

PERSPECTIVES AND PRACTICES OF GRADUATES OF AN URBAN TEACHER  
RESIDENCY PROGRAM

By

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To all of the Aquilino women, especially my great-grandmother, Giuseppina Aquilino,  
and my grandma, Mary Agosta

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## LIST OF TERMS

The terms and definitions provided below provide a foundation for the language used in this dissertation and indicate how each term has been used throughout.

Culturally responsive pedagogy	As described in this research, culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) includes the established practices that effective teachers use in order to best meet the needs of their students in environments with a high number of African American children who are living in poverty. It focuses on the following six components that teachers should incorporate into their routines: 1) strive to challenge their own beliefs about teaching and culture; 2) build relationships with students and parents; 3) create a classroom culture that is a learning community, including the use of specific classroom management techniques; 4) use specific strategies for selecting curricula and classroom materials; 5) use specific instructional techniques; 6) and strive to make the learning experience one that empowers students.
Educational Criticism	A methodology grounded in ethnography. The purpose of an educational criticism is threefold: “to describe the essential qualities of phenomenon studied, to interpret the meanings of and relationships among those qualities, and to provide reasoned judgments about the significance and value of the phenomenon” (Ross, 1988, p. 162).
Predominantly children of color	In the context of this research, a school population is considered to be predominantly children of color when it is comprised of a majority of students who identify with a race or ethnicity other than Caucasian.
High-poverty school	A school that receives federal Title I funding to provide students with supplemental materials and programs; additionally, at least 40% of the students attending these schools come from low-income families, defined by the receipt of free or reduced cost lunch. For the purpose of this study, a high-poverty school is one in which at least 70% of the students receive free or reduced cost lunch. ( <a href="http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/index.html">http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/index.html</a> ).

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Many traditional university-based and alternative route teacher preparation programs have been developed to prepare new teachers to work in urban, high minority, and high-poverty classrooms. There is little literature that documents the outcomes of these programs designed specifically for urban environments or the practices of teachers who completed such programs. We need to explore the outcomes of these teacher education programs, traditional and alternative, in order to meet the need for teachers in these environments and guarantee that urban students are taught by the most qualified teachers possible.

This study contributes to the sparse body of literature focused on the outcomes of such programs by examining the practices and perspectives of three teachers who completed one such program five years ago. The following question guided the study: What are the perspectives and practices of graduates of a yearlong urban teacher residency who are teaching in schools with a student population that is predominantly low income and/or children of color? Sub-questions included: 1) How do the teachers define effective teaching? 2) What practices do these teachers use that they believe are highly effective and why do they believe those practices are effective? 3) What factors

do these teachers identify as influential in the development of their perspectives and practices? Data were collected through interviews and observations. The findings of this study are presented as an educational criticism.

Grounded in culturally responsive pedagogy literature, this study identified several aspects of culturally responsive pedagogy that two of the three teachers incorporated into their practice. These two teachers developed a core set of practices that are culturally responsive, and both set similar goals for their teaching: to develop positive and caring relationships with their students and to help their students experience academic success. These teachers demonstrated clear and high expectations for student learning, tightly planned lessons in order to model and scaffold learning, used formative assessments to document students' progress, used caring language when talking with students, and got to know students and their families in order to learn how to best meet their needs. One teacher made a concerted effort to incorporate her students' culture into her instruction through the use of chants, music, technology, and students' interests. Moreover, two teachers demonstrated a moderate degree of evidence related to empowerment through building students' academic power. However, the remaining two goals of CRP, transformation and emancipation were not evidenced. Implications of this research for teacher educators, practicing educational leaders and professional developers, and researchers are discussed.

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

### **Statement of the Problem**

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) has issued a call for teacher certification programs to combine extended student teaching experiences with courses aligned with certification requirements (Blue Ribbon Panel, 2010). The principles for program design suggested by the NCATE panel argue for partnership between a university teacher education program and a school district, often in an urban, low-income area (Blue Ribbon Panel, 2010). The purpose of these programs is for teacher candidates to learn from classroom experiences that are interwoven with academic content and standards related to best practices for the profession (Blue Ribbon Panel, 2010). Their recommendation is that the novice teacher is not the teacher-of-record, but works alongside an experienced mentor teacher for an entire school year (The Aspen Institute and the Center for Teaching Quality, 2008).

As a number of these programs have already begun in urban districts, there is a critical need to assess the nature and impact of programs designed to foster success for teachers working with students who are living in poverty (Darling-Hammond, 2008). This is especially relevant in light of the United States' ranking in recent international assessments conducted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Out of 40 developed countries tested in science, the US scored 29<sup>th</sup>. However, when scores were disaggregated by race, White and Asian students "score above the OECD average in each subject area, but African American and Hispanic students score so much lower that the national average plummets to the bottom tier of the rankings" (Darling-Hammond, 2010). These data show that a subset of our

population is not adequately learning the material, perhaps because we are not meeting their educational needs. Because so many African American and Hispanic students attend urban and high-poverty schools, it is in our best interest to take a close look at how we educate students in these settings in order to meet the needs of every child.

Recommended teaching practices for teachers working in schools with high populations of African American students and students living in poverty are collectively referred to as culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP). Ladson-Billings (2009) describes this type of teaching as, “a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes” (p. 20). Culturally responsive pedagogy incorporates students’ backgrounds, prior experiences, cultural norms, and strengths in curriculum, instruction, and the classroom community in order to help children to be successful learners and empowered citizens (Gay, 2000).

Much research has already been conducted that addresses what culturally responsive teaching looks like in classrooms and the degree to which teachers implement culturally responsive pedagogy (Bergeron, 2008; Bondy, Ross, Galligane & Hambacher, 2007; Brown, 2003, 2004; Conrad, Gong, Sipp & Wright, 2004; Georges, 2009; Hermes, 2005; Irizarry, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Patrick, Turner, Meyer, & Midgley, 2003; Phuntsog, 2001; Poplin et al., 2011; Powell et al., 1990; Sampson & Garrison-Wade, 2010; Scott et al., 2009; Souto-Manning, 2009; Ware, 2006; Williamson et al., 2005). A review of the literature related to teaching in these environments indicated that there is a set of established practices that enables teachers to best meet the needs of their students. Scholars writing about CRP use slightly different

frameworks to describe its components, however, common elements exist across the frameworks. This study is guided by the synthesis framework suggested by Powell and Rightmyer (2011).

According to Powell and Rightmyer (2011), research related to successful teaching in schools with a high population of African American children who are living in poverty suggests that teachers in these settings focus on the following elements: Teacher Care, Classroom Climate, Family Collaboration, Assessment, Curriculum, Instruction/Pedagogy, Discourse/Instructional Conversation, and Sociopolitical Consciousness. Although not reflected as independent components of Powell and Rightmyer's framework, striving to challenge one's own beliefs about teaching and learning (Gay, 2000; Howard, 2010) and culturally responsive classroom management (Weinstein, Curran & Tomlinson-Clarke, 2003) are also considered to be part of successful teaching in this context. For the purpose of this study, challenging one's beliefs will be discussed independent of other elements and classroom management will be discussed as a part of classroom climate. Each of these components is integral to culturally responsive pedagogy.

Many programs, including traditional university-based teacher education programs and alternative route programs designed for those who hold degrees in fields outside of education, have been developed to prepare new teachers to work specifically in urban classrooms. However, because such programs are relatively new, there is little empirical research that examines the impact of teacher education programs designed specifically for urban environments (Castro, Kelly, & Shih, 2010; Freedman & Appleman, 2009; Ross, Dodman & Vescio, 2010; Ross, Halsall, Howie, & Vescio, 2007;

Watson, 2011). Other related research either describes the experiences of preservice teachers in both urban- and non-urban specific teacher education programs (Conway, Browning & Purdum-Cassidy, 2007; Olmedo, 1997; Wiggins & Follo, 1999; Wiggins, Follo & Eberly, 2007) or focuses on the experiences and perspectives of novice teachers working in urban settings (Achinstein & Aguirre, 2008; Grace, 2003; Worthy, 2005). However, not all of the teachers who participated in these studies completed teacher preparation programs designed specifically for teaching in urban schools.

Because programs such as these are so young, little research has been done to document their outcomes. It is important that we assess the nature and impact of programs designed to foster success for teachers working with students who are living in poverty (Darling-Hammond, 2008). The current research is a beginning in addressing this need for research concerning teachers who are prepared to work in urban schools with a high percentage of minority students who are living in poverty. Findings from the study will help teacher educators and administrators to better understand and meet the needs of the novice teachers who are working in these settings.

### **Purpose of Study and Research Questions**

The purposes of this study are 1) to understand the perspectives about effective teaching practice held by three teachers who graduated from a year-long residency and 2) to examine the relationship between their perspectives and practices. It will address the following research question: What are the perspectives and practices of graduates of a yearlong urban teacher residency who are teaching in schools with a student population that is predominantly low income and/or children of color? Sub-questions guiding the study include: 1) How do the teachers define effective teaching? 2) What practices do these teachers use that they believe are highly effective and why do they



believe those practices are effective? 3) What factors do these teachers identify as influential in the development of perspectives and practices?

### **Significance**

Ensuring that students have high quality teachers is considered by some to be “the single most important act that can be done to reverse disparities of educational opportunities and outcomes..., particularly in those schools where underachievement has remained prevalent” (Howard, 2010, p. 33). Yet, “In the United States, teachers are the most inequitably distributed school resource” (Darling-Hammond, 2010, p. 40).

Darling-Hammond explains,

The practice of lowering or waiving credentialing standards to fill classrooms in high-minority, low-income schools...became commonplace in many U.S. states [beginning in the 1990s], especially in states with large minority and immigrant populations, such as California, Texas, Florida, and New York, which allocated such teachers almost exclusively to these students. (2010, p. 41)

Howard (2010) agrees: minority students, English language learners, and those living in poverty usually attend schools with “high teacher turnover rates, larger numbers of under qualified teachers, inconsistent school leadership and administration, and overall lack of consistency and rigor in school curriculum and instruction” (p. 33).

As discussed previously, research suggests the effectiveness of a set of culturally responsive pedagogical approaches for teaching minority students and students who are living in poverty. Many traditional, university-based teacher education programs are structured to provide preservice teachers the opportunity to learn about and practice the skills needed to be successful culturally responsive, urban teachers. There is a limited body of evidence documenting the impact of these traditional programs. Findings from these studies suggest the impact is mixed. However, teachers

for these schools are also prepared in non-traditional programs which provide abbreviated coursework but extensive field experience that is connected to that coursework. There is even less empirical work documenting the impact of such programs.

In order to meet the need for teachers in urban, high minority, and high poverty schools while guaranteeing that the attending students are taught by the most qualified teachers possible, we need to explore the outcomes of all teacher education programs, traditional or alternative, that seek to prepare highly qualified teachers for these schools. This study seeks to address these needs by studying graduates of a non-traditional urban teacher education program who are teaching in urban schools five years after program completion in order to learn about how they teach their students and what perceptions guide their teaching.

### **Conclusion**

In speaking about education, Howard (2010) states that,

The mantra of education as the proverbial “equalizer” is promoted more in the United States than in any other nation in the world; it is seen as the commodity that helps to transform life chances, improve economic prospects, change dire outlooks to promising possibilities, and reduce the gap between the haves and the have-nots (p. 9).

However, education does not serve as an “equalizer” for many students, especially students of color or those living in poverty. This achievement gap is persistent and, as yet, we have been unsuccessful in decreasing it. As previously noted, African American and Hispanic students in the U.S. score lower than their national and international peers on assessments conducted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Additionally, as documented by more than 550 scholars who signed an amicus brief, there are persistent inequalities in segregated schools:

More often than not, segregated minority schools offer profoundly unequal educational opportunities...manifested in many ways, including fewer qualified, experienced teachers [and] greater instability caused by rapid turnover of faculty. (Darling-Hammond, 2010, p. 36)

Work must be done to improve the education for all of our students, providing them with qualified teachers who remain teaching in high minority and high poverty schools.

