

*A Critical Pedagogy in the Elementary Classroom:
Exhibition of Readiness for Student Teaching*

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COURSES TAKEN

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|------------|--|----------------------------|
| EDEC 7010* | Trends and Issues in Early childhood Education | Dr. Penny Oldfather |
| EDEC 7020 | Theory & Curriculum in Early Childhood Education | Dr. Betty Bisplinghoff |
| EDEC 8010 | Teacher Action Research | Dr. Deborah Tippins |
| EDEC 8120 | Social Constructivist Approaches to Understanding Classroom Motivation | Dr. Penny Oldfather |
| EDEC 8180 | Research in Multicultural Teacher Education | Dr. Martha Alexsaht-Snyder |
| EDIT 6150 | Introduction to Computer Based Education | Dr. Julie Tallman |
| EFND 7150 | Anthropology of Education | Dr. Jerome Morris |
| EFND 7200 | Multicultural Education in the United States | Dr. Mary Atwater |
| ELAN 6631 | Bilingual Education—Teaching Language-Minority Students | Dr. Melissa Cahnmann |
| ELAN 7040 | Language and Culture in the Classroom | Dr. Pam Sheppard |
| ELAN 7630 | ESOL—grades P-12 | Dr. Pam Sheppard |
| ELAN 7730* | First and Second Language Acquisition | Dr. Pam Sheppard |
| ELAN 7320 | Writing Pedagogy | Dr. JoBeth Allen |
| EMAT 6420 | Mathematics Methods for Early Childhood (PREK-5) | Dr. Hatfield |
| EPSY 8180* | Psychology of Learning and Instruction | Dr. Glynn |
| READ 6420 | Literacy Development and Instruction in Early Childhood | Dr. Ratliff |
| SPED 2000 | Survey in Special Education | Dr. Kim |
| SPAN 1110 | Accelerated Introduction to Spanish | Blake Monts de Oca |
| SPAN 2001 | Intermediate Spanish | Inma Garnez |
| SPAN 2002 | Intermediate Spanish | Leonor Teves |
| SPAN 3010* | Spanish Composition and Conversation | Fernan Cerro-Palomino |

AREA OF FOCUS

What experiences led to choosing this focus?

The path I have taken to developing this area of focus began in the first days of my ECCO journey. In my first class as an ECCO member, supported by my cohort colleagues and Professor Dr. Betty Bisplinghoff my curiosity in the area of critical pedagogy began to flourish, though at that point I did not yet know this term. In my first ECCO portfolio I chose as my focus, second language acquisition because of my interest in the ESL population, my travels in Costa Rica, and my commitment to learning the Spanish language. Through the summer and fall courses I continued to cultivate my interests in the ESL population, but abandoned my earlier chosen focus and embarked on quest to find critical pedagogy, ultimately introduced to me by my writing pedagogy professor, Dr. JoBeth Allen.

How did I go about developing the area of focus?

The works that I draw my focus from were introduced to me by caring yet critical professors I have had while at the University of Georgia. Dr. Betty Bisplinghoff, Dr. JoBeth Allen, Dr. Martha Allexsaht-Snyder, Dr. Penny Oldfather, Dr. Pam Sheppard, and Dr. Deborah Tippins, among others, have served as mentors and role models to me through the dedicated, yet each intimately unique, approach they bring to their classrooms as teacher educators. Through these professors, the texts they speak of, the articles and books they have written, and the critical eyes they each employ in their approaches to education I have found my inspiration and motivation for being a critical educator. I have read voraciously and questioned extensively, myself as well as my motivations, in the courses I have taken these past two years. I have focused projects and inquiries in my classes on the ESL learner and community building: my first semester as a non-degree graduate student in education a paper written for my Anthropology of Education class (EFND 7150) my interest was piqued by the research and literature I found for the class final paper I wrote on the practice of retention-- Addressing Academic Failure as a Failure of the School, Not the Child. In the process of researching and writing this paper, my curiosity was attracted to this practice that seemed to for the most part create "deleterious outcomes," and I began to wonder why this practice continued in light of these outcomes as well as the obvious fact of a biased application (Jimerson). This paper complimented the field experience I was at that time engaged in with the EIP Kindergarten teacher at Chase Street Elementary. I had never experienced so closely before the inequality of our public educational system; my action research proposal (EDEC 8180) provided me the opportunity to observe and plan ways to enhance the learning of ESL students--Learning to Comprehend: An investigation into the Reading and Writing Lives of three ESOL students; in writing pedagogy (ELAN 7320) I looked more closely at the same ESL students writings, and realized that there was no magic formula as I had hoped there would be for teaching the ESL learner--Muriel, Alan, and Lindsey: A trio of triumph; my ESOL endorsement classes have provided several opportunities for me to deepen my understanding of critical pedagogy and the ESL learner--I led a presentation on migrant workers and the education system (School-Home Relationship: examining the lives of migrant families in the education system--ELAN 7040), I planned and taught lessons geared toward the ESL learner (ELAN 7630), reported on Critical Pedagogy and Literacy in the ESOL classroom (ELAN 7630), and now am learning about first and second language acquisition (ELAN 7730); in my bilingual education class, ELAN 6631, I created a website on including Spanish in the mainstream classroom, accessible at <http://arches.uga.edu/~moflem/spanishmainstream>; in a multicultural class--EDEC 8180--I led a presentation to the class on critical pedagogy, and wrote a teaching module focused on building community while celebrating individuality and diversity in the elementary classroom; and finally, I have continued to study the Spanish language through undergraduate courses here at the University of Georgia. I am currently in the process of earning my ESOL Endorsement. The courses I have taken and the experiences I have chosen have been instrumental and informative in providing me with knowledge and preparation for the diverse classroom I will soon enter.

