent.
- Excellent incorporation of critical thinking opportunities. Good job helping students make connections to literature.
- Wonderful variety of instructional techniques and resources efficiently utilized (formative evaluation, September 11, 2007).

In this classroom, Lucy’s motivation of her students was particularly important. This was a high-poverty, multi-ethnic environment with many students functioning below grade level, particularly in literacy. Lucy’s determination to teach to their individual needs and with the incorporation of enrichment resources in addition to the scripted

curriculum (which she did not read verbatim) contributed to significant growth in their ongoing literacy assessments throughout that semester. In addition to motivating her students with her choices of technique, literature, and resources, she helped them to achieve a degree of self-motivation that her cooperating teacher gratefully acknowledged.

Her assignment for internship the following semester took her to a different district and an intermediate grade level – fourth—but the demographics were similar. Her class was predominantly high-poverty with the majority of students representing minorities (predominantly Hispanic and African American). In addition, Lucy was assigned to a school with a number of English Learners, and in her class, one student was from Mexico and spoke little English. Again, her ability to motivate her students was exceptional. She was equally proficient with intermediate students as she had been with first-graders in setting high standards and expecting students to work to their potential. Her lessons were marked with visual and language scaffolds to build better understanding for English Learners. The following excerpts from Lucy's literacy lesson plan for one of my formative evaluations completed during my observations of Lucy during this assignment demonstrate the continuation of her skilled literacy instruction. Once again, her students demonstrated significant gains on literacy assessments. In this internship assignment, Lucy was required to utilize a different literacy curriculum, this time unscripted but still structured and prescriptive for particular stories and associated skills practice. Lucy continued to supplement the curriculum with her own enrichment and differentiation strategies to keep motivation high, as she reported to me. The reader will note her incorporation of Venn diagrams in this lesson as an enrichment strategy for the prescribed story and associated skills tasks recommended.

Intro: At the beginning of the day, give students the journal topic, 'What is one thing you would say that you know with complete certainty?' This will give students an introduction to our story theme.

Modeled/Guided Practice: Tell the students you will be reading aloud the passage, 'School,' [and ask for] their predictions…Have the students sit back, 'take a load off,' and listen to the story. Prompt them to draw a visual in their mind of what I am reading. After the passage, ask students what they visualized. Write the ideas up on the board. Ask the Listening Comprehension Questions…Next, have them compare, contrast the school I described with their school. Make a double bubble diagram or Venn, then draw or color a picture on the back. Let students share their work and display on their hanging numbers.

When students are finished with their drawings, start focusing on Author's Purpose. Ask them to list the types of author's purposes and explain. [a pre-assessment question modeled by the cooperating teacher] Have each group explain what they are. 'Good job, group!' [Using the overhead] Discuss perspective. Complete the overhead activity.

Vocab in Context: Say the vocab words that are presented on the overhead passage. Ask if any student knows the meaning of the words before we read. Read the overhead passage. Circle the bold vocabulary words. Using context clues, ask students to take another shot [at] guessing the meaning of the words. Hand out index cards to each group. Have them match the definitions to the correct words. If they get them all right, [distribute] Murphy [a pseudonym] Money [class reward system]. Review as a class what the words mean.

[Distribute] Extra Murphy Money if the students can use the words in their own sentence.

Students line up in a row. Count off 1-4 to determine groups. When finished, conduct a fan and pick activity with the groups. If they draw a definition, give the word. If they draw a word, give the definition. Continue playing until all the cards have been used.

Individual Practice:

- *Students will complete a Venn/double bubble activity and color describing schools of today and in the past.*
- *Students will participate in the group activities and vocab building.*

Assessment:

- *Completed Venn diagram.*
- *Group participation.*
- *Vocab builder*

Gear up: Students can write a formal paragraph about the differences between our schools now and our schools of the past.

Gear down: Students can draw pictures of similarities and differences using the book that I read aloud to them. Vocab is used on index cards for better understanding.

From the lesson plan, Lucy's enrichment strategies for vocabulary building, schema activation, and making text-to-self connections are evident. In addition, her effort to motivate her students is also evident in her instructional choices. She

transitioned easily from primary to intermediate level students in terms of her ability to motivate and engage them in an age-appropriate and effective manner. The reader can discern in the lesson plan several specific elements of developmentally appropriate practice (DAP): making personal connections to literature, building critical thinking, prediction, and analysis skills, and developing language and vocabulary in an intentional and ongoing manner. In addition, motivation and management remained optimal, largely because of the students' engagement in lesson content. Differentiation was infused at several points in Lucy's instruction, and enrichment strategies remained prevalent in her instruction throughout her internship. The following excerpts from the formative evaluation I completed for this supervisory visit further indicate Lucy's adherence to DAP and incorporation of differentiation and enrichment, as well as motivation and management strategies.

- Excellent instruction of 'perspective.'
- Great idea to elicit predictions about story from the title [as well as] visual images of content! Good job identifying and reinforcing 'inferencing.' Your questions are intriguing and often higher level.
- Good use of [collaboration]: 'Talk with your group and give me an example…'
- The Venn diagram is a wonderful way to build connections to the story and encourage reflection and evaluation of content. Your instructional choices are highly appropriate developmentally (and for English Learners).

- Good use of 'Raise your hand if you have a picture in your noggin'!' …and the opportunity to verbalize what they visualized. Great support for ELs! Good elaboration on terms that surfaced (e.g., 'budget'). The lesson definitely meets everyone's needs.
- Vocabulary card matching activity is great! [Lucy's enrichment strategy]
- Excellent eliciting of critical thinking and reflection upon content. Constructing drawings of new and old schools as a culmination to diagramming was a perfect independent activity, utilizing creativity.
- You are so engaging, Lucy, from the 'take a load off' posture to positive responses to written and oral responses. Excellent use of refocusing [techniques] like 'Bubbles stop now.' Students respond quickly to your directions.
- Great reinforcement of children's journaling—and encouragement to share ideas. Students are very motivated and empowered and confident to share their thoughts, knowing that your response will be dignifying.
- The Venn diagram is a perfect way to practice comparison, analysis, and comprehension skills. Good idea to model examples first.
- Excellent integration of reading, writing, as well as language skills reinforcement – and encouragement of critical thinking.
- Good incidental clarification of vocabulary to provide language skills scaffolding as needed.

- Excellent building of social/communicative skills, especially with 'talk to your group,' 'share with a friend,' and vocabulary activity [as well as extra visual input, all reinforcing ELs].
- Management: Perfect combination of motivation and behavioral refocusing [techniques] that are quick and effective. (formative evaluation, observation April 1, 2008)

Below is an excerpt from the reference letter I wrote for Lucy at the conclusion of her internship:

> [Lucy's] motivational skills continue to prove unsurpassed within my framework of experience. Again this semester, she has had the opportunity to work in a low SES setting with many students with special needs, including an autistic child and several English Learners who have not yet acquired much English vocabulary. Her ability to scaffold their learning in many different ways is amazing. She adds visual input at every opportunity and has built a large repertoire of every-pupil-responses that are motivating and fun and elicit these children's oral participation throughout their school day. She continually incorporates think-pair-share and cooperative learning strategies that bolster language development across the curriculum, and she infuses excellent, engaging literature at every opportunity.
>
> [Lucy's] instructional skills include a large variety of different strategies, many of which involve children's hands-on learning and manipulation of creatively chosen resources. She incorporates meaningful, engaging writing opportunities that enhance learning in all areas of the curriculum, and consistently

> elicits students' personal connections to texts by drawing upon their previous learning and unique experiences. She validates every child many times each day in specific ways, and the sense of community she has established is a wonderful phenomenon. Children feel validated by her genuine reinforcement, and they consistently validate one another meaningfully.
>
> …Lucy has a tremendous work ethic, and has contributed far beyond the hours and effort required of her again this semester, simply because she wants to give her students the best possible learning experience. (April 28, 2008)

Lucy continued her attentiveness to developmentally appropriate practice, motivation and management, and differentiation and enrichment throughout this semester-long experience. Of importance is that she did so during "assessment semester." Later excerpts will reveal that the pressure to prepare students to learn test content was both significant and intense, and the atmosphere in the classroom far less supportive of Lucy. Consequently, her confidence did not grow and improve, as is often the case with pre-service teachers during their internship assignments. She developed doubts about whether her instruction was on the mark, because she was not often told so. She developed doubts about her management, since she was receiving little positive feedback from her cooperating teacher. Our post-evaluation conferences grew longer, Lucy shared more, and she articulated genuine relief and appreciation for the positive traits I had noticed and acknowledged in her evaluations. Noteworthy to me was her ability to persist in teaching the elements of literacy instruction that she knew needed to be present…through assessment preparation, lack of encouragement, and a less

supportive environment. I wondered how these two very different field experiences would inform her work in her own classroom.

I met with Lucy for an interview in November, 2009, in her first classroom as an in-service teacher. She was employed in the same school where she had student taught, now assigned to third grade, and teaching the same scripted curriculum required of her in student teaching first grade. By November, she described herself as feeling like she was finally "getting started" with the implementation of the scripted literacy program. She confessed that for the first five to ten days, she taught reading lessons as they were scripted, saying that without that structure, "I would have fallen." She said she did not really feel ready to teach reading until November, shortly before I came to visit her. "I had no knowledge of how to get started…with discipline, scheduling, and so many other things…It made me feel unprepared."

I asked Lucy what aspects of teaching literacy had been most challenging to her in her own classroom. She responded, "I never felt like anything was working. I wanted to make it more meaningful to them…help them make connections. The 'scriptedness' gets old! Are they becoming better [readers]? I don't know!" However, Lucy did feel prepared to assess students' reading skills through her knowledge of the DIBELS tests which she had utilized in student teaching. She understood running records from her literacy coursework and a concomitant practicum at State University, and she expressed gratitude for the knowledge of both.

When I asked Lucy what had been her biggest challenge as a new in-service teacher, she answered, "Finding my niche with my kids and how I like things

[taught]…making things interesting…Everyone else does it the easy way" (interview, November 24, 2008).

That's one of the most interesting things to me about Lucy's teaching. According to her cooperating teachers, and within my presence at supervisory visits, she has never done things "the easy way," beginning with her first observed Muzzy Monkey reading lesson in student teaching. Lucy goes the extra mile, as the excerpts above from her lesson plans and formative evaluations indicate. The best way to convey this trait of hers, however, particularly in regard to her infusion of literacy instruction throughout her curriculum, is to provide a partial transcription of the full day I spent in her classroom a year later, in late November of her second year as an in-service teacher. I have included my reflections, written as I observed her that day, bracketed within the text from my recording of the day's events. Interwoven through her text are multiple instances of developmentally appropriate practice (including all designated subcategories appropriate for her students' developmental stages), motivation and management, and differentiation and enrichment in a scripted, mandated literacy curriculum. I have also included opening activities' math responses to illustrate Lucy's teaching of literacy, with the elements of developmentally appropriate practice, across math (and other content areas).

> *[At the beginning of the day, children come in, sit down, and immediately begin working on their daily skills practice, district mandated, at their desks. Lucy circulates and makes individual comments and greetings to her students. She is upbeat, smiles, there is an occasional hug, a high-five…and questions are answered with scaffolded responses, encouraging children to do the work themselves. She circulates and gives assistance as needed…kind, nurturing,*

positive responses. At the conclusion of this work period, Lucy begins the self-assessment process for the work they have just completed.]

Lucy: Alright! Get out your daily work. Who knows how many inches are in a foot? Seven people know? If you see someone with their hand down, why don't you tell them? I think I hear the right answer…What is it?...39? Is 39 the right answer? I just heard it! Just kidding! I said 39!! [Laughing, as students are also… students respond with correct answer.]

Lucy: Alright! YARD! Are there any football players in here? [Several eagerly nod affirmatively.] Yardage is important, right? What's a yard? [Students respond.] How many yards are in a football field? [Student answers, 50.] 50? 50 is in the middle…[response] 100! 100 yards in a football field!

Lucy: OK! If 24 inches are in 2 feet, how many inches are in 3 feet? [response] Right, 12x3! Do it! How many? [response] See, my stick is in meters, so it's longer. [Demonstrates.] A yard is to here! So there are 100 of these in a football field! Use your yardstick to find something in the room that is a yard long. Sean's head isn't! [as she "measures" it…She eagerly takes students' suggestions.] Too tall for a yard [measuring a student's height]. What now? [Takes several suggestions and measures them] Robin, what should I look for? Me!!!! What else? The bookshelf? [measures] 33! Oooooo, almost! How many inches are in a yard? Right! 36! How wide I am?!!!! Oh, thank goodness, I'm not a yard wide [measuring herself]. The desk? 27…too short? The soft chair? The squishy squish chair? Oooooo, Sean, look at you! [Student is measuring the chair.] You're within 2 inches! Very good! Oh, lookie there! The doorway is

how many inches…36 inches?!!! How many feet is that? [Students respond collectively.] You are SO STINKIN' SMART!

Lucy: [moving on to next problem] What do we know about parallel lines? They NEVER, EVER, EVER, EVER, EVER, EVER intersect! They don't even want to come NEAR each other! [Conversation is excited, fun…but purposeful.]

Lucy: [moving on to a story problem] Gracie, what's important here, kiddo? [Students know that with every word problem, they must first underline important information contained.] [student responds] 364! DOLLARS? Ooooo, that's what I want! What does it mean by 'how many are left?' What are we doing here? Set my problem up for me. [student response]]364 – 292 dollars. Man, I wouldn't spend 292 dollars. I'd SAVE it! What would you spend $292 on? OK! Who can solve this? [A student begins dictating to Lucy what to do on the board to solve the problem, step by step. She does what they say at each step, but literally, putting numbers in crazy places…e.g., 'put the 8 under the 2.'…Lucy puts the 8 at the very bottom of the board, near the floor. 'Carry the 3.'…Lucy walks to the calendar on the wall next to the board, takes off the magnetic 3, and carries it over to the board. The students laugh and laugh while Lucy just looks convincingly bewildered. It is so much fun, for such a routine…daily…mundane task.]

Lucy: Alright! Let's go on to our DLR [Daily Language Review…notoriously boring, district-mandated daily]. Let's go down to number 3. I'm gonna do that first. Okie dokie? Artichokie! Which one is not spelled correctly? Number 1, 2,

or 3? Show me with your fingers! [I can see her quickly, thoroughly checking responses visually.] My, you are SO STINKIN' SMART!

Lucy: Number 4! [She reads the words aloud.] Oooooooo, this is tricky trick trick trickster! Show me with your fingers which one you think it is! GAIN. Tell me how you spell that. Ah, here it is, the vowels I use! Which ones? [students respond] YES! AI! Is it a long a or a short a sound? [response] Good job!

[They proceed to a timed math test, also required daily. To prepare, they have a daily practice orally with a partner, and students are incredibly efficient and on task with this procedure! When time is called, they are immediately ready to take their individual timed test, focused almost instantly.]

[Afterward, instruction in the scripted literacy curriculum begins, but with a twist from Lucy! It is the day for a periodically required 'test' over material read, and they are to review first. Lucy's review is a Jeopardy game! The students are so enthusiastic and very motivated to do well. This clearly could impact their performance on the subsequent required assessment.]

[Lucy assembles the class into teams. They find their places quickly and eagerly. A tattered orange ball sits on the shelf. Lucy reaches for it, as she reviews basic points.]

Lucy: If you act too soon, the question goes to the other team. Alright…[smiles}. Teams! Gobble gobbles and Aliens. This question is NOT multiple choice, so let's get the ants out of your pants. [Guided by Lucy, everyone shakes their legs and twists and turns to 'get the ants out.'] Ready? Where does the boy's father work? [regarding their reading content] [Someone burps.] Quiet. Everyone

does it. [response to question] He works in the city! Where do you think he is going to work? [student response] Congratulations! He works in a warehouse, and he works in Brooklyn! Step right up! This is multiple choice, so wait until all three choices are read to you. Let's see…In the story the sun is dark because….a...b…c…[Student response; 'Holly' has given incorrect answer.] A is correct. It's OK, Holly. You know what that means. It means that's the FIRST question you'll get RIGHT on your test today! [Smiles broadly…continues with questions.]

Lucy: Last question! Come on my twin! Come on Miss [Lucy's last name]! See, you look like me! We match! [Both are wearing gray pants and black tops.]...I'll wait. [Stands and watches sternly till misbehavior stops.] What just happened up here? [Student: He flicked a paper clip.] Alright, go get it. Everyone go back to your desk. Please get out the testing packet [part of literacy program]. I'd suggest using your book, or at least having it out so you can look up your answers. You should all get A's because you all know this. I'm going to have Miss _____ and Miss _____ [students who require differentiation] in the back with some new games I've made for you and they are pretty stinkin' cool! [She provides a quick preview. These are games for enrichment of the literacy program that Lucy has made and laminated.] Sorry, Charlie. What rule is that breaking? [Students in chorus answer, 'Best effort!' I look at the posted rules, and see it written. The students clearly know these classroom guidelines well.] Best effort, yes. Make sure your what is on the paper? [Students in chorus: Name!] I'd hate to throw away a test grade. I'd like complete sentences on this

too, ok? [Lucy rotates as students take the test. She answers ancillary questions at times, but never provides an answer.] Alright, check! Name on paper? Thumb up if it is. You already know the answers to these questions. Pay attention! Brent, give me your best effort! Nothin' less, bud! [Brent was sitting by me and was really struggling to be productive. He seems entirely capable, just has a hard time getting started and persisting with any task. Lucy tries to approach the redirection in a positive manner.]

[Lucy explains games (to me) that she has made to supplement the reading curriculum. These were suggested to supplement the scripted literacy curriculum in a workshop provided by the district. They are visually appealing and clearly motivating. Students are enjoying them as they come back to the center when finished with their work. They are working well cooperatively in small groups, something this literacy curriculum does not otherwise incorporate, as all lessons are for the whole class and scripted.]

Lucy: [rings a bell] There are a couple of tests still out, so let's take it down a notch, ok? Thanks!

Lucy: [rings bell again after a few minutes have passed] I want you in one minute to nice and neatly clean up your area, put it back in its place. First group to do so gets a point. [Conflict arises between a few students.] You need to do YOUR best, worry about YOUR best. [Student: He's yelling at me.] I know. That's sad, isn't it. I want the Aliens to find a book. (To aggressive student:) You can apologize. [He does so.] Next time you can show me. Look at all those words [posted in 'class code']. Show me, show me, show me. Next time, you

worry about yourself. If you are worried about someone else and telling them what to do, you are not following the rule: SHOW ME.

[When the students return from recess break, they immediately get in position standing behind their desk, all eyes fixed on Lucy. She takes her place at the front of the room, and begins to lead them in their daily 'workout.'] Ready, GO! [The students do jumping jacks and count aloud together with excitement to 25. [Lucy then moves to the other side of the room.] I'm going to do it back here. I'm going to watch! OMMMM! Yoga poses! [She models yoga poses and the students do the same. Leads in three more. Students show joy and excitement, and are completely on task.] OK, Breathing! [Leads in deep breathing.] Shake out the ants! Ready, 3 2 1, GO! [This is followed by complete silence and compliance. Students are called over to the rug by tables who are ready for sharing time by one student.]

Of interest to me is Lucy's ability and determination to incorporate science and social studies on a regular basis, which is seldom observed in today's classrooms due to assessment pressures and the time demands of changing literacy and math curricula. The day's science lesson was infused with a great deal of literacy instruction. In addition, she regularly gives her students the choice of learning from the science text or the rich expository books she brings to class about the subject matter, in this case, deserts. (The choice was predictably unanimous.) I include this section of transcript for the literacy that she inserts into her lesson: elements of developmentally appropriate practice, such as elicitation of critical thinking, making connections to text, activating prior knowledge, incorporating higher level questions, infusing rich language into all areas of the

curriculum, and teaching literacy across content areas. In addition, she provides many visuals, both pictorial and linguistic, to support new learning and involves students actively in the curriculum, eliciting everyone's participation.

> *[Lucy calls the students by groups according to their compliance…readiness. The reader will note that according to developmentally appropriate practice, Lucy activates prior learning and infuses vocabulary instruction, language enrichment, elicitation of critical thinking, analysis, synthesis and personal connections to literature. In her choice of this expository text,, she infuses meaningful literature across content areas, in this case, science.]*
>
> *Lucy: What do you know about the desert already? [She repeats students' responses accordingly:] Cactus, ok. VERY hot. Lots of sand, ok. Not a lot of water. POISONOUS ANIMALS? SCAAAAARY! Cooler at night and really hot during the day. Very good! Ok, they have cactus juice in the desert. Something's special about that cactus juice! What comes out? [response] It's WATER! Cacti store water inside, so the animals in the desert can drink it! [The students give her great background information!] Would you like to teach about the desert, because you know more than I do! GOOD JOB, Andy! Little rainfall, huh? [She launches into a comparison between desert and our climate. Discusses why there is no grass in the desert. Elicits students' analysis. Lucy then reads a section from the expository book about temperatures. She asks the students to think about temperature differences. She makes an analogy of desert temperature changes from day to night by drawing forth their comparison of summer to current recess weather:] Think about the hottest day in July, and we're outside, and we're*

sweating…when we went outside this morning…think about the hottest, hottest day, and when we went outside this morning…Think of the difference! Isn't that crazy?! [A student raises the concept of mirages in the desert. They discuss and she relates this to a Spongebob story about imagining an ice cream store in the desert.] So…Don't hang out with Spongebob and don't hallucinate! [Reads another excerpt about cold deserts and temperature extremes.] Oooooooo! Talk about EXTREMES! Look at the camel! Pretty cool, huh? So cactus is the most common desert plant. But I thought there were no plants in the desert. Why are there cacti? [This elicits great responses from kids. She redirects "stories" positively back to the information being considered, and then reiterates some of the students' comments.] That's why you bring water bottles to school! Because when I say you can't go get a drink, you have your own little cactus right there! Pretty cool, huh?

Lucy: [segues into a discussion of cactus roots. She reads a bit more from the book and then adlibs information about stems while pointing to key parts of an illustration in the book:] You know flowers have skinny stems? Cactus have BIG ones! [She discusses thorns.] Now, how does that keep a cactus from losing water? [Eliciting some students' critical thinking effectively here.] What do you think could be a danger to the cactus?... Oh my gosh, we're talking about birds in the cactus! Look at this picture!!! [One student relays amazingly detailed information about birds in cacti.] What other animals do you know of in the desert? [Students name snakes, jackrabbits, armadillos, lizards. Lucy reads another excerpt.] What's the name of an animal that eats other animals?

[Students respond in unison: Carnivores!] Carnivores! Good job! [She addresses a high school aide who has just joined the class:]

Lucy: You have a lizard, don't you? Don't you have a heat lamp for it? [Discussion continues about heat lamps.] So if it's 110 degrees, do you think the rocks stay hot for a long time? Yes! At night, if you're a lizard, you say, 'Let's go sit on the hot rocks!' So if you're in the desert, don't go sit on a hot rock, or you'll get bit by something! JUST KIDDING! [Lucy reads another excerpt from the book. She activates previous learning and links new material to personal experience.]

Lucy: Remember the ektoskeleton? It was all crunchy outside? [incorporation of language instruction]

Lucy: We are going to MAKE a desert! We'll start today if we have time. We'll make some animals for our desert, and hopefully we'll have time to start later today. If you are an odd number, please line up…

The day continues with spelling (again, district regulated and content determined…but Lucy manages to differentiate for a few students who need it). Afterward they transition into language arts, which I include here because of the writing content. Lucy emphasizes creative writing in her class, but the ideas are original, as is her teaching of them. They are working on an in-depth project: the writing of their own variations on "Frosty the Snowman stories." The lesson of the day is about writing a motivating, attention-getting, introduction:

Lucy: We're going to write an introduction to our stories. Do you know what an introduction is? Do you know, Andrew? [Andrew answers, 'Title page?']

Weellll, not the title page…[Andrew: Like the preview?] Yes, that works for me!...We've got to make this really exciting! Tell me how you make something really exciting. Ready? [Lucy pretends to read…in a very blah, monotone voice:] You are going to read about my snowman. Me and my snowman are at home, and we are going to have fun. [She then stares at the kids and waits. They respond in chorus, NO!!!] [Lucy is laughing]…Alright, now give me feedback on this one. She begins to pretend she is reading again, this time with expression and animation:] Frosty the Snowman came to life! We had a slumber party at my house, and we did the most fun things ever! We got in a snowball fight with the neighbor kids, we went sledding, he did my homework with me, and then guess what happened? [pauses] Wait! You'll have to read to find out! [Lucy pauses again. Students stare at her intently.] Whoa! Are you like, Oh brother, I can't wait to get to the goods of the story! Right? So are you going to write, 'Frosty is my snowman, we are going to have fun' [blah voice]? Maybe in robot world! BORING! Give me some juicy stuff! [In an animated voice:] 'And he threw me into the snow…and we went to snowman school…' Would you want to read that story? [Students respond, YEAH!]

Lucy: So, look on your front page here of your graphic organizer. You see the words: what, where, and with whom? In your introduction, you have to have all three of those things. I have to know what it's gong to be about…What's it going to be about? [Students respond, 'FROSTY!'] Frosty and your adventures, right? Ok, I need to know where it's going to take place, so where is yours gong to take place, Jeremiah? [Jeremiah responds, 'Outside.'] Outside, ok! Outside of your

house, of school? With whom? Who's going to be in your story? You see where it says the body right here [shows in graphic organizer]? And we listed the four things we talked about. OK, I'm going to wait for active listening, because a lot of people are doing their own thing. I'm going to wait. [She does…for several seconds. This is powerful, as the class grows completely silent, all eyes on her.] Alright, now that I have your active listening, I'll continue. Now we're going to write the introduction of a story together. We already have the guts, right? Or we know what we're gong to write about, correct? We already have the information so that we know exactly what we're going to write about. OK. What we're going to start with is an opening sentence, and we can all use the same opening sentence, so let's come up with something together. What's a really good catchy opening line? What do you think? [Student: 'The Adventures of Lauren.'] Lauren is your snowman? [Yeah.] I like that! [Student: a mystery] Is everyone's a mystery? You write what works for you. [Student: 'One day my snowman came to life.'] Oh, cool! Let's write it! [She writes it on the board.] Cool. Very good. What else could you write? You have 'with whom.' Do you have 'where?' I was at my…What, Andrew? [My museum!...Conversation continues.]

Lucy: I need you to list the activities that you and your Frosty are going to do. You need to tell me that he came to life, and we did this, this, and this! That's all pretty simple? Are you going to go into detail in your intro about what you're doing with your Frosty? Are you going to go into detail? [Students: No.] No! Where's your detail? [Students: In the guts!] It's in the guts. The intro is the

preview of what the story is going to be about, ok? So, in here it needs to have…List the four activities that you and your Frosty did. Now, where is all the juicy info about your four activities? [Students: the guts!] It's in the guts. We're just doing the intro, so the reader has something to go into. I'm going to start out, 'Frosty and I went snowboarding. Why did Frosty come to life?' All this good stuff. Are you getting some ideas? On your blank sheet of paper, write the word, introduction, [writes it on the board for them] and then write your introductory paragraph. All it is is a couple of sentences that you've already written down. I'll be walking around…also [the aide who has come into the class]. You have 15 minutes. [Lucy circulates, giving students feedback on their work. She finds one she wants to share with the class as exemplary:]

Lucy: I love it! Guys! I have a great example! Can I read it to you? This is Maddie's: [She reads the student's work.] Holy cow! Does that make you want to read? Did she list the guts? No. She kept me in suspense, and that makes me want to read. If you want, you can talk to her about how she did that…Oh, I like it! A snowwoman! Go ahead! [Student reads work. Writing takes on meaning for them as publishable language.]

Lucy continued circulating, excitedly providing students with feedback, encouraging others to read their work aloud. As I watched, I wrote the following reflections:

> [Michael] Pressley [researcher on excellence in literacy instruction and the power of motivation in the classroom] would love Lucy. It's all about motivation and positive approach to the task…also reading and writing across the curriculum and

the importance of seeing the printed word as literature…THEIR printed word! Differentiation is always there for Lucy, but almost not ascertainable, it is so subtly infused. It is present for every subject, every task..

I'm so glad Brent [student] has Lucy as a teacher. I hate to think where he would be without her patient motivation and standard-setting to encourage him to work to potential. He brightens up amazingly when she gives him little jumpstarts, and seems like a different child than the one who looked so bored and 'empty' only a moment before. He's clearly very smart, and yet he presents the opposite much of the time. Thank God Lucy can see the light inside and find many different ways to keep it alive.

Great redirection with Charlie also. He has made significant strides with Lucy (as per DIBELS, literacy assessment). He hits the wall frequently this afternoon, where he just stops producing. A kind 'How ya doin' Charlie?' with a smile, and he is reengaged.

Lucy's right, Andrew is so bright. It's easy to imagine how a rigid curriculum would put him to sleep, if it were not enlivened as Lucy does. He smiles at her humor. He is very quiet, but when he finally finishes his writing task, he is clearly happy. He does a little jump and embraces Lucy. 'I'm done!' Lucy said, 'Oh, my goodness!' … pleased, but not overdone. After all, he only completed the task assigned to everyone. Yet she gave him just enough reinforcement to keep the smile on his face for some time after.