The teachers who were involved in this study each completed a non-traditional teacher education program designed to prepare them to work in urban settings. Each earned her teaching certificate and in 2009, completed the program's contractual requirement of teaching in a Title I school within the same district for three years. One indicator of positive impact from the program is that they are currently still teaching within the district in high poverty, Title I schools where at least 50% of the student population is a minority race (identified as Black, Hispanic, or Mixed Race), and do not plan to transfer. Each of these teachers has met the challenge of teaching in poverty settings and received high student standardized test scores. The perspectives that these teachers provide in relation to their experiences as novice urban teachers are important to our understanding of how we, as teacher educators, can help ready preservice and novice teachers to work in urban, high poverty classrooms with a high minority student population successfully and with longevity.

### **Organization of the Study**

In order to increase our understanding about whether and how the perspectives and practices of program graduates connect to recommendations for best practice in teaching high poverty, minority youth, the findings of this study are presented as an educational criticism. Chapter Two includes a review of the current literature related to culturally responsive pedagogy and the experiences of prospective teachers and

novices teachers working in predominantly minority or high poverty school settings. Chapter Three describes the theoretical perspective grounding this study, as well as provides a description of the context of the study and the data collection and analysis methods that were utilized. Chapters Four and Five present the disclosures from each individual teacher's classroom. In the style of an educational criticism, each of these disclosures will include a description, interpretation, and appraisal of the teacher's perspectives and practices. Examples are provided to help illustrate each discussion. Chapter Six presents a cross-case analysis as well as a summary of the findings and implications of this study.

## CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This study focused on the perspectives and practices of novice teachers working in predominantly minority, high-poverty schools. This review of literature provides an overview of recommended practices considered to be effective for teaching in these environments, as well as a discussion of extant literature related to practices and perspectives of preservice teachers in urban teacher education programs and novice teachers who are working in urban schools. Although not exhaustive, this review makes a case for the importance of the study as it situates the study in existing literature related to the core elements of successful teaching practices and the experiences and perspectives of novice urban teachers.

### **Culturally Responsive Pedagogy**

Many articles, both conceptual and empirical, address teaching practices recommended for students attending high-need, urban schools. A review of literature related to teaching in these environments indicated that there are several common practices that teachers use in order to best meet the needs of their students. Collectively, these practices are known as culturally responsive or culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP). CRP is also referenced in the literature as culturally congruent pedagogy, culturally responsive instruction, or culturally relevant teaching, but the distinction between these terms is not clear in the literature. Throughout this research, I have chosen to use 'culturally responsive pedagogy' because of the meaning that each word in the phrase conveys. First, the word 'pedagogy' implies more than just teaching: it describes the art and science of the craft. Second, the word 'responsive' implies an action; a teacher actively responds to meet her students' needs. Finally, the term

'culturally responsive pedagogy' taken as a whole refers to the active stance a teacher takes when making pedagogical decisions related to her students' race, culture, and background. Culturally responsive pedagogy is a set of recommended practices that emerge from this body of research, the majority of which is descriptive. The research typically studies teachers who were nominated by others familiar with their practice and their students' performance. From this description, each study generates a set of practices that characterize the teachers' practices. The following synthesis is drawn from both research-based and theoretical writings. Of the articles and books reviewed for this synthesis, 19 are empirical studies. In the empirical studies, the participants ranged from 1 to 33 teachers, a single classroom of students to 13,054 students, and 121 mothers. Although data collection methods were not described in all of the articles, thirteen studies included participant interview data, nine included classroom observation data, three included quantitative analysis of student learning, and two used mixed methods. Unless otherwise specified, the literature cited provides empirical support for the practice described.

According to Ladson-Billings (2009), "culturally relevant teaching is a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (p. 20). Gay (2000) states that this approach incorporates "cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning more relevant and effective for them. It teaches to and through the strengths of these students" (p. 29). Bartolome (1994) summarizes Villegas' 1989 and 1991 writings to describe culturally responsive instruction as "attempts to create instructional situations

where teachers use teaching approaches and strategies that recognize and build on culturally different ways of learning, behaving, and using language in the classroom” (p. 184). Villegas (1991) has stated that, “Cultural differences present both opportunities and challenges for teachers. To maximize learning opportunities, teachers must gain knowledge of the cultures represented in their classrooms, then translate this knowledge into instructional practice” (p. 13).

This review is organized using a framework that incorporates the suggested practices found in the collective body of literature. This corpus of research related to successful teaching in a predominantly African American and high poverty context suggests that teachers in these settings focus on the following six components: 1) strive to challenge their own beliefs about teaching and culture; 2) build relationships with students and parents; 3) create a classroom culture that is a learning community, including the use of appropriate classroom management techniques; 4) use learner and culture centered strategies for selecting curricula and classroom materials; 5) use learner and culture centered instructional techniques; 6) and strive to make the learning experience one that empowers, transforms, and emancipates students. Each of these components is integral to culturally responsive pedagogy. Several of these components are tightly related; thus, at times it is difficult to discuss one in isolation from another.

### **Challenging Beliefs**

Research suggests that successful teachers of students living in poverty have reflected upon and challenged their beliefs about teaching and about the students they teach. Doing this helps them avoid deficit thinking and instead view their students as capable learners who they, in turn, can learn from (Bartolome, 1994). Deficit thinking “place[s] the onus of [school] failure on minority children and their families” (Villegas,

1991, p. 2); in other words, those who subscribe to this belief think that there must be something wrong with a child or his family that explains why that child is not doing well academically. Villegas (1991) argues that there are two main theories of deficit: IQ or culture. The IQ deficit theory compares the IQ test scores of minority or low socio-economic status (SES) students with majority or middle-class peers; the fact that minority or low SES students score lower is due to their inferior intelligence (Villegas, 1991). Proponents of the cultural deficit theory believe that “deficiencies in the home environment (e.g. ‘disorganized family life,’ ‘inadequate sensory stimulation,’ ‘inadequate child-rearing practices’) deprive minority children of the types of experiences they need to do well academically” (Villegas, 1991, p. 2). Rather than taking responsibility for finding solutions and strategies to help children learn, deficit thinkers pass the blame to the children and their families. They believe that all school can do is try to compensate for what is missing in the child’s home life or genetic disposition (Villegas, 1991). When teachers hold this view, they tend to lower expectations for student behavior and academic success, believing that students have a limited capacity to do well.

Teachers who have looked critically at their own beliefs and assumptions are better able to recognize that cultural discontinuities might exist between their own culture and those of their students and families (Howard, 2010). Bergeron (2008) refers to this as “cultural disequilibrium,” which “describes not only the cultural mismatch that may occur between teachers and their students but also the sense of imbalance or confusion that can result when an individual attempts to grapple with situations or experiences for which he or she is not fully prepared” (p. 5). For instance, many



teachers who work in high poverty schools have never experienced poverty themselves. One teacher in Hermes' (2005) study explained, "[my students] have to find food, because they're children of poverty, so they have to find a home and food, and I mean things so surprising to me, not having dealt with people from poverty" (p. 15). These discontinuities may relate directly to different personal experiences, but should also be considered broadly to include an examination of the historical and systemic oppression that may impact some groups (Hermes, 2005). The White, elementary school teacher in Bergeron's (2008) study noted in a journal entry:

As a child, whenever I attended an assembly or program I was told to sit Indian style. Without thinking about it, I asked the children to sit Indian style. This was followed by several, "huh?" comments from the children. I then realized what I had said to them. I was rather frustrated because I realized that this comment may have been potentially offensive to the children. I never encountered this in the part of the country where I am from originally. (p. 13)

As Bondy and Ross (2008) explain, culturally responsive teachers recognize "that their own cultural backgrounds guide their values, beliefs, and behaviors" (p. 56) and work to meet the needs of their students, rather than the needs they themselves had as children.

In order to help teachers with a "self-reflective analysis" of their attitudes and beliefs (Phuntsog, 2001), Howard (2010) suggests that teachers ask themselves, "Does 'who I am' contribute to the underachievement of students who are not like me?" (p. 114). Sometimes, this type of reflection can lead teachers to broaden their ideas of differences to include ethnicity and language, as well as socioeconomic circumstances (Hermes, 2005). Teachers often teach in ways that they found to be successful for their own learning as students (Ware, 2002). In contrast, culturally responsive teachers look

critically at their beliefs, assumptions, and teaching methods to determine whether they are in fact helping their particular students become successful learners (Howard, 2010).

### **Building Relationships with Stakeholders**

It is important for a culturally responsive teacher to build relationships with all stakeholders. Relationships with students, families, and the neighboring community benefit students as they serve to support their learning.

### **Relationships with students**

Building relationships with students should begin on the first day of school. It is important for a teacher to help her students get to know her as a person, not just as an authority figure (Bergeron, 2008; Bondy et al., 2007; Brown, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Patrick et al., 2003; Ware, 2006). Helping students get to know a teacher as an individual includes sharing personal stories about one's own experiences in school, family and life outside of school, attending school functions such as sporting events, clubs, or dances after hours, and using language or slang that students use (Bondy et al., 2007; Irizarry, 2007; Sampson & Garrison-Wade, 2010). This knowledge enables teachers to build better relationships with students and their families in a genuine way. When students get to know their teacher on a personal level, they begin to trust that their teacher cares about them and holds personal interest in their success (Irizarry, 2007). As one student in Irizarry's study of a secondary US history class stated, "Mr. Talbert is the first teacher to ever care about where I'm from and what I'm about. That's love." (2007, p. 26).

Care is one of the most important tenets of relationship building in a culturally responsive classroom. When students know that their teacher cares about them in a genuine way, they are able to connect with them emotionally and academically and

strive to meet the high expectations set for them (Bondy et al., 2007; Brown, 2003; Scott et al., 2009; Ware, 2006). One teacher in Brown's study commented, "If you don't care about students and they know that, you don't have a chance to get to them" (2003, p. 279) through instruction or with curriculum. While care is a significant contributor to academic success, it is also important to building a classroom community. One teacher explained, "We're a family. We have to care for one another as if our very survival depended on it...Actually, it does!" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 481). One way that a teacher in Poplin et al.'s (2011) study shows students that she cares is to "make sure every so often that [she has] said something personal to each of them" (p. 42).

### **Ensuring equitable and reciprocal relationships**

Maintaining "equitable and reciprocal" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 480) teacher-student and student-student respect is paramount in classrooms such as these (Brown, 2003, 2004; Patrick et al., 2003; Poplin et al., 2011). Researchers and theorists agree that one of the most important ways for the teacher to show that she respects her students is through attentive listening (Brown, 2003; Irizarry, 2007; Rightmyer, 2011). In their interviews and observations with 31 teachers, Poplin and colleagues (2011) found that effective teachers respected their students for who they are now as well as for the people they will become, often providing them "with a vision of their best selves" through focus on virtues such as "respecting self and others, working hard, being responsible, never giving up, doing excellent work, trying their best, being hopeful, thinking critically, being honest, and considering consequences" (p. 42). In their observations of what they considered to be effective teachers, Poplin et al. state, "The teachers did not need the students to love them; they needed to see their students achieve" (p. 42). Students, however, want to feel that their teachers love *them*, as explained by a high school- aged

African American girl in Sampson and Garrison-Wade's (2010) study: "We just want to go to school and believe our teachers like us" (p. 295).

