

Exhibition of Readiness for student teaching

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Course work

Classes I have taken

Course number	Course name	Instructor	Term
EDEC 7020	Theory and Curriculum in Early Childhood Education	Dr. Betty Bisplinghoff	Summer 2004
SPED 2000	Survey of Special Education	Dr. Mary Kathryn Everitt	Summer 2004
ESCI 6420	Science for Early Childhood Education	Dr. Deborah Tippins	Summer 2004
EDEC 7420	Organization and Management of Early Childhood Classrooms	Dr. Penny Oldfather	Fall 2004
EPSY 6800	Foundations of Cognition for Education	Dr. Eric Bridges	Fall 2004
EDEC 8200	Early Educational Intervention for Young Children Placed At-Risk	Dr. Stacey Neuharth-Pritchett	Fall 2004
ELAN 7630	ESOL, Grades P-12	Dr. Pam Sheppard	Fall 2004
READ 6010	Foundations of Reading Instruction	Dr. James Baumann	Spring 2005
ELAN 7040	Language and Culture in the Classroom	Dr. Pam Sheppard	Spring 2005
EDEC 7500	Action Research	Dr. Betty Bisplinghoff	Spring 2005
EDEC 7010	Trends and Issues in Early Childhood Education	Dr. Deborah Tippins	Summer 2005

Courses I am currently taking

EMAT 6420	Mathematics Methods for Early Childhood Education	Dr. Dorothy White	Fall 2005
ELAN 7730	First and Second Language Acquisition and Development	Dr. Pam Sheppard	Fall 2005

Courses I will take

EDIT 6150	Introduction to Computer-Based Education	TBA	Spring 2006
EDEC 6040	Special Topics in Early Childhood Education	Dr. Betty Bisplinghoff	Fall 2006

Area of Focus: Music in the Elementary Classroom

What experiences led to choosing this focus?

When I was a college student, I learned about the field of music therapy and became intrigued by the possibility of using my background as a musician to improve educational and clinical outcomes. While I ultimately decided not to pursue music therapy as a career, I remained fascinated in the potential of music to impact human emotion, health, learning, and memory.

I was able to experience the power of music as an educational and relationship-building tool when I taught English in a Japanese high school as a member of the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) program. About halfway through the year, my students and I began having conversations about music and exchanging Japanese and American music with each other. Sharing our music sparked many more conversations and quickly deepened my relationship with the students. As a bonus, I realized that our music exchange was motivating students to communicate with me in English and study the English lyrics in the music. I began to incorporate music into lessons to practice listening skills; I also designed an entire lesson around music from twelve different countries to introduce a unit on world travel. Bringing music into the classroom increased student engagement and participation.

From my experience in Japan and my knowledge about the field of music therapy, I realized that music could serve as a powerful learning tool in the classroom. When I began the ECCO program, I wondered about the possibilities and impact of incorporating music into the elementary classroom.

How did I go about developing the area of focus?

I investigated my topic in several different ways. I read journal articles, ordered books, and found websites pertaining to the topic of integrating music into the general education classroom. I searched for resources that addressed practical ways to incorporate music into the curriculum, as well as theoretical perspectives that supported the use of music in the classroom.

I also made an effort to incorporate my area of focus into inquiry projects in several of my graduate courses. Through these class projects I was able to research my area of focus from different perspectives. In "Foundations of Cognition for Education" (EPSY 6800), I focused my inquiry presentation and research paper on the topic of "Music and cognition in the elementary classroom." In my ESOL methods course (ELAN 7630), I chose "Music and ESOL" as the topic of my workshop presentation. Finally, for the inquiry project in "Organization and Management of Early Childhood Classrooms" (EDEC 7420), I investigated ways to use music for community building and classroom management.

Through my graduate courses and field experiences, I met elementary teachers who have used music in their classrooms. I conducted two e-mail interviews in which I asked the teachers questions about their use of music. From their answers I was able to learn about how music is being used in two real classrooms across the country with children from very different socioeconomic groups.

Finally, I participated in music activities during two of my field experiences. In my ESOL practicum, the supervising teacher and I sang songs with the Kindergarten and first graders to help them learn vocabulary. When working with pre-K students in the Haygood Preschool summer camp, the co-teacher and I played songs from "Dr. Jean" and engaged the children in singing and movement activities.

What did I learn?