The kids are excited and enthused about their writing. It is rare to see any writing instruction in these assessment days. When it's here, I generally observe a 'Do it'

> attitude, rather than this kind of motivational instruction with rich examples, generated first by Lucy, then reinforcing others and reading great examples. SO effective! Lucy came over to me at the end of the day, smiling, and whispered, 'I'm tired!' No one would ever guess. (full day observation, November 19, 2009)

Phenomena are difficult to put into words. A whole picture, a certain atmosphere, is what I have sensed in this classroom. The transcribed interactions I have included can't do it justice, but they can put it into some sort of context. It is clear to me, on that full day's visit, that Lucy has hit her stride, and has met with success, despite her misgivings about her literacy instruction that will become evident in the recap of her interview. Her conviction to teach to best practice, to motivate students to work to potential, and to make every moment count, have not been compromised at all. I retrieved her personal statement, which pre-service teachers are required to compose for distribution to their cooperating teachers and university supervisors prior to their student teaching and internship assignments. Lucy's reveals much of her inner strength and just what drives her to teach with such energy every day, all day, even when she is isn't feeling well:

> *Why did I choose to teach? I was asked to write about this question in my first education course and many times thereafter. However, it still amazes me how I get chills of motivation and passion every time I talk about teaching. I was blessed with the opportunity to work with elementary students early on in my education. During high school, I was selected for the Cadet Teacher program. This program allowed me to work at an elementary school and shadow a teacher*

> *for several hours everyday for the entire school year. I was fortunate enough to be teamed up with my sixth grade teacher…who happened to inspire me to pursue teaching. [He] gave me such a great insight on the teaching profession and allowed me to teach and tutor his students. I then moved around the school and worked with other teachers and students in different grades. I still remember the amazing feeling I had after tutoring a student and see[ing] the "light" turn on. I know this sounds cliché[d], but it is such an overwhelming sense of accomplishment and excitement for both the student and teacher, and I was lucky enough to experience that in high school. From that moment on, I knew that teaching is what I was meant to do* (personal statement, acquired August, 2007).

I would have to agree wholeheartedly.

"Never, never, never give up!" (Churchill)

Kelly

Kelly conveyed a positive spirit while teaching from the beginning of her student teaching assignment, and she demonstrated a clear determination to do all that was required or expected of her in a manner that would motivate her students. As a pre-service teacher, she connected with every student naturally and genuinely, and her ability to spontaneously re-word her lessons and insert conversation as the situation dictated effectively kept them engaged. While Kelly was not particularly animated, nor her instructional strategies necessarily unique, it was evident from the start that her students enjoyed her and worked hard for her. Her happiness and caring attitude were contagious. For a student teacher to develop a strong rapport while teaching effectively early in the

assignment was somewhat unusual within my experience supervising, and Kelly was clearly doing so.

Kelly's cooperating teacher in her third-grade student teaching assignment was clearly supportive. That quickly became evident in my introductory conversation with her, and Kelly reported the same at each of our conferences following my supervisory visits to observe her teaching. Although she was assigned to the same district in which she is currently teaching, the atmosphere surrounding the implementation of the same scripted curriculum was quite different in this student teaching classroom than in her first in-service teaching position. The principal, office staff, and neighboring teachers were all friendly and welcoming, and there was a relaxed feel to the school. Students were allowed to converse at lunch, talk in the halls, and the overall feeling was one of a positive environment where students enjoyed learning and were encouraged to interact in the process.

Kelly's current school atmosphere is significantly different. The expectations for implementing the literacy scripted curriculum appeared more rigid to Kelly as a beginning in-service teacher, again in third grade. Her assigned mentor did not meet with her as required. The principal is a pleasant man and supportive of Kelly, but he is strict with students, and silence in the halls is enforced. Looking back at her student teaching, Kelly believes the experience to have been strongly influential in her knowledge of how to teach literacy and her desire to continue implementing differentiation and enrichment, even if the scripted program does not provide for such. In reflecting upon her student teaching, Kelly shared, "I had a cooperating teacher that was such a mentor to me and helped me understand how to teach reading and specifically [this program]. I also

learned from her how to keep my class engaged in the reading lesson and the questions to ask the whole time" (final interview contribution, March 30, 2010).

The following excerpts from the first student teaching observation's lesson plan, as well as the formative evaluation I completed at that observation, provide a window into her early instruction of literacy and language arts. The specific content and teaching traits indicated align with developmentally appropriate practice, differentiation and enrichment implementation, and motivational strategies in the classroom. The reader will note that within a scripted curriculum requiring implementation of particular skills in sequence (as noted in the lesson plan), Kelly has infused her own enrichment strategies to provide motivating practice of said skills to her students. The reader will also note her intentionality in drawing upon students' previous knowledge prior to carrying out instruction of two specific skills prescribed in the curriculum, which she addresses in her lesson plan.

Types of Sentences

Background Information:

After the students correct the sentences on their D.O.L. [refers to 'Daily Oral Language,' a repetitive daily exercise required by the district]every morning, I ask them what punctuation goes at the end, what type of sentence it is, and how they know.

Objectives:

- *Students will be able to identify the four types of sentences and what characterizes each type.*

- *Students will be able to distinguish between the types of sentences when given an example.*
- *Students will be able to come up with their own sentences and define which sentence type it falls under.*
- *Lesson will coincide with [district] standards [700.70] (Write grade appropriate complete sentences) and [700.71] (Use correct terminology for parts of a sentence and different sentence structures.)*

Anticipatory Set:

'Give me five.' I will start with this phrase used regularly to get the students' attention and ask them what kind of sentence it is.

Method:

1. *Start out with an imperative sentence with the phrase we use a lot in class 'Give me five.' Have them identify what kind of sentence this is and what that type of sentence means.*
2. *Tell the students to think in their head what the other three types are and what they mean (covert) and tell them to put their thumbs up when they have an idea of what they are (overt).*
3. *Today we are going to play a game to practice the types of sentences. There will be one die with colors on four of the sides. I will split the class into six groups and group one will start with the die. There are different colored stickers on the sides of the die. If [the students] roll a blue, the team must compose a declarative sentence in 15 seconds,*

with a red they must compose an interrogative, with green they must compose imperative, and yellow is exclamatory. The remaining two sides on the die will not have stickers and this means the group has 15 seconds to come up with a sentence of any type but then must be able to identify what type of sentence it is.

4. *As the groups take turns rolling the die and coming up with sentences, the rest of the class will listen to their answers and give a thumbs up if they agree, or a thumbs down if they think we need to rethink it as a class.*

Closure:

Ask the students one more time to go over the types of sentences and the punctuation that goes with them. Give them different ways of thinking about it like the definition or what the punctuation is and they say the type. Then have them discuss as a class why different types of sentences might be necessary in language.

Evaluation:

This lesson will be assessed formally with [curriculum workbook prescribed assessment]. (Kelly's lesson plan, observation September 18, 2007)

Following are excerpts from the formative evaluation I completed while supervising the lesson above.

- Great anticipatory set! 'Give Me Five' was a fun way to consider imperative sentences. The activity encouraged critical thinking and

creative application of knowledge…and enabled students to make personal connections to subject matter.

- Small group activities are a good way for students to reinforce and boost learning through peer interactions.
- Your communication style is positive and effective, and your activity encouraged students' communication skills.
- You present information in a spontaneous, conversational, motivating manner.
- Ongoing informal assessment through observation of students' participation and contributions [was effective].
- Effective integration of language arts and writing. (formative evaluation, September 18, 2007)

The following excerpt from a reference I submitted for Kelly at the conclusion of her student teaching assignment also references elements of developmentally appropriate practice that I observed during my supervisory visits:

> [Kelly's] instructional skills…incorporate a variety of techniques and resources in a motivating manner. Her choices of resources…are developmentally appropriate and consistently incorporate the eliciting of problem-solving, critical thinking, and reflection from her students. [Kelly builds] personal connections to subject matter, and provides opportunities for collaboration and reflection among students. There are many opportunities for hands-on learning.

Kelly] is intentional about meeting the needs of all of her students, ably adapting her lesson plans as needed and providing scaffolding for some and meaningful extensions for others (reference narrative, October 18, 2007).

Kelly's internship assignment placed her in a classroom in a homogeneous, middle to upper class, suburban school in a different suburban district. Since this demographic typically does well on standardized testing in comparison to poor, more ethnically diverse schools, it was a bit surprising to learn of their curriculum for literacy (McNeill, 2001). In accordance with my instructions to my assigned interns, Kelly had told her cooperating teacher that her university supervisor wanted to observe her teaching reading for one of her evaluations. The cooperating teacher's response was, "We don't teach reading until after assessments in March." In the meantime, Kelly was issued a manual for the assessment preparation curriculum that the district had adopted for use across grade levels. Kelly emailed me to see what I wanted to do in terms of observing her "teaching literacy," given this limitation. I asked her if she would mind if I came to see her teaching reading-related assessment prep, and she willingly agreed. She was confident and positive, as she had consistently been.

In accordance with the assessment preparation curriculum that dealt with literacy skills, Kelly's lesson plan told me that this lesson was a follow up to instruction about text structure, setting, plot, and understanding passages. On the day of my first supervisory observation during her internship, Kelly was scheduled (within the restraints of the district's pre-assessment curriculum in literacy and language arts) to teach main idea. Her cooperating teacher had given her permission to add enrichment to the lesson as she saw fit. Kelly had found a supplementary activity entitled, "The Next Step: Scare

Radio: A Main Idea Spooky Story." The lesson centered upon their implementation of the script as a class, infused with discussion about main idea and simultaneous review of the previously taught information. The lesson was a hit, and the students appeared engaged and motivated throughout. They clearly enjoyed their active participation in the "production." The following is her lesson plan for this observation:

Main Idea

Background Information:

In fifth grade, all of the reading instruction occurring right now is test preparation. [The students] will take their state assessment next week and have been learning about text structure, setting, plot, and understanding passages.

Objectives:

- *Students will read 'The Next Step: Scare Radio' out loud as a class with some of them having parts and the rest of the class listening.*
- *Students will be able to identify the main idea of the passage and be able to answer several questions aloud about it.*
- *Students will discuss main characters, text structure, setting, and plot (problem, climax, resolution).*

Anticipatory Set:

I will start out this lesson by asking the class what the main idea of a story is. I will then tell them that we are going to read a fun radio show and they need to pay attention to main idea as we read aloud.

Method:

1. *Ask the students what they think about the main idea and how you know what the main idea of a story is. I will read to them the first paragraph on the radio show we will read before we begin.*
2. *I will assign six students that want to read aloud the character parts of the radio show. They will read through the whole thing with the rest of the class following along paying attention to details.*
3. *There are six questions that accompany the story about main idea. When we get finished reading, we will go over the answers to these six questions and discuss them and where the information can be found in the story.*
4. *Once we have finished discussing the main idea, we will discuss other aspects of the story. I will ask the students who the main characters were and have them name them and talk about the setting.*
5. *We will then discuss the plot. I will ask them what the problem of this was and have a student come up to the Smart Board and underline the parts of the story that tell them the problem. Another student will come up and underline the solution.*
6. *We will discuss the author's purpose of this story and whether they think it was to inform, persuade, entertain, or describe.*

Closure:

> *The closure of this lesson is to recap the lesson for the class, especially the main idea. I will ask them how you know these things, and how they can help readers understand what they are reading.*

Evaluation:

> *This lesson will be assessed informally with the questions they will answer aloud after we finish reading. I will ask them questions along the way and ask them if they have any questions at the end, or if there is anything I can do to help them better understand. I will call on different students to answer the questions and engage as many of them as possible in the lesson* (Kelly's lesson plan, observation February 28, 2008).

Elements of developmentally appropriate practice noted in the lesson included activation of prior knowledge, making personal connections to the text, providing text that represented an alternative literature genre (plays), eliciting critical thinking, problem solving, and frequent practice opportunities to identify the targeted concept (main idea). Kelly also included opportunities for peer interaction to enhance learning. She provided frequent and ongoing assessment through her questioning, and differentiated according to need by asking spontaneous questions as student responses indicated necessity. Kelly was intentional about these frequent checks for understanding, as the lesson plan articulates. Kelly was also intentional about better motivating her students by enriching the pre-assessment curriculum with this particular activity she found.

The following excerpts are copied from Kelly's formative evaluation, which I completed during the observation:

- Students are clearly engaged and motivated! Excellent choice of resource and you set your purpose [effectively]. Good use of positive verbal reinforcement for exemplary behaviors.
- Accompanying questions promote critical thinking. I'm glad you added some additional questions [about problems, solutions, and main idea] and discussion [as per students' needs and comments]. Underlining problems in the story was a great idea.
- Good idea to visually display story and questions concurrently to provide an extra boost for visual learners and/or striving readers. (formative evaluation, February 28, 2008)

When I returned for a subsequent evaluation, assessments were over, and Kelly had been given the opportunity from her cooperating teacher to be in charge of "everything" for the remainder of her assignment. Kelly was confident and enthusiastic about finally being able to implement literacy instruction as she had anticipated. I was given an opportunity to see her at work, utilizing "best practice" as she saw fit, and without her cooperating teacher's supervision or assistance in any manner. She was implementing a portion of the integrated unit she had designed, and the day's lesson infused literacy with the current social studies curriculum of early American history. They were focusing that day on the Boston Tea Party and the American Revolution. I was anxious to see her at work with "literature," as opposed to a scripted literacy curriculum (student teaching) or a pre-assessment curriculum (earlier in the semester). In short, the lesson was motivating, authentic, informative and engaging. The following is Kelly's lesson plan for this last observation during internship:

Integrated Unit

Background Information:

The students have been working on the American Revolution for the past few weeks.

Objectives:

- *Students will start out the lesson by recapping what they know about the Boston Tea Party and I will write them on the board.*
- *Students will listen to me read the children's book, Joining the Boston Tea Party, by Diane Stanley.*
- *Students will practice note-taking by listening to me read and use a graphic organizer to write down any information the book gives them about the Revolution or the Boston Tea Party.*
- *After reading and discussing, students will create a visual representation of what they learned about life during this time to life now (i.e., the dress of people, the flag, technology, plumbing, fashion, transportation, or anything else they learn from the story and can compare).*
- *Lesson will integrate reading, writing, and visual arts into the social studies lesson on the Revolution.*

Anticipatory Set:

Ask the students what they know about the Boston Tea Party and what it had to do with the American Revolution.

Method:

1. *Start out getting information from the students on what they have already learned about the Boston Tea Party or American Revolution.*
2. *I will write bullet points on the smart board about what they say they already know about the topic.*
3. *I will then read the children's book, Joining the Boston Tea Party, by Diane Stanley, to them, stopping along the way to ask them questions or talk about important parts of the story that have to do with the American Revolution. The children's book is a good way to help them learn about the Revolution in vocabulary fifth graders can understand and give them valuable information while it is still enjoyable for them.*
4. *The students will have the graphic organizer I give them out on their desk and practice their note taking skills while I read the book by writing down any information about the Revolution or Boston Tea Party that is incorporated into the story. This helps them practice their comprehension skills and note taking skills while also learning about the revolution.*
5. *After we read the story and discuss it throughout, the students will pick something from this time period that they can compare to today and visually represent it. (Examples are the flag, fashion, transportation, technology, or anything else they learn that they can compare to today.) They will draw the comparison of the two on a piece of paper and will be able to work on it and share them with the class the next day.*

Closure:

I will wrap up the lesson by talking about the story and recapping how this helped them learn about the Revolution. There is an author's note at the end of the book about what happened during this part of history, so I will read that to finish the lesson and tell them about the visual assignment.

Evaluation:

This lesson will be assessed by having the students turn in the notes they took during the story. This will show a lot about what they learned and comprehended about the Revolution during the story I read. The pictures they took will also show that they know about one thing that was different about life then than life now and they will learn about the differences the whole class found when they share their comparisons the next day.

The reader will note Kelly's references to several elements aligning with developmentally appropriate practice (DAP), including the following: (a) activation of prior knowledge, (b) intentional building of vocabulary and language development, (c) integration of literature across content areas (history/social studies), (d) incorporation of meaningful writing opportunities, (e) enrichment and differentiation as evidenced by infusion of literature and motivational activities, (f) exposure to multiple literature genres (expository/historical fiction), (g) connection building to literature, and between past and present time periods, (h) ongoing comprehension strategies, and (i) ongoing assessment of students' literacy skills.

The following excerpts from the formative evaluation I completed that day will also help construct elements of the emerging themes: utilization of developmentally appropriate practice, motivation and management, and differentiation and enrichment.

- Good job opening with a recap of previous learning, tying in new information effectively. I like your insertion of spontaneous, conversational questions during book reading.
- Drawing of past and present comparison is a great idea. Excellent choice of literature--motivating, fun story that ties in well with your unit content.
- Content appears appropriate for all of your students. Great review of major points at conclusion of story—reinforcing for everyone.
- Great elicitation of critical thinking as ‘teachable moments’ arise! (e.g., ‘Where was the light switch?’) Good tie-in to film, encouraging students’ reflection. Nice use of predicting questions with book.
- Good job connecting with students in such a positive manner, and also circulating as you read the book, making further visual, proximal contact with all students.
- Your communication style is highly motivating. You provide specific praise as warranted, and maintain eye contact and smile at all your students. Your enthusiasm is contagious!
- Ongoing assessment…The note-taking/graphic organizer assignment and instruction provided a wonderful assessment, and promoted thoughtful listening and synthesis of information.

- Beautifully integrated [curriculum]! Effective incorporation of great literature (with lots of interaction and critical thinking) with social studies, writing, and visual arts.
- Good use of the electronic board to record students' ideas during initial review.
- You do a wonderful job of raising spontaneous questions throughout reading to elicit students' critical thinking, as well as text to text and text to self connections. (formative evaluation, April 14, 2008)

It was difficult to describe Kelly on paper as I sat down to complete her summative evaluation and reference letter at the end of the semester. I could talk about her strengths in terms of the elements of her instruction, as well as her ability to motivate students, but it was difficult to identify exactly what it was that enlivened her classroom. Perhaps it was simply a combination of all of the above, but further enhanced by her uniquely positive spirit. No matter what changes or difficulties she faced, whether school-related or a tremendous loss within the family that she endured, her attitude never wavered. Kelly met each day and each student with the desire and the drive to keep good things happening. The following is an excerpt from my narrative reference for her, completed at the conclusion of her internship:

> On each of my visits [to observe Kelly during her internship], I have become increasingly convinced of her extraordinary instructional skills and effective and infectious enthusiasm with her students. She has taught for some time independently within this setting, as her [cooperating teacher] holds complete confidence in her abilities in all areas of instruction.

> Kelly's insistence upon [her students'] complete engagement, and her ability to motivate that engagement with humor and enthusiasm… have created a classroom climate that is highly productive and in which all students feel valued and successful. She offers only genuine praise for effort and content of responses, and her academic and behavioral expectations are clearly set and upheld. She elicits participation and engagement with instructional content by asking motivating, spontaneous questions throughout her lessons in a manner that stretches students' critical thinking and level of response. She integrates lessons across curricular areas, and effectively assesses students' understanding and level of participation in an ongoing manner.
>
> The rapport Kelly has created with her students in both [student teaching and internship] has been observable upon entering the classroom at any given time. She is professional and consistent in her conduct and involvement in the classroom community she sustains. Kelly knows her students' strengths and challenges well, and works to adapt [instruction] to scaffold the learning of all her students. (reference letter, April 28, 2008)

In the interview I held with Kelly after her last observation, she reflected upon her internship experience. She appeared confident and told me that she felt better prepared to teach literacy after internship than she had at the end of her student teaching assignment. In contrast to student teaching where she had taught the scripted curriculum every day, this semester she was allowed more variety…after assessments, that is. She had only used the literacy text two times; instead implementing book reports, autobiographies, etc. after assessments had passed. She said she perceives reading as "the place where kids

can show creativity" (interview, April 25, 2008). In response to my question, "If you could create your own reading program in your job next year, what would you choose?" Kelly responded with the following points. She would choose balanced literacy instruction (a conceptualization of combining elements of several approaches), she would incorporate fun projects, similar to the Newbery (a renowned children's book award given annually) book reports she had taught recently, and she would incorporate student choice in determining literature to utilize. She would strive for "lots of pull-out time" (for differentiation), and in general, "do things that interest [students], on their level" (Interview, April 25, 2008).

Kelly was clearly confident and inspired to take on her own classroom that spring. She contacted me at a few points during the summer (as my students often do) to discuss her job search, and was particularly excited about an interview for a position in the same district where she had student taught. That interview was followed by a job offer, which Kelly gladly accepted. This first teaching assignment, while placing her in the same district as student teaching, would come with differences in the environment surrounding her that she had not fully anticipated. These changes and their effects upon her classroom teaching surfaced in the interview I held with her that fall.

First, I noticed a drop in Kelly's confidence level since last spring. When I asked her if she felt prepared to teach literacy in her own classroom, she responded, "To an extent…" She felt more confident teaching to the whole group at that time, as per the scripted curriculum's original intent, and she did so initially, also due to the significant number of management issues she faced in this class. She did not feel prepared for literacy workshops, a new implementation now required by the district to supplement the

literacy curriculum and allow greater differentiation. Rather than allowing teachers to design their own workshops, there were strict regulations imposed upon teachers under the acronym for a new methodology. Although the district provided in-services, Kelly had not utilized anything similar before. She said she was having to "learn things she had never done," and that she was "…really stressed out at first" (interview, October 2, 2008). She described having to be "on my toes all the time!"

While subsequent interviews revealed Kelly's prior learning about literacy instruction in her coursework, as well as particular elements which she has employed independently, this was not the message of the moment. Her optimism had nearly vanished, and her motivation, although present, was nothing like what I had observed previously. She expressed the concern that she no longer felt she had received sufficient reading instruction…that the associated coursework came early enough in the program that she wasn't ready to take it all in. She also felt that not having to teach all of the requirements of her scripted curriculum during student teaching in the district had left her unprepared to implement this same curriculum now, even at the same grade level. She revealed that "we never did word knowledge or phonics in student teaching…[and] now we have to teach [scripted curriculum] with FIDELITY [emphasizing the term as one the district regularly utilized]. I don't know what I'm doing either" (interview, October 2, 2008). Regarding her confidence level at the beginning of school that fall, she said she only felt "kind of" confident…and not really that until two weeks before I came for the interview (which would have been mid-September, a month into the academic term). "I felt really odd being here all by myself—not knowing how to answer kids' questions." Kelly clearly missed her cooperating teacher from student teaching, and the support

inherent in that relationship. To make matters worse, she was assigned a mentor in the building, who failed to follow through with their required meetings as scheduled. The only place she felt she could turn for help was another teacher on her grade-level team. Since this team member was also relatively inexperienced, Kelly seemed to need something more. I told her she could certainly contact me if she needed help, but it appeared by that point that she was already in the mode to "survive" that first year as an in-service teacher on her own.

While the issue of management surfaced, it was far less of a concern to Kelly than teaching the curriculum. This does not align with research regarding the transition continuum for new teachers by Fuller (1969), who states that new teachers are concerned primarily with their new situation and discipline, and her conclusion that "no study supports the proposition that beginning teachers are concerned with instructional design, methods of presenting subject matter, assessment of pupil learning, or with tailoring content to individual pupils" (p.216). Kelly's overriding concern was clearly the curriculum, and the parts of it that she did not feel comfortable implementing, the pressure to align with the timetable it included, and soon, how assessment would fit into the whole instructional picture. She was also concerned about serving the needs of a very different demographic than her previous two experiences. About half of her students were poverty level, the class was more ethnically diverse, with the majority of children representing minority populations (mostly African American and Hispanic). In comparison to her student teaching and internship classrooms, parental support had dropped significantly. In addition, a larger number of Kelly's students were striving readers who risked not reaching targeted assessment outcomes.

When I met with Kelly again, right after school had dismissed for the summer, her smile was back, her laugh prevalent again, and she felt generally satisfied about what she had accomplished during the school term. Her students had done well and had met their goals, and while she still felt she had more to learn, she was ready to take on a new group of students in a couple of months. It was good to interact with Kelly as I remembered her from her field experiences…positive, motivated, and resilient. I felt confident that the following year would be smoother sailing for her. She eagerly agreed to let me come to her classroom the fall semester of her second year of in-service teaching and spend the day watching her teach. I left the interview relieved and eager to do so.

It felt good to be back in Kelly's room again in the fall of 2009, and to see her smiling and apparently eager and ready for the day. We caught up quickly before she went to get her students, and I spent a few moments walking around her room, taking in the sights. I noticed a bulletin board filled with photos of all of her students, each sitting in a special classroom rocking chair with giant smiles on their faces. The words above the pictures read, "Welcome to Miss [Kelly's last name]'s class!" Close by was another bulletin board with the words "Star of the Week." It clearly spotlighted one student who had contributed two photos, beside which was a stats sheet filled out with important information about him. It included interests, important information such as birthday, siblings, pets, etc., completed in his handwriting. Beside it was a drawing he had made of himself. The next bulletin board was entitled "City Life," and it was filled with sticky notes full of student-written information about animals that I assumed live in the city. Looking closely, I could see a wide variety of writing abilities represented. There was a birthday board, an interactive calendar display, and a word wall, filled with mathematical

terms. I recorded the day's events in my field notes, and some transcribed segments demonstrating Kelly's teaching and the emergence of the three themes within it follow:

> *[The students arrived, went to their desks, and began working on their morning work, which I am assuming is the same district required task Lucy's students were required to complete at the beginning of the day. Same district, same scripted curricula, same daily routine mandated even to the daily scheduling…it was all there. Kelly had written the word "gratitude" on the board, and after announcements discussing the day's word (schoolwide), asked her students,] 'What is gratitude?' [They briefly discussed some students' responses, and talked about some examples such as the school's food drive taking place.] Kelly announced, 'I'll be looking for that life skill to give out some Good Citizen bricks!'*
>
> *[Kelly began the preliminary instruction leading up to her incorporation of literature circles into the literacy curriculum.] Remember what it's called...what we're going to study today? ['Books!'] Books! What's it called that we're going to do with them? ['Read!'] Oh, we ARE going to read books! [Students respond, 'Get in a group!' and 'Take it home'] Anyone remember what it's called? No, not literation. That's alliteration. What's it called, Beth? [Beth responds, 'Literature circles.'] LITERATURE CIRCLES! Remember you gave me a vote on what books you wanted to read, right? And I said you may not get your first choice because we'll do them again. Well, I have your groups figured out. There are no more than five in a group. What we do in literature circles…is you all read the same book, and then you get together with your group and you talk about*

it, and you all have a part that you're going to share. Raise your hand if you've done one of these before…You're going to have something that you have to do on your own as you are reading. OK? One part! I'll go over what they are right now, and we won't start them today, but we probably will tomorrow. This literature circle is going to take us through Thanksgiving break, so we'll be working on it for seven days, right?

OK… What you do is, you'll only have one sheet like this that you keep with you when you're reading. They're not all the same. Then when you get together to share, probably Wed. or Thurs., you'll bring this, and you'll discuss it with your group. Got it? This first person is called what? Jane? Say it loud! ['Connector!'] All the connector does is make connections, ok? What the connector does is find connections between the book and you or something that's happened to you. So you can make connections between the book [and] maybe you've read another story kind of like it. You can make a connection to yourself. Remember like, oh that's happened to me before. Or you can have a connection between the book and the world or the other events that happen at the school, community, or the world. You have to list four. How many, Rachelle? ['Four.'] Four connections.

OK, the next person is called what, Aaron? ['Questioner.'] Questioner! What do you think the questioner does? ['Asks questions.'] OH, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding! ASKS QUESTIONS! Remember, GOOD READERS ALWAYS ASK QUESTIONS AS THEY GO, right? You have to ask yourself questions as you read, because that helps you understand [what you are reading.] That helps you

make predictions. That helps you be a better reader. Your job is to write down a few questions you have. Do you have questions about what is happening, what a word is, what a character did? I'm going to ask questions about what's going to happen next. What's that called, Kathy? ['Predict.'] PREDICT! I would PREDICT!...Hmmm, I wonder what's going to happen; I wonder why she did that to him. OK, those are some questions. They need to start with what? ['who, where,…'] What are those called? [inaudible response] What do they end with? ['a question mark'] A question mark!

The next one is a harder word to read. It's called the LITERARY LUMINARY! Say this with me: literary luminary! You locate a few sections or quotes in the book that you want to discuss. So you want to actually write down some quotations. What's a quotation? ['It's in quotation marks.'] You do put down quotation marks! Which is usually what someone says, right? Well, with this you write down exactly what it says in the book. Listen carefully. The job of the literary luminary is to help the people [in your lit circle] go back to some part that is funny, interesting, puzzling, or important, and to think about them more carefully with your group. With me so far? Questions so far? OK! As you decide which parts are worth talking about, make sure you put a note about why you picked something, if it's just important to the plot…if it's about the main character…if it's really funny, and so you think that you want to talk about it with your group. Got it? Yes? No? OK!