### **Relationships with parents and families**

Teachers working with high numbers of minority students who are living in poverty should work in partnership with parents. Seitz (2011) states, "We must...remember that the concept of 'partnership' acknowledges that neither educators nor parents alone can educate and socialize children for productive citizenship" (p. 61). Seitz (2011) notes that there are 10 facets to a successful home-school partnership, which include shared responsibility among all stakeholders with a recognition that these partnerships are vital at all grade levels, the importance of reaching out to all family members, including those in hard-to-reach families, and an effort to link student learning and curriculum to the "funds of knowledge" that families can contribute to the classroom (p. 61). It is important, though, to take into account parents' own needs and wants in their role as partners. For example, one study of Mexican and Mexican-American mothers' preferences for workshops and meetings found that some mothers preferred group workshops, while others preferred individual home visits (Powell et al., 1990). The same study found that some mothers preferred that their extended families participate in any workshops, while others requested that their spouses attend with them (Powell et al., 1990). This shows that teachers cannot count on meeting all families' needs in the same ways and that they need to be flexible so they can build meaningful relationships with each student's family.

Research also suggests that teachers build trusting relationships with students' families, building cultural literacy (Phuntsog, 2001) by learning about their respective cultures and individual experiences (Bergeron, 2008; Bondy et al., 2007; Brown, 2004;

McKinney et al., 2008; Scott et al., 2009; Ware, 2006). For example, Bergeron, seeking to understand the challenges faced by novices in creating culturally responsive classrooms, studied a novice teacher who worked in a largely Hispanic elementary school. This White teacher used Spanish in class to help her communicate with her Spanish-speaking students even though she was not a fluent speaker, and held joint parent-student conferences so students could both help her communicate clearly with their parents and take the lead on showing their parents what progress they have made during the year (Bergeron). This effort allows for the involvement of several stakeholders in student learning and also gives students control over sharing their own goals and accomplishments.

### **Relationships extend to the community**

In order to be as beneficial as possible, this stakeholder partnership should also include the local community. Hermes (2005) suggests that when a teacher collaborates with members of the community, the teacher removes herself from being the sole source of information, thus opening “a space for discussion, direction, and self-reflection” (p. 18). When teachers know and utilize the local community, students benefit from the support provided by those in and out of school. Gehrke (2005) suggests that this means not only learning about the characteristics and needs of individual families, but also how poverty affects students, the particular administrative issues that arise in large, urban school districts, and the available resources the school and local community have to offer. For example, in her research of teachers working in tribal schools on Native American reservations, Hermes (2005) suggests that teachers also understand the “broader historical circumstances that have resulted in low socioeconomic status and a myriad of related issues” (p. 16).

## **School and Classroom Culture**

The role of a successful teacher includes developing relationships with all stakeholders, but equally important to culturally responsive pedagogy is what takes place inside the classroom. The classroom culture, which includes the classroom environment and classroom management strategies, contributes to a successful culturally responsive classroom.

A teacher's classroom is "a reflection of the overall climate of the school, which can either be one that welcomes diversity and portrays a multicultural community of learners, or one that largely ignores diversity, thereby dismissing the unique contributions and funds of knowledge of students and their families" (Powell, 2011, p. 37). Powell suggests that the room reflect the "culture and community" (p. 35) of the students it serves with artwork, posters, books, maps and other displays that resemble the ways that students look, communicate, and play. If teachers are not conscious of this, "classroom displays can reinforce the notion of White privilege by marginalizing other racial and ethnic groups, and by inadvertently associating 'White' with academic achievement and success" (Powell, p. 36) rather than encouraging students to believe in themselves and their abilities.

In a conceptual piece in which Weinstein, Curran, and Tomlinson-Clarke (2003) introduce the concept of culturally responsive classroom management, they state that effective culturally responsive classroom management requires a teacher to create a physical setting that supports student learning, establish expectations for behavior, communicate with students in ways that are "consistent with students' cultural backgrounds" (p. 272), show students that she cares for them as individuals, work with families and encourage them to share insights about their children and families, and use

appropriate interventions when behavior problems arise. Teachers interviewed in Brown's (2003, 2004) studies of culturally responsive classroom management similarly noted that the learning atmosphere in a culturally responsive classroom should be business-like, where students know there is serious work to be done. One teacher explained, "We use very structured routines here. Students know what to expect down to every little detail" (Brown, 2004, p. 279). Several of the teachers in this study make it clear to their students that their behavior affects the learning of everyone in the class and if behavior is not meeting expectations, then they will be asked to leave (Brown, 2004). Other teachers believe that a key to successful classroom management with children living in poverty is that students should be working on "intense academic work" at all times (Poplin et al., 2011). According to Lawrence (2004) in her memoir about her tenure as principal in a high-poverty school, "Good instruction, naturally, is the biggest deterrent to misbehavior in the classroom" (p. 44).

In order for a business-like environment to occur, teachers need to establish clear expectations for student behavior and insist that students meet these expectations (Bondy et al., 2007). This can be done starting on the first day of school by teaching rules and procedures that are based on mutual respect, communicating the belief that students will meet these expectations, being consistent in enforcing rules, calmly delivering consequences, and contacting parents when necessary (Bergeron, 2008; Bondy et al., 2007; Brown, 2003; Patrick et al., 2003; Ware, 2006). When misbehavior does occur, teachers in Brown's (2004) study stated that discipline should be non-punitive, relying on trusting relationships rather than fear of punishment to address disruptions.

## **Instruction**

Although culturally responsive pedagogy should be considered a “consistent mindset” rather than a set of specific strategies (Cantrell & Wheeler, 2011, p. 154), there are several recommendations for effective culturally responsive instruction. These characteristics include holding high expectations, incorporating students’ frames of knowledge and experiences into lessons, explicitly teaching critical thinking and problem solving skills while increasing students’ responsibility for their own learning, allowing and encouraging students to work in groups. By incorporating these approaches, teachers are able to embrace the diversity of their classrooms while teaching relevant and meaningful lessons that meet the needs of their students on an individual level (Cantrell & Wheeler).

### **Hold high and explicit expectations**

Effective teachers of students living in poverty have high expectations for their own instruction as well as for their students’ academics and behavior, holding themselves responsible for finding solutions that help students develop skills to overcome the challenges they face (Bondy et al., 2007; Brown, 2004; Hermes, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Patrick et al., 2003; Poplin et al., 2011; Ware, 2006). Gehrke (2005) theorizes that these challenges could be due to “poverty, language barriers, or other socioeconomic factors” (p. 17). Effective teachers expect their students to learn regardless of those challenges, “relentlessly insist[ing] on two things: that students treat the teacher and one another respectfully and that they complete the academic tasks necessary for successful futures” (Bondy & Ross, 2008, p. 55). In promoting high expectations for students, teachers should be both clear and consistent, insisting that students meet their requests but calmly and authoritatively delivering stated consequences if



expectations are not met (Bondy et al., 2007; Brown, 2003). Knapp, Turnbull, and Shields (1990) theorize that expectations should be appropriate for the specific work being done at a given time, while falling within the set guidelines for overall classroom behavior. In a study of 31 Los Angeles County elementary and secondary teachers, researchers found that the teachers they interviewed had expectations that required students to not only behave appropriately but also to meet academic expectations, for example, using “full sentences and high-level vocabulary” (Poplin et al., 2011, p. 41).

It is important for teachers to make their expectations explicit through explanation as well as by modeling, as students should be able to hear and see what they are expected to do (Knapp et al., 1990). After working with preservice teachers in the Urban Teacher Preparation Program at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Tidwell and Thompson (2008) concluded that if teachers incorporate concepts of multicultural education in their belief systems and develop “a framework for interpreting their students’ realities” (p. 86), then they will be able maintain high expectations for their students despite their potentially very different backgrounds.

### **Incorporate students’ frames of references and experiences into instruction**

An effective teacher does not assume that students have prior knowledge of class content (Chenoweth, 2009). Instead, researchers and theorists agree that effective teachers of students living in poverty discover and build upon students’ cultures and background experiences, beginning instruction where students are and with what they can already do rather than where standards for learning assume students should be (Bennett, 2008; Chenoweth, 2009; Knapp et al., 1990; McKinney et al., 2008; Scott et al., 2009). In their study of a third and fifth grade teacher, Williamson et al. (2005) found through both interviews and observations that these teachers used “representing”

strategies that helped their students learn. In other words, these teachers were explicit, used what is familiar to students to teach what is unfamiliar, broke large concepts into smaller parts, and provided multiple exposures to new ideas. Such teachers are flexible (Hermes, 2005) and teach towards a variety of learning styles, knowing that not all students learn in the same ways (Bondy et al., 2007). Assessment and class activities should be differentiated and multi-faceted to meet students' needs (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Scott et al., 2009; Ware, 2006). Scott's (2009) study of literacy teachers sums up these characteristics neatly: in order for students to be successful learners, their teachers must "communicate genuine care and concern" (p. 339) while taking into account their students' unique backgrounds, teaching lessons that are authentic, motivating, focused, and differentiated to meet their needs.

### **Promote critical thinking while increasing students' responsibility for their own learning**

Effective teachers who work with students living in poverty structure their lessons in ways that promote critical thinking and increase students' responsibility for their own learning. Teachers may begin a lesson with direct instruction using strategies such as modeling, guided and independent practice, and review, incorporating demonstrations and whole-class discussions into their lessons (Poplin et al., 2011) in order to present content explicitly and help students become familiar with new material (Williamson et al., 2005). Additionally, some educational theorists suggest that teachers explicitly state and model their thinking processes when solving problems or thinking through literature, helping students learn how to make connections and move processes into long term memory (Knapp et al., 1990).

In one quantitative study of mathematics instruction with 13,054 kindergarteners living in poverty, Georges (2009) found that students benefited from classrooms where teachers emphasized analytical, problem-solving, and reasoning skills, geared lessons toward individual student needs, and required active student engagement where students applied mathematical concepts. As students expand their ability to think critically and independently, teachers should slowly begin to give students control of their own learning (Knapp et al., 1990). In her study of teachers on Native American reservations, Hermes (2005) described one teacher's system of files that allowed students to be responsible for retrieving and completing any work missed due to absences. Another teacher required students to have a buddy with whom they could work on assignments, quiz before assessments, and call to catch up on assignments if their buddy missed school one day (Ladson-Billings, 1995). By encouraging students to be responsible for their learning, they will turn to each other and to their own thinking rather than relying solely on the teacher for guidance. Students learn that the role of the teacher is not an all-knowing authority, but rather a coach who believes "that students are capable of excellence and [assumes] responsibility for ensuring that [her] students achieve that excellence" (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 26).

### **Encourage students to work in groups**

Finally, research on culturally responsive pedagogy suggests that teachers allow students to interact as a learning community. In doing so, the teacher creates opportunities for students to hone their social and interpersonal skills, as well as skills in working collaboratively to accomplish tasks (Brown, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1995). In addition, cooperative learning "builds upon a cultural value of black people and other students of color, who often prefer cooperation over competition as a modality of

learning” (Ware, 2002). Powers (2011) explains that some students’ familial discourse dictates that they make connections with others in the group before getting started on a task (referred to as “stage-setting”); in order to accommodate these students’ needs, it would be beneficial to allow them the opportunity to chat with each other or as a whole group for a moment before getting started.

Promoting students’ active involvement in heterogeneous groups is one characteristic of effective teaching in high poverty schools (Bartolome, 1994; Haberman, 2010). Sampson and Garrison-Wade (2010) note that students in their study appreciated being able to select their own group members, as they enjoyed working with their friends. Students working in groups may benefit academically as well as socially; Georges’ (2009) study of students in kindergarten math classes found that, after students worked in collaborative groups, their scores on the addition and subtraction subtest for students in high poverty classrooms improved significantly. In a true classroom community, students should feel responsible for their own success and emotional well-being, as well as for that of their classmates (Brown, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1995).