What did I learn?

In conceptualizing how I will approach my upcoming role as a teacher, I am intrigued by Luis Moll's work with funds of knowledge, as well as Paolo Freire's critical pedagogy-- with a focus on critical literacy. I have likewise connected with the ideals and goals of culturally-relevant pedagogy proposed by Gloria Ladson-Billings, and Gardner's multiple intelligences model. My area of focus includes these four, and a bit more. Culturally relevant pedagogy: I believe all students are capable of learning, and it will be my role as a teacher to determine how and with what methods and strategies this learning might best take place. I draw from an ideal of culturally relevant pedagogy I came across in a book by Irvine and Armento:

a culturally responsive pedagogy builds on the premise that how people are expected to go about learning may differ across cultures. In order to maximize learning opportunities, teachers must gain knowledge of the cultures represented in their classrooms, then translate this knowledge into instructional practice (2001).

I plan to be a responsive teacher by including elements of my students' culture in my teaching in as many avenues as possible. I found Ladson-Billings argument that achievement is intricately linked to what students care about—"they learn about what they love"—quite insightful, and an appropriate thought to keep in mind as I transition from the role of passionate student to teacher in charge of cultivating a passion for learning among my students (Ladson-Billings).

Luis Moll—funds of knowledge: I think the most practical conceptual framework I have encountered thus far is the funds of knowledge approach. As Moll and his colleagues wrote, "the primary purpose of this work is to develop innovations in teaching that draw upon the knowledge and skills found in local households" (Moll 1992). I think it is critical that we connect to students in a personal and meaningful way. By validating where children come from—their parents—and the knowledge of where they come from—the household knowledges—we are providing them with a confidence, and acknowledging that we value them as students and as resources of knowledge.

Gardner—multiple intelligences: The theory of multiple intelligences is teaching me the importance of getting to know my students, their interests, how they learn, and using this information in planning in order to capitalize on their strengths and gently encourage their weaknesses. Similar to Ladson-Billings as well is the key idea of learning becomes fun and occurs more naturally when it is centered around something we love or are interested in.

Critical pedagogy/critical literacy: I think critical literacy is a practical framework that I can use to apply the ideals of critical pedagogy in an elementary classroom. Joe Kincheloe writes, "learning is grounded in the learners own being, their interaction with the world, their concerns, and their visions of what they can become" (Kincheloe, 2004).

Critical literacy is about making connections, to students' lives and to society. Critical literacy, as Barry Kanpol writes, "allows the teacher to connect curriculum texts to student experience—making curriculum knowledge both meaningful and relevant as well as introspective for both the teacher and student" (Kanpol 1999). I believe that finding out who my students are will provide me access to the type of curriculum like that of preschool teacher Vivian Marie Vasquez's which,

deliberately 'makes significant' diverse children's cultural and social questions about everyday life. It arises as teachers and children tune in to issues of social justice and equity that unfold through classroom discussion and begin to pose critical questions. Discussions like these lead to questions like: In what ways are we already readers, writers, and analysts of the world?

In what ways can we equitably and democratically reread and rewrite the world in order to become the literate people we want to be in the new millennium? (Vasquez 2004).

Transformative education: This aspect of my area of focus is derived from an idea I came across in a textbook for JoBeth Allen's Writing Pedagogy class, *Authors in the Classroom*. Alma Flor Ada and F. Isabel Campoy discuss the benefits from self-exploration, self-discovery, and self-recognition, that occur when students experience literature as authors. My goal is to create a classroom in which literature is used as a device of personal as well as multicultural learning, where literature helps children to learn about themselves, about their own culture, and about the cultures of the world, and where children do not just read literature, but create literature as authors themselves.

What do I still want to learn? How do I plan to learn further?

I want to learn how I can translate this critical approach to education into practice as I begin my student teaching. I want to continue expanding my knowledge and reading in this field. I have recently been introduced to the work of Dr. Lew Allen and the League of Democratic Schools. I would like to learn more about what democratic learning is and about this league. I would also like to reconnect with his wife, Dr. JoBeth Allen, who was instrumental in my finding this area of focus.

I plan to begin reading and possibly subscribe to the following publications: *Teaching for Change, Educational Leadership, and The Reading Teacher*.

I have also recently come across the unpublished master's thesis of Andrea Pintaone from the University of Georgia, *Literacy Narratives toward identity and community in a 1st Grade Classroom*. From the abstract it seems we share similar goals and aspirations for our work as elementary teachers. I have met Ms. Pintaone previously in a class, and know that she currently teaches at Fowler Drive Elementary. I would like to connect with her and possibly volunteer in her classroom.

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WANT TO READ...