What's this person called? ['Illustrator'] The illustrator! What do you think they do? What do you think they do, Robin? ['Illustrate.'] So, what do you think

that means, Andrew? ['Make pictures.'} Good! An illustrator makes pictures in a book, don't they? What do good readers do as they read that has to do with illustrators? Kate? ['Visualize.'] Good! Visualize! What does that mean…when we're reading in [scripted curriculum] and I say, can't you visualize that? What does that mean? ['a picture in your mind'] Good. A picture you make in your mind, right? Do you think your picture is going to be the same as her picture? You probably all make your own pictures, so the illustrator is going to come up with their own picture and draw it. This says, ' Good readers make pictures in their mind as they read! Draw some of your own images and visions.' So, as you read, you draw what you see from that story. Draw a sketch, cartoon, a diagram. You can draw something that happened in the book or something it reminded you of. It says, 'Explain your drawing, or group members can talk about what they think it means. Be sure to have the last word, and tell them what it's about.' So they can talk about your drawing, and tell you what part of the story they think it's from, but then you have to tell them about it, and why you drew what you drew.

OK! The last one we're going to talk about right now is Summarizer. What does it mean to summarize something? If I ask you to go back and summarize something, what does that mean? [no audible response] Remember what we read? Don't know? You include the main ideas, and you say what's already happened. It helps you remember what's happened so far. All this is saying is to prepare a brief summary of what you've read. [It] means, tell us what you've read in a shorter version, ok? And the other members of your group will be

counting on you to give, in one or two minutes, the key points, the major highlights that have already happened up until when you do this together. Are you all with me?

Alright, let's say Trevor is reading this book, and Andrew is reading this book. (Holds up two books.) Do you think the lit group is going to be successful if Trevor reads the whole book in one night while Andrew's still on chapter one? Do you think then Trevor's going to tell him what happened or come with an illustration that Andrew hasn't read yet? Would that be good? ['No.'] So I'm going to put you in your groups, and I'm going to give you your books, and then you're going to see how many chapters are in the books. You're going to go through and count them, and say, if your book has seven chapters and we have how many days? ['seven'] What are you going to say that you need to read? ['one chapter'] One chapter each day, so that you're all on the same part! The books don't all have seven chapters. Is everybody with me? [Kelly hands out the books to the groups.]

Some of you picked a book that's going to require a little more reading. We'll have to maybe take it home and read a couple of chapters. And then it will become homework. But for today,, let's see, how many do you have? 11? Shoeshine Girl, you're going to read two chapters before tomorrow. That means you can read now for a few minutes, and then you can take it to your classrooms, and read in your spare time today. You're going to read two also, Courage of Sarah Noble. Freckle Juice is going to read one, because it's shorter. And Skinnybones is going to read two chapters.

Anybody have questions right now? Alright, start reading! You have seven minutes till we switch classes. [Kelly rotates around room.]

Alright! If you are not to where you should be in your story, I need you to take your books with you and come back tomorrow finished to where I told you you need to be. Got it? You can take it home, but make sure it comes back!...See you tomorrow! Come ready and we'll start your parts!

Kelly clearly is looking forward to enriching her literacy instruction with literature circles. I'm wondering if this is the first major addition she has made to the curriculum. The students seem eager. The literacy curriculum requires a daily CORE lesson, which consists of word knowledge, phonics, and vocabulary. I notice as Kelly takes them through this rote, daily practice, that she inserts many points along the way. Clearly she "scripts" the lesson as she chooses, adding comments about vivid verbs, compound words, multiple ways to spell the "ou" sound. All of these expansions of the curriculum include her elicitation of her students' ideas and contributions, and take the lesson to the next level. She appears to feel comfortable doing so. These additions enable Kelly to differentiate as needed, according to students' needs.

Following CORE, the students have a whole group lesson in the literacy text. There are extensions present here as well, as evidenced in the transcription of this lesson:

Kelly: Take out your reading books. Silently please! [She begins playing the music box.] [Student says, 'page 148!'] Alright, guys! All we're going to do is browse. You are going to browse from 148 to 153. What's our title? Read it for me please, Kamu. [Kamu reads.] So…check out the title, the illustration, the words, the clues that we can find to tell what this story will be about. We need

clues about the characters, the setting, the plot, and the genre. [Kelly writes these terms in columns on chart paper up front.] Alright! What do we know about characters who might be in this story? Robbie? ['birds'] Birds! I would say so! [She writes the students' contributed ideas on the chart paper.] Are you seeing people as you're browsing? ['yes, in cars'] Oh! There are some people in cars? [Yes!] OK! What else do we see? Where do you think this might take place? What would the setting be for most of the story? Annie? [inaudible response] Where? Where would the setting be, Jeremy? ['Outdoors.'] Outdoors! If we think this is mostly about birds, they'll be outside where they can live, right? ['Yes.'] So what else [can you tell me] about the setting or the characters? ['It's in a city.'] Big city? Why do we think that? ['Because of the illustration.'] What's the title? ['Urban Roost.'] What does 'urban' mean? ['In a city.'] Oh, so that gives us a clue that it might take place in a city. Brad. [inaudible response]

OK, what do we think [the story] might be about? Jeremiah? ['A family of birds.'] A family of birds. Maybe how the birds live? Good! What do we think the genre is? What is that big long word? [Student: 'Fiction.'] Does it look like it's fiction? ['No.'] What do you think, Daniela? ['Exposi…tory!'] Oh, what did she say? What did she say, Adam? [Adam: 'Expository.'] What does that mean? We learned that when we were doing city critters. What does expository text mean? ['Realistic fiction?'] Expository text and realistic fiction are different, right? They're both genres. What does expository mean? ['It's real and true.'] Thank you! Expository text! It tells us facts, right? It's not a made-

up story. 'Urban Roost' is also expository…which means it's going to tell us what? ['Facts!'] Look for some problem words…some things that might be problems for us as we read. Browsing to 153. [Kelly takes numerous suggestions from students and writes them on chart paper. The student reads the word, spells it, and tells the page where they found the word.] Remember when we talked about expository text? Did I tell you the words were going to be harder or easier? ['Harder.'] True! Because the story is about factual information, so we may have more problem words. That's why our list is getting so long! Questions. Wonderings. Let's come up with some wonderings we have about this story based upon the title, the pictures, the words, what we can ask.

What did we learn in 'City Critters?' What kind of stuff did we learn in 'City Critters,' the very first story of our unit? [This is the subject of the bulletin board mentioned earlier.] Does anyone remember? ['expository'…'animal facts'] It was expository. OK, we learned facts about a lot of different animals. The ducks, how raccoons dig in the trash. We learned about migrating. About flowers and how certain species are attracted to them. Remember learning all those facts in 'City Critters?' Well, in 'Urban Roost' we're going to learn facts about birds, and where they nest! Who knows where birds build nests? Your prior knowledge even before we start! What do you know about where birds build nests? ['In letters.'] Well, that's what we got from the picture. Right? That 'W' picture, that's what they were doing. Where have you seen it? ['Kohl's'] On Kohl's. So, a good place for birds to build is a cranny is in those little bitty spaces where their nests aren't going to get damaged, or their eggs aren't going to get hurt.

Kamdu? ['In trees.'] In the trees there's a bird nest. So we'll probably learn some new places, as we read where they can build their nests. Alright. Anna? ['In pipes.'] OK! Where in the pipes? ['In gutters.'] Oh yes. Gutters. Good. Birds can build nests in gutters, on the tops of your houses, or on roofs, or in trees. Yes. ['Streetlights!'] They can do it in streetlights. We'll probably learn more about where they build nests as we read. Alright, this is expository text, which means what? ['facts'] Facts! So, this story is going to have factual information, which means it is true. Remember when we were talking about real and make believe last week, and if it's real, and if it's not real? OK. So, this is called expository, and expository text can be about anything that's true. Our science and our social studies books... Do those tell us facts? So are they expository? ['Yes.'] They sure are. Alright. Some focus questions that we're going to go over before we read...Many kinds of birds survive in busy cities. So how do you think it's possible that they survive? How do you think that they can live in such a busy city when there are cars and people and other animals everywhere? How can they live? What do you think they do? [inaudible response] They find what? No, you were on the right track. I didn't hear what you said. They fly. Good! If they're on the ground, and an animal comes walking toward them, they fly away, right? OK, good. ['They fly up high.'] Good. They can fly over things so they can be safer. They also try to build their nests where? Do they want to build their nests in the middle of a street? ['No.'} Why not, Abdu? ['Because of cars'] It would probably get run over by a car? So where do they want to build their nests? ['Someplace high.'] OK. Some are high

where people won't mess with them. [inaudible response] Oh oh. [inaudible response] [Kelly laughs.] Hear what Tara just said? She saw a robin's nest, and she went and touched the eggs, and then the mama robin saw her, and she got so mad she chased after her! Birds don't like it if you touch their eggs. ['Why?'] Because they don't want you to harm them, and as a mom, their job is to protect their birds. Like your moms protect you, well, the mama bird has to protect her egg, has to protect her baby. Brian? [inaudible response] So it's possible for them to survive through all those things. They're smart, and they build their nests somewhere where they won't get trampled on. The mama bird protects her eggs, and she protects her babies once they're born. Trust me, as Tara knows. If the mama sees you when you sneak up on the eggs, oh, is she gong to get mad?! [Kelly is animated, laughs.] She will come flying and squawking at you. Do you think that people or wildlife adapt more easily to their environment? Adapt. What does adapt mean? ['Bring home a baby.'] Adapt, not adopt. Do you think people or wildlife adapt more easily to their environments? Harry. ['Get used to?'] Get used to or change to fit their environment. Do you think they can get used to their environment wherever they are? What is an environment? ['What's outside.'] OK. Your environment is everything that's around you outside. The trees, the plants, the animals. So do you think animals can change to fit their environment? No? I do, because they can see what's around them and where they need to go and what they need to do and how they can get their food and where they can get their shelter. Don't you think? Yes? No? What about when they migrate? Do you think the place where they go second is always the same as

where they go first? [inaudible response] They're going to have to find a new place to live, aren't they? Find a new place where they can get their food. OK. Any questions so far about urban roosts? We're not going to start reading until tomorrow…[She then prepares the class for dismissal.]

This section of transcript reveals Kelly's instructional style in terms of her conversational adaptation of a scripted curriculum to her students, their conversation, and their questions. Clearly, the scripted format was not followed verbatim, as Kelly incorporated many spontaneous responses to students' comments. Although the recorder did not pick up some of the students' responses to transcribe, it is clear that this dialogue is not a script from a manual. Kelly utilized developmentally best practice strategies in activating prior knowledge and making connections to new material and to the text. She inserted vocabulary instruction extemporaneously in some of this content. Both this "scripted" lesson, adapted by Kelly, as well as the literature circles she is adding to the curriculum for enrichment, illustrate how the themes emerged from watching her teach, listening to her, and transcribing the actual conversations taking place. Her motivational techniques are unique. They are subtle, and they often consist of making content meaningful to children, as well as intentionally drawing certain students into the conversation at certain points in the dialogue. I recorded the following written reflections as I watched her teach the full day in her classroom and contemplated her unique gifts and how they have enabled her teaching:

Kelly said to me, 'This is the first time for this. This could be chaos! [literature circles]. It's difficult to find words to express exactly what it is about her

communication style that is so effective and motivating. Maybe it's her ease, spontaneity, and the humor that she infuses naturally.

Kelly is direct. She looks her kids and me straight in the eye when she asks questions or when she simply comments. She smiles easily, and her pleasure and warmth appear genuine. I believe her kids respond to that more than anything. They are not 'subjects' or 'targets of instruction' but rather individuals to her, and she treats each student with respect and dignity and shows that she values them and their thoughts, ideas, and comments. She demonstrates this by her positive reinforcement for their contributions to discussion in class, by the comments she delivers to individuals at independent or small group work periods, and in the fundamental quick comments and bits of conversations that comprise a teacher's interactions with her students throughout a day.

The kids work well independently…just as in field experiences. Management is great…a simple touch is usually all that's needed to refocus…a pencil or a sleeve. Or perhaps a quick comment: 'If you can't keep your pencil still, you won't hear what I'm saying.' Kelly is direct, addressing the issue…not the child. She maintains the motivation and momentum. She is frank…says exactly what she means. (field notes, November 16, 2009)

I noted the ongoing, consistent manner in which Kelly differentiates, drawing students into a lesson at moments in which she needs to evaluate either their participation level or their knowledge of the subject matter. In particular, her literacy lessons illustrated this practice she has infused into her instruction. She spoke about her efforts to differentiate and enrich constantly during her literacy teaching:

As a second-year teacher, I am much more driven to teach to the needs of my individual students. As a first year teacher, I didn't feel as comfortable veering from the expectations of how and what I should be teaching…I believe my students need to enjoy what they are reading, or they won't get anything out of it. Also, …it is important to vary the instruction and try to incorporate a variety of approaches to reach all learners...The lit circles are not part of [the district curriculum]. I was doing these during the reading workshop time we have for 30 minutes every day (interview Nov. 16, 2009; email clarification, March 30, 2010).

Watching and listening to Kelly at work, there was no doubt that she was constantly "on her toes," as she had said in an earlier interview in regard to teaching this curriculum There was also no doubt of her motivation to make the content meaningful to her students. She had gained enough confidence over the course of a year to do so, in her way, and to bring in literature circles to enrich literacy as she thought it needed to be. Seeing all of this in place that day helped me realize that she had reached the goal she presented in her personal statement before her student teaching assignment began:

I know I can give my students something to look forward to when they come to school; like I remember my best teachers doing for me. With my student teaching and internship, I hope to learn about planning lessons that are engaging and fun at the same time. I know I will love being a teacher, but I want to learn to do it with confidence and excitement that will pour out into my classroom and my teaching. (personal statement, August, 2007)

While Kelly's confidence appeared to waiver during her first year as an in-service teacher, her excitement in her students' progress did not, according to the reflections she shared with me. And it is now again clearly evident that she loves being a teacher.

Subsequent Themes: Issues of Importance to Transitioning Teachers

As time ensued, and analyses and communication with the participants continued, two additional themes arose as highly important and sometimes problematic to the three new teachers. These additional themes became important elements evident in my research and data acquired, as guided by my research questions:

- *How do novice teachers negotiate the disparities between research-based best practice instruction in their teacher education programs and the realities of the classroom as they transition from pre-service to in-service?*
- *What could be done by universities to assist future teachers as they transition from pre-service to in-service?*

Assessment

The theme of assessment was coded in analysis of the data, both for its presence in an ongoing sense as the subjects continually assessed and differentiated according to student need in the classroom, as well as in the sense of the outcomes-based assessment phenomenon that drives practice in schools today. Each participant demonstrated insight and ability, from student teaching to the present, to incorporate ongoing assessment in their classrooms. This type of assessment continually surfaced in answer to my second research question, as participants frequently demonstrated their assessment skills in the classroom, beginning with pre-service teaching and continuing into their in-service teaching. The value and intentionality they brought to this assessment practice also

informed my research in response to my second question. The participants all expressed gratitude for the knowledge they acquired in their coursework at State University in regard to literacy assessment, while also expressing concern for their lack of awareness in regard to outcomes-based assessment realities in the schools that awaited them as in-service teachers.

Outcomes-based assessments, referring to those mandated by districts and the states, quickly emerged in conferencing as an ongoing concern for the participants, and the considerable and widespread effects of assessment in general is discussed frequently in literacy research. At some point, each subject found herself in a classroom situation where assessment dictated some aspect(s) of literacy instruction, forcing them to wrestle with the challenge of incorporating best practice within the constraints of assessment-based curricular requirements. The degree to which this issue evolved for them was highly dependent upon the grade level, the curriculum adopted by the school/district, and the demographics of their school. The assessment theme became pronounced through later analysis of their comments, in particular. Its bearing upon both research questions became clear: Assessment knowledge and skill, relating both to ongoing measurement of literacy skills as well as outcomes-based assessments shaping education reform, are essential in successfully transitioning from pre-service to in-service teaching (research question one). The participants negotiated the disparity between the best practice they were taught and the reality of the classroom in a variety of ways: They learned about outcomes-based assessment, they asked questions about it to their colleagues, they worried about it, and in general, they stressed about it significantly. In answer to research question two, the provision of said knowledge and associated skill is an important

inclusion in teacher education programs in literacy to help facilitate that transition from pre-service to in-service, and thereby offer better support to novice teachers.

Mentoring

Closely aligned with the assessment theme, numerous instances of discussion regarding the need for mentoring, or perhaps the aspects of mentoring received, clearly emerged as a recurrent theme, as analysis of data continued. All three participants received some degree of mentoring during student teaching and internship as provided by their cooperating teachers during the course of these field assignments. Their comments and subsequent reflection upon their teaching and level of confidence displayed during these assignments varied considerably according to the amount and type of mentoring they received. As their university supervisor, part of my responsibility was to confer regularly with cooperating teachers and with the pre-service teachers in regard to their communications with one another. The content of these conferences was often informative, and upon later perusal, revealed this continual theme of the degree of mentoring present for the student teacher or intern, and ensuing concern and confidence levels. It is clear from the data that the participants negotiated the disparity they encountered between best practice as taught to them and classroom realities by seeking out mentoring. Sometimes it was easy to obtain, partly due to familiarity of surroundings, or because of the skills provided by a cooperating teacher. Sometimes it was provided as part of an assignment, and while that worked in some cases, it didn't in all. The participants' clear need for mentoring provides a firm answer to research question number two: Teacher education programs can support novice teachers in the

transition to in-service teaching by ensuring that mentoring is present during both pre-service and the first year of in-service teaching.

Mentoring surfaced repeatedly as a theme in data acquired during the participants' first year as in-service teachers. All of them were employed in a district and school where some type of mentoring was assigned and regularly implemented (or not). The participants reveal in their conferences and interviews how this provision or lack thereof significantly impacted their initial experiences as first-year in-service teachers. The segments of conversation included below will reveal how dominant this theme became over the course of time, and will also reveal how one district with the same regulated provision of mentoring actually provided two completely different experiences for Lucy and Kelly, both employees of the same district but recipients of very different amounts and types of mentoring.

The theme of mentoring and the associated data that I have acquired has informed my research in response to both research questions. First, in handling the disparities they discover between best practice as taught to them in teacher education and the realities of the classroom, the data collected from all participants points to mentoring as essential in this transition. Secondly, the particulars that became evident in the data in terms of the type of mentoring needed, and provided to some but not all new in-service teachers, provide a substantial data base informing the second research question. Backed by evidence of existing programs cited in research, universities could assist future teachers of literacy in their transition to in-service teaching by ensuring that quality mentoring occurs.

In the documented dialogue with the participants, an early need for mentoring was evident in their expressed desire to implement literacy instruction appropriated to assessment demands, differentiated to need, while meeting curricular regulations. Because of the intertwining nature of these two themes, I will provide evidence of both themes concurrently in the data presented. All of this new emergence prompted the revision of themes and an extension of assertion 1, accordingly:

Assertion One Revision

Assertion One:

New teachers demonstrating exemplary literacy instruction possess strengths and commitment in the areas of incorporating developmentally appropriate best practice, motivation and management, and enrichment and differentiation in their instruction. In addition, they demonstrate strength in assessment of their students' literacy needs and skills, adapt to assessment demands, and seek support through mentoring of colleagues who demonstrate similar strengths and commitment.

The first research question asks, "How do novice teachers handle the disparities between research-based best practice literacy instruction in their teacher preparation programs and the realities of the classroom as they transition from pre-service to in-service? All three participants demonstrated skills in assessment in their literacy instruction in the classroom as pre-service teachers. They attributed that skill in large part to the best practice they had learned in their literacy coursework at State University, including the recommendation to incorporate ongoing assessment in literacy instruction to inform differentiation as needs arose. The participants all felt adept at utilizing running records, having had the opportunity to practice that particular skill in a literacy

practicum after learning it in class. What Kelly and Lucy were not prepared for, however, were the realities of outcomes-based assessment that they faced, primarily as in-service teachers. It was largely due to the stress they incurred in having to adapt, not only to the assessments but also to the associated curricular demands, that they found they needed considerable mentoring. The second research question states, "What could be done by universities to assist future teachers of literacy as they transition from pre-service to in-service?" The participants' response was a clear call for the provision of knowledge about those assessment-related realities within teacher education coursework, as well as the provision of reliable, knowledgeable mentoring to answer specific questions that arose during the transition.

The following excerpts from the multiple, triangulated sources acquired demonstrate the emergence of these two additional themes throughout my perusal of the data. I will provide documentation for both the participants' skills in assessing their students in various aspects of literacy, as well as the emergence of high-stakes assessments as a dominant theme in the data as well. Because of many instances of overlap between high-stakes assessment, the resulting implications of these assessments upon literacy instruction, and the expressed need for support and mentoring to adapt, the excerpts will be presented only once. My objective again is to prevent repetition and redundancy, while demonstrating the presence of these themes in further telling the three participants' stories.

Assessments and Mentoring

Lucy

My first visit to Lucy's student teaching classroom, where she entertained her students in their literacy instruction as Muzzy Monkey, provided ample examples to me of her ongoing assessment of her students. Lucy didn't just rely on the district's required literacy assessments to discover what the students understood. She had already, early in this first field experience, developed a wide repertoire of assessment techniques, as demonstrated in the activities she added to literacy lessons documented earlier. She was continually appraising her students' understanding of concepts, not only for her own knowledge, but to encourage their self-assessment as well. Lucy assessed through the questions she asked, adding her own spontaneously as the need arose. She assessed through every-student-response techniques, such as hand signals students utilized to quickly give answers to her questions and practice problems. She assessed through peer collaboration, watching as students informed their partners of their responses to a question. She assessed through meaningful writing opportunities and ensuing discussions. She assessed through the activation of prior learning at the incipience of each lesson. Lucy understood the developmentally appropriate practice of teaching students to think about their reading, enhanced by all these techniques of assessments, and as first grade students, they were learning to assess their own reading skills in an ongoing manner. The presence and prevalence of such practices within Lucy's teaching speak to the importance and frequency of assessment in her teaching of literacy. The following excerpts from Lucy's first formative evaluation, completed at my initial visit to her classroom on September 11, 2007, provide further specific demonstrations:

- Great assessment tool—Excellent job with ongoing effective assessment and provision of scaffolding as needed. [Assessment "tool" refers to whiteboards, on which students recorded quick responses to phonemic awareness and phonics lesson questions. Their use also enables Lucy's quick, ongoing assessment of each student's participation and understanding as they hold up whiteboards for her to see their responses.]
- Wonderful idea to incorporate pointer fingers—and great job reinforcing students' effective use of them. This is an excellent device to help you continually assess everyone's participation [and she used this to encourage their self-assessment as well]. ["Pointer fingers" used during reading are plastic "fingertips" worn on the student's pointer finger as a motivational device to help students attend to content and read with minimal diversion.] (formative evaluation, observation September 11, 2007)

Continuing into Lucy's internship with intermediate students, the evidence of assessment was demarcated in those formative evaluations as well:

- Excellent ongoing informal assessment, as you rotate between groups. The observation sheet was an excellent tool for students' self-assessment. [This refers to an integrated unit Lucy implemented, with this lesson focusing on static electricity. Students conducted related experiments in small groups, rotating to different sites for each experiment, and recording their observations at each station.]
- The hands-on work in stations provided wonderful learning and discovery opportunities. Good idea to hold students accountable and connect with

writing skills in recording observations for stations. (formative evaluation, observation, April 28, 2008)

In this new assessment-drive environment, test review constituted the majority of literacy instruction prior to state assessments in March. When the cooperating teacher completed her required formative assessment for Lucy, she addressed Lucy's ability to adapt these required test reviews in such a way that they became meaningful and engaging to students:

- Your test review power points were fun and engaging!

She added the following comment regarding a unit test that Lucy created for the science curriculum:

- Formal science test was very effective. [This exam was an accurate measure of students' knowledge of content covered, and questions were presented in a manner that was accessible to all students, including English Learners and striving readers. This "science" test was part of an integrated unit that incorporated literacy effectively across content areas, in accordance with developmentally appropriate practice.] (cooperating teacher's formative assessment, April 28, 2008)

Upon my observation of Lucy's intermediate level literacy instruction, I added the following remarks to her formative evaluation for assessment of the state standard: "This teacher candidate demonstrates (VIII.1) The ability to utilize informal assessment techniques to evaluate understanding and the need for modifications in instruction:" (Segebrecht, 2007, Appendix A)

- Good job circulating to monitor and ensure everyone's participation. The Venn [diagram]/double bubble is a perfect tool to assess students' understanding. Good use of "share with a partner…" and reinforcers for "good discussion" followed by sharing ideas with class. (formative evaluation, observation April 1, 2008)

The following comments were included in evaluation of the standard regarding the ability to adapt lessons to student needs:

- Good use of "Raise your hand if you have a picture in your noggin…" and opportunity to verbalize. Great support for English Learners. Good elaboration on terms that surface (e.g., "budget"). The lesson definitely meets everyone's needs. (formative evaluation, observation, April 1, 2008)

At a subsequent formative evaluation, I added the following in the section regarding her ability to utilize assessment to evaluate understanding and student need:

- Excellent ongoing assessment of participation and understanding, through creative implementation of fun all-student-responses (such as "ooo, aah, ohh!") – and formal assessment through written work. (formative evaluation, observation, April 28, 2008)

My evaluation of Lucy's assessment skills as demonstrated within her assignments, however, only substantiate one aspect of "assessment" as it was present in the data. The predominance of assessment, whether school, district, or state regulated and required, was a source of nearly constant concern and significant stress for Lucy. Her student teaching assignment required her to implement district and school

assessments, which she found generally very helpful to her in revising instruction and addressing individual needs. When she hit fourth-grade in internship, however, Lucy described to me how the picture changed dramatically. Newly facing the pressure of teaching low socioeconomic, challenged students in a diverse classroom with English Learners, she was forced to "teach to the test" as her cooperating teacher did routinely. While the scripted curriculum she had been required to use in student teaching was now replaced with a basal in the new district that was unscripted, the choices of activities were necessarily based upon the skills that would be tested in the literacy portion of state assessments in March. Lucy's interview during the internship revealed her appreciation for the knowledge she had been given during her literacy coursework in regard to DIBELS and running records, an assessment process she voluntarily utilized in the internship assignment to evaluate her students. She spoke of addressing her English Learners' needs by providing additional visuals, explanations, and opportunities for the students to work collaboratively with native English speakers. Lucy didn't speak much about state assessments…until her most recent interview, in retrospect. It was then that I learned the true picture of how Lucy had been affected by required assessments, as she discussed it during her second year as an in-service teacher. This discussion also clearly revealed her appreciation for the mentoring provided her by the reading specialist in her current school, who is the person assigned to her by the district for official "mentoring:"

> *They always said 'don't teach to the test' but you have to! Next door, reading lady, I love her to death. She is my official mentor. She has loads of ideas. She's an expert teacher. She'd say, try doing a flip book, make this for that one, instead of drill, drill, drill…'cuz I don't teach like that anyway for the most part. So she*

helped me get a grip on myself. I was stressing. We all got 80% or higher in math and in reading…A couple of kids passed by only a couple of points, but no one below! It was like WOW! I was so DRAINED. I was ready for summer. The fourth quarter was here and it was ok, let's have a party. The kids even, oh, we're done, and it's so hard to learn something. And honestly, why, why isn't the test at the end of the year and make the last week fun? Honestly, why, why learn everything in third grade by March? For the wedding [scheduled during assessments] I'm going to have pimples and hair like this! [pulls hair straight out to the side]…because of my testing. This year we've started prefixes and suffixes earlier now and started incorporating things that I know by the curriculum and the state's guidelines. I know that I'm hitting things earlier, and it's not brand new. It's all review. In a way, I know what they need better, because I taught my first year, and I know what the test has to offer. I know what they need to know, and I know what they can know. So it's kind of a healthy balance between the two [teaching to assessments vs. teaching to students' needs]. It's weird to say, but…you have to teach to the test, and you have to know how to do it.

Lucy spoke frankly about other mentors she had before she arrived in her school, along with the impact these individuals had upon her teaching at each stage:

I know that my observations with you were positive, but I know a lot of people's were awful. Like…I'm not doing this right. I'm not doing that right. And the placement, Ramona [student teaching cooperating teacher pseudonym] was great, but the last one [internship cooperating teacher] sucked. That brought me way down at one point and made me think I couldn't teach. Thank God for you

being there and boosting my confidence for that and helping me out, and I know you need constructive criticism occasionally, but…There's only so much you can take. You have to feel good occasionally, like you're pumped, and you want to do something. It's like playing golf. If you just go out there and hit the ball, and if somebody says, good job, you have a good time, but if there's somebody there saying do this, do that, you just end up looking like a gimp trying to hit a ball. You know what I mean? You boost my ego, I'm going to be a little pumped to do more things, but when it's constantly bam, bam, you do this wrong, you do that wrong, you're not ready for that, it's like why am I even doing it? It's just like with your kids; you're not going to tell them the bad things; you tell them the good stuff.