## **Curriculum**

What is taught in a culturally responsive classroom is just as important as how it is taught. Gay (2005) suggests that, in order for “students of color [to] identify with and relate better to schooling and improve their performance,” curricula must be reformed to reflect the “*comprehensive demographic, social, cultural, and linguistic realities of U.S. society and the world*, not just the technological, economic, and political sides of life” (p. 232-233; italics in original). Cantrell and Wheeler (2011) believe that “balanced instruction is insufficient for many children if the texts and tasks are not relevant to their

experiences” (p. 167). As stated previously, culturally responsive teachers should find ways for students to see themselves in the curriculum “using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes” (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 20). Others agree that an academic program should be dynamic rather than fixed (Cox, 2011), encouraging students to draw from and build upon their experiences and knowledge while exposing them to new experiences and ways of thinking (Bartolome, 1994; Knapp et al., 1990).

Rather than relying on prepackaged and impersonal curricula, successful culturally responsive teachers incorporate elements of the students’ cultures, such as language, music, video, books, and other nontraditional texts, into their teaching (Irizarry, 2007; Ware, 2006). One way to do this is for teachers to fill their libraries with books that include characters from a variety of ethnic and socio-economic groups or tell the same story from different perspectives (Souto-Manning, 2009). However, care should be taken so that this is done in a manner that provides deep cultural context, rather than through the superficial addition of things like food, folktales, or artwork that exacerbate stereotypes (Hermes, 2005). Incorporating these elements into the curriculum can form a bridge that eventually leads students to examine relevant social issues that affect their lives (Irizarry, 2007). In order to help build these bridges, teachers should model ways for students to think critically about texts and other resources, questioning point of view, accuracy, balance, and stereotyping found in words and images (Cox, 2011). Bartolome (1994) suggests that teachers should not blindly adopt methods or instructional programs that claim to be effective for all students; instead, teachers should create classroom environments that are informed by deliberate action and reflection.

In this era of high stakes testing, the teachers in Poplin et al.'s (2011) study explained that standardized tests should be considered neither unimportant nor the sole reason for instruction. Rather, standardized test results should be considered a resource for helping teachers teach better. Teachers are required to teach certain standards on which students will be tested, but these standards should be taught using students' cultural knowledge (Cox, 2011). Irizarry's (2007) research with high school history students concurs: state standards should be considered a support for learning, rather than being the first and only piece.

### **Empowerment, Transformation, and Emancipation**

Empowerment, transformation, and emancipation are three end goals of culturally responsive pedagogy. In working toward each of these goals, students become more independent and confident learners who strive to accomplish positive changes in their own academic work, as well as that of their classmates, and in their communities. It is important for teachers and students to strive to meet these goals in part due to the nation's rapidly changing demographics (Howard, 2010). Minority student enrollments are increasing annually, and as noted in Chapter 1, some minority groups are not scoring as well as their White counterparts on international tests of student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2010). As noted by Howard, "If current achievement gaps continue over the next several decades, an increasing proportion of the nation's citizens will be severely uneducated and ill prepared to compete in a global economy" (p. 35). Thus culturally responsive pedagogy and its goals of empowerment, transformation, and emancipation are potential avenues to help students increase their achievement.

The first of these goals is student empowerment. According to Gay (2000), empowerment “enables students to be better human beings and more successful learners. Empowerment translates into academic competence, personal confidence, courage, and the will to act” (p. 32). Empowerment comes through making available to students curriculum that is connected to their lives and experiences outside of school, as well as presenting them with lessons and activities that allow them to interact with each other, their communities, and the curriculum (Gay). Through scaffolding and support as well as by celebrating accomplishments, empowering teachers can help students gain confidence in their ability to learn and succeed (Gay).

Transformation is a second end goal of culturally responsive pedagogy. Transformative teaching recognizes students’ cultural strengths and then develops those skills further; one example is using verbal storytelling common in many Black communities as a means to teach writing (Gay, 2000). As stated by Gay (2000), transformative instruction involves “helping students to develop the knowledge, skills, and values needed to become social critics who can make reflective decisions and implement their decisions in effective personal, social, political, and economic action” (p. 131). Gay notes, “Students must learn to analyze the effects of inequities on different ethnic individuals and groups, have zero tolerance for these, and become change agents committed to promoting greater equality, justice, and power balances among ethnic groups” (p. 33).

Finally, the emancipatory goal of culturally responsive pedagogy means that teachers work with students to help them understand that “no single version of ‘truth’ is total and permanent. Nor should it be allowed to exist uncontested” (Gay, 2000, p. 35).

Teachers can help students meet these goals by modeling how to be critical consumers of texts and other classroom materials, as well as by being purposeful in instruction that points out and challenges stereotypes, one-sided information, and other hegemonic structures that serve to reproduce the status quo (Carter, 2011; Gay). By taking part in this type of instruction, students are able to view many perspectives and make their own interpretations about what they learn, thus helping them become active and engaged participants in their learning.

In the research of real classrooms, the end result of meeting these goals may present itself differently. For Native American students, empowerment begins with students taking responsibility for gathering their own missing work; here, the teacher has put a system of files in place, but it is up to the student to collect the assignments (Hermes, 2005). Several of the teachers in Ladson-Billings' (1995) study of 8 African-American teachers stressed the need for students to view their class as a collective of learners who worked for the success of all, rather than working for individual success. Students in the US history class in Irizarry's (2007) study were comfortable expressing their opinions through speech and writing, often using music, specifically rap, to make their points about social issues at school and in their community. Their teacher allowed them leeway in using vernacular as well as distinct handwriting styles that other teachers frowned upon (Irizarry, 2007). A final example is found in Sampson and Garrison-Wade's (2010) study, where students took a neighborhood field trip that one of the researchers designed to integrate with a local history lesson; upon their return, students felt more connected to their neighborhood. Whether or not a student takes action on what they have learned may depend on whether they feel that their teacher



cares about them. For example, a teacher in Ware's (2006) study demonstrated care to her students throughout the year as a way to model the care she wanted them to exhibit in their communities. She explained, "They have to care about what is going to happen to them and what is going to happen to the people in the world with them" (p. 441).

### **Practices and Perspectives of Novice Urban Teachers**

A search of literature related to the practices and perspectives of novice teachers working in urban schools revealed that there is little extant literature on this topic. Twelve empirical studies were found that addressed teacher candidate or novice teacher experiences in urban schools (Appendix A). Of these studies, six focused on participants in urban preservice teacher education programs. The remaining six studies focused on the experiences and perspectives of novice teachers working in urban settings but not all of the teachers who participated in these studies completed teacher preparation programs designed specifically for teaching in urban schools. The number of participants in these studies ranged from 10 to 218 preservice teachers and from one to 26 novice teachers. Although data collection methods were not described in all of the articles, seven studies included participant interview data, two included classroom observation data, three used textual analysis, two included quantitative analysis of teacher perceptions, and two used mixed methods.

### **Teacher Education Programs**

All six of the studies of preservice teachers looked at the field experience or internship component of teacher education programs and the extent to which the field experience affected the views or behaviors of preservice teachers. Each of the studies focused on preservice teachers who were enrolled in a teacher preparation program that placed students in urban school settings. Two of these studies were quantitative in

nature (Wiggins & Follo, 1999; Wiggins, Follo, & Eberly, 2007); three were qualitative (Conaway, Browning, & Purdum-Cassidy, 2007; Olmedo, 1997; Ross, Halsall, Howie, & Vescio, 2007), and one used mixed methodology (Ross, Dodman, & Vescio, 2010).

Several of these studies centered on the early field experiences that took place during the first years of the program (Olmedo, 1997; Wiggins & Follo, 1999; Wiggins, Follo, & Eberly, 2007). These field experiences included approximately 30 hours of observation and limited teaching responsibility over the course of one semester.

Concurrent with the field placement, preservice teachers were enrolled in courses that incorporated information about cultural diversity and strategies for working in diverse settings into the required readings and class discussions (Wiggins & Follo, 1999; Wiggins et al., 2007). Preservice teachers in Olmedo's study attended a seminar where they debriefed their experiences, learned new strategies, and described their field experiences and reactions to their placements through the use of journaling.

Wiggins and Follo (1999) provided 123 undergraduate teacher education students placed in both urban and suburban field placements with a survey that asked them to describe their feelings about teaching diverse student populations, their perceived readiness to do so, and ways that their program could be improved to strengthen their preparation for teaching in diverse settings. Researchers used quantitative analysis to analyze the responses from the questionnaire. Results showed that increased experience in diverse settings increased students' ability to teach in these settings but this experience did not affect their desire or commitment to do so, nor did the experience guarantee that new teachers would feel comfortable interacting with their students, parents, or colleagues (significance level of experience:  $p=0.0000$ ;

significance level of readiness:  $p=0.0078$ ) (Wiggins & Follo, 1999). The authors recommended that teacher education programs should include a combination of multicultural coursework, field experience, and modeling by practicing teachers that lead to deep rather than superficial understanding of the students and community.

In a later study, Wiggins et al. (2007) surveyed 44 preservice teachers, along with a comparison group of 15 substitute teachers working in urban settings. The purpose of this study was to describe “the degree to which pre-service teachers’ comfort level in culturally diverse urban classrooms changed” (p. 653) after completing a field experience that was designed specifically to address the complexities of teaching in such a setting. Findings suggest that internships that included extensive time on school campuses, either through extended internship experiences, having their classes and seminars on campus, or participating in extra-curricular activities, allowed preservice teachers to make more personal connections with students and families (significance level of time:  $p < 0.01$ ) (Wiggins, Follo, & Eberly, 2007).

Although also examining the early field experiences of preservice teachers, Olmedo (1997) used qualitative methods to focus on a smaller sample of 16 undergraduates, all of whom were White. As previously stated, part of their internship seminar required undergraduates to journal about their classroom experiences. Through content analysis of these journals, Olmedo uncovered the ways that course readings affected preservice teachers’ views about the inner city schools where their field experiences took place. Olmedo noted that the interactions with diverse students increased preservice teachers’ awareness of the “realness” of the issues related to

multicultural education; these were no longer just buzzwords mentioned in class, but concerns that affected real students.

In contrast to these three studies that focused on the early field experiences in teacher education programs, three studies examined the internship experience of preservice teachers. Internships lasted between one semester (Ross et al., 2007; Ross et al., 2010) and one year (Conaway, Browning, & Purdum-Cassidy, 2007). In each of these studies, internships took place in urban classrooms. Conaway, Browning, and Purdum-Cassidy (2007) began their study by questioning 218 preservice teachers at the start of their freshman year, semester-long field experience about their perceptions of teaching in urban schools. This field experience consisted of tutoring first and second graders in an urban school. Students were queried again at the end of the semester to see if their perceptions had changed. During the next two years of the program, preservice teachers participated in similar short field experiences but were not surveyed. Preservice teachers completed a one-year internship during their senior year in the teacher education program and their classroom responsibilities increased as the year progressed. At the conclusion of this internship, the 114 preservice teachers who remained in the program were provided with another questionnaire. At this time, qualitative analysis was done to determine whether the preservice teachers' perspectives about urban teaching had changed over the four years of their program. Findings showed that change in attitudes did occur; students developed more accurate understandings of the characteristics of those living in urban communities and felt more comfortable teaching in urban schools (Conaway et al., 2007).

Similarly, Ross et al. (2010) sought to understand the extent to which a one-semester internship affected the job acceptance decisions and effectiveness of new teachers. They surveyed 93 preservice teachers during the fifth, Master's degree year of their teacher education program. Of these 93 preservice teachers, 50 interned in a high-need school and 43 interned in a heterogeneous school. The pre-survey was given to interns after the first three weeks of their placements, once they had worked with students for a significant amount of time, and focused on their perceptions of self-efficacy and intent to teach in urban schools. A post-survey was administered to 53 total graduates of the teacher education program, 34 of who completed the internship in a high need school. The remaining 19 graduates completed the internship at a non-high need school. Results of the questionnaires were compared and analyzed quantitatively. Findings from the quantitative part of this study suggest that students who had an internship experience in a poverty school were more likely to accept a teaching position in a school with a moderate or high poverty level as compared to novices who had not had such an experience. The qualitative portion of this study, related to novice teachers, will be discussed further below.