The benefits of incorporating music into the elementary classroom are supported by educational theories and well-documented by research. There are a myriad of ways that music can enrich the curriculum, improve the learning environment, and increase cognitive functioning.

Incorporating music into the general education classroom is not a new idea. In the United States, music has been used as a tool for learning in the elementary classroom since the 1800s. Songs were commonly used to reinforce content area material (Harris, 2002-2004). One obvious example is the "ABC" song—a vehicle that most of us used to learn the alphabet. A generation ago, music was still an important daily ritual and tool for learning in the regular education classroom (Baer-Simahk, 2000). These days, music has lost its prominence in most classrooms due to the pressures of high-stakes testing and the amount of academic material to be covered.

Several theories support the incorporation of music into the classroom. Howard Gardner's *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (1985) states: "Musical-Rhythmic learners are sensitive to nonverbal sounds and are very much aware of tone, pitch, and timbre. Using rhythm, chanting, and songs with these students can increase their attention and interest while motivating them to learn" (p. 120). For all students, but especially those who are musical-rhythmic learners, music can serve as an exciting vehicle to receive content material and construct meaning. As Gardner states, incorporating music into the classroom also motivates musical-rhythmic learners. It catches their attention and interest. Increasing students' attention allows them to allocate more cognitive resources to the task at hand during perception of stimuli. They are able to concentrate better and absorb more material.

Combining content material with song and rhythms is also supported by theories of multi-sensory learning. The more senses we can activate at the same time, the more information we will retain. When teachers

Area of Focus: Music in the Elementary Classroom

incorporate music into the classroom, song is often combined with clapping, stomping, or other physical movements. Total physical response (TPR) is an ESL methodology that often combines music with movement to teach language. Visual aids such as pictures, books, or puppets can also be used with music. The combination of visual, auditory, and tactile stimulation “increases the likelihood that instructional material will be perceived” (Bruning, 2004, p.22).

Music can aid memory. Rehearsal of rote material that needs to be memorized, such as multiplication tables or the names of the bones in the body, can be more enjoyable when put to music. Students are more likely to rehearse a song, chant, or rhythm than text by itself. “Chunking” was discussed in my Cognition class (EPSY 6800) as a way that our brains increase memory capacity. Melody helps encode material because it “connects and chunks lines and phrases, which assists in learning” (Wallace, 1994, p.1473). In addition, repetition and rhyme in music satisfy the brain’s tendency to search for and recognize patterns. Music can serve as a very effective tool for memorization; of course, teachers must also check for understanding since memorization does not necessarily reflect true learning.

Music can also influence the classroom environment and make it more conducive to learning. A study investigated the effect of music in a science lab class for students with special needs. Playing orchestral music in the background helped students relax and aided physical coordination. Students were able to accomplish tasks that were previously frustrating and unbearable. The music eased their frustrations and diminished several of the behavioral problems present in that class (Savan, 1999). Music can also impact the learning environment by building community. Students may respond to a particular song and adopt it as their special class song (Tesler, personal communication, Sep. 12, 2004). Singing at the end of the day can help students relieve stress associated with high-stakes testing (Snow, personal communication, Sep. 2, 2005). Songs, chants, or rhythms can be used to signal transitions in class.

Our students who are English language learners (ELLs) can especially benefit from the impact of music on sensory input, memory, and the learning environment. ELLs can respond to the universal language of music and share a commonality with their native English-speaking peers. Theories of second-language acquisition support the use of music to aid ELLs. Steven Krashen’s “Input” hypothesis states that challenging input of new language can be made “comprehensible” with the help of “extra cues.” These extra cues help bridge the gap between a student’s current level of ability and more difficult material to be mastered. Music, used with pictures, gestures, and movement, can serve as “extralinguistic support” to provide meaning (Medina, 2002). Another hypothesis of Krashen’s, the “Affective Filter” hypothesis, states that second-language acquisition is influenced by the learner’s attitude, motivation, and emotions. If a learner is frustrated, intimidated, or fearful, he is less able to receive new information and make sense of it. Music can evoke positive emotions and create a calm and relaxing atmosphere that lowers the affective filter (Medina, 2002). Lowering the affective filter allows students to feel more comfortable expressing themselves and making mistakes—two important aspects of second-language acquisition.