[coming into her first classroom] They say it's like putting yourself in a lion's den. Oh God! I came in here and cried. Because I had nothing! Nothing for the walls; I didn't know what to teach. I sat down and looked at the…district book and thought, I'm going to have to teach all this! And then I went to every teacher and asked questions. What's this…What do you do in the morning…What's your schedule like…and they [other teachers] didn't give me very much, because they wanted me to be free, which I appreciate now, but I was like, just tell me what to do! We went to our mentor meetings, and we went to the curriculum coaches, and they told us, three days before school started!...how the morning work went and how that worked, you're supposed to know it apparently. I felt dumb. I felt unprepared, and I doubted everything. Like how am I supposed to know? I didn't even know how to unpack school supplies; I needed to have a start-up list. And

the curriculum; I was so anxious about how and what to teach. I couldn't just look at all that material and know what to do with it. If there is a way to teach that, awesome. I didn't know about district guidelines, which no one told me about until in-service. I had all my bulletin boards up and found out, oh, it's mandated you have a bulletin board about this. And I had to take it down and redo things. I had to get prepared. I came early, because I had nothing. I had absolutely nothing. I wanted a pet, and I couldn't, and I wanted to put my green couch in, and it wouldn't fit. It was just crazy. Big, overwhelming feeling. And that ruins your confidence. So the more prepared you are, the more confident you're going to be. Give me an example. Shadow a teacher, help them set up their classroom. HOW COOL WOULD THAT BE?!

[discussing the beginning of the student teaching assignment, fall semester, 2008]: I was here at the beginning of school with Ramona, and I came in and helped in the summer, because I had contacted her, but usually that's not the case [with student teachers]. She is so knowledgeable that she didn't have to plan anything. I'm like where did you get that? 'They just gave it to me.' Who gave it to you? Who's they? Write down everything. Am I gonna get that? I asked the most stupid questions. Coming in and talking to [the principal] after I got the job…before I got my mentor…I asked, Can I borrow one of your [scripted curriculum] reading books? To take home and look over, because I need to figure out what I'm going to teach? And she was hesitant, like, If you lose that you're screwed. But she let me take one home, and I read it, but I didn't know

what it meant…teach vocabulary, teach blended phonics, sounds…There was no confidence.

Now, I am more critical of what I do, so I'm less confident because I think I can do better at some things. I know what I did last year, and I know what I want to do, but how am I going to do it, and I still don't have all the knowledge to do it. I'm still learning.

I asked Lucy if her beliefs and goals in literacy instruction had changed, and she replied:

I hold them [students] more accountable now. More, because I am taking more time to be invested in it. Before it was just treading water…What I'm doing now, more one on one, knowing their DIBELS scores, working one on one, doing my workshop, and actually having a final goal…Before it was just…OK, we're having workshop. I have a set goal for them, because I know where they need to be. I wouldn't have known that the first year. I think you have to go through the first year to know what that is. So I hold them more accountable, and I know what to look for now.

[The required assessments are] DIBELS, state assessments, Friday test for math, and [scripted curriculum] reading tests. However, we're allowed to…I don't have to do that reading test. Sometimes I have them make up their own tests. We'll do a Jeopardy [game] and some questions. I remember we had to do that in school [literacy coursework]. We had to write five important facts, and we had to write a question about those important facts. And then whatever came out of the bag was the question. They have to find the information, own it, and then pass

it on to someone else. A couple of tests in [the scripted curriculum] really stink. They're really tough, and I'd never go over that stuff in class with them. So, I think my next story is "Through Grandpa's Eyes," and the boy is telling the story in third person, and it's weird, so we take each part and talk about it, and then they take that later and do their own thing. I only know that because of my partners [grade level team members] giving me a heads-up. 'By the way, this story sucks, so do something different.'

When I asked if Lucy needed to get permission to incorporate extensions to the scripted literacy curriculum, she replied:

No. We have to stay with [the scripted curriculum]. If I'm doing science during reading, that might be a problem. I use my reading time religiously. But if I'm doing something else, I could pretty much back it up. I don't feel like I need permission. I can pretty much do what I want.

The first year, we [my assigned mentor and I] would meet every single Wednesday, and she would have to document what was working, and what I needed help on, and what was going on. I knew her, and we talked every morning. I'm in her room every morning, and we talk all the time. I really feed off her, and hopefully someday she can feed off me!

I asked if this had been a big help, and Lucy replied:

Oh yeah! And second year, it's every other Wednesday that we have to meet formally…First year, I'm observed by my principal several times, and there wasn't a lot of feedback. I'm kind of like, they're really paying me to be here? [I would have liked]…'What is working, what can I help you with, what do you want

to improve?' It gives you more of an accountability and ideas. Like you've [addressed to me] been in the classroom, and everyone else has. I ask, how do you organize that? And I want to limit what I ask them, and use it wisely, so I think it would be helpful to have another support system….with you here all day, that was great! I felt like I could feed ideas off you, like, hey, did that work out ok, or hey, what did you think, but I know some people would be terrified of that, but since we have an ok relationship, I feel comfortable. I know some students within [my district] who have the same [mentoring] requirement, but it hasn't come through. If that doesn't happen in the school district for one reason or another, where do they go?

I asked Lucy what support she received in regard to literacy instruction:

Just Ramona [student teaching cooperating teacher], and same in internship. Basically, I was just a puppet and did what they did…and the more I do different things, hey, you can add things and do fun stuff with that, but in fourth grade, it was do this, this, this, and test, test, test, to meet standards, and why there was test cheating and stuff. She [cooperating teacher for internship] taught me to cheat on the test. And I thought it was right! So last year I said, we can tell them which ones are wrong, right? And they about pooped their pants. She had me go along while they were taking their tests and tell the kids to change their answers. That's what she was doing…They [other teachers] would take the test and then come tell us what was on it, and we would teach to the test right before they took it, and they still failed. Except for her class, because she cheated enough to get them to pass…I was talking to [assigned mentor], Can't we tell them what's

wrong, because we take the practice in the class. And apparently we're not supposed to do that. [Mentor] was like, I can't believe you could do that, and she ran to another teacher and told them…and it's SO STRICT. Isn't that nuts? If they're not going to make it, they're going to cheat on it. Or else they lose their job. Fourth grade was teaching to the test, which was my support. But I got to learn more concepts in fourth grade because of teaching to the test, so that was helpful. She was a GREAT experience! [sarcastically]

I asked Lucy what she knew about assessment before field experiences, and her reply was:

We [preservice teachers in coursework] heard a lot about it, and I had to write a paper about it, pulling stuff off a website. I knew why we were doing it, and I know the corruption…the bad stuff…Teachers were teaching it…If you don't make it, you don't get money, but don't you need money for the resources…We knew the flaws of it. We had to interview a teacher and got their point of view, and they just laughed at us. Things aren't going to change. You have to deal with it. We learned the bad stuff about it…why we have it, and why we have tests, but don't teach to the tests!...is what we're drilled.

Because I chose the research project on it, I knew more about it than most. [I] listened to interviews…One thing we did was really good. One professor hit home as to why it's such an issue in urban areas, and we talked about what they're missing, and also what their culture is. And we actually went to a school and saw what they didn't have, that we grew up with…and it was like, WOW! And then those kids need to have fun, so they stay in school, but you have to drill

them to the test, so AAAAAGHHH! I like the idea of No Child Left Behind…What teacher can say that isn't good? It sounds lovely, but the way they allocate that and fund the money…I think accountability for teachers is good, but test at the end of the year. Test, and if they know it, great; if they don't know it, shame on you; do it next year. I think that's what should be done. Not the kids. They shouldn't be punished. They shouldn't lose money for their school, because the teacher didn't do something great. And as for all these nonverbal [autistic, EL, etc] students in the classroom, how are they supposed to learn about text structure? Because they want inclusion now…because they can't afford it…save money….the government! Are you KIDDING?!

With all of Lucy's strengths, the adjustment was a difficult one for many reasons, and it is clear from her remarks that mentoring was of great importance to her. In student teaching, she relied upon her supportive, experienced cooperating teacher to show her how to implement the scripted curriculum. She still felt grateful to her for having been given the freedom to enrich and differentiate the curriculum to meet her students' needs. When the mentoring was virtually absent in Lucy's internship, and she was met with frequent and harsh criticisms, supposedly intended to help her grow, her confidence waned, and she spoke of needing my encouragement as her supervisor to continue to feel motivated.

When she reached her own classroom, the need for mentoring became exponentially higher, as Lucy struggled with implementing a rigid curriculum at a different grade level with numerous unfamiliar requirements. She spoke of going to teachers in the building, but feeling as though she couldn't overuse that option. While

the district workshops helped explain the literacy curriculum and its implementation, the information came so late it was difficult to process in time for the beginning of school. Lucy's greatest help in these difficult months was clearly the assigned mentor she speaks of so highly. As a reading specialist, this mentor was able to provide knowledge-based advice and expertise that equipped Lucy to gradually begin the process of differentiating to meet student needs. The mentor's developing role of friend to Lucy also enabled the sharing of information regarding assessment that Lucy had obtained incorrectly from her internship…that the cheating on assessments she had witnessed and been told to do was illegal. The mentor's continuing guidance, advice, and friendship on a daily basis enlivened Lucy's motivation, confidence, and power to enrich a curriculum that was stifling, while she also prepared her students for tests through excellent instruction. Lucy credits this woman with enabling her to do what she knew how to do…and to meet the needs of her students, teaching them to work to their potential…without cheating.

Molly

The theme of assessment often surfaced in my interactions with Molly due to her unusual interest in, and ability to, continually assess both her students' literacy skills as well as the materials to which they were exposed. By the time Molly began her first-grade internship, her assessment skills were accurate and refined, and she implemented them consistently and frequently. Interwoven with her ability to differentiate the literacy curriculum to meet individual students' needs, she became quite adept at infusing her teaching with specific adaptations and enrichment strategies. She kept her students motivated and stretched them just enough to ensure their growth was continuing. While the assessment strategies for first-grade students involved mostly ongoing observation

and elicitation of students' participation, they were always present, and always a primary objective for Molly. The following is an excerpt from my reference letter written for her at the conclusion of the internship:

> [Molly's] assessment capabilities are also extraordinary. She is adept at perceiving students' individual needs and challenges and adapting content appropriately. She provides extraneous resources that provide additional motivation and connections for children and promote their enthusiasm and engagement. She is articulate and clearly communicates with parents and colleagues in her efforts to collaborate to meet students' individual needs. (April 28, 2008)

When I interviewed Molly after my last observation of her that semester, I asked her how her current curriculum allowed her to meet the needs of diverse learners. She felt that the limited book selections available to her provided her with the flexibility to plan additional activities to enrich the curriculum. As an intern, Molly was already infusing her curriculum with differentiated elements: poetry, activities of varying kinds, adaptations of the lessons, adding to or changing some vocabulary prescribed. In order for these adaptations to succeed, Molly had to first be proficient at understanding what each of her students needed…and she was proficient indeed, even as a pre-service teacher.

When I visited her the following fall in her own in-service classroom, she had carried forward with many of the things she had begun to try in internship. Now a first-grade teacher in the same building where she had interned, Molly felt that she had received a great background experience in internship to help her adjust to her first

classroom. When I asked her if she felt prepared to teach reading in her own classroom, she answered that she "felt pretty strong about it." She felt that the most challenging aspects of teaching reading in her own classroom were the behavioral dynamics of multiple groups: "getting them to sit down and respect each other."

While required by her district to teach their guided reading curriculum, it fit her needs with its leveled books and the choice built in to choose stories and bring in additional materials as needed. As a first year in-service teacher, she felt most driven to "pull in more word work for low readers to keep them up to level." In this aspect, Molly demonstrates her departure from Fuller's (1969) theory that new teachers' greatest concern is discipline, to the exclusion of "tailoring content to individual pupils" until later in their experience (p. 216). Molly is ahead of the game, by Fuller's standards. While she expressed some concern about management in her small groups, she is equally concerned, with "…instructional design, methods of presenting subject matter, [and] assessment of pupil learning" (p.216), all attributes which Fuller claims are not demonstrated in research to be "concerns" of beginning teachers.

Perhaps, however, that has been partly enabled by what Molly describes as the "good support" she has received from her grade-level team teachers, with whom she had already established a positive rapport during her internship. They were clearly a communicative team who willingly shared ideas, and Molly voiced her appreciation for that presence during her first year of in-service teaching. Her expectations as a first-grade teacher were also different from Lucy's and Kelly's, because she didn't have to prepare students for state assessments, which begin in third grade. She is quick to acknowledge this difference.

Currently in her second year of in-service teaching, Molly finds herself in a first-grade classroom in the city where she grew up. The environment is different in a number of ways from last year's, however. Molly's adjustment has been more challenging on many levels this year than last. I asked her to compare the difference between this year and last in regard to literacy instruction and the ensuing challenges:

> *Last year I think I felt more of a time crunch to try and get everything in in reading groups. It seemed like they were really short, and we were shuffling all the time. You know, trying to teach them what I knew they needed in the time seemed to be one of the biggest time crunches last year as far as reading groups. And the shared reading, I didn't have the materials that I was supposed to have, so that was hard. So those were probably the two drawbacks last year. And this year…the reading groups are huge. You know, we learned in school [State University literacy coursework] that you're supposed to have, like a max of six kids in a group. I don't know if there were 10 or 11 here today, but with 11 in a group, you're either leaving someone behind, or someone's bored, because you've always got to be moving at this pace, so that you don't lose some of them, because if you lose some of them, then they all go off track. Like today, two of them didn't finish the page that we were working on, because we had to move on to the other activity, because most of them were done. It's kind of like majority rules with such a big setting. And shared reading. I have books this year so that's going well.* (interview, December 1, 2009)

Molly provided some additional background about the prescribed departmentalization of reading instruction she has been required to work within this year and its effect upon her ability to assess all of her students' literacy skills:

> *The way we do reading groups is really strange, because there are seven different reading groups, and we all do reading groups at the same time. So the group you saw this morning is my reading group, and in the mornings the librarian has a reading group, and there are four other people who have a reading group. The gifted person (part-time) has really high kids, and there are aides always here, and they always have a reading group. So I guess that has probably been one of my struggles with reading. I don't know where these kids are. I don't feel like it's a very consistent system, and I don't know where they all are…which sounds really bad, but last year I had less kids, so I had more of a chance to hear them read, and they were more able to control themselves if I needed to work with someone, and I was able to pull a small group back here last year, give the other kids something to work with if I felt like kids needed extra, but these kids can't handle that. So it's not like I can ever pull them back here, so I don't feel like I know where my kids are this year like I did last year, even though they have different materials and even more materials…It's like the people are missing.*
>
> *[I asked Molly if the people teaching the other groups are part of evaluating the students, coming to conferences, etc.] No. I can go ask them if I have a question…but mostly I get 'Oh, they're doing fine,' or 'They're right where they should be with us,' or 'They're not too far behind the group,' but I don't feel like I have data.*

> *We all benchmark whenever. Before we would take a week and not do reading groups, and we would all benchmark [assessing students' literacy skills and levels], so we knew the kids were all being benchmarked at the same time by their classroom teacher. So last year even if my kids were in a different classroom for reading group, I was able to hear all of them read when it came to benchmarking. But this year everyone does their own benchmarking whenever. So I have not sat down and heard all my kids read a book. I don't have time to do it, and they can't handle…too much redirection of certain kids. The noise level gets…and I'm always redirecting certain things, and I don't have seven minutes to listen to this kid read. But I'm trying to at least hear [as in reading centers described above]. I hear them read their journal every morning, so that's at least something.*
>
> *[I asked Molly, Do you feel prepared to assess students' reading skills and needs?] I feel like I do have the knowledge, but I don't feel like I necessarily have the time, you know. Running records, benchmarking, computer data…it was really interesting. I gave them the 'Words Their Way' spelling inventory [Molly attributes the knowledge of this program to a literacy professor whose course was valuable to her.] at the beginning of the year, because I wanted to see where they were…I have a word study station this year, and every time they go to the word study station, they have to do a word sort.* (interview, December 1, 2009)

Molly not only has learned how to assess her students within her literacy group, but she has also added a whole new dimension to her curriculum, even in a new school, in her incorporation of word work. She is determined to continue to incorporate this

practice with her students, and frequently praises the professor who taught her this information. She carefully assesses her students' daily work in every aspect of literacy.

In terms of assessment pressures, Molly avoided the state assessment stress that Kelly and Lucy encountered, simply because those assessments don't begin until third grade. Although the first-grade curriculum was definitely assessment-tied, Molly acknowledges that the pressures for the teachers of third through sixth grades were definitely different, and also visible to her through colleagues:

> *I think it [teaching to assessments] does happen more in the upper grades. I do not feel that I did, as first-graders don't take any major 'assessments.' With my 5th grade student teaching, I think that I was there early enough in the year that the pressure was not there yet. I do hear of it happening all the time though—especially during heavy testing season.* (interview, December 1, 2009)

Molly instead describes her biggest challenge as a novice teacher to be "finding a balance. It's tough to juggle all of the demands and all of the information that is thrown at you in the beginning." In describing her confidence level at the beginning of school, Molly said she "felt prepared and confident, but a little unsure, just because it was the first time to get out there and everything was on my shoulders." She was fortunate last year to have the close relationship with her team members already established from internship, and in addition, "I kept in touch with a reading professor, so she was sort of a liaison if I had questions." She discusses the structured mentoring plan provided to her by her district last year and by her new parochial school this year:

> *Last year the learning coach was my official mentor, but I consulted with all of the people on my team. Unofficially, I found one in particular who had a similar*

teaching style, and she helped me often with planning and upcoming events/lessons. This year, I have my team teacher…She's great too, although a little more 'last minute' than I am. I think she's wonderful, but it was nice to have someone very similar to me last year as a first year teacher. This year the other teacher and I have differences that complement each other. Last year mentoring was imperative—I don't know what I would have done if I had not had such a wonderful team or experience. This year, it sure makes things go much more smoothly and pleasantly, but not AS imperative as last year." (interview, March 15, 2010)

Molly credits her State University coursework for preparing her well to teach literacy. She appreciated the knowledge and support she received from a masters' literacy course in comprehension in which she was enrolled during her first year in the classroom. State University students generally take advantage of the opportunity to complete their masters' degrees quickly after the conclusion of their five-year program, since they finish fifteen hours of coursework in the interim between student teaching and internship. Other student teachers and interns also commented to me at times that the masters' courses they were taking simultaneously were helpful to them in their internship assignments. All of this raised the question of whether a university mentor would be helpful, to which the three case study participants agreed, provided that there be no mandatory observations, but rather voluntary mentoring. Molly commented that for first-year teachers, it could be helpful to have

…a person whom they choose, if they wish, to keep in contact with, to answer questions, and give support as needed…I could see that this mentor relationship

(by choice) could develop into a friendship that may continue through the second year and beyond. (interview, December 1, 2009)

Molly clearly has become a highly competent teacher who is not reliant upon anyone for instructional assistance, particularly in literacy, which is her forte. However, she does still appreciate the teaming and support that a colleague can provide, as well as the validation of her choices and practices that is inherent in such a relationship. Molly was fortunate to have a first year in her own in-service classroom in which she received optimal support from her colleagues, and she points to that support as a critical element of her success in her first year. As stated above, she finds first-year mentoring to be "imperative," even with her vast knowledge and expertise regarding children's literature and literacy instruction.

Kelly

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, I was curious about Kelly's mentor's lack of follow-through during her first year as an in-service teacher. While Kelly stayed the course and proved competent and independent in her second in-service year, it was not without duress. Kelly's additional pressure to prepare her students for high-stakes assessment added to that pressure, and together with the lack of support, made the first year more difficult for her than it needed to be:

As a first-year teacher, I had a very unfortunate mentoring situation and ended up getting no guidance. While it was very frustrating at the time, it forced me to become independent and learn on my own. We were supposed to meet weekly and probably met three times all year, and the first year mentor wasn't even supportive when I asked for something. As a district, they do a good job

providing teachers with a first and second year mentor. The district can't control when someone doesn't receive the mentoring. I would have liked to have received more from someone within the district at a different school. It would benefit to have someone to talk to that doesn't work directly with you and could bounce ideas back and forth between schools. I feel it is very important for first year teachers, but second year, it's more of a guidance if you need it.

I do have a mentor as a second year teacher who is very supportive when I need anything or have any questions. This year I feel more comfortable, and it is more on a need basis (interview, April, 2010).

In regard to receiving mentoring for literacy instruction in particular, Kelly identifies her only mentors as her two cooperating teachers in her field experiences:

I was fortunate enough to student teach with two amazing teachers, and they are more of mentors to me than I have had as a teacher. I learned more about reading instruction from them than I could learn from a mentor. I don't think my first or second year mentoring has provided that, but I feel lucky to have gotten it at all.

I student taught in [the same grade, same district] where I am now placed. I had a cooperating teacher that was such a mentor to me and helped me understand how to teach reading and specifically [the district curriculum]. I also learned from her how to keep my class engaged in the reading lesson and the questions to ask the whole time. During my internship, we were working on test prep, so I actually felt like I was prepared to teach that when it came time. I also got to

> *teach novel studies and some less monotonous things that are important to try to fit in.*
>
> *As a first year teacher I got to attend an all day [literacy curriculum] training to help me understand how to teach that specific program as a new teacher. I also had the reading teachers come in and watch a lesson, and refresh my memory on assessing with DIBELS, which they watched me and provided feedback. As a second year teacher, I attended the [district curriculum] all-day session again…and got a lot more out of it, having had one year under my belt.* (interview, April, 2010)

While Kelly did not have mentoring in place to help her through assessments in her first year, she was fortunate that she had experience during her internship to fall back on, and as her comment indicates, she has observed it beyond this one assignment:

> *I have experienced teaching to the assessments, and have seen it in every classroom I was in. It is sad that it has come to that, but the students need to be prepared at the same time. I tried to tie in preparation with my daily reading lessons and start them understanding the terms from the beginning, so it was more just integrated into everything else. We were doing, as opposed to teaching to the assessment.* (interview, April, 2010)

Like Molly, Kelly felt that the literacy graduate courses, particularly a comprehension course and a striving readers course in which she was enrolled during her first two years of teaching, were supportive to her in her literacy instruction: "The graduate level classes actually did [provide support] in themselves, and I am glad that I was taking those during my first couple years of teaching" (interview, April, 2009).

However, she did not feel that either undergraduate or graduate literacy coursework particularly prepared her for assessment-driven and scripted curricula that she encountered in her own classroom: "I don't feel like we learned much about assessing literacy or curriculum choices. It would have been beneficial to be more knowledgeable on this…" (interview, April, 2009).

The fact that Kelly, Molly, and Lucy all continued their graduate coursework during a stressful adjustment period underscores their "best practice" as evidenced in their continual desire for professional growth. Kelly's words indicate that she was not simply trying to finish her degree in short order; she clearly was reflecting and utilizing what she was learning in her literacy coursework. Herein lies another response to the first research question:

Research Question One:

How do novice teachers handle the disparities between research-based best practice literacy instruction in their teacher preparation programs and the realities of the classroom as they transition from pre-service to in-service?

Kelly handled the disparities and the concomitant stress at this particular juncture by seeking additional information professionally. She translated the coursework into solutions in her classroom on a regular basis. Molly and Lucy continued their coursework as well, and they were intentional about staying informed and incorporating new ideas while becoming more knowledgeable about literacy instruction. While the coursework may not have addressed a predominant concern regarding the implementation of both best practice and scripted curricula, the participants became newly armed with knowledge that enabled them to infuse differentiation, enrichment, and rich literature,

despite their curriculum's failure to provide the same. Allington (2002, 2006) has frequently referred to one particular skill as indicating excellence in literacy instruction, and that is the ability of the teacher to teach "against the grain." All three participants have followed Allington's directive precisely, and their commitment to ongoing professional development has helped enable them to do so.

The development of novice teachers follows a continuum, as per the remarks of Fuller (1969), that it is developmental, but that development is also highly individual and sometimes notable. The three novice teachers followed in this emic collective case study have demonstrated over time, through their thoughts, words, and instruction, that the journey from pre-service to in-service teaching is not an easy one. They have demonstrated the value of entering their own classrooms with a strong set of literacy instructional skills in place. They were then able to implement developmentally appropriate practice, differentiation and enrichment, management and motivational strategies, and assessment skills, all aspects of "best practice" as defined by research in the review of literature. They have implemented all of these facets of best practice in the face of difficulties imposed by a variety of assessment demands, and rigid curricula and policies. It is important to note, however, that each participant has followed her own unique path in this implementation; her own method of "handling the disparities" voiced in the first research question. There were many other strategies and reactions involved in that negotiation. They varied from person to person, and they included crying, physical symptoms of compromised health, exhaustion, and general feelings of extreme stress and being overwhelmed on a regular basis. But the positive steps they took are important to note: advanced preparation such as seeking out textbooks from a new building principal,

working long hours to organize and prepare a classroom, reviewing texts and notebooks accumulated in literacy coursework at State University, contacting former professors, continuing graduate coursework with the intent of utilizing new information to improve their situation in the classroom, and perhaps most importantly, seeking answers and mentoring wherever they could find it. All of these positive steps taken deliberately by the participants, as well as the articulated difficulties and angst they sustained, significantly inform the second research question:

Research Question Two:

What could be done by universities to assist future teachers of literacy as they transition from pre-service to in-service?

Ultimately, the participants attribute their survival of the transitional difficulties not only to the skills and knowledge they received as pre-service teachers, but also to the mentoring and support that have been present for them at different stages of the transition to in-service teaching. Nearing the end of their second year of teaching, they demonstrate confidence, strength, resilience, and determination to continue to provide their students with the "best practice" that is one of the conceptual foundations of their State University School of Education logo. They have done so, and they will continue to do so, supported by colleagues who share that determination.

Five additional themes emerged repeatedly from the case study participants' conversations and comments in terms of their own experiences: what was helpful to them in their transition to their own classrooms, and what they wished had been present, providing the participants' perspective regarding the second research question. I have provided the participants' answers to this question, from the vantage point that research

states is underrepresented in the literature. I have drawn comparisons to related research and I have described exemplary education programs that have attempted to assist this transition for novice teachers in unique ways. Finally, I have drawn upon my 21 years of experience working with pre-service teachers who have often continued contacting me as they begin the transition to their own classrooms and have become effective, independent literacy instructors. The case study participants have unique perspectives within their transitions, just as their preparation in field experiences has been unique for each of them. These three individual experiences, as expressed in their words, can inform teacher education programs of significant ways in which their transition was assisted by State University. In the novice teachers' own words, the following content can also provide helpful suggestions for provisions by teacher education programs that might make the transition less arduous.

Emergence of Themes:

Question two:

- *What could be done by universities to assist future teachers of literacy as they transition from pre-service to in-service?*

In analyzing the data, the following five themes emerged. The participants believed that university faculty should:

- *Provide information on how to incorporate developmentally appropriate practice in literacy instruction—including differentiation and enrichment strategies—incorporating multiple teaching opportunities to utilize that information with students in a classroom.*

- *Provide information regarding management and motivation, both in coursework and by observing exemplary teachers in their classrooms.*
- *Provide information on current education trends, practices, and materials utilized in literacy instruction; specifically, scripted curricula, assessment-based curricula, and assessment demands placed on classroom teachers.*
- *Provide support and mentoring from cooperating teachers and university supervisors during field experiences.*
- *Provide reliable, accessible, knowledgeable support and mentoring during the first year of classroom teaching.*

The reader will note that these themes generated from data acquired in my research align with research contained in my literature review. The reader will also note that what the participants conclude they need is what the research says they need (Feiman-Nemser, 1979, 2001, 2003; Howey & Zimpher, 1989: Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Stanulis, Burrill, & Ames, 2007; Wang & Odell, 2002; Wang, Odell & Schwille, 2008).

Figure 2 visually represents how these themes emerged from portions of the data collected in the case study:

Data Sources:
Formative and Summative Observation Forms
and Required Conference Field Notes,
Observational Field Notes from Full Day Observations,
Interview Videotapes and Transcriptions,
Full Day Tape Recordings and Transcriptions,
Follow-up Conversation Notes, Email Communications, and Thank You Notes

EMERGING THEMES IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION TWO:

What should be done by universities to assist future teachers of literacy as they transition from pre-service to in-service?

Provide information on how to incorporate DAP in Literacy Instruction--Including Differentiation and Enrichment Strategies--Incorporating Multiple Teaching Opportunities in the Classroom

Provide Information Regarding Management and Motivation, Both in Coursework and Classroom Observation of Exemplary Teachers

Provide Information Regarding Current Trends, Practices, and Materials Utilized in Literacy Instruction: Scripted Curricula, Assessment-Based Curricula, and Assessment Demands on Teachers

Provide Support and Mentoring from Cooperating Teachers and University Supervisors During Field Experiences

Received Reliable, Accessible, Knowledgeable Support and Mentoring During First Year of Classroom Teaching

In response to Question Two: Universities can assist future teachers of literacy as they transition from pre-service to in-service by incorporating these suggestions by the case study participants.