- Delpit, Lisa
 Hooks, Bell
 Igoa, Cristina. (1995). *The Inner World of the Immigrant Child*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.
 Ladson-Billings, Gloria
- Andrea Pintaone's unpublished master's thesis: "Literacy Narratives Toward Identity and Community in a 1st Grade Classroom."
- Beyond Reading and Writing: Inquiry, Curriculum, & Multiple Ways of Knowing*—a book
- The Magazines—*Social Studies and the Young Learner, Teaching for Change, Educational Leadership*

ECCO Exhibition of Readiness for Student Teaching—Field Experiences

| Title of Experience | Contact Person | Locale | Age & Number of Children | Dates & Hours of Experience | Responsibilities Included |
|--|---------------------------------|-------------|--|---|---|
| Introduction to Spanish | Sook Jin Reagan | Athens, GA | Pre-Kindergarten 14 children, 4-5 years old | Jan-Apr 2005 5 hours | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> taught 15 minute weekly Spanish lesson to whole class and observed classes |
| Assistant to EIP teacher | Carol Holmes | Athens, GA | Kindergarten 13 children, 5-6 years old | Aug-Oct 2003 60 hours | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> observed and assisted EIP teacher in each of the 3 Kindergarten classrooms during writing instruction |
| ESOL lesson plan implementation | Kathryn Hardy Jennifer Allen | Atlanta, GA | 1 st Grade (rising to 2 nd) 13 children, 7-8 years old 2 nd Grade (rising to 3 rd) 14 children, 7-8 years old | July 2005 10 hours in 1 st 10 hours in 2 nd | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> planned, taught, and assessed 8 separate language arts lesson plans (at Horizons program) |
| Horizons 5 th Grade Class Assistant | Danice Giles Betsy Allen | Atlanta, GA | 5 th Grade 11 children, 11-12 years old | June 27- August 5, 2005 180 hours | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> assisted classroom teacher in 5th grade classroom during Horizons Summer Enrichment Program |
| Girl Scout Co-Leader Troop 2095 | Nancy Moon | Athens, GA | Brownies—3 rd grade, 8-9 years old Juniors—4 th /5 th grade, 9-11 years old Cadettes—6 th grade, 11-12 years old | Sept 2003-present 400+ hours | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> assisted in planning and carrying out weekly meetings--leading badges , assisted in planning and carrying out 3 camping trips |
| Assistant Swim Coach—Summer Hill | Scott Burrell | Athens, GA | Beginner: 4-6 years old Intermediate: 7-12 years old | May-June 2004 May-June 2005 120 hours | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> coached beginning and intermediate swimmers in summer swim league |
| Swim Coach—Athens Aquatics | Sean Gillan | Athens, GA | 8-12 years old | Sept 2004- May 2005 100+ hours | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> coached intermediate swimmers in technique improvements for year round swim club |

FIELD EXPERIENCES

Before beginning my ECCO coursework, and through the past two years of classes I have spent time volunteering at local Title One schools in the Athens and Atlanta area; traveled to the country of Costa Rica and later Mexico, where many of the students these schools service have family; and worked a summer enrichment program enacted to supplement and enrich the education of elementary public school students in the Sandy Springs area, most of whom are Latino children from families of low socioeconomic status. I have loved every moment I have spent among these children, and honestly they have not all been the most enjoyable of moments. Yet, among these children, in times of joy and in times of frustration, I have learned so much about my self, gained confidence in my abilities, and found the inspiration to continue my pursuit of a teaching career.

Pre-Kindergarten Spanish Lessons—Barnett Shoals Elementary

A fellow ECCO member, Sook Jin Reagan, opened the doors of her pre-Kindergarten classroom to me last spring. Once a week for 15–20 minutes I came to her classroom and introduced the children to the Spanish language. When I spoke with Mrs. Reagan before my first visit, her advice was “keep it simple and keep it active.” This advice proved to be invaluable.

Sitting in the rocking chair before twenty curious 4–5 year old’s faces each Thursday morning was much more intimidating than I could have ever imagined. I am usually at ease around children, in and outside the schools, but Mrs. Reagan’s class was my first experience with so many preschool aged children. My fears were assuaged each week by the kind and loving nature these children extended toward me. I grew quite attached to the children, and usually stayed for lunch time after my lesson. A young native Spanish speaker and a Korean child who had already been exposed to the Spanish language became my resident experts, and often asked me each week if I knew certain things they had been learning in Spanish—“Miss Morgan, do you know *debajo* means below?” The challenge to this field experience was that for the first time in my planning I had to accommodate the fact that these children were not yet able to read—learning therefore, for the purposes of the mere 20 minutes I had, would have to occur through oral/audial means, and would most likely be enhanced by props such as pictures or objects. I developed lesson ideas with these eager faces in my mind, wondering each week what I might want to do were I 5 years old again. I relied heavily on Total Physical Response activities, and found that songs, especially with accompanying body movements, were met with excitement and were learned by the children within two–three of my visits.

Personal favorites of the children and I were, “Cabezas, Hombros, Rodilla, Pie” (Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes), “Ovejita Negra” (Baa Baa Black Sheep), *Simone Dice* (Simon Says), “Los Dias de la Semana” (The Days of the Week), “MacDonald Viejo Tiene una Fincha” (Old MacDonald has a Farm), and “Los Ruidos del Coche” (The wheels on the Bus—literally here the car). I was completely amazed in the last two weeks of my visits when the majority of the children, and I, were able to sing the words and do the accompanying body movements to all of these songs. My least successful lesson was “The Seasons,” even though each was introduced and had a hand movement to go with it. Although at first disappointed, I realized as the semester progressed that I was just learning to fine-tune skills of delivery and presentation that will aid me in my future career.

My time here at Barnett Shoals Elementary and other public elementary schools in the Athens area has provided me the opportunity to view the educational system through the eyes of an educator as opposed to the role of student I have played for the past two decades.