Music can be used to enrich learning in all of the academic subject areas. Even teachers who “can’t carry a tune in a bucket” can use music in the classroom. Below is a list of some exciting possibilities:

- Sing songs or recite chants that contain academic content.
- Write a song together, or have students write their own songs using academic content.
- Listen to songs or music to introduce content and ignite interest.
- Play background music to calm or focus students.
- Write, draw, or discuss responses to music.

One drawback to using music in the classroom is that, depending on the selection, music can serve as a distraction to some students. When playing music in the background, teachers should take special care to be observant and responsive to student needs. If any child feels distracted by the music, it should be turned off. Similarly, music that contains content area material can detract from learning if the melody is too complicated or difficult to learn (Wallace, 1994). Good judgment is needed to gauge when and how music should be introduced into lessons. Teachers should also be sensitive to themes or historical references in songs that might be offensive (Baer-Simahk, 2000). They should reflect critically on the song and check sources if unsure about appropriateness.

When combined with good instructional practice, music can be used to enrich the curriculum, aid memory, create an environment conducive to learning, and stir creativity. Students and teachers have much to gain from bringing music back into the general education classroom.

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

I still want to learn more practical knowledge about using music in the classroom. I want to interview more teachers who are effectively using music in their classrooms and learn from their approaches. I also want to look at actual lesson plans that incorporate music—there are many plans on the internet and in books that I plan to read. I would like to compile a library of practical resources that includes lesson plans, practical ideas, and appropriate music CDs. Finally, I would like to gain more hands-on experience with incorporating music into the classroom. I hope to find an opportunity to do this through my field experiences this semester and in student teaching.

Area of Focus: References and Works Cited

Articles and books I have read

- Baer-Simahk, B. (2000, Spring) Keeping music alive: Ideas for integrating music into daily classroom life [electronic version]. *Responsive Classroom Newsletter*, 12(2), 6-9.
- Bruning, R., Schraw, G., Norby, M., & Ronning, R. (2004). *Cognitive Psychology and Instruction*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Giles, A.M. & Frego, R.D. (2004, Spring/Summer). An inventory of music activities used by elementary classroom teachers: An exploratory study [computer file]. *UPDATE: Applications of Research in Music Education (online)*, 22 (2), 13-22. Retrieved 20 June, 2005 from H.W. Wilson Full Text database (Document ID: AN 200410807558002).
- Harris, R. (2002-2004). *Song as a Tool for Content Area Learning*. Retrieved August 28, 2004, from <http://www.songsforteaching.com/rationale.htm>.
- Jalongo, M. & Bromley, K. (1984). Developing linguistic competence through song. *Reading Teacher*, 37(9), 840-845.
- Jones, M. (2003). *The Mozart Effect*. Retrieved November 11, 2004, from www.indiana.edu/~intell/mozarteffect2.shtml
- Medina, S. (2002). Using Music to Enhance Second Language Acquisition: From Theory to Practice. In Lalas, J. & Lee, S. *Language, Literacy, and Academic Development for English language Learners*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Educational Publishing.
- Medina, S. (1993). The effect of music on second language vocabulary acquisition. FEES News National Network for Early Language Learning, 6(3), 1-8.
- Prescott, J. O. (2005, January/February). Music in the Classroom. *Instructor*, 114 (5), 29-30, 32, 34, 67, 76. Retrieved from 10 August, 2005 from H.W. Wilson Full Text database (Document ID: AN 200500106606010).
- Savan, A. (1998). A study of the effect of background music on the behavior and physiological responses of children with special educational needs. *The Psychology of Education Review*, 22(1).
- Tomlinson, C. (2001). *How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-Ability Classrooms*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Wallace, W. (1994). Memory for Music: Effect of Melody on Recall of Text. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*. 20(6), 1471-1485. Retrieved August 20, 2004, from PsycARTICLES database.

Articles and books I am currently reading

- Anderson, W.M., & Lawrence, J.E. (2001). *Integrating music into the elementary classroom* (5th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Area of Focus: References and Works Cited

Johnson, G.L., & Edelson, R.J. (2003). Integrating music and mathematics in the elementary classroom. *Teaching Children Mathematics*, 9(8), 474-9.

Tibbett, T. (2004). *Listen to learn: Using American music to teach language arts and social studies*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Articles and books I plan to read

Church, E.B. (1992). *Learning Through Play: Music and Movement*. Scholastic.

Gardner, H. (1983). *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. New York: Basic Books.

Katz, S. & Thomas, J. (2003). *The Word in Play: Language, Music, and Movement in the Classroom*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing.