Figure 2: Emerging Themes in Response to Question Two

Theme 1: Provide Information on How to Incorporate Developmentally Appropriate Practice-- Including Differentiation and Enrichment Strategies--and Incorporating Multiple Teaching Opportunities in the Classroom

All three students spoke of valuing elements of developmentally appropriate literacy instruction which they acquired in their coursework at State University, both as undergraduates, and in graduate classes which they took as novice classroom teachers. While they differed in the extent of their conceived preparation to teach literacy independently, they all incorporated knowledge that they had acquired in additional graduate coursework as in-service teachers. The most valued elements of all their literacy courses varied among them, but one was highly valued by all three: the working knowledge of literacy assessment techniques such as running records. Molly, Lucy, and Kelly all incorporated assessment techniques in their own classroom with which they had become familiar as undergraduates and had utilized with students in their literacy practica. The following excerpts indicate the importance they attribute to having acquired this knowledge during their teacher education coursework:

Kelly spoke to the importance of acquiring her knowledge of developmentally appropriate practice through her coursework and literacy practicum at State University in the videotaped interview I conducted:

> *[In response to the question, Did you feel prepared to teach reading in your own classroom:] I felt prepared to teach here because I had the [literacy] curriculum and student taught with this…We did do DIBELS [literacy assessments] in college, like we had practice scoring kids on that, and I felt prepared to do that and running records. So I did feel like I had experienced that in college, so that*

was good…I would change the literacy coursework in that I would have it later in the program. We did our literacy classes in our first semester in the School of Ed when things weren't really sticking. I remember certain parts of it, and I did enjoy working with students on literacy…I would have benefited more the last semester instead. We took that before our methods classes, and reading should be fresh on our minds. (interview, November 16, 2009)

I had noted Kelly's marked assessment capabilities at another point in our interview. I had posed the question: What are the most challenging aspects of literacy instruction for you as a new teacher? She responded, "The varying levels…because I have kids reading everywhere from 13 words per minute to 165 words per minute this year. The fact that they're on the 'same level' when they're not the same level at all…it's hard" (interview, November 16, 2008).

Lucy also noted the importance of her familiarity with running records and DIBELS from her literacy coursework. She utilized both in her student teaching, and she is also implementing both in her second year as a classroom teacher, as she did last year as well. In answer to the same question regarding whether she felt prepared to teach reading in her own classroom, Lucy responded accordingly in her interview during the first year of in-service teaching:

Not till November…I had no knowledge of how to get started. The discipline and schedule thing, and so many other things…it made me feel unprepared. EXCEPT…I knew running records and DIBELS. A quick review, and then I remembered!

(interview, November 24, 2008)

One year later, Lucy provided additional information when asked this same question about her preparation to teach literacy in her own classroom:

> *I just didn't know how to connect…if I did learn it, it didn't stick. The only class that I felt—[literacy professor #1]'s lit class, my second one, she gave me strategies and helped me work with a kid, so I knew, and I had a stash of things—those folders that they told us to keep, and just coming in here with colleagues, I got it…*
>
> *What did help was the running records thing, and I still do that to this day with DIBELS. And practice doing the IRI's [informal reading inventories] and practice doing that in judging where they're going to be on that scale. However, we don't use that system here, but it made me understand why we do that in the first place. We do DIBELS in our school religiously with our monitoring…but that gave me the verbiage, and I knew what they were talking about because I'd actually practiced it.*
>
> *I remember [literacy professor #2]. She was great, but that was my first lit class, and she had us do all these word things, but I'd never learned phonics when I was growing up. The first time I learned phonics and how sounds were taught was with Ramona [cooperating teacher for student teaching]. [I learned to read with] whole group and memorization. We were doing these word sorts, and I was like what am I sorting, and I don't know how to do it. Isn't that weird? I could do the pictures, obviously, because I'm a grown-up, and I know how to do that. She had us do these groups with hands-on [activities], and [I'm wondering] how this is helping anybody. Because I didn't know that's what we did! But when I got to*

first grade, student teaching, and I learned each letter and the sounds I'm like, oh! So that's what that's supposed to be like!...I'm a better reader now because I know my phonics, and I'll tell the kids now, It's like I'm learning with you." (interview, November 19, 2009)

Lucy spoke further in the aforementioned interview about assessing students' literacy, particularly to the value of working with a student to practice concepts that were taught in literacy coursework:

I remember in [literacy professor #1]'s class, we had a kid that we went and saw at [a rural elementary school], and he was in third grade, and he wasn't even reading at kindergarten level, and he couldn't read the pre-primers. And this was one of my 'aha!' stories…one of my favorites ever! I gave him the pre-primer IRI [Informal Reading Inventory], and he couldn't read the pre-primer ones, and I went to her [literacy professor #1] and said, 'What can I do? I have all these third-grade plans, and I can't use them.' And she was like, 'He loves to tell stories about Pokemon.' So I had him bring Pokemon action figures [to school], and he told stories, and I wrote them on the laptop. And he had this horrible awesome long intense vocabulary with no errors! And he…we were struggling, and we were making our own comic book. And [literacy professor #1] came in, and everyone came in to the library to listen to him read, and everyone starts crying! [Student] was like, 'OK! What's next? How do I use this thing?' He was really wanting to type in and add more to his story, and I had to read. I was like 'Ahh!' and I hugged him, and he was like 'Miss [Lucy's last name], we have to finish writing our story!' I still get chills to this day. And afterward we started

> *screaming and jumping outside like, 'He read! He read!' Like HIGHER THAN THIRED-GRADE BOOKS! 'Captain Underpants,' and he got it! [Literacy professor #1] helped me through, because I didn't know what the hell I was doing. [She] held my hand through the whole thing, and he got that! So afterward they had a banquet for us to thank us for coming, and so I made him this comic book, and I put a thing on each page, so he could make his characters, and I bound it, and he's like, 'Oh thanks!'…It was just the cutest thing! That's one memory I have from that, is that she was willing to give me strategies, and she had so much under her belt, and I was like, how would I know that? I need to know that!...They gave us, do this, do this, do this…you have the whole bag of tricks…but you've got to know the magic part of the trick!* (interview, November 19, 2009)

Lucy's account of working with this student, exercising her skills of assessment, differentiation, enrichment, and motivation, and witnessing the results firsthand, speaks to the importance of providing pre-service teachers with supervised, mentored experience before student teaching. The significance of this experience to Lucy aligns with related literacy research stressing the importance of supervised practice of instructional skills with students (Clift & Brady, 2005; Danielson, Kuhlman, & Fluckinger, 1998; Duffy & Atkinson, 2001; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Hibbert & Iannicci, 2005; Maloch et al., 2003; Risko, Roller, Cummins, Bean, Block, Anders, & Flood, 2008; Wang & Odell, 2002; Wilson, Dellinger, Green, Murphy, Hatfield, Long & Fantozzi, 2008). Holbein & Reigner (2001) substantiate the need for pre-service teachers to receive the support of experienced classroom teachers in their literacy coursework, a significant factor in Lucy's

meaningful and successful experience with this child. She was provided with support and scaffolding by her literacy professor, who had accumulated years of classroom teaching experience before becoming a professor at State University.

In interviews in both her first year and her second year of teaching in her own classroom, Molly expressed feelings of intense gratitude for her literacy coursework preparation, the hands-on experiences she received, and the resources she was provided which she still references. This year when I asked if she felt ready to teach literacy in her own classroom, she replied, "I did, yes. I felt like I had lots of tools—activities and things—in my back pocket." (interview, December 1, 2009) When asked what aspects of literacy instruction have been most challenging to her, Molly referred mostly to the frustration of being forced to teach literacy to school specifications that do not align with her own standards (of well-understood "developmentally best practice"). She cited being assigned to teach a literacy group that is too large to effectively meet the needs of all the students as presenting a significant challenge to her. She discussed the difficulty of continually assessing all her students' literacy skills, word acquisition, comprehension, and vocabulary, when she is restricted to teaching only one reading group. In addition, because of the size of her class, pulling students aside to read independently is quite difficult for her this year.

When I asked Molly if she felt that her State University curriculum had provided her with enough background and instruction to teach reading in her own classroom, she responded:

> *I do. In fact I had [literacy professor #3], and I still have a lot of my notebooks and things that I've pulled down and gone through and marked pages that would*

be good activities, things to do—so I do reference them" (interview, December 1, 2009).

When asked about her preparation to assess her literacy students' skills and needs, Molly again revealed her confidence in her knowledge, as well as her frustration in the limitations of her environment: "I feel like I do have the knowledge, but I don't feel like I necessarily have the time, you know, running records, benchmarking computer data" (interview, December 1, 2009). Molly's concluding remarks best illustrate the value she places upon her literacy instruction, including the practica and field experiences allowing her to put her knowledge to use with students: "I feel that I was really well prepared in my literacy instruction. I think practice and experience is the way to learn, once equipped with the knowledge—which I felt that I was given!" (interview, December 1, 2009).

In terms of the acquisition of experience, the theme of motivation and management repeatedly surfaced in response to question two, "What could universities provide to assist future teachers of literacy as they transition from pre-service to in-service?" While all three participants demonstrated exemplary management skills from the beginning of their pre-service teaching, it remained a serious concern for them. They also noted that the motivation of their students evolved as a necessary component of successful classroom management. The following section addresses this emergent theme:

Theme 2: Universities Should Provide Knowledge Regarding Management and Motivation, Both in Coursework and by Observing Exemplary Teachers in Their Classrooms

Several studies indicate the predominance of management as most novice teachers' primary concern (Fuller, 1969; Stanulis, Burrill, & Ames, 2007; Veenman, 1984; Wang, Odell, & Schwille, 2008). Molly, Lucy, and Kelly are no exceptions to this, as they all have indicated some initial concerns with related issues in their own classrooms, particularly in their first year as in-service teachers. However, in clinical experiences, management was proficient, and formative and summative evaluations indicated this. Regardless of this positive feedback from me as their university supervisor in our conferences after formative observations, all three participants repeatedly identified "management" as one of their "targets for growth" on their formative evaluation forms (Segebrecht, 2007, Appendix A).

Of the three participants, Molly appeared to experience the least amount of initial angst regarding management issues during the first year as an in-service teacher, although some concerns were present. When I interviewed Molly during the fall semester of her first year of in-service teaching, I asked, "What specific aspects of teaching literacy have been the most challenging in starting up your own classroom?" Molly replied, "Reading groups…the dynamics, the behavior part…getting them to sit down and respect each other." When I asked what had been her biggest challenge as a new teacher so far, she responded, "The behavior of some students…the chattiness." When I asked Molly if State University's teacher education program could have helped with her confidence level as a new teacher in her own classroom she replied, "They could have a classroom

management class. I learned more in music education [than other education courses]" (interview, October 7, 2008).

In Molly's second year as an in-service teacher, the management issues surfaced only in terms of high numbers of students hindering her desired, optimal literacy instruction. The excerpt provided above referred to this in terms of the size of her one assigned literacy group, limited to the same children, same time frame, and same routine every day through grade level departmentalization. I posed the same question to Molly when I interviewed her this year. "What has been your biggest challenge as a new teacher so far?" She replied, "Finding a balance. It's tough to juggle all of the demands and all of the information that is thrown at you in the beginning" (interview, December 1, 2009).

Lucy and Kelly found management and motivation to be a significant issue during their first year as in-service teachers. Both found jobs in the same district, at the third-grade level, and in essentially the same demographic. All three of these factors were different from Molly's first experience, which occurred in a first-grade classroom, in a different district without a scripted curriculum, implementing guided reading with leveled books, with middle SES (socioeconomic status), relatively homogeneous students. Lucy and Kelly taught more heterogeneous classes, both of which were predominantly low SES. Molly and Lucy had a different similar factor in their initial assignments, since Molly's first job was in the school where she interned, and Lucy's first job was in the school where she student taught. They both felt support from the staff, and especially their cooperating teachers, allowing them an entrée to ask advice and suggestions, at least to a degree.

When I interviewed Lucy, and the topic of management in her own class arose, she said, "The toughness naturally came." She described the process of telling her most difficult students early on to leave the class if they couldn't follow third-grade class rules, and that the experience seemed to "cure" that problem. However, when I asked if she would change State University's teacher education coursework, she replied, "There should be an entire class on getting started. The management class after student teaching didn't help. I need[ed] more whole group and small group [management instruction] and more field experiences before student teaching" (interview, November 24, 2008).

In Lucy's second in-service year, she reflected back upon last year's experience and in comparison, feels that management was much easier for her in her first in-service year than in this, her second:

> *Last year I didn't really have any discipline problems. Honestly, I was tooting my own horn, like I had the best class out of the third grade. I had my kids doing you jump how high, and it was great! I felt kind of like a dictator at some points, but it felt good, because my kids were following directions; they were learning well. Last year just kind of happened…They did great in testing. They did this, they did that…There's a lot of things I wanted to change, but somehow I managed, and it looked great on paper. And this year, I come in here, and I'm expecting the same thing as last year. And I am just tormented. The first couple of weeks I'm like…What am I going to do with this kid? What am I going to do with that kid? Behavioral stuff—and I'm like, why isn't this working? I was classroom management master last year. I had the best class, and this year it isn't working. But it comes to different kids…you have different problems. I had this whole new*

bag of problems, and I knew what to do with them [last year], but what I did last year wasn't working. I didn't know any of the kids last year, maybe a couple…and there was a honeymoon phase, and then when things went bad, consequences happened. However, I knew all these kids [in second in-service classroom] when I student taught here. When they came in the first day, it wasn't quiet. I was like, Help! Ha ha. I couldn't understand. Why aren't they afraid of me? Why isn't that respect there? Because of student teaching, [when] I was 'friends' with them…I played games with them…I made them laugh. They thought I was fun Miss [Lucy's last name] again. And then when I throw them under the bitchmobile, they probably went home and had nightmares! [I asked how many of her student teaching class students she has currently.] Four or five, [but] I worked with all of them on Fantastic Friday except for new [this year] kids. I blamed it on that. They already knew me. I just have to start even harder. It was like, sit down and do it. I remember I had two boys…that were just…everyone warned me about. And I said, do this or get out…They didn't, and I kicked them out. They came back and never did it again. They were some of my favorites…people pleasers from then on. They went out the door and looked like, where do I go? And I said, If you're willing to come in my class and be a third-grader instead of a first-grader, then come back. And they did, and nothing happened. Couple of times, end of the year, I had to do the same thing. But here, I was like, you don't do the work, you get kicked out. Didn't phase them! I'm like, what the hell's happening? I had all this good power, and it's gone! This really is different from year to year. I'm good, and they're going to be great, and

it did not happen! Last year was the sweet group, and this year is the needy group. I don't know what this next year is, but the first grade says they're really sweet, so ok, I'm ready for it! It took awhile for us to understand our expectations. I remember having these nightmares before school, like I don't remember how to do it. They were doing these things, and I'd try to be mean, and it would backfire, and they'd just laugh at me. And I'm like, I forgot how I did it last year. I tried to do it like I did it, and it didn't work. Like Brent and his behavior…alright, positive…you can only hand out so many loops. If I say, 'You're doing great,' then for the next person that works…We'll do punch cards and different things, and once we switch it up, then I get better attention. But sometimes, it's like ok, I get a minute of recess. Sometimes it's that way…when they are getting loud in the hallway…'Oh, we can't do that now!'...It stinks. I try to make it like they're in charge, I'm not. It's their choice. (interview, November 19, 2009)

The concepts underlying Lucy's management are something that I quickly ascertained in her consistent, effective management approach. She constantly emphasizes students' responsibility to make the right choices; academically, behaviorally, in every way. When I spent the full day observing her class, the hallway incident to which she referred in the text above actually happened, and the words from the interview were exactly what she said to them: "Oh, we can't do that now…it stinks." This was utilized to halt a transitional math game when the students got too loud. It is clear that Lucy has learned that this approach will continue to work for her, with this difficult class, as long as she maintains her consistency. She has also learned that the

changes from year to year can produce new sources of stress and new hardships for a teacher. The discovery in all of this information relayed by Lucy is that her management skills evolved from her efforts to deal with particular situations and students. Her management decisions were not based upon something learned in coursework, although she expressed her desire to have had additional background information to bring to the classroom. At the same time, however, she acknowledged the developmental nature of a teacher's growth into her own style and workable management strategies.

I asked her at this interview if there were anything she wished she could have learned in teacher education that would have been helpful…anything more she wished she had been given. Her response follows:

> *You know, the stuff I wish I had learned...I don't know if I could have learned other than by being thrown in. I think learning more about classroom management would have been good, but again, it's the same thing where you need to be in the classroom experiencing it. Like, watch a teacher…discipline a child…or do positive feedback. Just seeing it and getting ideas before internship…That would be a big issue and just the behind the scenes stuff, what to grade, how to grade…hey, we've got a grade book online, or what to do with parents. I still…like, when they come in…what to do? Uhhh…Creates more work for you…How do you juggle things?...the behind-the-scenes work…* (interview, November 19, 2009)

Far more stressful for her right now than management issues, Lucy has a parent volunteer who has been difficult. He insists on coming to her class weekly to help, but he is also insistent upon determining how he will help, and what he will or will not do with

the students. Moreover, he belittles her to the students, saying things that imply she is incompetent or does not know the material she is teaching. Lucy is now struggling with how to involve him (as per school initiative to agree to parent volunteers in the classroom) while maintaining the proper decorum. I discussed with her some ideas for having him help students individually or in small groups outside the class, or having him compile some new literacy enrichment games she has prepared but not yet finalized for implementation. Overall, she feels she has been left to manage this issue unsupported, due to the principal's firm insistence upon accepting parents' offers to help in their child's classroom.

It was surprising to me that management ever became difficult for Lucy, given the confidence she possessed initially and demonstrated early in her student teaching assignment. Her previously quoted excerpts regarding her internship demonstrated her cooperating teacher's lack of support, with Lucy's open acknowledgement of her resulting loss of confidence. Nevertheless, with considerable documented success in management, I would not have anticipated that in her second year, she might have experienced the duress she did in the first few weeks. Thankfully, she was able to look at the situation analytically and to resolve the problems with a consistent approach. I am convinced her confidence is now in place, hopefully to stay.

In similar fashion, Kelly had also achieved marked success in classroom management in both her student teaching and internship experiences. She appeared to be highly confident in her management ability, and when interviewed at the end of internship, expressed no concerns about it whatsoever. Likewise, when I interviewed Kelly in October of her first year as an in-service teacher, her main source of stress was

the scripted literacy curriculum, and meeting the rigid demands of its implementation. In passing, she mentioned that this rigidity, combined with a somewhat challenging group behaviorally, had prompted her to teach only whole group lessons the first few weeks of school. Kelly asked, "Why don't we have a behavior management class? A lesson plan class?" (interview, October 2, 2008). She attributed her knowledge of behavior management to her student teaching experience, and described student teaching as the part of her teacher education program that she valued most highly at that particular time. Although entire semester-long classes devoted to management or lesson plans are not part of teacher education, a number of State University literacy professors report that they do include teaching of both behavior management and lesson planning in their coursework. In fact, one literacy professor devotes an entire class period to management and the specific related concerns of pre-service teachers.

Kelly's stress in teaching the scripted curriculum according to its prescribed rules was evident in her first in-service year. However, one year later, I noted markedly increased confidence, and I was pleased to hear one answer change when I interviewed her. As I had the year before, I asked, "What would you say you find yourself more driven to do…teach the curriculum according to district/building expectations or teach according to the needs of your individual students?" In her first year, Kelly had responded, "Teach the curriculum" (interview, October 2, 2008). This year, her response had changed:

> *As a second-year teacher, I am much more driven to teach to the needs of my individual students. As a first-year teacher, I didn't feel as comfortable veering*

from the expectations of how and what I should be teaching." (interview, November 16, 2009; email clarification March 30, 2010)

Kelly never spoke of classroom management as being stressful or difficult in the interview this year, other than briefly in response to one question: "What has been your biggest challenge as a new teacher so far?" Kelly responded, "My biggest challenge has been learning how to juggle everything; the curriculum, the communication with parents, the paperwork on individual students, managing well, and all the things that need to be remembered" (interview, November 16, 2009; email clarification March 30, 2010). Kelly looks at management as one piece of an entity that has to be in place in order to make her reading instruction run like a well-oiled machine. The stress that she was clearly experiencing when we met in her first year in her classroom had been replaced with a purposeful confidence, that same determination I had seen before to give her students what they need. She was clearly meeting her goal successfully.

This need to "juggle" everything, to which all participants refer in describing their challenges in literacy instruction, is directly related to the additional knowledge that the three participants had to learn largely for themselves as they entered the workplace. The scripted curricula, rigid policies, and scripted and pre-assessment curricula constituted contributed largely to the disparities they had to negotiate, and to their need for mentoring in learning to do so.

Theme 3: Universities Could Provide Knowledge of Current Educational Trends, Practices and Materials Utilized in Literacy Instruction; Specifically, Scripted Curricula, Assessment-Based Curricula, and Assessment Demands on Classroom Teachers

Although this theme is broad, it needs to be, to encapsulate the surprise element of field experiences for many pre-service teachers, and the surprise element of the first in-service teaching assignments for many novice teachers. Even in the best of teacher education programs in literacy, some novice teachers have felt that they were unprepared to translate their knowledge acquired to an environment where these surprises await them. I use the term “surprise,” because the elements contained were the source of considerable angst for Lucy and Kelly, in particular. Both of them were highly successful in literacy instruction in their field experiences, as documented in the artifacts presented early in this chapter. While their student teaching and internship experiences introduced them to a scripted curriculum and an assessment-based curriculum, respectively, neither of them felt confident to implement their scripted curriculum in their own classroom under the strict regulations of the district, schools, and state assessment demands placed upon them as third-grade classroom teachers. While Molly acknowledged the difficulty of “assessment time” for colleagues in grades three and up, she also indicated that without the requirement of state assessments for first-grade students, she has escaped this particular source of stress for new teachers in higher grades.

As indicated earlier in the chapter, Kelly discovered at the beginning of her internship assignment that the literacy curriculum had been replaced with a pre-assessment curriculum, which constituted the only literacy instruction that would take place until March. While disappointing in its inherent limitations, I reported that Kelly embraced the internship assignment with a positive attitude, taught the assessment curriculum, and managed to enrich and motivate in the process. As she reflects upon it

now, she sees value in what she experienced: "During my internship, we were working on test prep, so I actually felt like I was prepared to teach that when it came time" (interview, November 16, 2009; email clarification March 30, 2010).

I also asked Kelly, "Did assessment affect your teaching of reading? In what ways?" Kelly responded,

> *Assessments affect the teaching of reading in that we have to prepare the students and teach them the test-taking skills. This year, I was better at incorporating that into my everyday instruction than I was last year…and starting at the beginning to teach them the skills and terminology needed.* (interview, November 16, 2009; email clarification March 30, 2010)

During Kelly's first in-service year, when she was particularly stressed with the implementation demands of her scripted curriculum, it was impossible to follow those directions and to infuse this "incorporation of test-taking skills" simultaneously. Kelly has arrived at a place where she exhibits less constraint in utilizing the scripted program. She indicated this by inserting those skills, as mentioned above, as well as continually enriching and differentiating according to best practice, as evidenced in the classroom recording transcriptions provided earlier in this chapter. She has found a way to successfully fuse the curriculum and the necessary test prep in a manner that allows her to teach and motivate her students concurrently.

Lucy's interview a year ago revealed similar angst over the demanded implementation of the same scripted curriculum. Although she had taught it to her first-grade class in student teaching, the third-grade curriculum proved altogether different. In the excerpts provided earlier in the chapter, Lucy revealed her lack of knowledge of

phonics, and the instructions within the manual overwhelmed her because of this. While she knew that there was a wealth of material she was required to teach, she received no instructions regarding that implementation until the district provided a workshop a few days before school started. She revealed in her first interview that, like Kelly, she spent the first five to ten days using only the "script" to teach to the entire class without differentiation or enrichment. Paradoxically, she also described that "script" as helpful at that stressful time, providing her with the structure she needed in those first several days. In her words, "Without that, I would have fallen." She described her confidence level as so low that "I questioned whether I was doing the right thing" (interview, November 24, 2008).

Excerpts were included earlier in the chapter discussing Lucy's sense of allowance to modify the program in her first in-service year, which Kelly didn't realize until this, her second in-service year. For both young women, that realization not only freed them to begin inserting the literacy instructional skills they knew they needed to incorporate, but also allowed them to feel validated in doing so. In sitting in their classrooms for an entire day, I was assured that the differentiation and enrichment to the scripted curricula were now routine for them, each in their own unique style. However, it is important to acknowledge the difficulty encountered in reaching this point for both of them, even though they had all the necessary skills and the confidence to implement them, at least at one time. Research studies have pointed to this problem, emphasizing the importance of preparing preservice teachers for these types of curricula (Allington, 2002; Benton & Schillo, 2004; Cochran-Smith, 2001; Duffy & Atkinson, 2001; Hibbert

& Iannacci, 2005; Quick, 1998; Valencia, Place, Martin & Grossman, 2006; Wang & Odell, 2002).

In addition to her own stress, Lucy described the stress that her students endured through assessment time, as well as their difficulty focusing after assessments for the remainder of the school year. I asked her if she had learned about assessment in literacy coursework, and she said that she had, somewhat, through a research project she chose to do. While the participants reported that some information is provided in State University coursework, they were unaware of the major studies that had influenced legislation preceding the assessment subject. However, Lucy understood one important aspect of assessment mandates and the ensuing problems. She stated her opinion aptly:

> *I think accountability for teachers is good, but test at the end of the year. Test, and if they know it great, if they don't know it, shame on you, do it next year. I think that's what should be done. Not the kids. They shouldn't be punished. They shouldn't lose money for their school because the teacher didn't do something great."* (interview, November 19, 2009)

Novice teachers sometimes find themselves in situations where they have to face multiple hurdles that are a part of assessment procedures and mandates. The participants feel it is important to be equipped with background knowledge and an advance warning of what might await them in their in-service classrooms. In addition, they believe that available, knowledgeable mentoring in handling such issues is highly important.

Theme 4: Universities Could Provide Knowledgeable Support and Mentoring from Cooperating Teachers and University Supervisors During Field Experiences

Although no field experience is perfect, the case study participants all identified at least one of their two field experiences that was enormously helpful to them in the learning and especially the support it provided them. This theme of support from cooperating teachers and university supervisors emerged often throughout the continuum of my experiences working with Molly, Lucy, and Kelly. In 21 years of experience supervising, I have observed many student teacher/cooperating teacher relationships. Most have been positive; some becoming extraordinary friendships extending long past the assignment. Others have been less so, and I have worked with a number of pre-service teachers to help them cope with a difficult situation. Because State University does not possess the authority to choose cooperating teachers, the School of Education is never assured of their ability to mentor. Principals and districts approve the appointments, and while significant potential for poor placement exists, thankfully, it rarely happens. When it does, it becomes a far greater issue than what it appears at face value. Lack of support from a cooperating teacher can have a negative impact on a pre-service teacher that lasts far beyond the assignment. It happened to me, and perhaps that is the reason I have worked hard to try and improve the unfortunate placements that have occasionally occurred. For me, as university supervisor, this work usually involves extra conferencing time, extra emails and sometimes phone calls, and extra deliberation before conferencing with cooperating teachers.

Of the three case study subjects, only Kelly received both student teaching and internship placements that provided her with cooperating teachers who offered the mentoring, support, and guidance she needed, as per her evaluation of her experiences:

> *I was fortunate enough to student teach [and intern] with two amazing teachers, and they are more mentors to me than I have had as a teacher [with an assigned mentor in the building]. I learned more about reading instruction from them than I could learn from a mentor. I don't think my first or second year mentoring has provided that, but I feel lucky to have gotten it at all.* (interview, November 16, 2009)

While I don't have recorded excerpts to provide, I clearly remember visiting with both of the cooperating teachers to whom Kelly was assigned. The student teaching cooperating teacher was actually a family friend of Kelly's, and that provided her a wonderful entrée into the classroom. This teacher was experienced, kind, consistent, and knowledgeable, and Kelly respected her and absorbed everything she observed like a sponge. The cooperating teacher appreciated Kelly's work ethic and positive spirit, and she provided her with extensive opportunities to teach, which isn't always the case during the short eight-week assignment. Kelly's cooperating teacher for internship was also confident in Kelly's instructional abilities, and although she did not do as much supervising of her teaching and providing feedback, she did give Kelly many full days of full responsibility teaching her class. As Kelly's comments above indicate, both experiences provided her with the validation she needed for her efforts. In her interview in October of her first year teaching Kelly said, "I felt really odd, being here all day by myself…not knowing how to answer kids' questions" (interview, October 2, 2008). Perhaps this best illustrates the value Kelly placed upon the teamwork, and the resources these two women became for her.

As indicated earlier in the chapter, Molly's student teaching assignment put her in a rather unfortunate position of having an absent cooperating teacher for the first three weeks of school, due to bereavement. When Molly's cooperating teacher returned, the situation was positive enough, but at that point, Molly had already begun teaching without mentoring, as described earlier. The cooperating teacher validated and reinforced Molly's teaching from that point on, but the situation as a whole did not provide her with the knowledge and scaffolding it might have under different circumstances. She credits her internship cooperating teacher with giving her a much better experience, however. Molly valued the opportunity to witness differentiation and enrichment modeled within a guided reading program, something that had not existed in her student teaching placement in a fifth grade. She also valued the trust and permission given her by her cooperating teacher to add to the program and its "limited book selection," as Molly described it. Since Molly was hired by the school to work on the same team, she was given continued mentoring by them, as well as her assigned mentor. She described her team as "wonderful" on more than one occasion.