Kindergarten EIP Assistant—Chase Street Elementary

In my first semester of graduate school as a non-degree student in education I decided to look into volunteering in the local Athens public schools to determine whether or not I really wanted to pursue teaching certification. At the suggestion of a friend I visited Chase Street Elementary, only 2 miles from my apartment on North Avenue, and on my first day was offered a volunteer position assisting the Early Intervention Prevention teacher, Mrs. Carol Holmes, during her writing instruction to the 3 Kindergarten classrooms. In this position I was able to observe a veteran Kindergarten teacher, and guide the children during independent drawing/writing time. I watched in utter amazement as Mrs. Holmes led these little people on their own individual journey towards a literate life. I found myself as entranced as these children, watching for the first time the sounds emerging from their mouths being transformed into letters, words, sentences upon paper—transcribed so that others could read them over and over again, perfectly in just the order they were stated. I have fallen in love with these children, and continue to relish in delight each time I pass them in the hallway at Chase, these days as eager 1st graders. They have without knowing it

served as one of my most powerful motivators, and I think back often to their days as fresh faces in the school and see myself sitting among them watching their fascination grow with each passing day as they learn and absorb more and more about the world all around them.

This position also provided me the opportunity to work for the Literacy Coach of Chase Street, Dr. Jan Miller Burkins, who has become an indispensable mentor and friend to me throughout this program. I made connections with teachers at Chase Street as well, and have spent innumerable undocumented hours observing and volunteering in the various grade levels at Chase Street Elementary. This exposure to the inner workings of a Title One public school has influenced me in ways I am unable to express, and has motivated me to pursue a position in a Title One school as well. My time at Chase Street has truly been special. I have been exposed to so many different facets of the education system. I have learned so much about the process of education, and am forever affected by the kindnesses and respect bestowed upon me by the teachers and staff at Chase.

Horizons Summer Enrichment Program-- ESOL Lesson Plan Implementation & 5th Grade Assistant

From June 27th to August 5th of 2005 I spent my days drinking, eating, and sleeping Horizons. The Horizons Enrichment Program is a national program aimed at providing academic enrichment and enriching opportunities like field trips to children who ordinarily would spend their summer with little planned activity. The Atlanta Horizon branch is one of 13 branches throughout the United States that each summer opens its' hearts and doors—normally within a private school—to children grades Kindergarten to Sixth chosen by their public school teachers as needing extra academic encouragement. The Horizons branch in Atlanta, GA has been running since 1999, and now services over 100 Latino, African-American, and Asian American children from homes of low socioeconomic status in the Sandy Springs Area. My primary job this past summer was as the classroom assistant to the 5th grade cohort, but I spend several hours circulating throughout the different grades, and taught 8 lessons focusing on language arts and English skills through my ESOL methods endorsement class.

Danice Giles, the director of Horizons in Atlanta, spoke often as the staff met before the program of people "falling in love with these children." I knew as soon as the words escaped from her mouth that I would fall head over heels, and my anticipation for the start of Horizons became almost uncontainable over the months. However the phrase "Falling in love," I think, does not do justice to my feelings towards the children, and the staff, of Horizons 2005. As a classroom assistant and teacher in the 1st, 2nd, and 5th grades as well as one of the swimming instructors in the daily swim lesson every afternoon I established an unbreakable bond with these children. They moved me. I will forever have an impression of these children upon my heart, and am driven now to pursue a position in one of the schools linked to Horizons. Since the end of Horizons I find myself returning once a week to one of the chief public schools the children are drawn from, High Point Elementary, and spend time in the classrooms of two of the women I worked with closely during the program. My heart does cartwheels each time I am greeted with smiles, giggles, and hugs from of my Horizons children.

Horizons provided me the most practical experience I have yet had because of its structure, much like that of the typical school day. As an assistant in the 5th grade I had first hand experience in managing a classroom, making decisions with my lead teacher and the children in regards to issues of topics for study, classroom organization, and behavior, among others. As an assistant teacher in the 1st and 2nd grade classroom I had the invaluable opportunity to try on the hat of an elementary school teacher, and found that the hat fit quite nicely! In the 1st grade my lessons centered around language arts and phonics and English skills through literature. Tar Beach was a lesson where the children were read aloud to Faith Ringgold's book by the same name, and asked to write and illustrate a response to the prompt: "if you could fly anywhere in the world where would you fly;" Word Wheels was introduced by the text I'll Teach my Dog One Hundred Words, and provided the children opportunity to practice onset and rime skills in small groups with word wheels; Who did What Where introduced the children to sentence writing through answering questions, and was conducted with an interactive chart where the children could place various cards with illustrations they found at their desk into the proper question category—as a whole group we constructed sentences with our chart; the Body Parts lesson engaged the children in several Total Physical Response exercises such as singing Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes, labeling partners with sticky notes containing names of body parts, and playing Simon Says. The 2nd grade lessons were aimed at writing skills and science: Letters to Someone Special began with a reading of Arthur Dorros' book Isla, and continued with children writing adventure letters—a letter to someone special in their life about an adventure they might like to take together; Lesson in a Bag was a small group writing activity of children writing a story using the objects in their specific gift bag; Water and the Water Cycle were two lessons that introduced the

children to the water cycle, aimed at supplementing material their classroom teacher was teaching on habitats, specifically the rain forest. These two science focused lessons included a Reader's Theater about the life of a drop of water, several simple science experiments illustrating the processes of condensation, evaporation, and precipitation, a Science Court activity testing their understanding of these processes, and a bracelet making activity with an accompanying song, The Water Cycle Boogie, all of which gave the children a hands-on connection to the material.

