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Best teaching practices in reading methods courses

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Abstract

Recently, I made an occupational change to instructing at the college level while still completing work on my Masters in Reading Education. My journey has led me to this research project, a search for the best practices in teaching reading methods courses.

The questions guiding my research were: 1) What do the Higher Education professors of reading methods courses in a mid-sized Midwestern city's three colleges think are the most effective teaching practices being utilized in their reading methods courses to prepare pre-service teachers to be successful teachers? 2) How do these methods compare to research on the most effective teaching practices being used in reading methods courses?

BEST TEACHING PRACTICES IN READING METHODS COURSES

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Best Teaching Practices of Reading Methods Courses
Research Paper
Stacey Ruff

For the past six years, I have taught both third grade and seventh grade Title I reading in a small city in the Midwest. Recently, I made an occupational change to instructing at the college level while still completing work on my Masters in Reading Education. In my journey to teaching in the higher education, I began looking for a guide to help me make the leap from teaching elementary students to college students preparing to be teachers. In particular, I knew I would need guidance in the instruction of reading methods courses, since the education department had approached me to do some teaching of those courses for them. My journey has led me to this research project, a search for the best practices in teaching reading methods courses.

The professional literature on reading methods courses describes a set of best practices that are successful with preservice teachers. I wanted to know how the research compared to what was happening in college reading courses in my local area. My search for the best practices led to interviews with three professors from three different private colleges in a small city in the Midwest. My hope was to find the similarities and discrepancies between the research and what these professors were doing in their reading classrooms in order to better prepare myself as a future instructor at one of these colleges.

The questions guiding my research were:

1) What do the Higher Education professors of reading methods courses in a mid-sized Midwestern city's three colleges think are the most effective teaching practices

being utilized in their reading methods courses to prepare pre-service teachers to be successful teachers?

2) How do these methods compare to research on the most effective teaching practices being used in reading methods courses?

Literature Review

For about the past 25 years, the use of a lecture format in college reading education courses has been debated and many other practices have been researched and evaluated. Following are teaching practices that have received attention in the preparing of pre-service teachers, and more specifically the preparation of reading teachers.

Practicing what we preach

Research points to the use of preparing preservice teachers by engaging them in the methods they might use in their classrooms, in other words… "practice what you preach" (Craig & Frerichs, 1999; Roberts, 1998; Shaw, 1994; Short & Burke, 1989; Kelly & Farnan, 1990). Craig and Frerich discuss the discrepancy that often can occur between the transmission model used by professors in preservice teaching courses and the transactional model of literacy learning that instruction advocates for elementary education students (1999). The transmission model consists of "teachers passing on specific sets of content and skills to passive students sitting at desks" (Short & Burke, 1989, p. 193-194). This lack of engagement in the reading courses taken by preservice teachers goes against the transactional learning they are being taught. Roberts describes transactional learning as practice where "students both bring and take meaning from a text or learning event and gain a broader understanding as they interact with others and/or the text" (1998, p. 366). Roberts also describes benefits from literature study groups, a

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transactional method that can be used for reading instruction. These benefits include: the opportunity to familiarize students with professional books, a format that can be used for all learner types, and a chance for the students to construct their own meaning concerning important factors related to literacy.

In Shaw's research (1994) on the effects of teacher training on preservice teachers' conceptual framework of reading, she found that for congruence to occur from the reading courses to student teaching, professors needed to model practices that the student teachers would later be expected to teach. A similar conclusion to "practicing what we preach," by Short and Burke (1989, p. 205) is that "the way students learn in teacher education classrooms will shape the way they teach in their classrooms." Professors need to apply literacy theory in their own reading courses. Kelly and Farnan put theory into action in their reading education program by the use of the Strategic Overlay Model (SOM). In this model, students reap many benefits by grasping literacy pedagogy through the use of teaching techniques they can apply in their own classrooms, such as pre-reading activities like brainstorming or post-reading activities like writing to learn (1990).