Sporborg, J. (1998) *Music in every classroom: A resource guide for integrating music across the curriculum, Grade K-8*. Portsmouth, NH: Libraries Unlimited.

Storms, J. (1995). *101 Music Games for Children: Fun and Learning With Rhythm and Song*. Alameda, CA: Hunter House Publishers.

Wirth, M. (1983). *Musical Games, Fingerplays and Rhythmic Activities for Early Childhood*. Parker Publishing.

Website resources

Dr. Jean- Songs and Activities for Young Children: <http://www.drjean.org/>

ESL Through Music: <http://www.caslt.org/research/music.htm>

The Responsive Classroom Newsletter: www.responsiveclassroom.org

Rethinking Schools Online-"Songs with a Global Conscience": <http://www.rethinkingschools.org>

Songs for Teaching: www.songsforteaching.com

Field Experiences summary table

Dates	Organization	Nature of work	Grade(s)	Size of group	Number of hours	Student/ school profile	Principle responsibilities
Oct. 2002— March 2003	Kojen English lang. school (Taipei, Taiwan)*	English teacher	K-2 class; 3-5 class	25 children per class	400 hrs	Private language school all native Chinese speakers mixed gender classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Prepared and implemented lesson plans focusing on communicative English o Assessed children o Managed classroom environment
March 4 – April 26, 2004	Falmouth Public Schools (Falmouth, Maine)	Substitute teacher	K-4	Special ed: 1 on 1 Whole class: 20-25 children	Special ed (1:1) 39 hrs Whole class 55 hours	High SES suburban district mixed gender classes inclusion of children with exceptionalities predominantly Caucasian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Implemented sub plans o Planned extra activities o Managed whole-class environments o Worked 1:1 with children with mild to mod ID, autism, & Down syndrome, focusing on academic as well as social & functional tasks
Sept. 24 – Nov. 8, 2004	Cleveland Road Elementary (Athens, Georgia)	ESOL practicum	K-1 class; 4-5 class	11 children per class	20 hours	students of Latino heritage one student from India school had 78% of students on free and reduced lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Acted as lead teacher o Prepared and implemented eight lesson plans for reading, writing, and vocabulary o Managed the classroom environ.
Feb. 2 – April 29, 2005	Cleveland Road Elementary (Athens, Georgia)	Reading tutor	3	Tutored 1 child at a time	40 hours	Caucasian, African-American, and Latino students 3 male/ 3 female one student received special ed. services low SES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Created a daily template for tutoring o Worked with struggling readers to improve phonetic skills, comprehension, and enjoyment of reading
June 13- June 17, 2005	Haygood Preschool summer camp (Atlanta, GA)	Co-Teacher	Pre-K	15 children	20 hours	Caucasian and Asian American children high SES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Planned activities related to the theme of “Space Camp” o Managed the classroom.

* Despite attempts to have my former Kojen directors complete the ECCO field experience verification and evaluation form, I have not received the form from overseas.

Reflecting on field experiences & readiness

My field experiences have provided wonderful contexts for exploring teaching and learning. I have worked with children from a spectrum of age groups, socioeconomic backgrounds, cultures, and needs. Each experience has offered new insights into teaching and learning, and helped me develop understandings about what kind of teacher I hope to be. The reflections below describe how each learning experience has contributed to my readiness to student teach.

Kojen English Language School (Taipei, Taiwan) – *English teacher*

From October 2002—March 2003, I taught English as a foreign language (EFL) in a private language school in Taiwan. Due to a teacher shortage, I was immediately given responsibility for two classes of elementary-aged children, a class with middle school students, and an adult class. I initially found the sudden demands of this job to be quite overwhelming. Thankfully, I received a great deal of teacher support, especially in comparison to my experience in the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) program the year before. At the Kojen school, teacher trainers were available to help with lesson planning, the school library was filled with curriculum materials, and helpful training sessions were offered at the central school branch every month.

Through this experience I was able to work with a range of ages and discover how much I especially enjoyed working with elementary-aged children. I learned about effective teaching strategies and gained experience managing the classroom environment. I fully embraced the Kojen philosophy of engaging students actively in the English language through a variety of activities, games, and interaction. I learned how to vary the pace of lessons, use visuals and role-playing activities to aid comprehension, and address speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. As I interacted with the children and assessed their progress, I saw the value of designing lessons that capitalize on children's natural inclination to learn through exploration and play. My time at Kojen language school formed a basic belief that learning should be active and student-centered.