Excitement and emotions ran high during the six weeks. The children were exceptional, but they were children. One incident among the 5th and 6th graders whom I grew quite close to I will forever remember. On a Friday afternoon, after returning from our fieldtrip to the skating rink, the children and I were deciding which movie to watch in our last hour together before the weekend. When one child interjected that she has brought "It," a science fiction horror movie I had already asked her not to bring, the children went wild chanting over and over again "it, it, it, it, it." I was already exhausted from a long week, and feeling frustrated by the unraveling of the democratic process to choosing a movie I as trying to lead. At my flat out denial to the movie "It," one child remarked under his breath, "You are not letting us watch this because you don't like Mexicans, because you are a racist." My stomach felt as though it fell through my body and onto the floor. Upon reflection I wish I would have handled the situation differently, would have sat down with the children and engaged in a discussion about what it means to be a racist, why that comment might have upset me, and why that was inappropriate comment used to share his frustration with me. Lead a discussion, however, I did not. I took a deep breath, exhaled, yelled for the attention of the nearly chaotic classroom, and said "I do not ever want to be called that word again." Because I had not yet yelled in the previous weeks of the program, this alone sent a message, but I wish I would have followed up more closely. I suppose my shock at the situation, as well as embarrassment when I actually entertained the suggestion for a millisecond, hindered my ability to more effectively respond, but I learned a valuable lesson and will now be more attune to opportunities I can use to discuss such salient issues like racism.

In total, my experience with Horizons provided me the motivation as well as the confidence I will need to carry me through my student teaching and into my first years as a teacher. In six weeks I witnessed and participated in the creation of phenomenal achievements in learning. From writing improvement to increased knowledge about the water cycle to increases in speed and endurance in the water, each moment invested in these children poured forth such inspiring results. I hope to take the passion for teaching I gained this summer into my future classroom, and hope to continue to be involved in the lives of these children.

Girl Scout Co-Leader Troop 2095—Chase Street Elementary

I am now entering my third year as a Co-leader for the Chase Street Elementary School Girl Scout Troop. Although this experience is not academic in the sense that I am the teacher, the girls are my students, and we are surrounded by the rules and regulations of a public school, I feel that I have learned a tremendous amount about relating to children and forming relationships with children. Our troop has fluctuated in numbers the past few years as girls move on to middle school and visit every other Friday for the Junior Meetings, but generally there are ten girls at each meeting of varying levels of education, the majority of whom are black, a few Latino, and two white.

My Co-Leaders Nancy Moon and Jennifer Thompson have become mentors as well as close friends, and have taught me through their interactions with the girls as well. My responsibilities as Co-Leader include planning and teaching badges during our weekly/bi-weekly meetings: I have taught Jewelry Making, Outdoor Creativity, Water Safety, Drawing & Painting, Print Making, and Architecture among countless others, and always try to share my passion for creating and arts and crafts with the girls. I have likewise aided in the planning of our annual camping trip, and enjoy even more with each passing trip the budding interest the girls are developing in the environment and the intricacies of camping—tent pitching, hiking, open-fire cooking—which most of them had little interaction with previously. I will close this reflection with a quote from one of my girl scouts at our first camping trip in the fall of 2003. She was one of all but two of our girls who was camping for the first time in her life. This remark she made as we sat around our first official campfire really struck a chord with me of how important this experiential learning was for these young girls:

"Miss Morgan, what are those orange dot-looking things floating up in the air?"

"O Sweetie, those are sparks, tiny flames from the fire that have been carried from it by the wind and will eventually burn out in the air"

"Sparks. Wow, we read about those in one of our classes, but I never knew what they were."

Swim Coach—Summer Hill, Athens Area Aquatic Association, & Athens Bulldogs Swim Club

My several positions in Athens as an assistant swim coach have likewise increased my understanding of establishing and developing relationships with children. Although the children I have coached are of a higher socioeconomic status than those I would like to someday teach, and for the most part are from stable, loving families, I have learned a great deal from them.

My family shares a lake house in Wisconsin with our extended family, and to assuage my parents' fears of their children drowning, my sister, brother, and I were enrolled in swimming lessons as soon as we left the womb—well, not really but shortly thereafter. My parents never dreamed that this early exposure to water would lead my sister and me to become competitive swimmers through college, my brother through high school. After 22 years in the chlorinated water of pools I traded in my Speedo for a bikini, and now enjoy the pool from the side. It was by chance that I ran into one my coaches from the University of Georgia, in a bind finding instructors for their annual swim camp. In the summer of 2003 I accepted the job with great hesitation and reservation about my desire to be around a pool and my ability to coach, but today I look back at this “chance” encounter with gratitude. I have developed a whole new appreciation for the sport of swimming, for coaching in general, and plan to continue coaching as long as I have the opportunity. One of the most intriguing learning experiences I have had in my coaching was learning a new language—the language of swimming. All of the years of technique instruction and repetition of laps did little to enable me to effectively communicate the intricacies of a quite technically organized activity. Through mentor coaches and through conversations with my former teammates I have learned the language of swimming instruction, but am perfecting it with each practice, with each new child that I encounter. This learning I believe will greatly impact my learning as a teacher in the classroom when I am sharing my knowledge of English, science, social studies, and mathematics to the children as they are constructing their own. I look forward to learning the language of my future classroom and my future students.