Cooperative Learning

Kelly and Farnan (1990) also believe in the use of cooperative learning groups for their reading methods courses. Their SOM utilizes cooperative groups to foster learning of content and modeling of activities students can use. Wedman, Kuhlman and Guenther describe their use of jigsaw teams for the development of reading pedagogy in preservice teachers. "The expert-jigsaw team strategy is based on an interdependent cooperative learning model that includes individual accountability"(1996, p. 113). It

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involves students working together to learn and present a segment of content to team members. First, the students meet with their expert groups to learn the same material, and then they reassemble in their jigsaw teams to present what they have learned. Wedman, in her work with Hughes and Robinson (1993), studied the use of a systematic cooperative learning approach versus a direct instruction approach in the teaching of informal reading inventories (IRIs). The cooperative grouping approach contained objectives, examples, guided and independent practice, and specific feedback on progress made by students in relation to the IRI while the direct instruction approach used three components: objectives, lecture, and examples. Results in this study indicated significant differences between the two approaches' learning outcome scores. The systematic cooperative learning group perceived the lectures, group work, and feedback as beneficial in learning the IRI concepts (1993).

In her beliefs on teaching reading methods courses for undergraduates and graduates, Watts emphasizes the idea of a teacher as a collaborator and engages her students in team problem solving and projects. Also, as mentioned earlier, Roberts advocates the use of cooperative learning through the implementation of groups for literature studies (1998).

Reflection

Reflective practice has been emphasized in the professional literature as an important component for the preparation of preservice teachers, too. Reflection, as defined by John Dewey many years ago, calls for "…active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusion to which it tends" (1910, p.6). In her reading

methods courses, Watts emphasizes the idea that effective teachers are decision makers. In order to develop strong decision makers, Watts uses reflection as one part of her teaching model. To provide opportunities for her students to practice being reflective, she engages her students in journals, response cards, and other writing activities (1993). Short and Burke (1989) strongly support engagement, inquiry, multiple perspectives and reflection in education programs. They point out the need to use reflection with preservice teachers in order for learners to become inquirers of knowledge and to grow as teachers.

However, a recent comparative analysis on 54 reflection studies by Roskos, Vukelich, and Risko (2001), takes an in-depth look at the use of reflection in teacher education reading courses. Their research revealed that what constituted reflection in these studies was not clear or consistent. They found little evidence that current practices such as journals, case studies, portfolios, and ethnography actually promote reflective practices needed by teachers when used inconsistently across courses in a program. These researchers feel there is a need to sequence reflective thinking practices throughout a pre-service reading education program to ensure later teacher success.

Situated Context and Scaffolded Instruction

Two final areas of the research on best practices to be used in preservice reading methods courses focus on situated context and scaffolding of instruction. Situated context as it pertains to preservice education is when "students' learning is a function of their legitimate participation in the ongoing life of a classroom" (Mosenthal, 1996, p.382). One method of trying to create a more authentic learning context is the use of case studies, which provide real descriptions and dilemmas in educational settings and

have many alternative courses of action (Rasinski, 1989 & Griffith & Luframboise, 1998). These situated contexts allow students to connect the content of the course with real teaching situations. Along with being able to make connections, students have the opportunity to see models of different types of instruction through the analysis of the case studies.

Another way to provide a more situated context is through the use of field placements during various reading methods courses, which allow students the opportunity to teach and apply what they are learning in the area of literacy pedagogy. Britton compared the traditional course of three-hour lecture/discussion to a course with five hours in making use of both teaching in a field placement and the lecture format (1975). The traditional course was campus bound and covered reading pedagogy while the five-hour course included an articulated sequence of reading skills methodology with a field component. The students in the five-hour course applied the reading skills learned in the classroom to on site teaching locations in some rural elementary schools. Both students and cooperating teachers found student learning to be significantly better (1975). It would seem then that the application of the pedagogy in the teaching sites and the involvement of children was the catalyst to the positive response to the five-hour course.

Mosenthal tells of two situations of preservice teachers having scaffolded instruction in their situated learning context that in turn allowed the students to feel confident when they actually teach (1989; 1996). Mosenthal designed a program to teach strategy instruction methods to pre-service teachers in two reading methods courses, focusing specifically on reciprocal teaching. He sequenced the instruction of the reciprocal teaching method and gave opportunities for students to apply those methods.

Student journal entries reflected a positive experience (1989). In 1996, Mosenthal combined scaffolded instruction and situated context with his analysis of situated learning of one particular student's work in a field based literacy methods course. Mosenthal's reading course, along with the work of the cooperative teacher, were purposefully scaffolded to help the student in her decision making with a small group in the classroom. A strength of this particular student's learning was her ability to make reasoned decisions with her reading group in that classroom. However, it was unclear as to whether the student could transfer her decision-making abilities to another teaching context.