Ross, Halsall, Howie, and Vescio (2007) studied the experiences of 10 prospective teachers who had completed an internship and corresponding seminar that was designed to help preservice teachers develop and practice a "no-excuses" philosophy for student success. After completing their internship, prospective teachers participated in a retrospective interview and gave permission for their online course postings to be examined during inductive analysis. The researchers determined that 3 of the 10 participants had developed a clear and constant "no-excuses" philosophy, constantly

working to solve classroom problems rather than placing blame on students, their families, the curriculum, or testing. Five other participants were considered to have emerging “no-excuses” philosophies, as they occasionally placed blame on students or other factors or sometimes questioned whether they could reach every student. However, these students also posed classroom questions as solvable problems. Data related to the remaining two prospective teachers were not reported. Findings showed that all 10 of the interns were willing to teach in high poverty schools, though five qualified their responses by stating a need to teach elsewhere first or that the school would need to have a supportive professional climate (Ross et al., 2007).

Findings from these studies suggest that teacher education programs should include multicultural coursework that connects tightly, and not superficially, to the fieldwork experience and should provide students with opportunities and guidance to be self-reflective and make connections between what they read about and what they see in classrooms (Olmedo, 1997; Wiggins & Follo, 1999). One major finding common to these studies is that field experiences in urban, high need settings contribute to preservice teachers’ feelings of comfort and self-efficacy in teaching in these environments (Conaway et al., 2007; Olmedo, 1997; Ross et al., 2010; Ross et al., 2007; Wiggins & Follo, 1999; Wiggins et al., 2007).

### **Novice Teachers**

The studies reviewed below focused on the experiences of novice teachers working in urban settings. Two of these studies, Watson (2011) and Cross (2003), addressed the ways that novice teachers thought about the urban settings in which they taught. Four studies (Achinstein & Aguirre, 2008; Castro, Kelly, & Shih, 2010; Freedman & Appleman, 2009; Worthy, 2005) concerned the challenges faced by and the resilience

of novice teachers working in urban schools. Finally, although the study conducted by Ross et al. (2010) was discussed above as a teacher education study, the qualitative component of the study concerns novice teachers and will be discussed further below.

In addition to the quantitative component of Ross et al.'s (2010) study, interviews were conducted with six teachers, three graduates each from high need and non-high need internships, all of whom were teaching in high need schools after graduation. These interviews were conducted during the participant's first or second year of teaching in one of the following contexts: rural with a high White student population, urban with a high African American student population, or urban with a high student population of English Language Learners. Interviews were qualitatively analyzed in this mixed methods study, and findings showed that the greatest challenge to teaching in high poverty schools is confronting the assumptions that preservice teachers held about their students' families. Additionally, new teachers who had prior experience working with children from poverty felt less frustrated during their first year of teaching in a poverty school. The data suggested that, "for all interns, successful experience increases efficacy, validating the importance of internships in high need schools" (np).

Cross (2003) and Watson (2011) also used teacher interviews as the source of qualitative data; Cross interviewed 12 graduates of an urban-focused teacher education program, while Watson interviewed 16. Although both addressed the perceptions novice urban teachers held about the environment in which they taught, the research questions guiding these studies were different. Cross used interviews to uncover whether the teacher education program led to learning or unlearning of racism through graduates' reflections about their readiness to teach in multiracial classrooms. Each teacher was

interviewed one time, and each interview lasted approximately one hour. Watson focused on the ways that novice teachers used the words, “urban” and “suburban” in reference to their students and schools. Each teacher in this study was interviewed three times over the course of one year; each of these interviews lasted approximately one hour. The transcripts from each set of interviews were analyzed prior to the next interview, and questions were created based on the teachers’ responses during the previous interviews.

From the interviews, Cross (2003) determined that the teachers who graduated from this urban teacher education program were able to explicate several of the tenets of multicultural teaching (respect for children’s language, the need for using diverse literature, recognizing cultural diversity, and acknowledging background knowledge and experiences). However, these teachers had difficulty implementing these practices in their classrooms. Similarly, findings from Watson’s (2011) study suggest that, even with preparation designed for teachers entering urban settings, novice teachers avoided using “race words” in their interviews, especially when they spoke about their own Whiteness. These teachers were willing and wanted to teach in schools that were diverse, but only diverse to a certain extent; schools with higher levels of racial diversity or poverty were avoided by many of the teachers due to perceived challenges inherent to those environments.

Three of the studies related to the challenges faced by and the resilience of novice teachers working in urban schools focused on the experiences of White teachers working in urban and culturally diverse schools (Castro, Kelly, & Shih, 2010; Freedman



& Appleman, 2009; Worthy, 2005). Achinstein and Aguirre (2008) examined the experiences of teachers of color in schools with high minority student populations.

The majority of research concerning urban education focuses on the experiences of White teachers in a high-minority classroom setting. Conversely, Achinstein and Aguirre's (2008) study focused on the experiences of teachers of color with their minority students. The purpose of the study was to understand the challenges they faced, how teachers responded to those challenges, and what induction support these minority teachers felt would have helped them deal with those challenges. Each of 15 teachers participated in three semi-structured interviews during each of three years of the study, six classroom observations during the first two years of the study, as well as focus groups to allow participants to member check the analysis. Analysis included three levels of coding: preliminary coding of socio-cultural challenges, pattern coding of responses to challenges, and cross-case analysis.

Findings suggested that minority teachers face questions from students regarding their language, skin color, class, gender roles, and country of origin, and are sometimes accused of intercultural racism. However, teachers in this study generally did not feel that the questions and challenges were meant to be hurtful. Instead, they were considered to be attempts by students to make connections with them. In order to cope with these challenges, these minority teachers often reflected upon and reframed the challenges to turn them into teachable moments in order to broaden students' understandings of culture, strengthen their relationships with students, and connect the issue to course content. These teachers argued that helping to problematize culture helps minority students learn how to navigate dominant culture.

The remaining three studies focused on the challenges and resilience of White teachers working in urban, high minority and high need schools. Two of these were 5-year longitudinal studies that focused on the same teacher or teachers throughout the course of the study (Freedman & Appleman, 2009; Worthy, 2005). Worthy used interviews, classroom observations, and field notes to document the journey of one male teacher who completed a traditional university teacher education program as he navigated the first years of teaching in an urban elementary school. The purpose of this study was to examine this teacher's perspectives about teaching and the support he received while teaching, in addition to his opinion as to whether his teacher education program adequately prepared him for the job. Worthy found that there were three main themes related to this teacher's thinking as he moved from being a novice to an experienced teacher: becoming a teacher versus being a manager; overcoming challenges in finding support systems; and criticisms of and suggestions for preservice preparation and induction programs.

Freedman and Appleman (2009) studied 26 secondary English teachers during their first five years teaching in urban schools. Each of these teachers completed a teacher education program designed specifically to prepare teachers to work in urban environments. The research question that guided data collection and analysis was, "What factors help teachers stay in urban teaching?" (p. 324). In order to answer this question, the mixed methods study consisted of a collection of demographic data that was collected during all five years and a survey of all participants, followed by individual interviews with eight teachers during year four of data collection. Five of those eight teachers were interviewed again during the fifth year of the study. Not all of the teachers

remained teaching in urban schools for the duration of the study. Freedman and Appleman found that teachers generally stayed in challenging urban environments for reasons that included a sense of mission, a disposition for hard work, the receipt of appropriate and adequate teacher preparation, and support from members of their cohort and other members of the professional community.

Castro, Kelly, and Shih (2010) studied 15 elementary and secondary teachers working in hard-to-staff schools. Five were special education teachers who completed a traditional teacher education program; the majority of the remaining 10 teachers were either working towards completion or had completed the requirements of alternative teacher certification programs. Five of those teachers taught in urban schools and five taught in rural schools. This study focused on the perspectives of these teachers related to two research questions: First, what strategies do new teachers employ in response to adverse situations? And second, what resources do beginning teachers rely on to overcome challenges and obstacles to teaching? Interviews were the sole data source. Findings included teachers' use of four strategies that helped them meet the challenges of paperwork, grading, meetings, parents, classroom management, and the myriad others faced by teachers working in high-needs schools. These strategies included help-seeking, problem-solving, managing difficult relationships, and seeking rejuvenation and renewal. However, Castro et al. also found that developing these coping mechanisms can "create new resources where none previously existed, but also expend energy from beginning teachers" (p. 628), which could lead to greater stress for novices.

In all three of these studies, support systems were crucial to the success of a novice teacher, though support may not be easy to find (Castro et al., 2010; Freedman & Appleman, 2009; Worthy, 2005). Castro et al. note that veteran teachers often do not volunteer to help novices, so novices may have to seek help when needed. Worthy (2005) states that learning how to communicate with colleagues for any reason is a learned, although necessary, skill. Additionally, a key characteristic common to the teachers who remained working in challenging environments is persistence (Castro et al.; Freedman & Appleman; Worthy). As part of problem-solving, trial and error, and researching alternative solutions, including learning how to “play the game” to meet administrators’ requests while also meeting students’ needs, are considered common coping mechanisms (Castro et al.; Worthy).

### **Limitations in the Literature**

Based on this review of relevant literature, it is clear that we already know a great deal about recommended practices for teaching in high poverty environments. Teachers successful at working in these environments reflect upon and challenge their own beliefs about teaching and students, recognize and act upon the needs of their students, and learn about and work with members of the school and neighboring communities. However, although several scholars known for their work in culturally responsive pedagogy (Banks, 1991; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Howard, 2010) stress the need for this type of pedagogy to have an end goal of empowerment, little of the research on this topic discusses ways in which students’ work helps them to meet this goal. Of the 19 empirical studies synthesized for this review, less than one fourth (Hermes, 2005; Irizarry, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Sampson & Garrison-Wade, 2010) discuss ways that the study reflects an emancipatory or empowering outcome.

Several of the studies discussed what preservice teachers are learning related to culturally responsive pedagogy (Conaway et al., 2007; Olmedo, 1997; Ross et al., 2010; Ross et al., 2007; Wiggins & Follo, 1999; Wiggins et al., 2007), as well as indicate what is challenging for novice teachers in diverse settings in relation to implementing CRP (Castro et al., 2010; Freedman & Appleman, 2009; Ross et al., 2010; Worthy, 2005). However, we don't know whether teachers who completed urban teacher education programs endorse and adopt these perspectives and practices or whether they are able to do so over time. Further research is needed that helps us understand whether new teachers who completed urban teacher education programs believe that culturally responsive pedagogy is effective and valuable in their own classrooms, whether they use culturally responsive pedagogy in their classrooms, and their perspectives about what promotes and inhibits the implementation of strategies recommended for use in classrooms with a large population of children of color who are living in poverty.

## CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

### **Introduction**

The purposes of this study were: 1) to understand the perspectives about effective teaching practice held by teachers who graduated from a year-long residency and 2) to examine the relationship between their perspectives and practices. Because year-long, alternative certification, clinical teacher preparation programs are relatively new, it is important for us to learn more about how program graduates conceptualize and enact their roles as teachers of low income, children of color, and how we, as teacher educators, can improve our practice to help them become more effective educators in urban and high-poverty environments. In order to increase our understanding about whether and how the perspectives and practices of program graduates connect to recommendations for best practice for teaching in predominantly minority, high poverty schools, the findings of this study are presented as an educational criticism. The purpose of an educational criticism is threefold: “to describe the essential qualities of phenomenon studied, to interpret the meanings of and relationships among those qualities, and to provide reasoned judgments about the significance and value of the phenomenon” (Ross, 1988, p. 162). This study sought to understand the perspectives and teaching practices of graduates of an urban residency, as well as to compare their experiences with existing literature about recommended practices for teaching in similar, high-poverty environments with a large African American student population.