PHILOSOPHY OF TEACHING

What is my philosophy and how will it guide me?

I have been a wonderer from the beginning. With my imagination always switched on, always active, I enjoyed my childhood, surrounded by loving parents who provided me with love, support, and an enriching environment that fueled the explorer harboring within. I have finally reached an age where I can appreciate the fortune I have been afforded in life, and recognize that all are not as fortunate as I am. As a teacher, I hope to share some of my fortune, some of my vivid imagination, some of my passion for the world and for learning about the world with children whose lives have begun with far less than I could ever imagine.

I would like in this future career to take my students on a journey to begin asking themselves questions I, at the age of 25, still wonder at:

Who am I?

What is this world around me?

Where in the world am I?

When can I become a participant of this world?

Why are my motivations for taking the path I am traveling upon?

How can I become the best person possible and make the most positive impact on others?

These questions I hope will serve as guiding questions for our exploratory journey in my class and in the world beyond the door of my classroom. The quotes that follow will also guide me.

"the word education evolved from the Latin word *educare*, which means to draw out or lead forth. The original definition of the word, then, suggests that schooling can facilitate the expression of what is contained within one's mind, heart, and the deepest recesses of being...how can we cultivate a sense of wonder in children? How can we assist them in articulating their insights and posing their questions?" (Campbell 1996)

I am coming to the field of teaching excited by the process of learning—both the learning of my future students and my own learning, and excited by the potential and possibility contained in the young children of the world. I dream often of my ideal classroom, a classroom where diversity is present and celebrated, a classroom where children learn together about themselves, their own cultures, and the cultures of the world, and a classroom where children begin to develop an appreciation for their place in the world. I want to likewise, "cultivate a sense of wonder" in my future students, and help them to draw out what lies inside of them (*ibid*). I believe a central component of a classroom that fosters diversity and acceptance is community, one where students and teacher feel welcome and safe, where self-esteem is cultivated.

- I want my students to be able to feel pride in themselves, their class, their learning.
- I want my students to make connections, connections with one another, to their family and culture, and to the community and world around them.
- I want my students to feel present in my classroom and present in the world. By present I do not mean in the class, hands raised, poised for listening, but present in the posters and work hanging from the walls, present in the classroom library, present in the characters and stories we read everyday.

"I have learned much from much from my teachers, more from my colleagues, but most of all from my students"

Maimonides

A classroom is a community, and in the community of my classroom I want my students to know

- we are a community—within and among ourselves we are capable of great learning and great achievement
- I am there for them—we will teach, learn, and grow together
- this is their classroom, there for them and exists because of them

regardless of policies, philosophies, theories, and methodologies, the success or failure of an individual child—the way that child experiences school—depends on what happens in that child's classroom, what kind of learning environment the teacher is able to provide, and how well the teacher is able to investigate and attend to the particular needs of that child. (Igoa 1999)

I want to be a teacher who

- helps students to realize the potential they contain
- is shown her own potential through the relationships developed with my students
- allows for the open sharing of joys and heartbreaks
- knows herself, but is constantly seeking to "know [more of] myself"

PLANNING TEMPLATE

Essential Guiding Question(s): _____

Thematic Unit Title: _____

Learning Goal(s): _____

Content Objectives:

Language Objectives:

TESOL Standards addressed:

GPS addressed:

Progression of the Day:

Morning Meeting:

Goals _____

Reflections _____

Daily Read Aloud:

Content Areas

| <u>Social Studies</u> | <u>Language Arts</u> | <u>Science</u> | <u>Mathematics</u> |
|---|---|--|---|
| History through the eyes of explorers | Literature through the eyes of authors | Science through the eyes of scientist | Math through the eyes of mathemagicians |
| Where will we go in our Time Travel Machine ? | Are we Becoming Authors in this Classroom ? | Are we Experiencing the Roles of a Scientist ? | Are we learning the "magical" presence of math in our world ? |
| People of History met: | Authors met: | Scientists met: | Mathematicians met: |
| | Genres Addressed: | | |
| Strategies Employed: | Strategies Employed: | Strategies Employed: | Strategies Employed: |

Relating Learning Goals in Content Area to Learning Goals in Community:

| <i>Features found in daily activities (adopted from SIOP)</i> | | |
|---|--------------------------|------------------|
| Preparation | Scaffolding | Grouping Options |
| ___ Adaptation of Content | ___ Modeling | ___ Whole class |
| ___ Links to Background | ___ Guided Practice | ___ Small groups |
| ___ Links to Past Learning | ___ Independent Practice | ___ Partners |
| ___ Strategies Incorporated | ___ Comprehensible Input | ___ Independent |
| Integration of Processes | Application | Assessment |
| ___ Reading | ___ Hands-on | ___ Individual |
| ___ Writing | ___ Meaningful | ___ Group |
| ___ Speaking | ___ Linked to Objectives | ___ Written |
| ___ Listening | ___ Promotes Engagement | ___ Oral |

Closing Moves & Reflections

Department of Elementary Education
Early Childhood Certification Option (ECCO) in the Master's Degree Program
Field Experience Verification and Evaluation Form

MORGAN FLEMING

has submitted work conducted under your supervision as part of an application for student teaching to the Department of Elementary and Social Studies Education of the University of Georgia. The department would appreciate your verification that the work was performed and your judgment about the quality of the applicant's performance. Please respond to the following items.