Scaffolded instruction in these instances is "an instructional technique in which the teacher breaks a complex task into smaller tasks, models the desired learning strategy or task, provides support as students learn to do the task, and then gradually shifts responsibility to the students. In this manner, a teacher enables students to accomplish as much of a task as possible without adult assistance" (North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, S section, 2002). In both of Mosenthal's studies, he did just this. With reciprocal teaching, he broke down the method, taught it to the students in sequenced parts, and then gradually helped them apply the strategy with children. In regard to the student analyzed in the situated learning strategy, both his instruction for the class and the cooperative teacher's work with his student were purposely sequenced and supported.

In combining the use of reflection and situated context (field placement), Fazio speaks on the need for students to engage in reflective activities during field-based courses to "really" change pre-service teachers' beliefs that could later affect their behavior in student teaching (2000). Along those lines, in an Armbruster, Anderson, and

Mull study, the Illinois College of Education collaborated with a public school to create a reading program in which students spend their entire senior year in the schools and take part in a course called the "Language and Literacy Block." This block not only provides the situated context for preservice teachers, but also scaffolding, modeling, and coaching components to help ensure success. Students are videotaped for 3 lessons and both the teacher and that student analyze the tapes. This literacy course was rated higher than the traditional courses, though the students did feel the demands in the course were high (1991).

Methodology

After completing a review of the practices used in reading methods courses in the professional literature, I conducted interviews with college professors teaching those reading methods courses. A search of the College's Internet sites provided the names of reading professors at each of the three colleges. Emails to the possible participating professors described the research project and follow-up calls were conducted. In cases where a college had more than one professor of reading methods courses, selection of one for an interview was done randomly.

I conducted personal interviews with each of the subjects using a semi-standardized interview approach. This interview approach involved the implementation of a number of predetermined questions and/or special topics. The questions were typically asked of each interviewee in a systematic and consistent order, but the interviewer was allowed freedom to probe beyond the answers to the prepared questions (Berg, 2001, p. 70). Interviews were utilized because, as Berg states, "It (the interview approach) is particularly beneficial for assessing events or processes in social groups

when public record exists. It is likewise helpful in many types of exploratory or descriptive studies." (2001). Because there was a potential for the interviews to be both descriptive and lengthy, each interview was tape recorded for later analysis.

The interviews followed an interview guide to ensure that the same categories of information were obtained in each interview. This allowed the data collected to be both orderly and comprehensive (Marshall & Rossmann, 1989). The interviews aided finding out what practices were taking place without having to conduct lots of observation, and they allowed the opportunity to get a number of perspectives (Patton, 1990). In order for the interviews to be reliable, I developed a framework using questions that followed good interviewing technique. Good interviewing technique as described by Berg includes at least two types of questions: throw away and essential. The throw away questions were used to develop rapport and gain demographic information for each interviewee. The essential questions were based on the focus of the study, best teaching practices. This interview approach also allowed for probing questions. I was able to ask other questions to be sure to get the most information possible in regards to each essential question asked (2001).

To make the subjects feel open to respond in their own words, the sequencing of the questions was important. Opening questions were informal and consisted of topics to get acquainted with one another. The questions in relation to their teaching practices mostly focused on feelings and opinions of the interviewees to give a less-threatening feel to them (Patton, 1990).

Interview Questions:

Throw Away Questions:

   a. Tell them about my own background and interest in the research project.

   b. Give a brief description on the study to refresh the topic.

   c. Ask the professors to give a general description of their background.

Essential Questions:

   d. How long have you been teaching reading methods courses at this
       college? How long overall?

   e. Whose work do you follow for your reading methods courses?

   f. Whose work do you actually apply in your reading methods courses?

   g. What are some common types of practices you use in those courses?

   h. What practices have you found to be most successful in preparing pre-
       service teachers?

   i. Why do you feel these are the most beneficial practices for your students?

   j. What kinds of assessment have you done on the effectiveness of your
       teaching practices? What can you share about the results of those
       assessments?

Again, the interviews were tape-recorded, allowing me to attend more closely to
the interviewee instead of being preoccupied with taking notes. The recordings also
provided a check for accuracy of the notes when doing the analysis (Patton, 1990).

The variables studied in this research were effective teaching practices in reading
methods courses as determined by professional literature versus effective teaching
practices in reading methods courses according to professors. Once the interviews were

completed, I used content analysis to find naturally occurring classes/categories of things, persons, and events. Berg describes content analysis as an objective coding scheme used to analyze qualitative data, like interview data (2001). By data categorizing, I came up with commonalities and/or topics. I then segmented the interview data by finding meaningful units of the interviews in relation to those categories. Once that was done, I re-contextualized the data by matching all the segments of interview data with the corresponding category (Renata, 1990). In order to keep the data manageable and reliable, I used a systematic filing system for data by coding manila folders, as suggested by Berg (2001, p. 103). After this process, I compared and contrasted the data between the professors' perspectives and what the research says, the variables mentioned earlier.