### **Research Questions**

The purpose of this study was to investigate and document the perspectives and practices regarding effective teaching held by teachers who completed a year-long,

alternative certification, urban residency program and are currently working in Title I elementary schools. The research question guiding this study was: What are the perspectives and practices of graduates of a yearlong urban residency who are teaching in schools with a student population that is primarily low income and minority? Sub-questions include: 1) How do these teachers define effective teaching? 2) What practices do these teachers use that they believe are highly effective? Why do they believe those practices are effective? 3) What factors do these teachers identify as influential in the development of their perspectives and practices?

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is qualitative in nature, with a theoretical foundation in constructivism. As stated by Glesne (2006), a qualitative researcher “seeks to understand and interpret how the various participants in a social setting construct the world around them...[by gaining] access to the multiple perspectives of the participants” (p. 4-5). Constructivism “maintains that human beings construct their perceptions of the world, that no one person is ‘right’ or more ‘real’ than another, and that these realities must be seen as wholes” (Glesne, 2006, p. 7). To be clear, only portions of this study are consistent with a constructivist perspective; while the interview portion and the feedback component of the observation portion are considered constructivist methods, the cross-case analysis and criticism are not. These methods will be described individually and in detail below. The study is grounded in ethnographic methods as it sought to understand the behavior patterns and perspectives of three teachers who completed an urban residency program and are currently teaching in Title I schools (Patton, 2002). As previously stated, the findings are presented in the form of an educational criticism which includes

the teachers' perspectives and also goes beyond these perspectives using interpretation and critique.

The writer of an educational criticism “construct[s] stories or portraits of what [the researcher] experienced and understood in the settings explored” (Hatch, 2002, p. 29), with the end goal of improving the educational process for those involved (Eisner, 2002). This study sought to improve the educational process for the participating teachers as well as for novice teacher residents who proceed through the program in the future. By discussing their perspectives and practices during interviews, the participants may have become more aware of and reflective about their own practice. Additionally, by learning how these teachers taught and why they made certain instructional decisions, those involved with the residency program may gain key understandings about how they could inform their practice as teacher educators.

Educational criticism has its roots in social anthropology and aesthetic criticism (Ross, 1988). According to Eisner, an educational criticism is “the illumination of something’s qualities so that an appraisal of its value can be made” (2002, p. 214). The critic, then, is to create an image of the situation or event that draws the reader’s attention to its most significant features (Eisner, 2002). Eisner explained that the features considered significant depend on the critic, the purpose of the study, and the theories or models being used for comparison (2002). In this study, features that were considered significant were both the defining qualities of each teacher’s classroom practice as well as those features related to effective culturally responsive practices as illustrated by a review of the existing literature.



In turn, an educational criticism is descriptive, interpretive, evaluative, and thematic. The purpose of the description is to make most clear the features of each teacher's case that are most significant. Each teacher's case, therefore, does not necessarily focus on the same aspects. The interpretative part of a criticism answers the questions, "What does this situation mean to those involved? How does this classroom operate?" (Eisner, 2002, p. 229). This stage allows the critic to combine knowledge of theory with knowledge of practice in order to interpret the teacher's words and actions. During the evaluative stage, the critic uses educational criteria to determine value: Is this practice improving the educational process for this teacher or these children? Finally, the thematic stage is a place for garnering the major ideas or conclusions derived from the experience. The identification of themes helps showcase the larger lessons that can be learned from this experience and allows the reader to understand the essential point of the work (Eisner, 2002).

This educational criticism includes three overlapping components. A description of each teacher's practice is presented side-by-side with a discussion of the perspectives the teacher shared during interviews. This coupling of practice and perspective lends itself to an interpretation and an understanding of each teacher's pedagogy. A critical description is also provided that compares the data to understandings culled from the existing literature on recommended practices for teaching in high minority, high poverty environments. Essentially, this criticism seeks to understand the perspectives through which these teachers view teaching in their context, which practices these teachers are able to do easily, which practices they find challenging, and determine whether these

teachers hold perspectives and are enacting practices considered by existing literature to be effective in environments similar to those in which they teach.

### **Participant Selection**

The district in which this study took place is one of Florida's five largest school districts. The district's urban residency program was a partnership program between the school district and a nearby university. After the 2012 school year, the program will no longer be in operation for a variety of reasons, including the fact that the teacher shortages the program was designed to address have subsided. The residency was a one-year program, open to candidates who held bachelor's degrees in areas outside of education. Participants worked side-by-side with experienced mentor teachers four full days each week, gradually taking on more responsibility for planning and teaching lessons. During the fifth day, participants attended courses such as educational psychology, reading and mathematics methods, classroom management, and other topics that are important to effective teaching and that will be addressed on certification tests. Culturally Responsive Pedagogy was woven into the subject matter for each of the five courses, and was not offered as stand-alone content. All coursework was practical and designed to connect theory to classroom practice. Upon program completion, newly certified teachers were required to work in one of the district's urban, Title I schools for three years as repayment for tuition costs. After the contractual three-year period, teachers were free to transfer to any within-district school, or leave the district entirely.

Of the 15 participants who began the residency during its inaugural year (2006-2007), eleven completed it and were hired for teaching positions at schools within the district. During the contractual three-year period, two teachers were released from their

contracts. One of those two teachers was hired to work in a within-district charter school. After the contractual period ended, one teacher was not reappointed but is currently teaching in a Title I school in a different district. Another is still active within the district but on maternity leave, while a third teacher was transferred to a within-district, non-Title I magnet school. Currently, six of the participants who completed the program are employed at within-district, non-charter elementary schools. Each of these teachers was asked to participate in this study

Three teachers were purposefully selected to participate in the study and represent a homogenous group meeting specified criteria (Patton, 2002). Selection criteria included the following: each participant 1) completed the district's urban residency program during the 2006-2007 school year; 2) completed the contractual three year teaching requirement in an urban, Title I school, and; 3) still teaches in an urban, Title I elementary school within the district. Of the six teachers who completed the program, three met all of these criteria.

Each of these three teachers was invited to participate in the study and was provided with an informed consent form that explained the purpose and procedures that would be followed during the study. The teachers were informed that participation was voluntary and that they could terminate their participation at any time. All three teachers agreed to participate in the study. However, after data collection and analysis were completed I determined that one of these teachers would not be an appropriate case for study. This decision is explained in full below (see section titled, 'Ms. Winslow'). In order to protect the privacy of individuals studied during this research, pseudonyms were

given to all participants and their students and schools, and specific programs are not referenced by name. All identifying information was altered to protect anonymity.

### **The School Setting as Situated in History**

Both of the Title I schools involved in this study are located in one of Florida's five largest school districts. Historically, this district has faced long-standing challenges to integrate its schools. In general, Florida was hesitant to end segregation in its schools, instead encouraging schools to equalize funding, transportation needs, and staff racial ratios in order to preserve segregation (Tomberlin, 1974). Even after the passing of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* in 1954, Florida maintained its segregated school systems by passing 21 bills into law that were designed to protect the dual Black-White education system that was in place (Tomberlin). The first Black students to enroll in an all-White Florida public school did not do so until 1959 (Tomberlin).

Historically, desegregation efforts in the district in which this study takes place were no different from those in other parts of the state. In 1960, one-quarter of the district's students were Black. The schools these children attended were not equal to those attended by White students. Rather, the Black schools were "smaller, badly supplied, understaffed, poorly constructed, inadequately ventilated, underfinanced, and often located in White neighborhoods," which necessitated busing; the distance was sometimes so great that the district used Greyhound buses (Bartley, 2001, p. 337). Through the 1960s, the district implemented two integration policies. The first was to integrate one grade level each year in neighborhood schools, starting with first and second grades, until all grade levels integrated in 1974. The second plan was to allow school choice, meaning that Black families could choose to send their children to White

schools within the district (Bartley). The district did not expect that either of these plans would lead to widespread desegregation (Bartley). In fact, both of these policies failed. Neighborhoods were often segregated due to discriminatory housing and redlining policies so the integration of neighborhood schools was ineffectual (Ware, 2005). Although many Black students lived closer to White schools than to the Black school they had been attending, very few Black students transferred to White schools (Bartley). By 1965, “only 137 of the 30,000 African American students were in integrated schools (Bartley, p. 340).

Although the district made gains in integrating its schools by the mid-seventies, the district’s designation as a “unitary” school district was revoked in 1989, returning to its designation as a dual African American and White system by the Federal Circuit Court (Bartley, 2001). A school is considered an African American school when it has a population of at least 75% African American students (Bartley, 2001). This shift in status was due in part to the end of mass busing, the district’s emphasis on equal education rather than integration, and the return to neighborhood schools. Presently, consistent with resegregation across the south, of 101 elementary schools within the district, 26 are predominantly African American, according to 2008-09 Florida School Indicators reports (<http://www.fldoe.org/eias/eiaspubs/0809fsir.asp>). Of those predominantly African American elementary schools, half have enrollments of over 90% African American students. Middle and high schools, while integrated, often segregate students through tracking.

### **The Modern-day School Setting**

Two of the study’s participants, Ms. Winslow and Ms. Rigsbee, are employed at Turner Elementary, a Foreign Language, Art, and Music Enrichment Magnet School.

Ninety-six percent of the 436 students enrolled at Turner Elementary identify as Black. Nearly 87% of the students attending Turner Elementary receive free or reduced price lunch. In comparison, the statewide average percentage of students who receive free or reduced price lunch is 49.57%. Twelve percent of the teachers working at Turner do not meet the federal criteria for highly qualified teachers, compared to the state average of 5%. A highly qualified teacher is one who holds a bachelor's degree or higher from a four-year college or university, full certification by the state, and the demonstration of competence in each core academic area in which the teacher teaches. In addition, Turner Elementary lacks stability regarding faculty assignments. During the course of this study, the principal was released and the assistant principal took over, a retired principal came out of retirement to take on assistant principal duties, a fifth grade teacher was reassigned to third grade (the third grade teacher was moved to fifth grade), and Ms. Winslow, one of the participants, was reassigned from first grade to a fourth/fifth grade combined class.

Ms. Grace, the study's third participant, is employed at Oceanside Elementary School, which houses an Autism Center. At Oceanside, 37% of the students identify as Black, 16% identify as either Hispanic, Asian, or mixed race, and 47% identify as White. Approximately 76% of the 336 students receive free or reduced cost lunch. Seven percent of the teachers working at Oceanside do not meet the federal criteria for highly qualified teachers. Oceanside's principal is new to the school this year; mid-year faculty reassignments are not typical.

### **Individual Participants**

As stated, three teachers met the selection criteria and agreed to participate in this study. Each of these teachers is described below.

### **Ms. Grace**

Ms. Grace, a White teacher from an educated, middle-class background, taught first grade at Oceanside Elementary during the course of this study. Prior to becoming a teacher, Ms. Grace worked in construction, completing a master's degree in architecture. Soon after finishing her graduate studies, Ms. Grace began to question her choice of profession, believing that it was no longer right for her. After praying for guidance for a new direction, Ms. Grace received an answer: she should teach poor children. Though at first uncertain, Ms. Grace discovered this residency program, interviewed, and was granted a spot in the program. Ms. Grace was hired at Oceanside as a primary teacher and has taught first and second grades. Ms. Grace's student achievement data has consistently improved during her tenure at Oceanside; since 2009, her students' scores have placed her in the top 47% of first grade teachers in her district.

### **Ms. Rigsbee**

Ms. Rigsbee, a Black teacher with roots in Haiti, taught fifth grade at Turner Elementary. When she was a young girl, Ms. Rigsbee and her parents emigrated from Haiti. She later became a United States citizen, living in Brooklyn, N.Y. until health problems and a troubled economy led her family to relocate to Florida. Like Ms. Grace, Ms. Rigsbee did not intend to become a teacher; her earlier career path was in law. Ms. Rigsbee taught second and third grades for three years before moving to fifth grade in the 2010-11 school year. As a second grade teacher, her students' achievement data placed her in the top 2% of teachers in her district. As a third grade teacher, students' scores placed her in the bottom third of teachers in her district. During the past two school years, Ms. Rigsbee served as the sole reading teacher for all three classes of

fifth graders at Turner Elementary. Fifth grade reading scores for 2011 indicated that 66% of students scored a level 3 or higher.