1. What is the name and purpose of the organization for which the work was done?

Barnett Shoals Elementary School. It's a public school to educate children Pre-K to 5.

2. What was the nature of the work done?

Ms. Morgan taught Spanish to class using songs, movements, and charts.

3. Over what time period and for approximately how many hours was the work done?

She came in between 10:30 and 10:50 and taught for 20 minutes each time throughout the ~~spring~~ semester of 2005.

4. How many children were involved, how old were they, and what were their demographic and educational characteristics?

There were twenty four five-year children, ten African-American, 1 Muslim, 2 Asian, 2 Hispanic, and 5 white. Their educational interests and abilities were very diverse.

5. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the best possible rating, how would you rate the quality of the applicant's performance? Please feel free to comment as well.

Ms. Morgan did a superb job. She was well prepared and punctual. I would give her 10.

Signature of supervisor:

Sook Jn Reagan

Typed or printed name:

Sook Jn Reagan

Position:

Teacher

Phone number and e-mail address:

369-9321, reagan@clarke.k12.ga.us

Date:

9/19/05

Department of Elementary Education
Early Childhood Certification Option (ECCO) in the Master's Degree Program
Field Experience Verification and Evaluation Form

MORGAN FLEMING

has submitted work conducted under your supervision as part of an application for student teaching to the Department of Elementary and Social Studies Education of the University of Georgia. The department would appreciate your verification that the work was performed and your judgment about the quality of the applicant's performance. Please respond to the following items.

1. What is the name and purpose of the organization for which the work was done?
 HORIZONS Student Enrichment Program, a National HORIZONS affiliate hosted at Holy Innocents School in Atlanta. The purpose of the program is to serve students from low-income families - provide a program of academics, sports, and cultural enrichment.
2. What was the nature of the work done?
 Morgan worked as ~~the~~ teaching assistant and also planned and presented numerous lessons to classes grades K-5. She also was a swimming coach for the daily swimming program at HORIZONS (K-4).
3. Over what time period and for approximately how many hours was the work done?
 For 6 weeks from June 27th Aug 5th. Her hours were 8:30-4pm approx 35 hrs per week - 210 hours total
4. How many children were involved, how old were they, and what were their demographic and educational characteristics?
 100 total children in Program K-6th grades. The class she was primarily assigned was 5th grade ¹³ student (entering 6th grade). She also planned activities and lessons for K-4th. All the students were from low-income families in the Sandy Springs area referred by public schools. The educational level of children varied from below to above average. ^{91%} of children came from Non-English speaking homes, primarily Latino.

3. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the best possible rating, how would you rate the quality of the applicant's performance? Please feel free to comment as well.

Absolutely a 10! Morgan was devoted, creative, passionate and professional. She was outstanding with the students, and very organized in the classroom.

Signature of supervisor:

Danice Giles

Typed or printed name:

Danice Giles

Position:

Program Director, HORIZONS

Phone number and e-mail address:

404-303-2150 ext 784 danice.giles@hies.org

Date:

9/13/05

**Department of Elementary Education
Early Childhood Certification Option (ECCO) in the Master's Degree Program
Field Experience Verification and Evaluation Form**

MORGAN FLEMING

has submitted work conducted under your supervision as part of an application for student teaching to the Department of Elementary and Social Studies Education of the University of Georgia. The department would appreciate your verification that the work was performed and your judgment about the quality of the applicant's performance. Please respond to the following items.

1. What is the name and purpose of the organization for which the work was done? Horizons 6 week summer academic enrichment program for children from Sandy Spring.

2. What was the nature of the work done? assistant to me in 5th grade

3. Over what time period and for approximately how many hours was the work done? 6 weeks (M-F) 7 hours a day

4. How many children were involved, how old were they, and what were their demographic and educational characteristics? 5th Grade Hispanic students below - above average

5. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the best possible rating, how would you rate the quality of the applicant's performance? Please feel free to comment as well.

10+ - Morgan was great with the kids; she planned creative lessons & was happy to do anything I asked

Signature of supervisor:

Elizabeth Allen

Typed or printed name:

E Allen

Position:

Teacher

Phone number and e-mail address:

allene2@fultonschools.org

Date:

8-5-05

Department of Elementary Education
Early Childhood Certification Option (ECCO) in the Master's Degree Program
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1. What is the name and purpose of the organization for which the work was done?

Horizons - Summer enrichment program for six weeks. The population are Indigent children from Public Schools.

2. What was the nature of the work done?

Well planned language Arts lessons geared toward a specific skill.

3. Over what time period and for approximately how many hours was the work done?

Four lessons taking approximately four hours in July of 2005.

4. How many children were involved, how old were they, and what were their demographic and educational characteristics?

Fourteen children of ages 6 and 7 were involved. There were 12 Hispanic and 3 black children from the Sandy Springs area.

5. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the best possible rating, how would you rate the quality of the applicant's performance? Please feel free to comment as well.

Her ideas and preparation were excellent. She is a very creative individual and considering the group she was working with, I would definitely give her a 9 or 10 rating.