After returning to the United States and reflecting upon my experience in Taiwan, I realized how much I enjoyed teaching and interacting with students. This experience had a major impact on my decision to apply for the ECCO program and pursue a career in elementary education.

Falmouth Public Schools (Falmouth, Maine) – *Substitute teacher*

I worked as a substitute teacher in the Falmouth Public Schools from March 4, 2004—April 26, 2004 for a total of 94 hours. This was my first opportunity to venture into a public elementary school since attending elementary school myself. By working in these schools, I gained reassurance that elementary teaching is the career that I wish to pursue. I substituted for general education teachers, grades K-4, as well as for special education aids who worked 1:1 with children with special needs.

Since this was my first opportunity to work closely with children with special needs, I feel that my greatest learning was in the special education context. In my first special education substitute assignment, I aided a fourth grader with moderate intellectual disability. I found myself initially trying to "take care" of her—underestimating her ability to accomplish tasks by herself. With coaching from the special education supervisor and the girl's classroom teacher, I began to understand how to better meet her needs. It was truly inspiring to observe how the special education team worked with children with intellectual disabilities, autism, Down syndrome, and other disabilities. With their guidance and modeling, I learned how to carry out academic activities with the children, work on socialization behaviors, and modify materials to help the children participate in the general education classroom. This experience profoundly impacted me both personally and professionally. I am now better equipped to work with children with exceptionalities.

Cleveland Road Elementary (Athens, GA) – *ESOL practicum*

In the fall semester of 2004, I completed a 20 hour ESOL practicum for my ESOL methods course (ELAN 7630). I worked in an ESOL pull-out class of K-1st graders as well as a pull-out class of 4th and 5th graders. It was my responsibility to plan and teach eight lessons, manage the classroom, and assess the children's work. I also observed two classes taught by the ESOL teacher and one hour of a general education kindergarten class that contained an ESOL student.

This experience provided a wonderful opportunity to work closely with the Latino population, practice writing lesson plans, and manage the classroom environment. The ESOL teacher was a delightful woman who provided ideas when asked for guidance, yet gave me complete control of the classroom and allowed me to act as lead teacher. I learned how to design lesson plans using the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model for teaching English language learners (ELLs). Through this model I became more familiar with the national TESOL standards and learned how to write both language and content objectives for each lesson. I was also able to incorporate my area of focus into a few of the lessons; I sang songs with the younger class to learn and practice new vocabulary. The children loved singing and quickly learned the words and actions to the songs.

I learned a great deal about classroom management through my work with the younger class. The ESOL teacher admitted that classroom management with the kindergarten and first graders was a challenge for her since

Reflecting on field experiences & readiness

she was accustomed to working with older children. It was interesting to work together with the teacher and try different approaches to classroom management as we learned how to work with very young students.

Cleveland Road Elementary (Athens, GA) – Reading tutor

Three times a week, from February 2—April 29, 2005, I tutored individual 3rd grade students who were considered at-risk of failing the reading CRCT. The classroom teacher asked that I help the students improve their phonetic skills. I designed a daily template to engage the children in a variety of literacy activities and improve their phonetic skills. I also conducted an action research study in this context, investigating the question, "What is important to struggling readers?" I sought to understand what the children valued from our time together, as well as what I valued. This inquiry gave me the opportunity to attempt a variety of instructional strategies used to teach reading, and discover how the children felt about the strategies. My modified Reading Recovery plan included time for oral storytelling, writing down our stories, modeling my enjoyment of reading, student read-aloud of books, and manipulating magnetic letters to practice phonetic skills.

I learned that each of the strategies in my daily template has a place in the literacy classroom. In particular, I had not previously considered taking time for storytelling or modeling my enjoyment of reading. I now see how these strategies helped build the student-teacher relationship and influenced the children's perception of reading. My findings also illuminated the importance of "how the children feel about themselves." Their confidence and self-concept as readers played a major role in what they valued from our time together. Finally, the children revealed how much they valued learning about me and sharing themselves with me. Our relationship was important to them. I will carry these central understandings with me into my future classroom.

Haygood Preschool summer camp (Atlanta, GA) – Teacher

I was nervous and excited about this week-long summer camp because I had never before been in charge of a classroom of children this young (pre-K). I ended up having a lot of fun with the four and five year-olds, and felt extremely lucky to have the opportunity to observe and work with an experienced co-teacher.