### **Ms. Winslow**

Ms. Winslow is a Black teacher who grew up in a neighborhood very similar to the one in which the majority of her students live. Prior to beginning the residency program, Ms. Winslow earned a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and had a career in child welfare. In child welfare, she often felt helpless to protect children from the abuse that she witnessed. She believed that, as a teacher, she would be able to work with children earlier, in a "beginning stage [where] you're teaching children new ideas...something that's lifelong" (interview 1.2.22-15). Ms. Winslow taught first and second grades until this year, when she was reassigned midway through the first nine weeks to teach a combined class of fourth and fifth graders. Her students' achievement score data show that Ms. Winslow's students have consistently improved. More specifically, she was ranked at 279 out of 322 first grade teachers in 2007-08 (top 86.6%); 287 out of 566 second grade teachers in 2008-09 (top 50.7%); and 249 out of 264 first grade teachers in 2009-2010 (top 44.1%).

Ms. Winslow's current placement, the intermediate STAR (Students Taking Academic Responsibility) class, was designed to be an elementary-level dropout prevention program, serving students who are overage due to retention. Students in Ms. Winslow's class were between the ages of 11 and 14 years old. According to district criteria, students who are eligible for placement in STAR have had academic but not behavioral challenges. Prior to and during enrollment in STAR, students must maintain a C average or better in conduct.



This assignment was particularly challenging for Ms. Winslow for several reasons. First, Ms. Winslow did not have previous experience teaching at the intermediate level. Her residency and all subsequent teaching assignments were at the primary level. Second, this reassignment happened without notice in late September, about one month into the school year. Thus, Ms. Winslow did not have the opportunity to enroll in summer professional development offerings, review grade level standards and texts, or pre-plan with grade level teachers prior to her first day with the students. In addition, as a combined class, Ms. Winslow often felt isolated from both the fourth and fifth grade teams of teachers. Finally, all of the students in STAR faced significant academic challenges. Because they all had been retained more than once, many were achieving far below grade level expectations in both reading and math. Additionally she felt that teaching a combined 4th/5th grade class was especially challenging and found it difficult to meet the needs of all 15 students. Though an aide was assigned to assist with STAR classes, this person was not a certified teacher and also performed other duties around the school during much of the school day, such as monitoring the cafeteria during lunches.

Each of these hurdles contributed to the difficulty Ms. Winslow faced this year. During informal interviews, Ms. Winslow frequently communicated dissatisfaction with her placement and described a variety of professional and personal stressors that made this year especially difficult for her. Perhaps as a result of her stresses, she had difficulty maintaining her classroom as a productive learning environment. There were times when Ms. Winslow joked with her students, used encouraging and endearing language, and asked her students to interact with each other during lessons. Students

often responded to her in a positive manner. However, there were also times when less desirable teaching behaviors occurred. For example, there were several instances when Ms. Winslow left the room, leaving students in the charge of an unprepared aide or in my care for periods as long as 20 minutes. She sometimes seemed unprepared to teach, appearing unsure of content and occasionally presenting factually incorrect information to students. During most observations there was a great deal of downtime where students were not engaged in any sort of learning task. Though copious interview data were collected through previous studies of this residency program, there is no observation data that can be used to compare Ms. Winslow's current practice in the STAR setting to her practice in previous years. However, because this was such a stressful year for Ms. Winslow and because there was a low proportion of task-focused learning time in this classroom, it did not seem productive to include a negative case here.

### **Data Collection Methods**

As a qualitative study designed to provide understanding of the perspectives and practices of three teachers in relation to effective teaching practice, data collection focused on each teacher in her natural setting, the classroom (Sherman & Webb, 1988). The classroom setting is important because "human behavior- experience- is shaped in context and the events cannot be understood adequately if isolated from their contexts" (Sherman & Webb, 1988, p. 5). Because this study is grounded in ethnographic methodology and in order to best understand each teacher's perspectives and practice as a whole experience, interviews, observations, and field notes were the selected data collection methods.

## Interviews

In general, interviews are conducted with the purpose of capturing “the unseen that was, is, will be, or should be; how respondents think or feel about something; and how they explain or account for something” (Glesne, 2006, p. 105). With the aim of understanding the perspectives of each teacher concerning effective teaching in high-poverty, predominantly minority, urban schools, both formal and informal interviews were conducted. Three formal interviews were conducted with each teacher to understand her views related to her understandings of effective teaching and the development of those perspectives. Each interview was designed to last approximately 45 minutes and took place in person in the teacher’s classroom. All interviews were transcribed verbatim and in their entirety.

All three of the formal interviews were semi-structured. Although there was a general direction and a set of beginning questions for the interviews, questions were adapted “in response to informants’ responses, the social contexts being discussed, and the degree of rapport established” (Hatch, 2002, p. 23). The first interview was conducted before observations began and included questions about teaching in general (such as, In what ways is teaching different from what you expected it to be like?) and were designed to build rapport with each teacher. This interview was important as it helped to build a relationship between researcher and participant that nurtured a “basic sense of trust...that allow[ed] for the free flow of information” (Spradley, 1979, p. 78). The second interview focused on questions about each teacher’s classroom and her perspectives regarding how she teaches (such as, Think of a lesson you taught recently where you finished feeling like you had done a really great job. What did you do?). The third and final formal interview was conducted at the end of the observation period and

addressed the ways in which each teacher learned to teach (such as, What experiences do you think have been most influential in teaching you how to teach?). During this interview, I prompted teachers to discuss things they think they “should” do but do not.

In order to fully appreciate the teachers’ practice in the “here and now” (Hatch, 2002, p. 91), several informal interviews were conducted with each teacher as part of the observation process. Informal interviews provide a place “where researchers and participants construct understandings of what is happening in the research context” (Hatch, 2002, p. 92). These informal interviews were designed to help clarify what was observed during a particular observation and were very short and to the point, in the hallway or on the way to lunch, and served either to quickly clarify a question I had about the observation or address patterns I saw over the course of several observations. Questions asked during these interviews were designed to help me understand why a teacher acted in a certain way during the observation (such as, I noticed you have students sit in rows when they write. Why do you want them to sit that way?). These informal interviews also allowed me to understand the connections (or lack thereof) between what the teachers stated they believed to be true during their interviews, and what I saw during the observations. Protocols for the formal and informal interviews are located in Appendix B.

## **Observations**

Ethnographic observations were a main source of data. Although observations are challenging in that the researcher may first try to see and take note of every occurrence, the purpose of observation is not to see and attend to everything. Rather, the purpose is to “bring [one’s] subjects into sharper and sharper focus, careful to include some peripheral detail as well” (Wolcott, 1999, p. 257). The goal of observations is to find

patterns in behavior that help to uncover the practices of those involved in the study. This can only be accomplished through frequent, repeated observation (Spradley, 1980). With frequent observation, the observer begins to “discern recurring themes, behavior suggestive of underlying templates for action” (Wolcott, 1999, p. 260). One concern with the use of observations in research is that participants will put on a display, acting in the manner that they think the researcher wants to see. Wolcott (1999) acknowledges this possibility, but states that people can only “maintain their best image” for so long before “assum[ing] a more natural stance” (p. 49).

With the aim of understanding the practices of each teacher, full-day and half-day observations were conducted with each teacher. First, three full-day observations were conducted in order to get a thorough understanding of each teacher’s general classroom procedures. The remaining observations were typically half-day observations, depending on the scheduling needs of the teacher, and focused on learning more about specific aspects of each teacher’s practice. Practices I focused on included classroom management, how each teacher conveyed academic and behavioral expectations, assessment procedures, how students interacted with the teacher and with each other, and the procedures and content of academic teaching. The use of specific observation protocols was minimal, as Eisner (2002) suggested that observation tools can cause researchers to miss a particular activity or statement because they have the tendency to get too focused on the tool rather than on the experience at hand.

Although no observation protocol was used to structure the observations, one relevant observation tool was considered a resource that informed the observations.

This observation protocol was co-developed by Center for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy at Georgetown College, Kentucky and the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development at the University of Kentucky for use with observing culturally responsive pedagogy. The instrument, the Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol (CRIOP), was developed from a synthesis of literature related to culturally responsive teaching and literacy instruction. It consists of eight, research-based elements that are central to culturally responsive pedagogy: Teacher Care, Classroom Climate, Family Collaboration, Assessment, Curriculum, Instruction/Pedagogy, Discourse/Instructional Conversation, and Sociopolitical Consciousness. For each of these elements, several observable indicators are provided to assist with and focus the observation. The CRIOP can be found in Appendix C.

As stated, the use of this protocol was limited. The CRIOP was reviewed prior to some observations as a reminder of the aforementioned indicators. After all of the observations were completed, I reviewed the transcribed field notes and interview transcripts for each teacher and filled out the CRIOP, taking into account all of the information gleaned through the full set of data. The completed protocol then became another data source that pointed my attention to particular aspects of each teacher's practice.

The role of the researcher during these observations was generally as a "non-participant participant observer" (Wolcott, 1999). A "non-participant participant observer" is a label given to researchers "who make no effort to hide what they are doing, but neither are they able fully to avail themselves of the potential afforded by participant observation to take a more active or interactive role" (Wolcott, 1999, p. 48). Spradley

refers to this type of observer participation as “passive participation,” where the researcher is “present at the scene of action but does not participate or interact with people to any great extent” (Spradley, 1980, p. 59).

In the case of this research, there were a few times with each teacher where I was asked to take a supervisory role with students. Because I have had a professional relationship with these teachers over the course of five years, I did what was asked of me. In most instances, I simply supervised students for a few moments while the teacher stepped out of the room to speak with a parent or administrator. In one instance, I read books to a class of students for about 30 minutes while the teacher dealt with several students who had gotten sick in class. In another instance, the teacher and her class were in science lab when the assistant principal, also serving as science lab instructor, was called out of the room and the teacher was left without instructions for the science activity. In this case, she asked me to help her improvise the computer-based lesson. On most occasions, I sat silent in the background while taking notes as described below, only speaking to students or the teacher if spoken to first. If students requested assistance, I first referred them to a peer or to their teacher, depending on the nature of the request and the nature of the classroom.

### **Field Notes**

During each observation, raw, descriptive field notes were taken in order to assist with recall of the observation as well as to allow me to make note of questions, hypotheses, possible interpretations, and ideas that arose during the observation (Hatch, 2002). The purpose of these field notes is to “make a careful record” of what one is able to attend (Hatch, p. 78). Field notes were taken by hand. As suggested by Hatch, the first set of notes included a detailed description of the classroom context in

order to situate the researcher in the classroom and gain “a solid sense of the contextual world of the participants” (p. 79). I captured as many aspects of classroom life as possible, including verbatim accounts (Hatch; Spradley, 1980), realizing that it is virtually impossible to capture everything that was observed in a classroom setting (Hatch). Additionally, these field notes allowed me to refer to specific events when speaking to the teacher during informal interviews.

Directly after each observation, the raw field notes were transcribed. During the transcription I filled the notes with more complete descriptions of events and conversations. These complete descriptions were typed each night, following an observation. Field notes from each observation were used to help me determine on what specific classroom events to focus subsequent observations, as well as to help me understand patterns in each teacher’s instruction.