Signature of supervisor:

Kathryn Hardy

Typed or printed name:

Kathryn Fulton Hardy

Position:

First Grade Teacher

Phone number and e-mail address:

404 252-5998 Kathryn.Hardy@comcast.net

Date:

September 16, 2005

Department of Elementary Education
Early Childhood Certification Option (ECCO) in the Master's Degree Program
Field Experience Verification and Evaluation Form

MORGAN FLEMING has submitted work conducted under your supervision as part of an application for student teaching to the Department of Elementary and Social Studies Education of the University of Georgia. The department would appreciate your verification that the work was performed and your judgment about the quality of the applicant's performance. Please respond to the following items.

1. What is the name and purpose of the organization for which the work was done?

Girl Scouts of Northeast Ga. Troop 2095.
Empowering Girls to be responsible, active and aware citizens

2. What was the nature of the work done?

We do badge work with girls in a variety of areas - go on field trips, camping

3. Over what time period and for approximately how many hours was the work done?

2 years - 400+ hours

4. How many children were involved, how old were they, and what were their demographic and educational characteristics?

10-14 ages 8 - 13 white/hispanic/African-American
middle + lower socio economic
all learning levels - gifted to low

5. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the best possible rating, how would you rate the quality of the applicant's performance? Please feel free to comment as well.

10

Signature of supervisor:

Nancy Moon

Typed or printed name:

Nancy Moon

Position:

Troop Leader Troop 2095 Girl Scouts of NEGA

Phone number and e-mail address:

206-322-1694 moon@clark.k12.ga.us

Date:

9/14/05

**Department of Elementary Education
Early Childhood Certification Option (ECCO) in the Master's Degree Program
Field Experience Verification and Evaluation Form**

MORGAN FLEMING

has submitted work conducted under your supervision as part of an application for student teaching to the Department of Elementary and Social Studies Education of the University of Georgia. The department would appreciate your verification that the work was performed and your judgment about the quality of the applicant's performance. Please respond to the following items.

1. What is the name and purpose of the organization for which the work was done?

Summer Hill Recreation Club ; Assistant Swim Coach

2. What was the nature of the work done?

Coached swimmers - ages 6-12

3. Over what time period and for approximately how many hours was the work done?

May - June 2004 & 2005 ≈ 120 hrs

4. How many children were involved, how old were they, and what were their demographic and educational characteristics?

100+ kids, ages 4-18, primarily caucasian

5. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the best possible rating, how would you rate the quality of the applicant's performance? Please feel free to comment as well.

10 ; Works well ^{with} children & parents

Signature of supervisor:

Scott Burrell

Typed or printed name:

SCOTT BURRELL

Position:

Head Swim Coach

Phone number and e-mail address:

(706) 769-5031 scottb@uga.edu

Date:

9/18/05

**Department of Elementary Education
Early Childhood Certification Option (ECCO) in the Master's Degree Program
Field Experience Verification and Evaluation Form**

MORGAN FLEMING

has submitted work conducted under your supervision as part of an application for student teaching to the Department of Elementary and Social Studies Education of the University of Georgia. The department would appreciate your verification that the work was performed and your judgment about the quality of the applicant's performance. Please respond to the following items.

1. What is the name and purpose of the organization for which the work was done?

Athens Area Aquatic Assoc.
Competitive swimming program for kids.

2. What was the nature of the work done?

Morgan was an assistant coach working with children from the beginner to intermediate levels.

3. Over what time period and for approximately how many hours was the work done?

Fall of 2004 to Summer 2005. 3 hours a week.

4. How many children were involved, how old were they, and what were their demographic and educational characteristics?

15 or so in each practice session. Ages 7 to 12.
Mainly Middle Class Caucasian.

5. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the best possible rating, how would you rate the quality of the applicant's performance? Please feel free to comment as well.

10

Morgan is one of the best assist coaches I have ever employed. She made a real connection with the children in her group.

Signature of supervisor:

Sean P. Gillan

Typed or printed name:

Sean P. Gillan

Position:

Head Coach/Owner

Phone number and e-mail address:

706-548-7284 / spgillan@yahoo.com

Date:

June 5th, 2005

Department of Elementary Education
Early Childhood Certification Option (ECCO) in the Master's Degree Program
Field Experience Verification and Evaluation Form

MORGAN FLEMING has submitted work conducted under your supervision as part of an application for student teaching to the Department of Elementary and Social Studies Education of the University of Georgia. The department would appreciate your verification that the work was performed and your judgment about the quality of the applicant's performance. Please respond to the following items.

1. What is the name and purpose of the organization for which the work was done?

Athens Bulldog Swim Club
assistant swim coach

2. What was the nature of the work done?

coach beginning swimmers

3. Over what time period and for approximately how many hours was the work done?

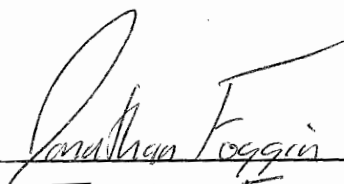
Tu/Thur Sept 14 - May 2006 - only 2 hrs thus far

4. How many children were involved, how old were they, and what were their demographic and educational characteristics?

15-18 children ages 4-11 of beginning swim level
90% white, ~~10%~~ 5% Asian, 5% other

5. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the best possible rating, how would you rate the quality of the applicant's performance? Please feel free to comment as well.

Signature of supervisor:



Typed or printed name:

Jonathan Foggin

Position:

ABSC Head Age Group Coach

Phone number and e-mail address:

369-8431 jfoggin@uga.edu

Date:

Sept 16, 2005