Lucy was given what she felt was an ideal placement for student teaching. She introduced herself to her cooperating teacher long before the official start day, so their relationship was longer and friendlier than some have time to become in the eight weeks of the assignment. During student teaching, Lucy described the woman as supportive, and she demonstrated her trust in Lucy's instructional skills by giving her extensive instructional opportunities early in the assignment. She provided helpful feedback, and the experience gave Lucy confidence and significant experience implementing the scripted curriculum, infused with her own enrichment. The cooperating teacher's

permission to adapt and enrich as Lucy saw fit enabled her to teach her students effectively. Their assessment gains provided the evidence of her effective instruction. Lucy felt fortunate to obtain her first teaching position in this same school where she had been given such a positive student teaching experience.

Internship, however, was another story, as reported earlier in the chapter. Not only did the relatively inexperienced cooperating teacher provide continual criticism; she also withheld reinforcement of the things she indicated to me she saw Lucy doing well. Lucy's confidence wavered, and the negative impact upon the beginning of her first year in her own classroom is certain. In addition, Lucy's friendliness and positive spirit were not welcomed, as she has been used to experiencing. The atmosphere was tense, and Lucy was unsure of her ability to teach as the semester progressed. When I conferenced with her after her formative evaluations, she seemed surprised, although very pleased, to hear that I was impressed with her skills in this classroom. She seemed to hang on my words, as I described the evidence I saw and wrote about on her form, indicating her excellent work with her students. I sensed tremendous relief that there was someone who thought she was doing well, and who could relate openly and in a friendly manner with her. She expressed her gratitude to me repeatedly, and wrote me a thank you note at the end of the semester.

Looking back, Lucy thinks some of the tension in that environment was due to the assessment pressure that the cooperating teacher was feeling. In retrospect, Lucy is appalled that she was taught that showing students which answers were wrong during testing was permissible. She sadly relayed the process to me, whereby teachers who had taken a part of the assessment would come and report to her cooperating teacher what

would be included, so that she could "feed" answers to students ahead of time. Lucy is relieved that she found a mentor and friend as a new teacher who informed her of the illegal nature of what she had not only witnessed, but had been ordered to do. Lucy spoke of the situation, and how my observations of her fit into that picture:

> *I know that my observations with you were positive, but I know a lot of people's were awful. Like, I'm not doing this right, I'm not doing that right. And the placement, Ramona [student teaching cooperating teacher] was great, but the last one [internship cooperating teacher] sucked. That brought me way down at one point and made me think I couldn't teach. Thank God for you being there and boosting my confidence for that and helping me out, and I know you need constructive criticism occasionally but…there's only so much you can take.* (interview, November 19, 2009)

Although part of this excerpt was included earlier in the chapter, it is important to cite here as testimony to the importance to all three of these young women of the mentoring they received during their field experiences. It is also important to demonstrate the negative repercussions of a situation in which support and mentoring is not present. It is at those moments that I am most thankful for my opportunity to have held my position as university supervisor for many years. When I come across a situation like Lucy's internship, and I see a student teacher who is excellent but invalidated, I am thankful to be given the opportunity to provide the feedback that has been denied. I have seen on my pre-service teachers' faces the power of genuine, substantiated positive feedback for a job well done, and I have observed how it can inspire them to keep growing professionally and improving their craft.

Research studies have addressed the importance of carefully selecting and training both cooperating teachers and university supervisors (Clift & Brady, 2005; Feiman-Nemser, 2003; Gratch, 1998; Healy & Weichert, 1990; Howey & Zimpher, 1989; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; Wang & Odell, 2002). Often noted in the literature is the premise that being a good teacher in the classroom does not necessarily make the person a good mentor to a pre-service or novice in-service teacher. In my experience, the worst scenario I faced as a supervisor was one in which a student teacher was placed with a woman considered to be one of the "top" teachers in the district. Her curriculum appeared to be the perfect model for a student teacher, and her demeanor seemed pleasant. However, my student teacher's success in relating to the students and motivating them apparently threatened this cooperating teacher. She withheld communication and limited the student teacher's opportunities to work with the children in the class. She said the curriculum was "fixed" and would not permit the student teacher to implement her required integrated unit. At that point, the director of field experiences at State University suggested I negotiate a contract, which I did. The cooperating teacher was required to sign off on the list of requirements that the student teacher had to fulfill, agreeing to allow these to happen in her classroom. State University has never again allowed a student teacher or intern to be placed in this illustrious teacher's classroom. While she may be a phenomenal first-grade teacher, she cannot mentor. Because of such situations' unforeseeable occurrence, State University is in the process of designing and implementing a required online course for all cooperating teachers to complete before student teachers are sent to their classrooms. It is hoped that such actions will prevent poor placements in the future.

Theme 5: Universities Should Provide, Knowledgeable Support and Mentoring During the First Year of In-Service Teaching

The three case study participants were all hired by districts that have incorporated a mentoring program for new teachers, in which a veteran teacher is assigned to a novice teacher. They are required to meet a specified number of times during the first year of the new teacher's employment, and in some districts, the second year as well. While Molly was provided an official mentor by her district, she found that her grade-level team, and one particular teacher on that team, were actually the source of the mentoring she deemed essential to her success during her first year on the job. As a new teacher in a second position this year, she has also been assigned a mentor:

> *Last year, the learning coach was my official mentor, but I consulted with all of the people on my team. Unofficially, I found one in particular who had a similar teaching style, and she helped me often with planning and upcoming events/lessons. This year, I have my team teacher…She's great too, although a little more 'last minute' than I am. I think she's wonderful, but it was nice to have someone very similar to me last year as a first year teacher. This year, the other teacher and I have differences that complement each other. Last year, mentoring was imperative. I don't know what I would have done if I had not had such a wonderful team or experience. This year, it sure makes things go much more smoothly and pleasantly, but not AS imperative as it was last year.* (interview, December 1, 2009; email clarification March 17, 2010)

While Lucy and Kelly were offered jobs in the same district with the same regulations for the provision of mentoring in the first year, the "provision" was markedly

different. Lucy's assigned mentor was a tremendous help, according to Lucy's documented comments, but Kelly's was not at all. In essence, her mentoring never happened in her first year, and this year she was assigned a new mentor:

> *I do have a mentor as a second year teacher who is very supportive when I need anything or have any questions. This year I feel more comfortable, and it is more on a need basis. As a first year teacher, I had a very unfortunate mentoring situation and ended up getting no guidance. While it was very frustrating at the time, it forced me to become independent and learn on my own. We were supposed to meet weekly and probably met three times all year, and the first year mentor wasn't even supportive when I asked for something…As a district, they do a good job providing teachers with a first and second-year mentor. The district can't control when someone doesn't receive the mentoring. I would have liked to have received more from someone within the district at a different school. It would benefit to have someone to talk to that doesn't work directly with you and could bounce ideas back and forth between schools. I feel it is very important for first year teachers, but second year it's more of a guidance if you need it.*
> (interview, November 16, 2009; email clarification March 30, 2010)

Once again, Kelly's resilience and positive spirit helped her to see this failure on the part of her first assigned mentor as having a positive benefit: forcing her independence. These comments were also made a year later, but one year ago when I interviewed Kelly, she was clearly feeling very much alone. I remember her telling me that she would go to the next door teacher who was also relatively new for help. Other than unmet district provisions, she had no one else. She described the mentor who failed

her as "only wanting to talk about her daughter's wedding" on the few occasions that they did meet, and not providing her with any helpful assistance.

Lucy's assigned mentor, on the other hand, proved to be not only helpful, but a friend who was trustworthy and dependable:

> *The first year we [Lucy and her assigned mentor] would meet every single Wednesday, and she would have to document what was working and what I needed help on, and what was going on. I knew her, and we talked every morning. I'm in her room every morning, and we talk all the time! I really feed off her, and hopefully someday she can feed off me! [I responded, 'That's been a huge help?'] Oh yeah! And the second year, it's every other Wednesday that we have to meet formally. [I asked, 'Is that a district policy?'] Yes. And a license policy. I have to have two years of mentoring…I know former students within [my district] who have the same requirement, but it hasn't come through. If that doesn't happen in the school district for one reason or another, where do they go?* (interview, November 19, 2009)

Lucy's question raises an interesting point. Some university programs have addressed this through the incorporation of an induction program that provides novice teachers with university-based support into the first, and sometimes second and third years of teaching. Sometimes this is provided through the university only, and sometimes in conjunction with an area public school district. Because this need for mentoring has emerged so often in my interactions with the case study participants, as well as many other pre-service teachers over the 21 years of my career, I will address

exemplary mentoring programs that are working to meet this need in the following chapter.

Research Question 2: What could be done by universities to assist future teachers of literacy as they transition from pre-service to in-service?

Assertion 2: In answer to Research Question 2, teacher education programs can assist future teachers of literacy as they transition from pre-service to in-service, by providing the supports suggested by novice teachers in the case study.

The purpose of research question two was to determine ways in which teacher education programs can support novice teachers as they transition into their own classrooms. In analyzing the data obtained in this case study, clear themes emerged that relate directly to the themes identified for research question 1. These themes represent the concerns expressed by the participants at various points of my experiences with them, as well as the knowledge they have acquired and value most as independent teachers adapting to a changing school environment. The themes also align with research I have included in my literature review.

The participants are weathering the challenges they have faced, from implementing scripted curricula to following rigid constraints, from tailoring management practices to new students with new behaviors, to finding ways to insert valuable enrichment into a controlled literacy environment. They are adapting to the inherent stresses of an assessment-driven school environment, sometimes with the help of a mentor and sometimes alone, although not by choice. Their struggles align with research findings, and their suggestions also align with those contained in the literature.

It has comprised rewarding work for me, to be able to watch their growth from the sidelines, to witness their strength, commitment, and unwavering spirits. All three of these young women have encountered significant bumps in the road to achieving excellence in their literacy instruction…but they have arrived at the mark. In the following chapter, I will present further evidence to support this statement, and further evidence to support their emerging ideas of just what they needed to survive the transition to their own classrooms: knowledge of developmentally best practice, strengthened by related experience, knowledge of management and motivational strategies and experience observing these, knowledge of differentiation and enrichment in literacy instruction and the ability to implement both in restricted environments, knowledge of how to implement assessments that inform their practice and how to teach well despite those that are mandated, and the ability to seek out mentors to support their efforts and growth.

The participants have worked diligently. They have reached many of their goals. They have witnessed their students' growth and success. And unquestionably, they are excellent literacy teachers in their own classrooms.

Chapter Five

Conclusions

" Clearly, in designing our studies we qualitative researchers do not confine interpretation to the identification of variables and the development of instruments before data gathering and to analysis and interpretation for the report. Rather, we emphasize placing an interpreter in the field to observe the workings of the case, one who records objectively what is happening but simultaneously examines its meaning and redirects observation to refine or substantiate those meanings"

(Stake, 1995, pp. 8-9).

While this dissertation has proven to be work of epic proportions for me, it has also comprised the opportunity of a lifetime. I have been privileged to watch pre-service teachers grow and develop into competent in-service teachers for the better part of my professional life, and I have loved my work. I have relished the opportunity to teach, and I have equally enjoyed the opportunity to learn what this professional experience has taught me.

The three young women who graciously agreed to serve as the participants in my case study have allowed me the opportunity to take that experience to the next level. I have immersed myself in their growth and development, particularly the transitions they have made to becoming strong, confident literacy instructors in their own classrooms. As my research has allowed me to get to know Kelly, Lucy and Molly on a deeper level than most of my pre-service teachers , I have come to recognize and admire the creativity and commitment they bring to the classroom in their own unique styles. While they have repeatedly credited me for teaching them, I know that I have learned from them as well. I believe that I am a better teacher for having observed them at work with their students over this three-year period.

One of the characteristics noted about these three participants is their resiliency. I have spoken of the challenges they have faced in their transition to classroom teaching throughout this dissertation. The challenges were an integral part of the information I have obtained, and in looking closely, and listening closely, the deeper meanings arose. However, the meanings lying within the research reach beyond challenges to the very essence of who these women are as educators. I have accrued field notes from 18 hours of observations of each student, transcriptions of audio-recorded full-day observations, pre-service artifacts from supervision of each participant, multiple emails and other items of correspondence, as well as videotapes from lengthy interviews to capture this essence of their lives as teachers. I have analyzed, coded, read and re-read data, while also pondering and deliberating the research questions around which this study has been constructed:

- *How do novice teachers handle the disparities between research-based best practice literacy instruction in their teacher preparation programs and the realities of the classroom as they transition from pre-service to in-service?*
- *What could be done by universities to assist future teachers of literacy as they transition from pre-service to in-service?*

The process of investigating these questions in light of three of my assigned pre-service teachers in whom I saw something unique from the beginning-- has been unquestionably arduous at times. Within these three participants' passionate desire to provide excellent literacy instruction to their students, and within their unique and successful techniques for doing so, lie substantive, significant insights and feedback to

inform these questions from their perspective. The collective case study format as explained by Stake (1995) has validated my decision to seize the opportunity provided to me as their supervisor and facilitate an emic collective case study providing deep, rich descriptions of them as highly individual teachers:

> We tout case study as being noninterventive and empathic. In other words, we try not to disturb the ordinary activity of the case, not to test, not even to interview, if we can get the information we want by discrete observation or examination of records. We try hard to understand how the actors, the people being studied, see things. Ultimately, the interpretations of the researcher are likely to be emphasized more than the interpretations of those people studied, but the qualitative case researcher tries to preserve the multiple realities, the different and even contradictory views of what is happening. (Stake, 1995, p.12)

As themes arose in the analysis of Lucy's, Molly's, and Kelly's actions and words, in alignment with extensive corresponding research, the first research question has been informed:

Research Question One:

How do novice teachers negotiate the disparities between research-based best practice instruction in their teacher preparation programs and the realities of the classroom as they transition from pre-service to in-service?

Research findings as presented in the literature review and study findings obtained from the data all align to support the following response:

Response to Research Question One:

In order to negotiate these disparities, new teachers should be able to: incorporate developmentally best practice, motivate students, use effective classroom management, and infuse literacy instruction with enrichment and differentiation.

Discussion of Response

The initial themes that emerged from information collected from my participants and aligning with research are those listed initially in this assertion: incorporation of developmentally best practice, effective management and motivation of students, and enrichment and differentiation according to individual needs. As my analysis of information continued, two additional themes emerged: assessment, including both the knowledge of its incorporation and adapting literacy instruction to it, and the participants' expressed need for available, knowledgeable mentoring and support. The first themes' manifestations as specific behaviors align with those enumerated as "best practice" in landmark studies, particularly the NAEYC/IRA report (1998), and supported in other research included in my literature review. Among these studies, Wang, Odell, and Schwille (2008) report on NCATE's directive regarding "teaching to standards," and associated teaching characteristics. Despite the inevitable "targets for improvement" identified in pre-service teaching, all of the participants demonstrated the identified elements of "best practice" throughout my longitudinal case study. Their demonstration of these teaching characteristics began in their first literacy lessons in student teaching and persisted through their second year of in-service teaching. I have retained documentation of these characteristics in their formative evaluations, all day class recording transcriptions, and interview transcriptions. The additional themes of

motivation and management, as well as differentiation and enrichment according to individual needs, are also exemplified within these documents as evidenced in their literacy instruction. As indicated numerous times in chapter four through documentation of classroom discourse and interviews obtained, these latter two themes were very much an integral part of the instruction of all three case subjects, as well as ongoing concerns verbalized by each of them.

The subsequent themes regarding assessment and the need for support/mentoring also emerged from these same sources and artifacts. As discussed in chapter two, research studies align with the subjects' expressed need for knowledge regarding high-stakes assessment and its implications for classroom teachers. In addition, I have documented their expressed need for associated knowledge regarding adaptation of instruction to high-stakes assessments, as well as increased familiarity with current materials chosen for that purpose.

Among research studies emphasizing the importance of novice teachers' acquisition of knowledge regarding high-stakes assessment and the implications for classroom teachers are Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin, and Bernstein (1985), who declared 20 years ago that "instruction geared toward testing differs from instruction geared toward greater complex cognitive learning, problem-solving ability, and creativity" (p.67). In 2001, Cochran-Smith reported that teacher education seldom includes new classroom realities in their programs, and does not prepare students to deal with impending change. Wixson and Pearson (1998) researched changes in literacy education evolving from assessment mandates and stressed the importance of new teachers' familiarity with and questioning of assessments they will use with their students

in their own classrooms. Allington (2002, 2006) has conducted extensive empirical research in regard to changes in literacy instruction resulting from assessments, and protests the infusion of scripted curricula that have become increasingly popular during this school reform movement. In identifying six essential traits of effective literacy instruction (2002), he includes one he calls "teaching against the grain," or finding ways to adapt scripted or assessment-based curricula.

All of these studies underscore the importance of preparing new teachers for the assessment-driven realities they will likely experience, both in field experiences and in their own classrooms. In addition, the words and experiences of Lucy, Kelly, and Molly document the associated realities they encountered. When Kelly inquired about teaching reading at the beginning of her internship, she received the following response from her cooperating teacher: "We only teach assessment prep until March." Kelly was left with only one month to implement her creative ideas constituting "best practice" in her final field experience. Lucy, who had not been exposed to an assessment prep curriculum during field experiences, was forced to teach a scripted reading program to third-graders in her first in-service classroom "with fidelity." She commented that this was something the district made them "swear religiously" that they would do. Lucy didn't realize until March of that first year of in-service teaching exactly what concepts she needed to instruct before assessment time arrived…that were not included in the curriculum she was provided. She eloquently described the pressure she felt to infuse all these necessary skills in just a few weeks' time before state assessments. She expressed how helpful it might have been to have had more background knowledge about the entire phenomenon of assessment in the classroom before she found herself in that situation.

Molly spoke of colleagues in upper grades who clearly expressed the stress and pressures associated with assessment preparation, as well as of her gratitude that assessments of her first-grade students are different entirely. She learned in her pre-service classes, and still appreciates, the importance of regularly assessing literacy skills in her students. Molly has been frustrated in her current school environment that literacy groups are firmly set, permitting her to work daily with only one group at one particular level. Molly understands, according to "best practice," that reading groups must be mobile and flexible as students' needs change, but the situation at her grade level does not allow for that mobility. She regrets being unable to assess all of her students as thoroughly as she would like by hearing each of them read more often, rather than being limited to working with one small group. When I asked her to elaborate more about this regret, she emphasized the difficulty that management presents in such a large first-grade classroom, when children are pulled out individually, and the others cannot be adequately monitored concurrently. She explained that while it might be possible for her to do so in some large classes, that this class in particular presented a group dynamic in such situations that made it very difficult and unsuccessful for her; she had tried on several occasions. That was the only option she had, as the reading group assignments remained largely inflexible.

What became clearly apparent in the work of all three case subjects were their skills representing each of the initial four themes. On a regular basis, they consciously implemented developmentally appropriate practice with its inherent facets as enumerated in chapter three. They also exercised continual reflection upon and refinement of motivational and management strategies with their students, while demonstrating these in

the classroom, as documented in recorded discourse and evaluation excerpts. Molly's calm reinforcement, Lucy's contagious humor, and Kelly's engaging communication style served them uniquely and well in establishing and maintaining optimal management in their classrooms, both pre-service and in-service. Their motivation of students was largely tied to this effective management, as well as to the unique ways in which Molly, Kelly, and Lucy enriched and differentiated their curriculum, daily and from moment to moment. This was demonstrated in both recorded discourse and evaluation excerpts. Finally, they utilized their comprehensive knowledge of assessment strategies, and they continue that utilization in ongoing evaluation of students throughout each class period. In fact, it is largely because of their skills in assessment that they differentiate so successfully according to students' needs.

With experience, Kelly and Lucy have also learned to adapt to the pressure and rigors of state assessments as well. They are now starting early in the year to teach concepts in an ongoing manner, infused into their scripted literacy curriculum, to help ensure their students' adequate preparation for the tests, but more importantly, to enhance their overall literacy knowledge. Molly has adapted to the limitations of the literacy grouping required in her school by incorporating literacy centers in her classroom that provide additional meaningful experiences for her students. While they are happily engaged in the centers' literacy activities, she is concurrently utilizing those "extra" moments to hear snatches of their reading and continue her ongoing assessment of their knowledge. She utilizes every possible moment for that purpose.

These three novice teachers are meeting all of the standards cited in research as constituting "developmentally appropriate practice," necessary motivation and

management, appropriate differentiation and enrichment, and ongoing effective assessment of students. Based upon these practices, they have been formally evaluated as "exemplary" (Segebrecht, 2007). They have not only succeeded in demonstrating all of the aforementioned teaching traits, but they have done so, in Allington's (2002) words, "against the grain." They have implemented all of these aspects of "best practice" as they were taught in their teacher education program, despite the challenges they faced. Clearly, they were challenged as independent classroom teachers. These challenges were due to curricula they encountered, district and school policies, assessment pressures, and last but not least, the fact that they were alone in the classroom, without the available support of cooperating teachers whom they had been able to consult in the past.

The segments of conversation regarding mentoring included in chapter four clearly reveal the importance to Molly, Kelly, and Lucy of mentoring during student teaching and internship, and also the importance of mentoring they received as new classroom teachers. Lucy was fortunate that her first job placed her in the same building as her supportive cooperating teacher from student teaching. Since she was assigned to a different grade level, however, her assigned mentor in the building became a crucial support for her in adapting to teaching literacy at the third-grade level from a scripted curriculum with a demanding pace prescribed. She credits that mentor teacher with helping her in many specific ways, while also providing friendship and support that were of inestimable value. Kelly described feeling profoundly "alone" in her first classroom, noting the void of the excellent mentoring she received in both of her field experiences. Like Lucy, Kelly was also assigned a mentor by the district. Unfortunately, however, Kelly's mentor did not follow through with her assigned responsibilities. She did not

schedule meetings with Kelly every week as directed, but rather only a few throughout the first year. Rather than providing helpful specifics for instruction, she talked mostly about herself on the few occasions when she showed up for a few brief moments. Kelly was left with no one to ask for help except her colleague next door, who was relatively new herself, and also still struggling to adapt to the scripted, fast-paced literacy curriculum. Molly was fortunate to be hired to teach on the same grade-level team at the same school where she interned. She already had a positive working relationship with all of the team members, and she received assistance as needed, along with friendship and support. She describes that support as absolutely essential to her in her first year of teaching. This year, however, Molly's situation in a new school and a new city is markedly different. While she has developed a positive working relationship with her grade-level colleague as well as other staff members, the limitations of the literacy grouping are so structured, that there is essentially no support available to her in dealing with the ensuing frustrations. She has had to create her own methods to supplement the inherent shortcomings within the confines of her classroom, without the support and mentoring that would have been helpful.

This documented need for support and mentoring in new teachers' first and/or second years in their own classrooms aligns with numerous research studies. Among the many identified, Wang, Odell and Schwille (2008) provided convincing statistical evidence of the value of mentoring new teachers: The attrition rate in the United States at the time this report was published had dropped from 75% to 45% for new teachers who were mentored after graduation through specific programming. In addition, the authors report that when universities provided induction programs for new teachers, 80% of those

new teachers chose to participate in them. Other research studies have also indicated findings of lower attrition rates and greater incidence of initial teaching success for new teachers who have been provided with mentoring throughout and beyond their teacher education programs (Carr & Evans, 2006; Feiman-Nemser, 2001, 2003; Howey & Zimpher, 1989; Huling, Resta, & Rainwater, 2001; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Stanulis, Burrill, & Ames, 2007; Villani, 2002; Wang & Odell, 2002; Wildman, Niles, Magliaro & Mclaughlin, 1989). Clearly, mentoring is needed by new teachers. That need is well documented in research, and unequivocally voiced by new teachers themselves. This case study now provides what has been lacking for some time in research (Zeichner, 1999) …new teachers' voices speaking specifically to what mentoring has meant for them, both in its presence, and in its absence.

Research Question Two:

What could be done by universities to assist future teachers of literacy as they transition from pre-service to inservice?

Research findings as presented in the literature review and study findings obtained from the data align to support the following response:

Response to Question Two:

In response to question two, universities can support future teachers of literacy by providing knowledge relating to assessment in literacy, as well as knowledge of high-stakes assessment, scripted curricula, assessment-based curricula, and the impact of assessment on classroom teachers. In addition, universities can support future teachers of literacy by providing support and mentoring during pre-service teaching, as well as during the first year of in-service teaching.

Discussion of Response

The additional themes to emerge from study of the data are reflected in this response: (a) provide information regarding assessment in literacy instruction, including high-stakes assessment, assessment-based curricula, scripted curricula, and the impact of assessment on classroom teachers; and (b) support/mentoring during pre-service teaching, as well as during the first year of in-service teaching.

Important suggestions emerging in the case study for inclusion in teacher education programs fall into four categories, all of which align with research suggestions for teacher education:

- *Expanded teaching opportunities in the field (as State University provided in its five year program to case study participants)*
- *Instruction regarding high-stakes assessment and enrichment of assessment curricula*
- *Additional instruction in management and motivational strategies, including additional observations of teachers in their classrooms, prior to pre-service teaching experiences*
- *Provision of support and mentoring through field experiences and, as an option, into the first year of teaching.*

Each of these suggestions will be discussed along with the documented support contained in research and case study participants' contributions.

Provision of Extended Teaching Opportunities in the Field

When State University initiated its five-year teacher education program in 1985, one of the reasons given for its incipience was the provision of extended field experiences

for education students. I began supervising student teachers in the first semester of the program's implementation, and the students were as vocal then as now about the strengths they acquired from completing two major field experiences instead of just one. During the participants' years in the program, State University provided an eight-week student teaching assignment and a 14-week internship, as well as two 20-hour (or more) practica in literacy for undergraduates. Because education graduates finish their fifth year with 15 graduate hours completed, many new graduates from the program continue to enroll in masters' level classes during their first year(s) as independent classroom teachers. Molly, Kelly, and Lucy continued their master's degree work in this manner, and as their documented comments revealed, found their graduate courses in literacy, particularly comprehension and remediation, to be of significant help to them in their classrooms.

All three students praised the program for the opportunity to have both student teaching and internship opportunities, mostly for the additional experience, but also because the two experiences are completed at different grade levels, different schools, and different districts. They credited this varied placement with providing them helpful background for accommodating the needs of students in their own classrooms. As their university supervisor, I observed them as they progressed significantly in all of their teaching skills from student teaching to internship. Their confidence grew as well, which they found to be of value and importance, and they expressed gratitude for the opportunity to work with two different teachers and observe different teaching styles in the process. Since Molly and Lucy experienced sufficient mentoring in only one of their two field experiences for various reasons, this provision was of particular importance to

them. Not all cooperating teachers are able or effective mentors to pre-service teachers, and because assignment of cooperating teachers is generally not controlled by teacher education programs, multiple experiences increase the likelihood that at some point essential mentoring will be provided.

Significant research has been published regarding the positive impact of providing additional field experiences upon new teacher success (Benton & Schillo, 2004; Clift & Brady, 2005; Danielson, Kuhlman, & Fluckinger, 1998; Duffy & Atkinson, 2001; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Iaquinta, 2006; Maloch, Flint, Eldridge, Harmon, & Loven, 2003; Risko, Roller, Cummins, Bean, Block, Anders, & Flood, 2008; Stanulis, Burrill, & Ames, 2007; Wilson, Dellinger, Green, Murphy, Hatfield, Long, & Fantozzi, 2008). These findings, combined with the voice of novice teachers who have experienced teaching literacy in multiple settings, clearly validate this recommendation for teacher education programs included in the response to research question two: "provision of expanded teaching opportunities in the field," which Sate University provided in its five-year program to case participants. I supervised concurrently for another university for several years that provided only one semester of student teaching. From my experiences supervising student teachers in both types of programs, I am convinced that extensive field experiences positively impact a new teacher's competence and readiness to teach, as well as their confidence level.

Instruction Regarding High-Stakes Assessment and Enrichment of Assessment Curricula

As the data demonstrated, Molly, Kelly and Lucy effectively provided ongoing assessment of their students in their literacy instruction from student teaching through

their first two years as in-service teachers. They credit State University literacy instruction and support for this knowledge and their ability to implement it consistently. They credit cooperating teachers for providing them with the opportunity to practice this skill and build upon their knowledge with experience. The participants' assessment ability was formally evaluated during their formative observations in both student teaching and internship assignments, as aligned with state teaching standards (Segebrecht, 2007).