<center>**Interview Results**</center>

To ensure confidentiality, each of the three professors is referred to as a letter A, B or C. All three professors have been working in their current position for the past three to four years, but have had different experiences in places in which they have taught, the levels at which they have taught (though all three did teach at the elementary level at some point in their careers), and in educational levels attained, two instructors having attained their doctorates, while one is in the process of completing her doctorate. Professor A taught in Okalahoma and Missouri, Professor B taught in Iowa and Illinois, and Professor C had experiences teaching in Kansas, Indiana, and Kentucky. In regard to level of the reading courses taught, Professor B's experience is mostly with the beginning reading courses, Professors A's experience is in the middle level courses, and Professor C works with students at the final reading courses of the undergraduate program and with students at the graduate level.

There was little congruence in the responses on what researcher's work each instructor follows for his or her reading methods courses. Both professors A and B cited Mari Clay as important researchers for their reading methods courses and professors A and C talked about using many ideas from different people. Other researchers mentioned by the professors include: Robert Ruddell, Cunningham and Strickland (Professor A), Sharon Taberski, Fountes-Pinnell, Pearson (Professor B), and Rummelhart, Katie Woods-Ray, Gunning (Professor C).

However, while the professors cited different significant researchers, there was great similarity in the types of practices they use in their courses. Several categories seemed to emerge on the teaching practices the instructors utilized in their courses and which they felt were the best practices, including field placement/tutoring, discussion/exposure to theory, simulations, observations, reflection, and modeling (See Tables 1 and 2).

[Insert Table 1]

[Insert Table 2]

Field placement/Tutoring

All three professors emphasized the need to have their students in the schools working with children no matter what level reading methods course they taught. How that field placement was determined differed by each school's education program. Professor C discussed the use of the Professional Development School (PDS) where students are placed in various schools throughout the district as part of Block I and II in their education program. In this situation, students have clinical time in the school's classroom a set number of hours a week, but also attend their particular class in that

school with their instructor/professor in a separate classroom from the class they are working in with children. The same instructor also places her students with a particular child to conduct one-on-one tutoring throughout the semester as an assignment for her course.

Professor B also has his students engage in two different field placements as part of his beginning reading methods course. For one placement, the students are engaged in a Service Learning Project, which requires them to do 18 hours of work with Pre-K to second grade and ESL students. This professor also has the students conduct Observation Surveys (Clay, 1993) on 1st graders at a particular school and write up a report on the results, which are submitted to both the professor and the cooperating teacher.

Professor C considers field placement "a big turning point" in her reading methods course. In his or her education program, each instructor is responsible for setting up the field placement being sure to have the number of required hours in the schools. Professor C's students conduct various assessments on their particular student and then develop a plan of instruction based on the different assessments. Students who knew the theory well have sometimes struggled with doing effective lessons. Helping make that transition from theory to application is very important in the field placements.

Discussions/Exposure to Theory

Exploring theory is also another critical element to ensure pre-service teacher success. As Professor A stated about her reading methods courses and Language Arts practicum, "You have so much theory to get across, that lecture and reading is necessary." However, this professor believes in more than just lecturing about theory.

She also engages her students in class discussions about different reading theories from whole language to direct instruction.

In order to make discussion easier and more accessible to students, Professor B utilizes technology. Blackboard, a form of computer courseware, is used throughout the campus as a whole to make syllabi, assignments, and readings readily available on-line to students. This professor also uses Blackboard as a means for discussions based on readings, videos, speakers, lessons done in their field placements, etc. One of the texts used in discussing theory in this instructor's course is *On Solid Ground* (2000) by Sharon Taberski, and it generates good discussions both on Blackboard and in the classroom.

Professor C has her students reading many different types of materials. Her students read materials to become familiar with many different ideas- books for kids, journals, researchers, and resources available to them to build lessons for students. These different readings allow her students to engage in discussions of a variety of theories for practice.

Simulations

Another practice all three instructors use in their classrooms is simulations. The type of simulation done in each course is dependent on the level or description of that course. In the beginning reading methods course, Professor B has his students simulate conducting an Observation Survey. His students view a video on the Observation Survey. Then, they receive training on it, role-play it, practice it, think about what it means, and look at the results that are given. All of this work is done in preparation of actually giving the Observation Survey to a first grader. In the next level of reading methods courses, Professors A and B have their students simulate lessons and tests. In

particular, Professor A has her students demonstrate a lesson using Big Books with their peers and the students also practice tests from their diagnostic kits with one another before using them in their field placements.