The co-teacher in my class was a woman who had nine years of experience teaching kindergarten during the regular school year. I observed the way in which her relaxed and gentle demeanor set a similar tone in the classroom and helped all activities run smoothly. I also observed my co-teacher's interactions with the students' parents, and I gained daily experience interacting with the parents myself. I realized that I have not had much practice in the area of parent communication. During this week I saw and talked to the parents every morning and afternoon. I grew more comfortable talking to parents and sharing news with them about their children. Another benefit of working with my co-teacher was seeing the way she reacted to certain situations. Most memorably, on the first day of camp, a child threw a wild tantrum when dropped off in the morning. I followed the co-teacher's lead and we addressed the situation calmly and effectively.

This week was a wonderful learning experience. I had a lot of fun talking and listening to the children, carrying out art activities with them, singing songs, and reading with them. I gained confidence in my ability to lead and manage a classroom of children this age.

Concluding thoughts

Reflecting on my field experiences has helped me recognize my strengths and goals as I prepare to student teach. I will draw upon my strengths to make a difference in the lives of children. My goals will help me continue to learn and grow on my personal and professional journey.

Strengths

- I have a genuine care for children and their social, cognitive, and affective needs.
- Living and working overseas has helped me develop resilience, flexibility, and a deep appreciation for diversity.
- I strive to build meaningful learning opportunities around students' interests, individual needs, and home lives.
- I am always seeking self-improvement and welcome constructive criticism and change.

Goals

- I would like to gain more experience managing classrooms of children from diverse or low socioeconomic backgrounds. To gain this experience, I will substitute teach in Clarke County elementary schools this semester.
- In my field experiences I have always encouraged my students to view mistakes as opportunities to learn. As a recovering perfectionist, I hope to become more accepting of my own mistakes and acknowledge them openly to students to serve as a better model.
- Most of my field experiences have emphasized language and literacy. I hope to learn more about teaching math. I will learn more about math education and gain experience planning lessons through my math methods course this semester.

Philosophy of teaching

My experiences thus far in the ECCO program have helped me develop several core beliefs about who I am and what I hope to stand for as an elementary educator.

I believe in the importance of building a supportive learning community.

How we feel about ourselves, and how we relate to one another, heavily impacts our educational experiences. In a supportive learning community, children are able to experience a sense of belonging. The classroom is a safe and nurturing place where we listen, care for one another, and negotiate meaning together. Children are able to take risks and grow personally and intellectually. In a learning community, differentiated instruction becomes possible because students support one another's individual needs and paths to learning. Teachers and students also share responsibility and power in the community, thus giving students a sense of empowerment and autonomy. Finally, I believe that functioning as a community in the classroom allows children to extend the idea of "community" to local, national, and global scales—thus tying into my next core belief:

I believe in multicultural education.

Multicultural education means different things to different people, and I am still developing my understandings of what multicultural education means to me. For me, the core principles of multicultural education are:

- *Providing equal educational opportunities to all children.* I believe that all children, regardless of race, socioeconomic status, or background are capable of learning and are entitled to equal educational opportunities. "Equal" does not necessarily mean "the same."
- *Celebrating diversity and modeling/promoting tolerance.* I believe in promoting awareness, appreciation, and tolerance for different ways of living and thinking in the national and global community.
- *Illuminating the presence and contributions of minorities traditionally overlooked in the curriculum.*

I believe in honoring the diverse reality of our nation and world by including the faces and contributions of diverse people in the lessons, literature, curriculum materials, and posters of my classroom. I believe that students from outside the dominant culture feel affirmed and empowered from this recognition; students from within the dominant culture benefit from gaining a larger perspective.

I believe in listening to children.

Children come to school with a range of backgrounds and prior experiences. I believe in actively listening to students in order to understand who they are and how I might help them connect new knowledge with prior knowledge. Listening allows teachers to learn about children's interests and build learning opportunities around them. We are able to discover children's Funds of Knowledge and capitalize on them to enrich the classroom community. There are multiple ways of knowing and creating knowledge, and listening allows us to get windows into children's thinking as they construct knowledge. Listening to children is a seemingly simple and obvious element of teaching that may be considered an educational cliché. In practice, listening is more difficult than it appears, and I am still developing my listening skills to truly "hear" and learn from children. To remind myself of its importance, I have created a space in my planning template for "listening to children" each day.