The additional knowledge some pre-service teachers are seeking, as expressed in research, is knowledge regarding high-stakes assessment, its effects on classroom teaching, and how literacy curricula and assessment prep curricula have been redesigned to meet demanded outcomes. Research has cited a need for provision of additional assessment knowledge of this type within extensive field experiences (Benton & Schillo, 2004; Clift & Brady, 2005; Danielson, Kuhlman, & Fluckinger, 1998; Duffy & Atkinson, 2001; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Iaquinta, 2006; Maloch, Flint, Eldridge, Harmon, & Loven, 2001; Risko, Roller, Cummins, Bean, Block, Anders, & Flood, 2008; Wilson, Dellinger, Green, Murphy, Hatfield, Long, & Fantozzi, 2008). Studies have also addressed the need for teacher education programs to provide students with knowledge of the variety of teaching models and materials that are currently in circulation (Duffy & Atkinson, 2001; Valencia, Place, Martin, & Grossman, 2006).

All three case subjects indicated that they had acquired a valuable, workable knowledge of running records as a primary ongoing assessment tool in literacy which they all now utilize in their classrooms. This knowledge represents content of an undergraduate literacy course at State University which they stated they value highly, as

documented in the data. Knowing how to implement running records grew in importance to them as they utilized it with students in the 20-hour practicum accompanying the course, facilitated by the same literacy professor.

Lucy and Kelly, who are now teaching in third-grade classrooms, might have benefited from additional knowledge of what high-stakes assessments entail. They have encountered the following: the association of assessment with funding and job retention, intensive skills practice, elimination of content areas, stress incurred by students and teachers, administrative and parental pressure, cheating on tests, and the scripted curricula and pre-assessment curricula adopted by some area districts to enhance assessment outcomes. Both Kelly and Lucy have been required to implement the same scripted curriculum in their third grade classrooms, and have found the process challenging on several levels. They clearly knew what developmentally appropriate literacy practice should include, but finding the time to do so within a highly-paced, time-structured curriculum that is not developmentally appropriate has proven challenging at best.

Within their study of literacy in teacher education programs, pre-service teachers need to become informed about current issues, controversies, and debates in education. Before their field experiences begin, they need to understand that designing and implementing a motivating, integrated curriculum in the elementary classroom has become unquestionably more complicated in light of state and federal governments' directives, legislation, and assessment requirements. Teacher educators have the opportunity within literacy instruction to familiarize students with landmark research. If that instruction is followed by clear and concise content of legislation that ensued, along

with information regarding assessment requirements, new teachers will not meet these expectations unaware as they enter the classroom to teach.

Pre-service teachers also need to be informed of the attachment of assessments and children's performance on them to school funding, and thus be given an opportunity to reflect upon the ramifications of this situation. If they subsequently find themselves student teaching or interning in a placement where pre-assessment curriculum is all that exists, or is all that they are permitted to teach, they will have the background and familiarity with the situation to appraise it more clearly. Furthermore, teacher educators who confront this information in the classroom can provide an arena where pre-service students can begin brainstorming regarding ways to enrich, extend or motivate within such constraints. Such information and background would be of use to those who are assigned to a situation where enrichment, extensions, and motivation are not modeled by a cooperating teacher, and they could be provided with the knowledge to substantiate their own initiative to adapt the prescribed assessment preparation. Teacher education programs can also provide pre-service teachers with helpful background knowledge regarding striving readers who often do not meet the targeted scores, and how these needs can be addressed by classroom teachers. When they arrive in their student teaching classrooms, they will be informed and better able to contribute recommendations and suggestions for strategies to implement in helping their striving readers.

Additional Instruction in Management and Motivational Strategies, Especially Through Observing Teachers in Classrooms Prior to Pre-service Teaching Experiences

According to research by Fuller (1969) and Veenman (1984), "teacher shock" is a predictable occurrence for first-year teachers. Developmentally, teachers have been observed in these and other studies to fall along a continuum of observed behaviors and practices, demonstrating in their first year a posture of trying to survive, concentrating upon discipline. Every teacher, including myself, knows the truth inherent in this concept, because we have all lived it in our first classrooms.

However, management is a far bigger issue than getting accustomed to discipline issues as a novice teacher. The three landmark studies, NAEYC/IRA Report (1998); NRC Report (Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998); and the NRP Report (1999), all validate the necessity of motivation and successful classroom management for optimal literacy instruction. Wharton-McDonald, Pressley, and Hampton's (1998) longitudinal study regarding highly successful literacy instruction points to motivation and classroom management as essential in facilitating students' growth in literacy. All three participants have voiced the difficulties that management has presented, at one time or another, in providing all the elements of "best practice" as they were taught, and as they thoroughly understand. Because of their strong literacy instructional skills and their management and motivational skills, they have worked through the management issues they have encountered to continue implementing what they believe is mandatory for optimal instruction.

However, even at this point in their teaching, when the crises are past and the participants' confidence has returned, they all clearly point to the necessity of having excellent management and motivational skills as a prerequisite to success in their classrooms. Lucy suggested that teacher education provide as many opportunities as

possible to watch “real teachers” in action. She suggested that it would have been helpful to her as a student in teacher education coursework to follow an exemplary teacher throughout her day, beginning to end, work periods and planning time included, enabled by the teacher wearing a movie camera throughout the day. She said that for her, such a provision would have given her the details she needed about setting up a classroom and implementing opening management strategies. According to Lucy, an entire class on management and motivation, long before field experiences, would have been ideal preparation. However, she did articulate her appreciation of the literacy course in which an entire class period was devoted to teaching management

Unfortunately, for many new teachers, “teacher shock” and the associated challenges last beyond the first year (Feiman-Nemser, 2003). However, education appears to be one of the few fields in which new professionals are simply expected to “tough it out” in many schools and districts. Fortunately, since the 1980’s, research has begun to elicit the participation of both teacher education programs and school districts in offering new teaching professionals the mentoring and support traditionally offered to newcomers in most professions.

Feiman-Nemser (2003) has been a leader in this research over the past thirty years, sharing her knowledge regarding “teacher learning over time” (p. 1014). Along with the provision of additional literacy coursework and practica, as well the facilitation of advanced degrees, Feiman-Nemser and others (Carr & Evans, 2006; Howey & Zimpher, 1989; Stanulis, Burrill, & Ames, 2007; Wang & Odell, 2002) additionally recommend that teacher education programs provide quality mentoring throughout the education process…and beyond. A number of universities have followed this directive in

establishing mentoring programs that do just that…follow new teachers into their first classrooms with mentoring provided, often on an optional basis, and through varying approaches.

Provision of Support and Mentoring Through Field Experiences and, As An Option, Into the First Year of Teaching

What, Exactly, Is Effective Mentoring?

Having established the rationale for improving and expanding mentoring for new teachers, the question remains: How can teacher education programs best provide the support that is needed? While a number of studies define personal traits recommended for effective mentors (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, 2003; Gratch, 1998; Healy & Welchert, 1990; Hicks, Glasgow, & McNary, 2005; Huling, Resta, & Rainwater, 2001; Wang & Odell, 2002, 2004), the context of effective mentoring is multifaceted. The majority of new teacher mentoring programs consist of seminars and/or assigning experienced teachers to new teachers. Sometimes districts require that mentoring take place before or after school or during lunch breaks because the mentor teacher is still responsible for his/her own classroom. In other districts, experienced teachers (often requiring a minimum of five years of successful classroom teaching) are given temporary employment as district mentors assigned to work with new teachers. Typically, they may make visits weekly or biweekly, and usually programs are concluded within or at the end of the first year. In either approach, the feedback may consist primarily of informal conversation and advice regarding building or district procedures or policies, commiserating about classroom management, and sharing stories from experience, as

opposed to a joint review of carefully created formative evaluations of actual teaching, completed and discussed by both mentor and new teacher.

An example of a program that incorporates conferencing around formative evaluations of observed teaching is the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project, a two year program that provides intensified, specialized mentoring to new teachers by full-time advisors on a weekly basis, for two hours per visit. These advisors not only observe but may assist the new teacher, actually modeling or co-teaching if there is a need. The advisors provide assessment data via the formative evaluation form that is structured to align with state standards. This evaluation is reviewed jointly by advisor and novice teacher and serves as a basis for creating long and short term goals and plans.

Aligned with similar goals, several universities have established comparative mentoring programs in an effort to provide new teachers with quality advisors: "Well-prepared mentor teachers combine the knowledge and skills of a competent classroom teacher with the knowledge and skills of a teacher of teaching" (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p.1036). Teacher educators have the singular ability to connect pre-service course content to the realities of classroom teaching because they have, in theory, developed coursework to align with the same teacher reform and standards that new teachers are learning to address in practice:

> New teachers would experience greater coherence and continuity in learning to teach if their induction into teaching were in the hands of school-based educators who understood and valued what pre-service programs were trying to accomplish, because they were part of its design and delivery. With some practical experience

under their belts, new teachers might revisit some of the subjects they had previously studied and discover new meaning (p.1037).

Exemplary university teacher education and mentoring combined programs touted in current research include Michigan State University's. According to a study conducted by Stanulis, Burrill, and Ames (2007), Michigan State has developed a "seamless" teacher preparation program extending from planned learning experiences for freshmen, through a year-long internship, and into the teacher candidates' first two years in their own classrooms. The comprehensive program is built upon partnerships between area K-12 schools and is based upon a constructive framework that was created by an advisory board consisting of "first-year graduates [of their teaching programs], veteran teacher leaders, and retired teachers and administrators as well as university education faculty" (p.137). This group of educators "developed a curriculum for induction experiences around the following outcomes to promote their vision [of] continued growth as teachers" [including] "knowing students in the classroom as unique learners, managing classroom activities in ways that support a productive learning community, integrating assessment as a centerpiece for teaching and learning, [and] using professional judgment to make teaching decisions…" (Stanulis, Burrill, & Ames, 2007, p. 137). This program utilized online resources, seminars, full-day institutes, and different options for mentoring students both locally and those teaching at a distance from the university. The following are the three foundational areas of the induction framework: "learning to thoughtfully 'fit in' to the teaching context, being mentored to move beyond survival in first-year teaching, and developing principled reasons for teaching decisions" (p.138). In induction

focus groups, beginning teachers expressed the following needs: "collaboration, connections to people who helped to prepare them, and further learning" (p.139).

As reflected in several studies (Grossman & Thompson, 2004; Stanulis, Burrill, & Ames, 2007; & Veenman, 1984), management evolved in research as the primary area of concern for novice teachers. This prompted the provision of a compilation of suggested strategies for new teachers, while also stressing the need to assess effective strategies within the framework of the content area of instruction. From this provision developed a prominent workshop entitled "Working with New Teachers on Classroom and Behavior Management: A Framework and Method for Matching Supports to Need" (Mayer, 2005), encouraging students to "think beyond the next day" in their consideration of management strategies to incorporate (Stanulis et al., 2007, p.140).

In addition to Michigan State University, other universities cited for utilizing mentoring programs for first year in-service teachers include the University of New Mexico Teacher Induction Program and Resident Teacher Program in Albuquerque and Santa Fe, Montana State University's Systematic Teacher Excellence Preparation Project, and Southeast Louisiana University's Teacher Scholars Program. The program at Southeast Louisiana University begins in summer with the training of "teacher scholars" employed by the university contracting with the school district. These new teachers are evaluated by "school principals and district liaisons in collaboration with the university program director and coordinator" (Carr and Evans, 2006, p.114). Southeastern also incorporates an accelerated master's program for those graduates chosen to participate, which teachers complete over a period of 15-18 months in either Special Education-Mild/Moderate Disabilities or in Curriculum and Instruction in Elementary Education or

Reading. Support is provided by both mentors and university faculty. The two goals of the program at Southeastern Louisiana University are described accordingly: "To develop and implement a specialized 'just in time' master's degree program [and] to provide systematic sustained support to ensure that beginning teachers remain in the teaching profession" (p.114).

Participating new teachers have evaluated the program positively. Over a seven-year period since the program's incipience, new teachers consistently agreed that the support and assistance received is helpful. For example, the item 'I felt the assistance I received through the TS Program improved my professional competencies as a teacher' has received ratings from 4.20 to 4.88 [on a 5-point Likert scale]. In response to questions about involvement in professional activities, 41% indicated membership in educational organizations and 75% reported participation in leadership activities (p.115).

Carr and Evans report that outcomes suggest the following:

1. systematic, sustained support is critical, and mentors play a pivotal role in beginning teacher retention;
2. a specialized 'just-in-time' master's degree program enhances teacher performance and readiness for leadership;
3. collaboration among university faculty, school administrators, and other school personnel can maximize teacher success; and
4. Beginning teachers who participate in programs like the TSP more often pursue ongoing professional development. For example, data from follow-up questionnaires indicate that TSP participants earn additional certifications

(e.g., administration, early intervention) and achieve National Board Certification early in their careers (p.115).

Montana State University's program is targeted toward math and science instruction, and because of the wide geographical area that is covered, the work is handled largely through mailings and telecommunications, along with face-to-face meetings with mentors twice yearly. Participants are in their first to fourth year of teaching and are also offered special incentives toward completion of masters' degrees. In this particular program, mentors support but do not evaluate new teachers. Collegiality is the goal of the mentor-new teacher relationship. Training for mentors is required, as is their presence at workshops two to three times a year, with their expenses paid by the program. Responses from new teacher participants as collected in evaluation forms were positive:

1. This was a wonderful opportunity to develop hands-on teaching techniques for my class. As a new teacher the ideas presented were invaluable.
2. What a great opportunity—new ideas and lots of people to ask when I have a question.
3. I always enjoy STEP conferences because of the insightfulness and resources made available (p.181).

Villani (2002) describes the University of New Mexico Resident Teacher Program as an induction program for highly qualified new graduates who similarly receive benefits propelling them toward a masters' degree. They are mentored by both classroom teachers who are given leaves of absence from their classrooms while they are mentoring, as well as university supervisors who partner through the University of New

Mexico and Santa Fe public schools (Villani, 2002, p.189-191). Training for mentors is required and intensive, with ongoing meetings and workshops provided to mentoring teachers. Mentors are assigned to new teachers, but also sometimes to experienced teachers who may request assistance for problem situations.

Essential Elements of Successful University Mentoring Systems

Villani (2002) has served as a consultant in the establishment of varieties of mentoring programs, including those that are university-based and those that are facilitated by districts or at the state level. With her varied experiences working with diversely successful programs, her book constitutes a legitimate source for identifying essential elements in successful mentoring programs. The following are some of the criteria she proposes for "success" in such programs:

1. The induction program is far more than a buddy system, in which the buddy is available as a sounding board and a sympathetic ear and shoulder. A buddy is important, and every well-designed program includes provision for a more experienced colleague to offer moral support. But well-designed programs consist of far more than buddies—they provide help with instruction as well.
2. The induction program provides help with instruction as well as policies and procedures, such as how to order supplies or videos, or how to conduct back-to-school night. Again, this type of assistance is important, but not sufficient.
3. The program includes adequate training for the mentors and orientations for the site administrators, so they can carry out their roles with skill. Ideally, the training for mentors engages them in important professional learning, and a heightened awareness of their own practice.

4. The program engages beginning teachers in self-assessment, reflection on practice, and formative assessment—the same ingredients found to enhance learning by all, students as well as adults (Danielson in Villani, 2002, p.x-xi).

Hope for New Teachers' Adjustment

Every educator can attest to the difficulties inherent in stepping into their own classroom for the first time, and the additional burdens placed upon teachers today through federal and state mandates have arguably increased those difficulties exponentially. After review of these various implementations of successful mentoring, it becomes clear that neither the school, nor the district, nor the university needs to carry the responsibility for mentoring new teachers alone. The aforementioned programs aptly demonstrate the strength in numbers and the power of collaboration through several different models. It is becoming increasingly apparent that the presence of university design, input, and sharing in mentoring involved in induction programs produces significant results in lessening new teacher attrition, and particularly attrition of academically top-notch new teachers. With the provision of incentives for supporting the attainment of a master's degree, universities can clearly convey not only an interest, but also a commitment to their new teachers' lifelong learning.

The three case subjects all concluded that mentoring was essential as a new teacher in the first year in their own classrooms. When asked how they would have felt about having a university mentor provided during that year, their responses varied. Molly had actually remained in touch with one of her literacy professors via email, and greatly valued her input and continued conversations. She felt comfortable asking questions of her, and because of this relationship, could see the value in remaining in

touch with a designated faculty member during that first year as needed. Kelly felt that a mentor within the district would be ideal in the first year, to reflect upon the implementation of required curricula and policies but from the vantage point of another school. This, of course, was the type of mentoring that should have been provided to her but was never delivered. Lucy felt that the mentoring she received from her assigned mentor fulfilled her needs adequately. She also saw value in having the option of consulting a university faculty member as needed, rather than having required observations, similar to field experiences. She spoke of other new teachers with whom she was acquainted whose assigned mentors had not provided the support she had received, and thought that the added university support would be of great help to new teachers who find themselves in similar situations. The common thread in all of the responses was the recommended provision of some type of mentoring for every new teacher.

Conclusions

As I near the conclusion of my writing, I find that my research has left me hopeful on several counts. My case study participants have demonstrated and articulated that their preparation in their teacher education program at State University provided them with extensive knowledge and preparation to teach in their own classroom on many levels. I am proud to work for an institution that has accomplished what Molly, Kelly and Lucy indicate it did for them. In retrospect, it is gratifying to have observed them at work, because, based on my research and observations, I have seen excellence in their teaching. This is not to say that I had never encountered it previously, but to encounter it in a first observation from three student teachers concurrently who were all unique in

their approach…was notable. I seized the opportunity for its potential to reveal the transition that awaited my participants, in all of its nuances, and more insight and information were revealed to me than I had anticipated. The intelligent, insightful remarks and recommendations of three excellent new in-service teachers will add significantly to the body of research that continually informs the practice of teacher education.

Teacher Education Coursework

One of the unanticipated findings of my research is the value placed upon the facilitation of an advanced degree and corresponding coursework by my three case subjects. All three were motivated to continue their graduate coursework as they began teaching in their own classrooms, and Kelly and Molly spoke to the value of taking a graduate literacy course in comprehension while teaching independently. They found the material to be helpful on a practical level as they worked with their students, and were grateful that they had enrolled in that particular class when they did. As indicated earlier in this chapter, research has also demonstrated the increased success of new teachers who have graduated with additional literacy coursework and the accessibility of an advanced degree in the short term after graduation.

My case study participants were also particularly grateful for the experience provided them with students in their literacy practica. It was in these assignments that they became familiar with utilizing various strategies, assessments, and resources they had learned in class. This practice was highly significant for the opportunity it provided them to assess a student or students as to reading level and need, and to plan and

administer instruction accordingly. They continue to utilize knowledge they obtained through the experience.

Lucy also poignantly termed one of her literacy practicum experiences as an "Aha!" moment that she would always remember. She was assigned to work with a third-grade boy, who tested below pre-primer level. After consultation with her literacy professor, and utilizing an interest inventory she had administered, she taught this boy to read by creating Pokemon comic books with him. Together, she and this child captured the attention of several faculty members, who cried as they watched him read the cartoons he had helped create. Kelly recommended that literacy coursework and practica be offered closer in time to the student teaching assignment, after other methods coursework. In doing so, she posited that pre-service teachers might feel freshly energized to implement the literacy knowledge they acquire from practicum experiences and content of associated coursework during their student teaching and internship assignments.

It was a hopeful and encouraging finding to watch the participants implement every aspect of "best practice" in their literacy instruction throughout my ongoing observations and conversations with them. State University prepared them well in theory, provided practice, and allowed them two extensive field experiences to test their wings in a supportive, mentored environment. However, concerns regarding student teaching and internship placements still exist. I learned that even exemplary student teachers can have their confidence seriously shaken when they are assigned to a cooperating teacher who does not mentor them, or does not mentor them appropriately. Feiman-Nemser (2003) has addressed this issue, recommending that mentors be trained,

not just assumed to be adequate. State University's School of Education is currently working to implement an online training system for cooperating teachers, which cooperating teachers will be required to complete before their student teacher or intern arrives in the classroom. While programs such as this have been utilized before in the Professional Development Schools serving at risk populations, State University is now attempting to implement this process as a requirement for all cooperating teachers and all placements. Having worked with more than a few pre-service teachers to negotiate difficult situations with cooperating teachers over the course of 21 years, I feel that this policy will constitute a vital addition to our teacher education program, and an effective model for others.

However, it is also clear to me from my experiences, and documented in professional literature (Clift & Brady, 2005; Duffy & Atkinson, 2001; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Maloch, Flint, Eldridge, Harmon, & Loven, 2003) that factors other than placement with qualified cooperating teachers need to be considered. Research indicates that those field experiences which provide student teachers with extensive and informed feedback, support, and mentoring from experienced, qualified teacher educators during every teaching experience do indeed maximize learning and skill development for pre-service teachers. In some teacher education programs, budget restraints dictate that whichever education graduate students are available and need tuition funding be employed as university supervisors. In these cases, classroom experience, background knowledge, and mentoring skills are often unevaluated or become secondary eligibility requirements for supervisors. Other universities hire clinical professors to perform this important role in an ongoing manner, better enabling the continuance of an effective mentoring program

into students' first years on the job. It is important, as the research cited above indicates, that this associated training and these prerequisites be met by both cooperating teachers and university supervisors to facilitate optimal field experiences for student teachers.

I had anticipated before this study that assessments and assessment-driven curricula might prove problematic for new teachers, as evidenced in research (Allington, 2002). I had not anticipated, however, just how problematic a new scripted literacy curriculum could prove to be, even for a competent new teacher. I learned that the district employing both Lucy and Kelly only provided associated in-service sessions shortly before the beginning of school, which allowed them minimal time to become acquainted with how to implement this very complicated, rigid program. Both young women found pluses and minuses to the curriculum in retrospect. Because of their initial anxiety as new in-service teachers, the rigid guidelines did provide them with a reliable structure around which to plan initial lessons. However, the demands were so intense, and the details of those demands so minute, that implementation itself proved challenging. In listening to their reflections and suggestions, it makes sense for education students to be provided with some background regarding curricula such as theirs that are currently popular in the area. One of State University's literacy professors utilized a class period in a literacy remediation class in which I was enrolled to do just that, and I found it helpful and informative to learn of new programs available, as well as the "claims" they make. This is an important recommendation for literacy content inclusion. Kelly received exposure to a packaged pre-assessment curriculum incidentally through her internship assignment, but inclusion of content informing all students of such programs would be helpful as well.

Mentoring Programs

For the reasons cited earlier in this chapter, obtained in research, data, and experience, mentoring programs should become a focus of the current reform movement. Because of the disparity between such programs currently implemented at the university level, and because of some districts' attempts to provide mentoring, there is no reliability that new teachers will be able to draw upon such a program. The potential exists that new teachers will not be mentored, even if mandated by a district, as happened with Kelly in her first year of in-service teaching. If a nationwide initiative were to require all universities to offer mentoring programs to their education graduates, the encouraging statistic cited earlier would likely be sustained. If the reported 80% of new graduates would continue to opt for such a program, new teacher success would likely improve. The inclusion of the examples of mentoring programs which I have provided can serve as models regarding associated issues of funding, staffing, and distance. Technological resources such as SKYPE, available at no cost to students and university programs, enable university mentors to provide knowledgeable help and guidance to new in-service teachers from a distance, as Montana State's program provides. My hope is that through this research, additional initiatives will begin to address students' needs for informed mentoring through the implementation of such programs in all universities that offer teacher education programs.

This need for mentoring was poignantly demonstrated to me by the receptiveness of Molly, Kelly, and Lucy to my continued communication after field experiences were complete. Particularly in the fall of their first year as new teachers, I was deeply touched and moved by the manner in which they responded to my request for an interview. They

were eager to talk, and they were open and honest in sharing where they found themselves at that juncture. It was quite clear to me that they welcomed the opportunity to talk to a teaching professional connected with State University. I believe that they truly appreciated the connection we had established and were continuing, as well as the fact that someone from State University was still demonstrating concern for their well-being and success in their first in-service teaching positions. At times, they elicited my suggestions, and they appeared genuinely grateful for the ideas I willingly provided. Most of all, it was abundantly clear that they needed my validation to tell them that they were, indeed, doing something right. From my experience, Fuller (1969) appears to be correct in her assessment that new teachers are likely to be most concerned about survival and discipline. That is all the more reason they desperately need to hear, from a teaching professional, when they have also taught superbly during this developmental phase of uncertainty. I am privileged to have been able to deliver that news to my three participants.

Implications

The purpose of my case study was first and foremost to tell the stories of three exemplary new teachers, revealing in their words and experiences the details and nuances of their transition from effective literacy instructors as pre-service teachers to effective literacy instructors in their own in-service classrooms. I intended to add to a significant void in the research…that of new teacher voices…to document this process accurately. Secondly, I believed that in learning and reporting the deep stories and rich background and experiences I came to learn from Molly, Kelly and Lucy, that their insights could add to our current understanding of the transition from pre-service to in-service teaching.

Their insights can reveal what, as new teachers, they deeply value from their teacher education program in literacy, what has helped them reach success in their classrooms, and where their struggles have occurred. Finally, I hoped that the difficulties they experienced could speak to the needs of our newest teachers. I anticipated that these three women's reflections during and after those struggles would elicit suggestions for teacher education programs and the provision of necessary ancillary support. While case study does not entail generalization, there is an inherent universality to new teacher experiences. It is my hope that teachers everywhere can relate to Molly, Lucy, and Kelly, clearing the way to purposefully listen to their ideas and input.

Directions for Research

There is no question that in America, educational reform is moving full speed ahead, with or without teacher input. Every time I read an uninformed comment from a governmental official regarding education reform, I realize anew the desperate need for professional contributions to "research" being circulated by non-educators about the "current crisis in public education." There is no doubt that change is in order, and this study has touched upon some of the reasons why that is the case. However, it is important that informed research, contributed by educators, be considered before launching changes in educational policy. Documentation of teacher education programs' positive changes, and the associated gains indicated by new teachers, need to be made highly visible. Additional research documenting new teachers' successes can accomplish this.

Additionally, research is warranted to enhance that success on several fronts identified throughout this case study. Careful selection and additional training of

cooperating teachers and university supervisors need to be provided without exception in every teacher education program. Associated research can document training programs that are currently in existence, such as that being established at State University, to help guide implementation of the same in other universities. Mentoring programs facilitated through teacher education programs can be further researched and their results followed and documented.

The research needs to happen to keep the ball rolling, as these initial programs lead the way. Our new teachers are professionals. They should be treated as such.

Limitations

Predicting that our relationships would likely grow closer over the three years of the study, I realized the importance of examining my limitations as researcher in this situation. In order to guard against the effects of any bias I might incur, I utilized multiple, varied data sources through which to obtain lengthy samples of the participants' teaching, as well as their thoughts and reflections during the interview process. It is for this reason that I structured the interviews around the same set of questions over the three years of the study, while allowing the participants' extensions and clarifications to surface and be fully expressed and recorded. I examined the literature at length to inform both my research procedures and my underlying knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction

I also realized the need to guard against any generalizing of findings to the general population of novice teachers. While the participants reveal the details and nuances of their unique transitions, the study does not intend to imply that reactions are identical from teacher to teacher. Each story is unique, and each series of events is

unique. I hoped to ensure this singularity would be relayed by including all dialogue in its original form. No language has been changed, no exclamations or groans deleted. While I recognize that I have grown increasingly fond of my participants, and while I perceive and acknowledge my admiration for each of them, I have endeavored to let their words and actions be the primary vehicles to relay their stories accurately and in an unbiased fashion.

Concluding Thoughts

An article appeared in the U.S. News section of *The Wall Street Journal* on June 3, 2010, describing the proposed "national syllabus" that is being considered by a group of "governors and state school chiefs." This group is deliberating the creation and implementation of new education guidelines to be followed uniformly by all states, schools and districts in the United States. The article states,

> The Common Core State Standards detail the math and language arts knowledge children should master to prepare them for college and the work force. The blueprint doesn't tell teachers exactly what to teach or how to teach, but lays out broad goals for student achievement. Currently, each state sets its own academic benchmarks, and the rigor varies widely (Banchero, 2010, p. A3).

I am probably not the only educator to read this article with dismay. Superintendents or state school board members and governors are now apparently the new expertise for United States' continuing education reform. Within that group, I am assuming that a number of administration degrees have been conferred, but I wonder how many literacy teachers are weighing in on the "literature choices" and "language arts recommendations" for each grade level. In the example provided, literacy instruction is

reduced to the following for all third-grade students in every state, district and school across America : "Reading: Learn terms like chapter, scene and stanza; describe how successive parts build on earlier sections; compare and contrast details from two texts on the same topic" (p. A3). An apparent non-educator, Governor Jack Markell, appraised the proposed reform as follows: "Consistent standards mean all of our children will be prepared for work and college readiness regardless of their ZIP code" (p. A3). Apparently the writers of such "consistent standards" must believe that all third-grade students in the United States come to that classroom with identical background information. Apparently the assumption is being made that their abilities, language skills and development, and prior school experiences enhanced their phonemic awareness and subsequently their knowledge of phonics and word skills in the same manner and at the same pace with identical outcomes. Lucy and Kelly know better. This was not the case in their third-grade classrooms.