Observations

Though observations were mentioned more in the assessment of their own students' progress, all three professors stated that observing was a practice used in their reading methods courses. These professors have their students involved with observing different aspects of reading instruction. A couple of the professors have their students watch and take notes on Reading Recovery lessons (Clay, 1993) in the schools or in the "Behind the glass" sessions. The professors also have their students observe in their field placement classrooms to see the many different aspects of literacy instruction already occurring in their particular room from big books and read-alouds to guided reading, independent reading, and shared reading.

Reflection

Two professors (A and B) discussed reflecting as a teaching practice. Professor C talked about reflecting but as a means of assessment. According to Professor A, "Reflection papers from the field placements show it is a real eye-opener for them." For her Corrective and Remedial class, students engage in writing reflection papers each time they teach a lesson. They reflect on each step of the lesson, how the students reacted to the lesson, and what they might change next time. For the Language Arts Practicum, the students keep a reflection journal throughout the semester. Some examples of responses include: "This didn't go as I expected, so I will do this differently" or "I think it went well, because I was well prepared. I wasn't rigid, I was able to change if I needed to."

Professor A feels that reflection is critical since brain-based research says memories are set during reflection time. It is very important to have a time period set aside for students to sit and see what they have learned.

Although Professor C discussed reflection separately from practice, she too engages her students in reflection about twice a week. The focus for these reflections is teachers as problem solvers, so they are reflecting on how to make their lessons better, what can they change. However, Professor B uses reflection differently. He pursues the question "What is Reading?" throughout the course and has his students reflect on the question at the beginning of the class and then again at the end of the class to check for growth in their thinking. He has found that his course has helped them to change their views, but he can also see that much has not changed. As he puts it, "I recognize that I am not going to change their thinking a whole lot, but I hope to have upset their thinking a bit" (See Tables 1-2, 4).

[Insert Table 3]

[Insert Table 4]

Modeling

Both Professors A and C mentioned modeling as a practice they use in their classrooms. For Professor A, modeling is used for several purposes. She models different approaches to reading instruction such as phonics words lessons, language experience lessons, and reading recovery lessons. Also, when her students are actively working in their field placement, without intervening too much, Professor A will model different ways to handle situations with students.

Modeling for Professor B serves a different purpose. He models teaching techniques that he hopes his students will engage in during their student teaching and

future teaching job. "I model cooperative practice since of course, I want them to use the technique with their students- asking questions, problem solving, and the use of small groups."

Professors' Practices versus the Literature

The professors' use of field placements (situated context), reflection, and modeling correlate highly with the review of professional literature. In relation to field placement, Professor B's use of video cases matches the idea of Rasinski (1989) and Griffith and Luframboise (1998) to use case studies as a means of creating a more authentic context to apply learning to teaching situations. All three professors use of field placements and/or tutoring as a part of their reading methods course follows the findings of Britton (1975) in which the five-hour course with a field component provided better student learning than the campus-bound traditional course.

Though a recent study by Roskos, Vukelich, and Risko (2001) questions the effectiveness of current reflective practice, the professors in this study agree with the need for reflection as discussed in the literature by Watts (1993) and Short and Burke (1989). Professors A and C both use reflection journals (also utilized by Watts) where student write often and analyze readings they have done and lessons they have taught.

Modeling or "Practicing what we preach" also was a strong connection between the professors' practices and the professional literature. Professor B's modeling of particular teaching practices in the hopes his students use them in their later teaching is directly in line with Short and Burke's idea that "the way students learn in teacher education classrooms will shape the way they teach in their classrooms" (1989, p. 205).

One area from the professional literature that was not as evident was the use of cooperative groups. Only one professor, Professor B, specifically stated the use of cooperative groups as a teaching practice he used. His use of cooperative groups was mainly for the purpose of discussions, but was also used for role-playing and work with the Observation Surveys. The use of cooperative groups for discussion is not too unlike what Kelly and Farnan (1990) describe with the expert jigsaw team idea to get across reading pedagogy. Also, the cooperative group practice to learn Observation Surveys as described by Professor B is similar to Hughes and Robinson's use of a systematic cooperative learning approach to teach the administration of informal reading inventories (1993).