I believe in the power of music to impact the minds and hearts of children.

As elaborated in my Area of Focus, music has the ability to motivate children, lower the affective filter, enrich the curriculum, and bring a sense of togetherness to the community. I believe in infusing the classroom with the joy and power of music.

Reflecting on and articulating my core beliefs about teaching and learning has been an empowering process. I know that I will continue to develop my teaching philosophy as I reflect upon new experiences. No matter where my teaching career takes me, I feel empowered by the belief that teachers have the ability to make a positive difference in the world. In the words of Christina Igoa, "I believe our task is profound, but we teachers can contribute to a more peaceful America, beginning in our classrooms in our own small way."¹

¹ Igoa, C. (1995). *The Inner World of the Immigrant Child*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Earlbaum, p. 174.

**FIELD EXPERIENCE VERIFICATION AND EVALUATION FORM
M.Ed. Early Childhood Certification Option (ECCO)**

Cindy Lo has submitted work conducted under your supervision as part of an application for student teaching to the Department of Elementary 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?

Cindy substitute taught for the Falmouth School Department in a variety of assignments.

2. What was the nature of the work done?

She substituted in K-4 classrooms and also as a 1:1 support teacher for special education students.

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

She was employed from March 4 through April 26, 2004 and worked approximately 95 hours.

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

Kindergarten - ages 5-6 6.5 hrs.
Gr. 1 & 2 - ages 6-8 32.5 hrs.
Gr. 3 & 4 - ages 8-10 16 hrs.
Ages 6-10 39 hours - special needs/mult. hand. & autism

} heterogeneous needs suburban district

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

⑤ Cindy was professional, warm, and highly capable in this work assignment.

Signature of supervisor:

Barbara Powers

Typed or printed name:

Barbara Powers

Position:

Principal

Phone number and e-mail address:

207-786-3988; BPowers@fps.k12.me.us

Date:

5/4/04

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

Cindy Lo 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?

Cleveland Rd. Elementary School - ESOL class - Cindy came as a student teacher from USA.

2. What was the nature of the work done?

Cindy wrote lesson plans and taught both small and large groups.

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

Sept. 24, 2004 - Nov. 8, 2004 20 hours total

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

Cindy worked with kindergarten, 1st, 4th and 5th grade students. Most of the students were hispanic and all were being served in the ESOL class.

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 - Cindy not only writes wonderful lesson plans but is also able to implement them in a way the students learn all of the information. She exhibits a ^{very} calming demeanor with the students.

Signature of supervisor:

Happy K. Farber

Typed or printed name:

Happy K. Farber

Position:

ESOL Teacher

Phone number and e-mail address:

549-4085 / farberh@clarke.k12.ga.us

Date:

5/24/05

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

Cindy Lo 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?

Miss Lo pulled out below grade level, at risk students who struggled with reading. She worked with the students on phonics, decoding and other reading strategies, and shared various literature pieces with them.

2. What was the nature of the work done?
Cleveland Road Elementary School
3rd grade students (at-risk and reading below grade level)

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

From 2/2/05 - 4/29/05, from about 12:50 pm - 2:15 pm. Total of 42 hours.

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

Approximately 10 children, ages 8-10, mostly African-American or Hispanic; 1 Caucasian. Both males & females, of low-middle SES. Rural home environment with limited parental education.

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.

8/9 Miss Lo works wonderfully with at-risk students. She is patient, supportive, positive, and listens to the children. She will make a good teacher!

Signature of supervisor:

Andrea H. Jay

Typed or printed name:

Andrea H. Jay

Position:

general ed. classroom teacher

Phone number and e-mail address:

770-725-2423 ; majay@bellsouth.net

Date:

5/20/05

Whoops!
Sorry!

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

Cindy Lo 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?

Haygood preschool - serving children ages 15mo - Pre-K

2. What was the nature of the work done?

She was a pre-k teacher

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

The week of June 13 for 20 hrs

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

15 children ages 4 + 5 yrs old - some going into pre-k next year, some going to kindergarten

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.

Cindy is a 10. She is a hard worker and has excellent rapport with the children. She is absolutely dependable + trustworthy.

Signature of supervisor:

Angela Foster

Typed or printed name:

Angela Foster

Position:

Director of Haygood preschool

Phone number and e-mail address:

404 872 5806 x233 / afoster@haygoodwc.com

Date:

8-12-05