Fortunately, Lucy, Molly, and Kelly already know how to deal with obstacles to developmentally appropriate practice, enrichment, differentiation, and motivation of young readers. With yet another roadblock looming, they will likely encounter additional challenges, but I have confidence they will stay the course with fidelity. The fidelity will be to the implementation of "best practice," however, rather than another set of mandates. I feel certain that teacher educators will stay the course as well, attempting to instill the kind of determination to teach according to best practice I see in my participants. I am hopeful that novice educators will be provided the support they need to enable them to meet the inevitable challenges that lie ahead.

Lucy, Kelly, and Molly's teaching practices are grounded in their beliefs and ideologies about best practice in literacy instruction. This became evident as I observed them in their pre-service classrooms. The more successes they encountered, the more others noticed as well, and the more confident they grew. They stood out to the school faculty and their colleagues and students for their skills, dedication, and unique gifts.

In their first in-service classrooms, challenges arrived. Their confidence waned at times, and they sometimes struggled to find ways to keep providing "best practice." With every attempt to maintain that posture, however, their growth continued. Every time they overcame a challenge and met with the success of a student's progress or simply one of those "Aha!" moments Lucy poignantly described, they grew and developed further. They effectively instructed and motivated the children entrusted to them. Their focus changed from protecting themselves, from surviving, to providing consistently and reliably what each of their students needed to optimize their learning experiences.

Lucy, Molly, and Kelly have become those "consummate teachers of literacy" I described in chapter two, summing up the research recommendations I reviewed. I have watched them at work with their students through the stages of their development. I have observed as they facilitated transformations in their classrooms. They have changed lives with the heartfelt concern that permeates their interactions with their students. For themselves, and for their students, they have transformed challenges into opportunities for growth. And every day, they motivate and inspire their students to do the same.

Teachers who inspire realize there will always be rocks in the road ahead of us. They will be stumbling blocks or stepping stones; it all depends on how we use them.
~Author Unknown

References

Allington, R. L. (2006). Reading lessons and federal policy making: An overview and introduction to the special issue. *The Elementary School Journal, 107* (1), 3-15.

Allington, R. L.(2002). What I've learned about effective reading instruction from a decade of studying exemplary elementary classroom teachers. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *83* (10), 740-747.

Anders, P., Hoffman, J., & Duffy, G. (2000). Teaching teachers to teach reading: Paradigm shifts, persistent problems, and challenges. In Kamil, M. L., Mosenthal, P. B., Pearson, P. D. & Barr, R. (Eds.) *Handbook of reading research, vol. iii.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 742-744.

Anfara, V.A., Jr. & Mertz, N.T. (Eds.) *Theoretical frameworks in qualitative research.* Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2006.

Banchero, R. (2010, June 3). States craft school goals. *The Wall Street Journal,* p. A3.

Barritt, L. (1986). Human sciences and the human image. *Phenomenology and Pedagogy, 4* (3), 14-22.

Benton, C J. & Schillo, J. M. (2004). Action in teacher education school and university collaborative partners: A model for collegial support of literacy and professional development. *Action in Teacher Education, 25* (4), 30-37.

Bohn, C. M; Roehrig, A. D: & Pressley, M. (2004). The first days of school in the classrooms of two more effective and four less effective primary-grade teachers. *The Elementary School Journal*, *104* (4), 269-287.

Brownell, M. T. & Walther-Thomas, C. (2000). An interview with Dr. Michael Pressley. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 36* (2), 105-108.

Burns, P. C. (1975). Reading research that has influenced reading instruction: 1960-1974. *School Media Quarterly, vol. NA*, 142-148.

Carr, S. C. & Evans, E. D. (2006). Helping beginning teachers remain in the profession: A successful induction program. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 29* (2), 113-115.

Chall, J. S. (1999). Commentary: Some thoughts on reading research: Revisiting the first-grade studies. *Reading Research Quarterly, 34* (1), 8-10.

Clandinin, D. J. & Connelly, F. M. (1986). The reflective practitioner and practitioners' narrative unities. *Canadian Journal of Education, 11* (2), 184-198.

Clift, R.T. & Brady, P. (2005). Research on methods courses and field experiences. In M. Cochran Smith and K.M. Zeichner (Eds.) *Studying teacher education: The report of the AERA panel on research and teacher education,* pp. 309-424. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Cochran-Smith, M. (2001). Reforming teacher education: Competing agendas. *Journal of Teacher Education, 52* (4), 263.

Commeyras, M. & Degroff, L. (1998). Literacy professionals' perspectives on professional development and pedagogy: A United States survey. *Reading Research Quarterly, 33* (4), 434-472.

Creswell, J.W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches.* Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2007.

Danielson, K. E.; Kuhlman, E.; & Fluckinger, J. (1998). Benefits of literacy field experiences: Three views. *Reading Horizons, 39* (1), 33-47.

Duffy, A. M. & Atkinson, T. S. (2001). Learning to teach struggling (and non-struggling) elementary school readers: An analysis of pre-service teachers' knowledge. *Reading Research & Instruction, 41* (1), 83-102.

Duffy, G.G. & Hoffman, J.V. (1999). In pursuit of an illusion: The flawed search for a perfect method. *The Reading Teacher, 53* (1), 10-16.

Feiman, S. (1979). Technique and inquiry in teacher education: A curricular case study. *Curriculum Inquiry, 9* (1), 63-79.

Feiman-Nemser, S. (2001). From preparation to practice: Designing a continuum to strengthen and sustain teaching. *Teachers College Record, 103* (6), 1013-1055.

Feiman-Nemser, S. (2003). What new teachers need to learn. *Educational Leadership, 60* (8), 25-29.

Fuller, F.F. (1969). Concerns of teachers: A developmental conceptualization. *American Educational Research Journal, 6* (2), 207-289.

Gratch, A. (1998). Beginning teacher and mentor relationships. *Journal of Teacher Education, 49* (3), 220.

Grossman, P. & Thompson, C. (2004). District policy and beginning teachers: A lens on teacher learning. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 26* (4), 281-301.

Guthrie, J. T. & Wigfield, A. (2000). Engagement and motivation in reading. In Kamil, M. L., Mosenthal, P. B., Pearson, P. D., & Barr, R. (Eds.) *Handbook of reading research, vol. iii.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 403-424.

Guthrie, J. T., Wigfield, A., Humenick, N. M., Perencevich, K. C., Taboada, A., & Barbosa, P. (2006). Motivation mediated the effect of stimulating tasks on

reading comprehension. *The Journal of Educational Research, 99* (4), 232-245.

Healy, C.C. & Welchert, A.J. (1990). Mentoring relations: A definition to advance research and practice. *Educational Researcher, 19* (9), 17-21.

Hibbert, K. & Iannacci, L. (2005). From dissemination to discernment: The commodification of literacy instruction and the fostering of "good teacher consumerism": Teachers must be actively involved in the process of selecting and modifying materials for their students. *The Reading Teacher, 58* (8), 716-728.

Hicks, C.D., Glasgow, N.A., & McNary, S. J. (2005). *What successful mentors do: Research-based strategies for new teacher induction, training, and support.* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Holbien, M.F. & Regnier, R.S. (2001). Collaboration, reflection, and research in teaching reading: A teacher education perspective. *Journal of Reading Education, 32* (3), 44-46.

Howey, K. R. & Zimpher, N. L. (1989). Preservice teacher educators' role in program for beginning teachers. *The Elementary School Journal, 89* (4), 451-470.

Huling, L, Resta, V., & Rainwater, N. (2001). The case for a third alternative (targeted and accelerated teacher certification). *Journal of Teacher Education, 52* (4), 326.

Iaquinta, A. (2006). Guided reading: A research-based response to the challenges of early reading instruction. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 33* (6), 413-418.

Jacob, B. (2007). The challenges of staffing urban schools with effective teachers. *The Future of Children, 17* (1), 129-153.

Juel, C. & Cupp, C. M. (2000). Learning to read words: Linguistic units and instructional strategies. *Reading Research Quarterly, 35* (4), 458-495.

Korthagen, F. A. J. & Kessels, A. M. (1999). Linking theory and practice: Changing the pedagogy of teacher education. *Educational Researcher, 28* (4), 4-17.

L'Allier, S. (2005). Using the reflections of pre-service teachers to help teacher educators improve their own practice. In P.E. Linder, M.B. Sampson, J.B. Dugan, & B. Brancato (Eds.). *Building bridges* (27th yearbook for the College Reading Association, pp. 80-93), Commerce: Texas A&M University.

Learning to read and write: Developmentally appropriate practices for young children: A joint statement of the International Reading Association and the National Association for the Education of Young Children. (1998). *Young Children, 53* (4), 30-46.

Maloch, B.; Flint, A.S.; Eldridge, D.; Harmon, J.; Loven, R.; Fine, J.C.; Bryant-Shanklin, M.; & Martinez, M. (2003). Understandings, beliefs and reported decision making of first-year teachers from different reading teacher preparation programs. *The Elementary School Journal, 103* (5), 431-457.

Massey, D.D. (1990). Pre-service teachers as tutors: Influences of tutoring on whole-class literacy instruction. *National Reading Conference Yearbook, 52,* 259-271.

McNeill, L. (2001). Contradictions of school reform: Educational costs of standardized Testing. *Journal of Educational Change, 2* (1), 1-11.

Merriam, S.B. (1998). *Case study research in education: A qualitative approach.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1988

Morrow, L. M. (2004). Developmentally appropriate practice in early literacy instruction. *The Reading Teacher, 58* (1), 88-89.

Morrow, L. M. & Gambrell, L. B. (2000). Literature-based reading instruction. In Kamil, M. L., Mosenthal, P .B., Pearson, P. D., & Barr, R. (Eds.). *Handbook of reading research, vol. iii.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 563-586.

National Reading Panel. (2000). *Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction: Reports of the subgroups.* Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

National Research Council. Snow, C. E., Burns, M. S. & Griffin, P. (Eds.) (1998). *Preventing reading difficulties in young children.* Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

Pearson, P. D. & Stephens, D. (1994). Learning about literacy: A thirty year journey. In Ruddell, R. B.; Ruddell, M. R.; & Singer, H. (Eds.). *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (4th ed., pp. 22-42). International Reading Association. Originally published in C. Gordon, G. D. Labercane, & W. R. Mc Eachern (Eds.) (1992), *Elementary reading instruction: Process and practice* (pp. 4-18). Lexington, MA: Ginn Press.

Pressley, M. (2001). *Effective beginning reading instruction. Executive summary and paper commissioned by the National Reading Conference.* Chicago, IL: National Reading Conference.

Pressley, M. (2006). *Reading instruction that works, 3rd ed.* New York: Guilford Press

Pressley, M. (2000). What should comprehension instruction be the instruction of? In Kamil, M. L., Mosenthal, P. B., Pearson, P. D., & Barr, R. (Eds.) *Handbook of reading research, vol iii.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 545-562.

Quick, B. N. (1998). Beginning reading and developmentally appropriate practice (DAP): Past, present, and future. *Peabody Journal of Education, 73* (3-4), 253-272.

Risko, V .J.; Roller, C. M.; Cummins, C.; Bean, R. M.; Block, C. C.; Anders, P. L.; Flood, J. (2008). *Reading Research Quarterly, 43* (3), 252-288.

Schlecty, P. C. & Whitford, B. L. (1989). Systemic perspectives on beginning teacher programs. *The Elementary School Journal, 89* (4), 441-449.

Segebrecht, L. (2007). Formative Evaluation for Teacher Candidates. University of Kansas.

Segebrecht, L. (2007) Summative Evaluation for Teacher Candidates, University of Kansas.

Sleeter, C.E. (2001). Culture, difference and power. Teachers College Press

Smith, T. M. & Ingersoll, R. M. (2004). What are the effects of induction and mentoring on beginning teacher turnover? *American Research Journal, 41* (3), 681-714.

Stake, R.E. (1995) *The art of case study research.* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Stanulis, R.N., Burrill, G., & Ames, K.T. (2007). Fitting in and learning to teach: Tensions in developing a vision for a university-based induction program for beginning teachers. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 34* (3), 135-147.

Taylor, B. M., Pearson, P. D., Clark, K. & Walpole, S. (2000). Effective schools and accomplished teachers: Lessons about primary-grade reading instruction in low-income schools. *The Elementary School Journal, 101* (2), 121-165.

Taylor, B. M., Pearson, P. D., Peterson, D. S., & Rodriguez, M. C. (2003). Reading growth in high-poverty classrooms: The influence of teacher practices that encourage cognitive engagement in literacy learning. *The Elementary School Journal, 104* (1), 3-28.

Valencia, S. W.; Place, N. A.; Martin, S. D.; Grossman, P. L. (2006). Curriculum materials for elementary reading: Shackles and scaffolds for four beginning teachers. *Elementary School Journal, 107* (1), 93-120.

Veenman, S. (1984). Perceived problems of beginning teachers. *Review of Educational Research, 54* (2), 143-178.

Villani, S. (2002). *Mentoring programs for new teachers: Models of induction and support.* Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press, Inc.

Wang, J. & Odell, S. J. (2002). Mentored learning to teach according to standards-based reform: A critical review. *Review of Educational Research, 72* (3), 481-546.

Wang, J., Odell, S.J., & Schwille, S.A. (2008). The effects of teacher induction on beginning teachers' learning: A review of literature. *Journal of Teacher Education, 59* (2), 132-153.

Wang, J., Strong, M., & Odell, S.J. (2004). Mentor-novice conversations about teaching: A comparison of two United States and two Chinese cases. *Teachers College Record, 106* (4), 775-813.

Weaver, C. (2002). Portsmouth: Heinemann. *Reading process and practice (3rd ed.), 14,* 325-362.

Wharton-McDonald, R., Pressley, M., & Hampston, J. M. (1998). Literacy instruction in

nine first-grade classrooms: Teacher characteristics and student achievement. *The Elementary School Journal, 99* (2), 101-128.

Wharton-McDonald, R., Pressley, M., Rankin, J., Mistretta, J., & Ettenberger, S. (1997). Effective primary-grades literacy instruction: Balanced literacy instruction. National Reading Research Center.

Wigfield, A., Guthrie, J. T., Tonks, S., & Perencevich, K. C. (2004). Children's motivation for reading: domain specificity and instructional influences. *Journal of Educational Research, 97* (6), 299-309.

Wildman, T.M., Niles, J.A., Magliaro, S.G., & McLaughlin, R.A. (1989). Teaching and learning to teach: The two roles of beginning teachers. *The Elementary School Journal, 89* (4), 471-493.

Wilkinson, L. C. & Silliman, E. R. (2000). Classroom language and literacy learning. In Kamil, M. L., Mosenthal, P. B., Pearson, P. D., & Barr, R. (Eds.) *Handbook of reading research, vol. iii.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 337-360.

Wilson, E. V.; Dellinger, M.; Green, A.; Murphy, J.; Hatfield, M.; Long, C. & Fantozzi, V. (2008). Improving reading skills of second-grade students: Integrating accountability and assessment in elementary school reading instruction with a pre-service teacher education class. *Teacher Education, 14* (2), 41-46

Wise, A.E., Darling-Hammond, L., McLaughlin, M.W., & Bernstein, H.T. (1985). Teacher evaluation: A study of effective practices. *The Elementary School Journal, 86* (1), 60-121.

Wixson, K. K. & Peason, P. D. (1998). Policy and assessment strategies to support

literacy instruction for a new century. *Peabody Journal of Education, 73* (3/4), 202-227.

Yin, R.K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods, fourth ed.* Los Angeles: Sage.

Zeichner, K. (1999). The new scholarship in teacher education. *Educational Researcher, 28* (9), 4-15.

Listing of Appendices

Appendix A -- Formative evaluation (Segebrecht, 2007)

Appendix B – Summative evaluation (Segebrecht, 2007)

Piloted Spring, 2007: Elementary Internships

UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS
FORMATIVE EVALUATION FOR TEACHER CANDIDATES

______________________________	______________________________
Teacher Candidate	**Date**
______________________________	______________________________
School and District	**Subject and Grade**
______________________________	______________________________
University Supervisor	**Clinical Supervisor**

Students are to be evaluated by the following rubric, and comments are to be included. Please provide specific examples of skills the student has demonstrated.

N/O	1 Needs improvement	2 Developing	3 Skilled	4 Exemplary
Not observed	Not ready to assume responsibility for classroom	Currently developing expected beginning skills	Meets expected skills of a beginning teacher	Exceeds expected skills of a beginning teacher

KANSAS STANDARD I: The educator demonstrates the ability to use the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of each discipline he or she teaches and can create opportunities that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for all students.

N/O 1 2 3 4

This teacher candidate demonstrates:
1. An understanding of concepts being taught and the ability to explain concepts clearly.
2. Utilization of effective questioning techniques promoting higher level thinking skills.
3. The ability to make content meaningful for students. ______

KANSAS STANDARD II: The educator demonstrates an understanding of how individuals learn and develop intellectually, socially, and personally, and provides learning opportunities that support this development.

This teacher candidate demonstrates:
1. An understanding of learning and development sufficient to enhance learning for all students.
2. The ability to present learning opportunities and activities that are developmentally appropriate for students.
3. The ability to assist students in making connections to their own experiences.

______

KANSAS STANDARD III: The educator demonstrates the ability to provide different approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are equitable, that are based on developmental levels, and that are adapted to diverse learners, including those with exceptionalities.

N/O 1 2 3 4

This teacher candidate demonstrates:
1. The ability to adapt lessons, activities, and resources for individual students as needed.
2. The ability to construct lessons that meet the needs of exceptional diverse learners. ______

KANSAS STANDARD IV: The educator understands and uses a variety of appropriate instructional strategies to develop various kinds of students' learning including critical thinking, problem solving, and reading.

This teacher candidate demonstrates:
1. The ability to utilize a variety of instructional strategies effectively.
2. The ability to elicit and develop students' critical thinking, problem-solving, and reflection skills.
3. The ability to promote students' independent learning. ______

KANSAS STANDARD V: The educator uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self motivation.

This teacher candidate demonstrates:
1. The ability to engage and motivate students effectively.
2. The ability to set clear behavioral expectations and respond to student behaviors with consistency.
3. The ability to encourage positive social interactions and cooperative work skills.
4. The ability to maintain productivity and on-task behavior. ______

KANSAS STANDARD VI: The educator uses a variety of effective verbal and nonverbal communications techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

This teacher candidate demonstrates:
1. The ability to communicate in an effective, positive, and dignifying manner with students.
2. The ability to clearly communicate expectations and provide instructions effectively.
3. The ability to guide students to develop their own communication and collaboration skills. ______

KANSAS STANDARD VII: The educator plans effective instruction based upon the knowledge of all students, community, subject matter, curriculum outcomes, and current methods of teaching reading.

N/O 1 2 3 4

This teacher candidate demonstrates:
1. A strong knowledge base of content, standards, and lesson objectives.
2. The ability to plan comprehensive lessons effectively to meet learning objectives.
3. The ability to adapt lesson plans based on learners' response and individual needs of students. ______

KANSAS STANDARD VIII: The educator understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and other aspects of personal development of all learners.

This teacher candidate demonstrates:
1. The ability to utilize informal assessment techniques to evaluate understanding and the need for modifications in instruction.
2. The ability to plan and interpret formal assessments effectively.
3. The ability to effectively monitor student engagement and participation in classroom activities. ______

KANSAS STANDARD IX and X: (See professional dispositions evaluation at the conclusion of this form.)
KANSAS STANDARD XI: The educator demonstrates the ability to integrate across and within content fields to enrich the curriculum, develop reading and thinking skills, and facilitate all students' abilities to understand relationships between subject areas.

The teacher candidate demonstrates:
1. The ability to integrate curriculum across subject areas.
2. The ability to integrate related literature into various curricular areas.
3. The ability to promote critical thinking and effective inquiry in all subject areas. ______

KANSAS STANDARD XII: The educator understands the role of technology in society and demonstrates skills using instructional tools and technology to gather, analyze, and present information, enhance instructional practices, facilitate professional productivity and communication, and help all students use instructional technology effectively.

N/O 1 2 3 4

The teacher candidate demonstrates:
1. The ability to utilize technology to enhance instruction.
2. The ability to support students in learning to apply technology.
3. The ability to engage students in the use of technology for inquiry. ______

KANSAS STANDARD XIII: The educator is a reflective practitioner who uses an understanding of historical, philosophical, and social foundations of education to guide educational practices.

The practice teacher demonstrates:
1. The ability to utilize knowledge of historical, philosophical and social foundations of education to guide instructional choices in the classroom.
2. The ability to demonstrate support for policies/practices that promote student welfare and development.
3. The ability to follow all legal requirements for working with students, other teachers, administrators, and parents. ______

ASSESSMENT OF TEACHER CANDIDATES' LEVEL OF PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS

KANSAS STANDARD X: The educator fosters collegial relationships with school personnel, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support all students' learning and well-being.

KANSAS STANDARD XI: The educator demonstrates the ability to integrate across and within content fields to enrich the curriculum, develop reading and thinking skills, and facilitate all students' abilities to understand relationships between subject areas.

N/O 1 2 3 4

The teacher candidate demonstrates:
1. The ability to elicit feedback and receive and respond to suggestions and criticism. ______

2. A desire to learn from mentors, participate in collaboration, and achieve professional growth and development. ______

3. Punctuality and responsibility in following rules and requests of staff and administrators in field experience setting. ______

4. Ethical values and concern for students' welfare, safety, and development. ______

5. Respect for the dignity and worth of all students and the belief that all students are capable of learning. ______

6. The ability to talk with and listen to all students, demonstrate sensitivity to distress, and indicate willingness to investigate situations and seek outside assistance to remedy problems. _______

7. Enthusiasm for teaching and learning, and enjoyment in interacting with students. _______

8. Ability to instill in all students a sense of responsibility for and commitment to learning. _______

9. Professional conduct, appearance, and communication skills. _______

10. Honesty and integrity in all communication and interactions. _______

11. A strong work ethic and willingness to assume responsibility in student teaching/internship setting. _______

12. The ability to communicate in a respectful, positive, and effective manner with students' parents and school staff and administrators. _______

13. Flexibility in meeting change, unexpected occurrences, and emergent situations effectively. _______

14. The ability to work effectively within a team of colleagues to address student needs and plan curriculum and instruction. _______

Additional Comments:

Targets for Growth:

Please sign and date:

______________________	______________________	______________________
Teacher Candidate	**University Supervisor**	**Clinical Supervisor**

Elementary Education

UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS
SUMMATIVE EVALUATION FOR TEACHER CANDIDATES

______________________________	______________________________
Teacher Candidate	**Date**
______________________________	______________________________
School and District	**Subject and Grade**
______________________________	______________________________
University Supervisor	**Clinical Supervisor**

Students are to be evaluated by the following rubric, and comments are to be included. Please provide specific examples of skills the student has demonstrated.

N/O	**1** **Needs improvement**	**2** **Developing**	**3** **Skilled**	**4** **Exemplary**
Not observed	**Not ready to assume responsibility for classroom**	**Currently developing expected beginning skills**	**Meets expected skills of a beginning teacher**	**Exceeds expected skills of a beginning teacher**

KANSAS STANDARD I: The educator demonstrates the ability to use the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of each discipline he or she teaches and can create opportunities that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for all students.

N/O 1 2 3 4

This teacher candidate demonstrates:
1. An understanding of concepts being taught and the ability to explain concepts clearly.
2. Utilization of effective questioning techniques promoting higher level thinking skills.
3. The ability to make content meaningful for students. ______

KANSAS STANDARD II: The educator demonstrates an understanding of how individuals learn and develop intellectually, socially, and personally, and provides learning opportunities that support this development.

This teacher candidate demonstrates:
1. An understanding of learning and development sufficient to enhance learning for all students.
2. The ability to present learning opportunities and activities that are developmentally appropriate for students.
3. The ability to assist students in making connections to their own experiences. ______

KANSAS STANDARD III: The educator demonstrates the ability to provide different approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are equitable, that are based on developmental levels, and that are adapted to diverse learners, including those with exceptionalities.

N/O 1 2 3 4

This teacher candidate demonstrates:
1. The ability to adapt lessons, activities, and resources for individual students as needed.
2. The ability to construct lessons that meet the needs of exceptional diverse learners.
3. The ability to utilize creativity and resources available in implementing adaptations. ______

KANSAS STANDARD IV: The educator understands and uses a variety of appropriate instructional strategies to develop various kinds of students' learning including critical thinking, problem solving, and reading.

This teacher candidate demonstrates:
1. The ability to utilize a variety of instructional strategies effectively.
2. The ability to elicit and develop students' critical thinking, problem-solving, and reflection skills.
3. The ability to promote students' independent learning. ______

KANSAS STANDARD V: The educator uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self motivation.

This teacher candidate demonstrates:
1. The ability to engage and motivate students effectively.
2. The ability to set clear behavioral expectations and respond to student behaviors with consistency.
3. The ability to encourage positive social interactions and cooperative work skills.
4. The ability to maintain productivity and on-task behavior. ______

KANSAS STANDARD VI: The educator uses a variety of effective verbal and nonverbal communications techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

This teacher candidate demonstrates:
1. The ability to communicate in an effective, positive, and dignifying manner with students.
2. The ability to clearly communicate expectations and provide instructions effectively.
3. The ability to guide students to develop their own communication and collaboration skills. ______

KANSAS STANDARD VII: The educator plans effective instruction based upon the knowledge of all students, community, subject matter, curriculum outcomes, and current methods of teaching reading.

N/O 1 2 3 4

This teacher candidate demonstrates:
1. A strong knowledge base of content, standards, and lesson objectives.
2. The ability to plan comprehensive lessons effectively to meet learning objectives.
3. The ability to adapt lesson plans based on learners' response and individual needs of students. ______

KANSAS STANDARD VIII: The educator understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and other aspects of personal development of all learners.

This teacher candidate demonstrates:
1. The ability to utilize informal assessment techniques to evaluate understanding and the need for modifications in instruction.
2. The ability to plan and interpret formal assessments effectively.
3. The ability to effectively monitor student engagement and participation in classroom activities. ______

KANSAS STANDARD IX and X: (See professional dispositions evaluation at the conclusion of this form.)
KANSAS STANDARD XI: The educator demonstrates the ability to integrate across and within content fields to enrich the curriculum, develop reading and thinking skills, and facilitate all students' abilities to understand relationships between subject areas.

N/O 1 2 3 4

The teacher candidate demonstrates:
1. The ability to integrate curriculum across subject areas.
2. The ability to integrate related literature into various curricular areas.
3. The ability to promote critical thinking and effective inquiry in all subject areas. ______

KANSAS STANDARD XII: The educator understands the role of technology in society and demonstrates skills using instructional tools and technology to gather, analyze, and present information, enhance instructional practices, facilitate professional productivity and communication, and help all students use instructional technology effectively.

The teacher candidate demonstrates:
1. The ability to utilize technology to enhance instruction.
2. The ability to support students in learning to apply technology.
3. The ability to engage students in the use of technology for inquiry. ______

KANSAS STANDARD XIII: The educator is a reflective practitioner who uses an understanding of historical, philosophical, and social foundations of education to guide educational practices.

N/O 1 2 3 4

The practice teacher demonstrates:

1. The ability to utilize knowledge of historical, philosophical and social foundations of education to guide instructional choices in the classroom.
2. The ability to demonstrate support for policies/practices that promote student welfare and development.
3. The ability to follow all legal requirements for working with students, other teachers, administrators, and parents. ______

ASSESSMENT OF TEACHER CANDIDATES' LEVEL OF PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS

KANSAS STANDARD X: The educator fosters collegial relationships with school personnel, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support all students' learning and well-being.

KANSAS STANDARD XI: The educator demonstrates the ability to integrate across and within content fields to enrich the curriculum, develop reading and thinking skills, and facilitate all students' abilities to understand relationships between subject areas.

N/O 1 2 3 4

The teacher candidate demonstrates:

1. The ability to elicit feedback and receive and respond to suggestions and criticism. ______
2. A desire to learn from mentors, participate in collaboration, and achieve professional growth and development. ______
3. Punctuality and responsibility in following rules and requests of staff and administrators in field experience setting. ______
4. Ethical values and concern for students' welfare, safety, and development. ______
5. Respect for the dignity and worth of all students and the belief that all students are capable of learning. ______
6. The ability to talk with and listen to all students, demonstrate sensitivity to distress, and indicate willingness to investigate situations and seek outside assistance to remedy problems. ______

7. Enthusiasm for teaching and learning, and enjoyment in interacting with students. ______

8. Ability to instill in all students a sense of responsibility for and commitment to learning. ______

9. Professional conduct, appearance, and communication skills. ______

10. Honesty and integrity in all communication and interactions. ______

11. A strong work ethic and willingness to assume responsibility in student teaching/internship setting. ______

12. The ability to communicate in a respectful, positive, and effective manner with students' parents and school staff and administrators. ______

13. Flexibility in meeting change, unexpected occurrences, and emergent situations effectively. ______

14. The ability to work effectively within a team of colleagues to address student needs and plan curriculum and instruction. ______

Total Points: ______

Letter Grade: ______

Additional Comments:

Targets for Growth:

Please sign and date in the appropriate space:

______________________________	______________________________
University supervisor	**Clinical supervisor**