Scaffolded instruction was the other area from the professional literature not noticeable in the professors' responses in the interview questions. Professor B did talk a little about students scaffolding one another's thoughts when using Blackboard for class discussion, meaning students would clarify each other's thoughts and build off each other's ideas. Also, though Professor B did not explicitly say it, it is evident from his description on the teaching of the Observation Surveys for his beginning reading course that each part is carefully sequenced and given support. However, neither of the other professors made it clear this was a part of their teaching practice.

Discussion

Throughout the analysis of the professional literature and the analysis of the professors' interview responses, two themes emerged: Working with children (field experiences) and tying theory to practice. Both practices are critical elements to any reading methods course at the undergraduate level.

Though this is a place to start for my instruction in reading methods courses, more work needs to be done in this area. The question on reflective practices and their impact on student growth needs to be addressed. What reflective practices seem to have the biggest impact on student growth? What can professors do to change students thinking about reading if reflection is helping this process? Also, in regards to scaffolded instruction, do all types of reading instruction in the reading methods courses need to be scaffolded or do only particular types of instruction warrant this practice?

It would also be important to go into professors' classrooms and see if their responses to the interview questions match what is actually occurring in their rooms. Not only that, but seeing what graduates from these programs feel are the best practices that helped them as teachers and comparing those responses to the professors' and the professional literature could provide some interesting insights.

Based on the results of this project, as a future college instructor it will be important for me to construct my reading methods courses in such a way that the students have the opportunity to learn about, explore, and engage in reading theory but also have the chance to use their gained knowledge in the classroom working with children. I envision my classroom full of lively discussions of reading pedagogy sprouting from a provoking question from a reading or an observation of practice. I also see myself engaging in modeling of reading techniques and approaches and giving students cooperative groups to practice these ideas in a safe, yet authentic environment. Lastly, I see my future students involved with children, applying the theory and techniques discussed in class along with my modeling and support to guide them when they may stumble.

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Table 1

Similarities and Differences on teaching practices used in reading methods courses

Question	Similarities	Differences
What are some common types of practices you use in those courses?	**Professors A, B, & C** Experiences with kids -Field placement -Tutoring Discussions based on readings and questions Simulations -Students do language experience lessons -Role-play Observation Surveys **Professors A & B** Modeling **Professors A & C** Observations	**Professor A** Tests as a practice **Professor B** Use of Blackboard-technology Use of a Service Learning Project Use of Videos and Speakers Use of Cooperative groups **Professor C** Clinical lab time in the school with reading methods class in the school (placement) Tutoring- one on one work with first-graders Use of the Professional Development School

Table 2

Similarities and Differences on most successful teaching practices

Question	Similarities	Differences
What practices have you found to be most successful in preparing pre-service teachers?	**Professors A, B & C**	**Professor A**
	Working with a child	Taking tests on theory
	-Apply classroom knowledge	
	-Can see achievement with a child	**Professor B**
	-Big turning point in students' development	Training on different assessments (simulations of Observation Surveys)
	Exposure to theory	
	-Use of good texts	Presenting at reading
	-Lecture and talk about theory	conferences
	-Connections from schools to pedagogy	Scaffolding in discussion groups & modeling of
	-Discussion on Blackboard and cooperative groups	cooperative groups to use in their students future classroom
	Professors A & B	**Professor C**
	Reflection on lessons and "What is Reading?"	Action research (mostly graduate work)

Table 3

Similarities and Differences on why teaching practices are most beneficial

Question	Similarities	Differences
Why do you feel these are the most beneficial practices for your students?	Field Placement	Tutoring
	Professor A	**Professor C**
	See more confidence at the end of the class. They have gained strategies and can design an instructional plan for a student. Observations and test scores reveal that confidence and achievement.	Tutoring allows the student to solve problems since teaching is not prescriptive, but rather diagnostic. Students then can see practice and achievement with a child.
	Professor B	
	Students can apply what they have learned and see it in action. There is a connection between the pedagogy learned in the classroom and what is happening in the schools.	

Table 4

Similarities and Differences on assessment of best teaching practices

Question	Similarities	Differences
What kinds of assessment have you done on the effectiveness of your teaching practices?	**Professors A, B, & C** -Reflection pieces -Tests (only undergraduates)	**Professor A** -Formal evaluations done on own teaching

	Professors B & C
	 -Observations of:
	   a. Work with tutoring a child
	   b. Discussion board responses
		Professor B
		 -Student performance on Observation Surveys
		 -Portfolios kept by the education department
		 -Surveys of Graduates (positive responses)

		Professor C -Presentations