### **Challenges to Data Collection Methods**

Although there are challenges to using interviews and observations as methods of data collection, I believe that the amount of time I spent with these teachers during this study, as well as the history we have shared together minimized these challenges. The teachers were aware that the purpose of the study was to understand their perspectives and practices so it was possible that they presented lessons that they felt showcased what they thought was best practice. In order to minimize this issue, I spent a considerable amount of time in each classroom so the teacher was accustomed to my presence. Additionally, because the teachers and I have worked together for several years for several different purposes, none of which were evaluative, I expect that they were already accustomed to talking with me and providing honest feedback about their experiences.



## **Data Analysis**

The data collection methods were used to create a whole picture of each teacher's perspectives and experiences related to effective teaching. As appropriate for an educational criticism, analysis sought first to describe the teachers' perspectives about teaching and their practices, and then to interpret those descriptions (Eisner, 2002). I adapted and combined Hatch's inductive and interpretive approaches to data analysis. The inductive approach is "a search for patterns of meaning in data so that general statements about phenomena under investigation can be made" (Hatch, 2002, p. 161), while the interpretive approach continues where the inductive approach leaves off, with the researcher "making inferences, developing insights, attaching significance, refining understandings, drawing conclusions, and extrapolating lessons" from the patterns found in the data (Hatch, 2002, p. 180).

Essentially, this process included the following steps, detailed further below: 1) read the data for a sense of the whole; 2) identify a preliminary set of domains based on relationships found in the data; 3) reread data to make early interpretations; 4) study data for examples that support those interpretations; 5) analyze codes; 6) look across codes for common themes; 7) write a draft summary of interpretations; 8) review interpretations with participants; 9) write a revised summary and identify excerpts that support interpretations (Hatch, 2002, p. 162 and 181).

The first step of the data analysis process was to read through the entire data set of all three teachers. This read-through was separate and different from reading the interview transcripts in order to revise the protocol for the next interview. Here, the goal was to understand what was included in the data set and to consider and decide how to break it into manageable parts, referred to as "frames of analysis" by Hatch (2002, p.

163), for continued analysis. Hatch suggested that these frames would shift throughout analysis. The goal, however, was to “put rough parameters” on how the data was approached (Hatch, p. 164). Example frames from this original step of analysis included “characteristics of outstanding teacher,” “meeting individual students’ needs- academic,” “meeting individual students’ needs- behavioral/social,” “teacher’s needs,” “parent contacts,” and “connecting to students”. By compiling this list of frames, I was able to identify preliminary frames to look for across teachers

After a complete read-through of the full data set, the next step was to return to the each teacher’s data set to begin creating categories. These categories reflected relationships found in the data and are referred to as domains (Hatch, 2002). Hatch explained, “Discovering domains gives researchers a way of getting at how participants organize their understandings and operate in their worlds” (2002, p. 165). Examples of domains included: “ways to integrate own culture into the classroom” or “ways to learn how to teach”. I organized these domains by pulling them from the data and listing them, along with examples that reflected each, including specific line numbers that referred back to transcripts or observation protocols. Domains were considered dynamic and were revised throughout the analysis process.

The next steps of analysis were rereading the data set and domain sheets in search of new impressions that developed into interpretations, and then finding examples and quotations within the data that supported those interpretations (Hatch, 2002). The goal was to understand what was happening in the data, and questions asked during this step were framed in terms “related to understanding, meaning, and explanation” (Hatch, 2002, p. 184). The big question I asked myself throughout this

process was, “What is the main concern for this teacher?” For both teachers who remained a part of the study, these interpretations were nearly identical: building caring relationships with students and providing academic support to help students attain success. The examples and quotations found at this point in analysis were not necessarily those included in the final draft. However, these examples provided evidence that an interpretation was significant to consider in continued analysis. At this time some early codes, such as “classroom procedure”, were dropped altogether or combined with others. Once data was reread and evidence garnered, steps five and six in this process were to review notes and interpretations to determine which were relevant to answering the research questions, and then to look across the codes for common themes, which were the focus of the remaining steps of analysis. Examples of common themes included, “terms of endearment,” “moving a student out of the classroom,” and “challenges in relating to students”.

Once interpretations were decided upon, step seven was to write a draft that summarized the findings for each case thus far. This part of the process serves as a test for whether the interpretations are logical, as well as whether there are any gaps in the argument (Hatch, 2002). Once I determined each teacher’s main themes, I emailed each participant the interpretations relevant to her case to be sure that they were aligned with her experiences. This served as a member-check to make sure that I correctly interpreted each participant’s actions and points of view. Both Ms. Grace and Ms. Rigsbee were in agreement with my interpretations, although a few further clarification emails were exchanged during later steps in analysis and writing.

Once the participants reviewed the interpretation of their case, the final step of the process was to return to the data to find excerpts that supported the interpretations that would be included in the final draft. Several of these excerpts were located during earlier steps in the process, but this step allowed for a final check to be sure the best examples were located, and also served as a check to be sure that there was enough support for the interpretations. For this reason, the reader should be confident that the interpretations are well-founded and supported fully by the data.

These steps summarize the descriptive and interpretive parts of data analysis. Educational criticism, however, is incomplete without a third level of analysis, thematic analysis. This step is where major conclusions are formed. In Eisner's words, "The major function of the critic here is to apply educational criteria so that judgments about such events are grounded in some view of what counts within an educational perspective" (Eisner, 2002, p. 234). Thus, the final step in analysis comprised a return to the literature in order to ground the perspectives and practices of the teachers in the applicable literature related to teaching in high minority and high poverty contexts. In the following chapters, first a disclosure of each teacher is presented, including an appraisal of each teacher's practice (what each teacher does well and what is challenging to each teacher), and then the theoretical analysis is presented which makes explicit connections between the teacher's perspectives and practices and existing literature.

In sum, data analysis began following the first formal interviews with a review of the interview transcripts and continued after each set of observations, informal interviews, and formal interviews. That preliminary analysis shaped subsequent observations (Hatch, 2002). Each piece of data was read and re-read with the intention of

understanding the significance of each event (Eisner, 2002). Data was coded for the major patterns and themes that arose in the findings as they applied to the research questions. These codes were related to types of learning activities, the classroom environment, and teacher-student and student-student interactions (for example, use of terms of endearment, chant, and type of disciplinary action). Any questions or discrepancies that arose during analysis were discussed with the teacher for clarification, via email or in person.

### **Trustworthiness**

Glesne (2006) recommends eight procedures that can be used to address trustworthiness. I attempted to attend to several of these recommendations in this study, as described below. To begin, prolonged engagement and persistent observation allowed me to build trusting relationships with each teacher, learn each classroom environment, and test hypotheses that developed during observations and interviews. The use of multiple data sources (observations, interviews, field notes, and completed CRIOP notes) contributed to trustworthiness through triangulation. I checked my descriptions and interpretations of the participants' practices throughout the course of the study by sharing with each participant (verbally or via email) the themes from analysis to ask for clarification and/or verification. Another way I attempted to increase credibility was through peer review and debriefing the process and information I learned with my academic advisor, which provided me with input and reflection upon my work that, as the principal investigator, I was often unable to see for myself. Finally, the use of rich, thick description allows the reader to perform a final check on trustworthiness by entering the research context through the written account of the study.

Specific to educational criticism, Eisner cites two considerations that may help address trustworthiness: structural corroboration and referential adequacy. Structural corroboration is “the extent to which the facts presented or the interpretation of those facts is corroborated by the way in which they support one another” (Eisner, 2002, p. 238). Providing sufficient evidence for each point addresses this consideration. Referential adequacy concerns the degree to which the criticism relates to its subject. In other words, “When the critic’s work is referentially adequate we will be able to find in the object, event, or situation what the cues [in the criticism] point to” (Eisner, 2002, p. 239). The reader should be able to experience each teacher’s classroom and the connections between the classrooms in a new and more complete way.

### **Limitations**

A major limitation to this study is the fact that teacher perspectives are only one of many influences on practice. A teacher may have certain perspectives related to what practices are most effective for student learning in the classroom, but feel that it is impossible to carry them out. Constraints may include factors outside of a teacher’s control, for example, money, administrative requirements, or state or district mandates. Other factors, such as a teacher’s perceived ability to teach a particular concept or grade level and the availability of professional development to help a teacher learn effective teaching strategies, may also affect a teacher’s practice and are not accounted for in this study unless identified by a participant as a constraint or facilitator.

Because one teacher was ultimately not included in analysis, a further limitation is the lack of access to earlier observation notes. Because her students’ test scores showed that students in her class were achieving and her interview data did not indicate problematic teaching, it is impossible to know whether Ms. Winslow’s teaching practices

have changed due to the perceived challenge of her current placement or if the lack of task-driven instruction is the norm. Also limiting the findings of this study is the lack of student interviews. Interviewing students would have richened our understanding of the ways that these teachers were perceived by their students. One important component of care is that the students feel cared for (Noddings, 1988). The behaviors that a teacher considers to be caring behaviors may not feel caring to a student, which means that she is not effectively caring for her students. Without the student perspective, this element is unknown. We can only assume that care is present when the teacher is acting in a way that *typically* portrays care.

### **Role of Researcher**

According to Eisner (2002), an important characteristic of someone attempting an educational criticism is experience: “one must have a great deal of experience with classroom practice to be able to distinguish what is significant about one set of practices or another” (p. 216). I have almost six years of experience teaching grades four, five, and six. I worked in a rural middle school, an International Baccalaureate magnet elementary school, and a suburban elementary school with a high minority and high poverty population. One fifth grade class was comprised of students classified as “at-risk” learners. Additionally, I hold an MAE in Curriculum and Instruction and have completed coursework towards a PhD in Curriculum and Instruction. Although I was never a teacher-of-record in a classroom context similar to that in which some of the participants work, my experiences as an elementary school teacher provide me with a context from which I can relate to their experiences.

Additionally, I have spent the past five years of my graduate studies learning about and working in urban, high-poverty, and high-minority contexts. I have taken

coursework, including Critical Pedagogy and Teacher Learning and Socialization in Poverty Schools, which focused on developing an understanding of the challenges faced by teachers and students in contexts such as these. Each of these courses encouraged me to challenge my own assumptions about race, poverty, learning, and teaching. I have also been prepared to use two observation protocols (Instructional Practices Inventory and the Classroom Assessment Scoring System) in environments similar to those in which the participants work. Eisner recommends that a researcher embarking on an educational criticism also be well versed in different theories in education and the history of education, as this knowledge is an essential tool in understanding the context in which one is working (Eisner, 2002). To this end, I have taken several undergraduate and graduate level courses related to history and philosophies of education in the United States. Additionally, I have taught six semesters of Social and Historical Foundations of Education at the undergraduate level and one semester of Education and American Culture at the graduate level.

Additionally, it is important to note my own relationship with the participants in this study. I have known each of these teachers since 2006, when I began my master's program. During that year and a half, I worked closely with the residency program in several ways. First, I attended several of their course sessions, eventually planning for and implementing sessions about culturally responsive pedagogy for one of my own graduate classes. I also planned and implemented a series of three sessions related to differentiating instruction. This component of their program included lesson planning and implementation in the classrooms in which they completed their residency. I provided feedback on the lessons, observed their teaching, and held post-observation



conferences with several of these teacher residents. I also conducted my thesis research with the group, working most closely with 3 teacher residents, two of whom were also involved in the present study. My thesis work included analysis of interviews, reflections, and lesson plans.

After the residency ended, a fellow doctoral student and I worked together to create an induction program to meet the needs of this cohort of teachers as they embarked on their first teaching assignment. Our program, Mentoring and Online Support for Teachers (MOST), allowed them to continue working as a cohort as they met the challenges of being first-year teachers. Eight of the eleven teachers who completed the residency participated in the year long induction program, which we designed to include face-to-face and online components. Both Ms. Grace and Ms. Rigsbee elected to participate in this program in lieu of the district's traditional induction program. During this year, I also worked closely with two of the teachers for an assignment for another one of my own graduate courses. More recently, I worked with a faculty member of an unrelated university on a study that evaluated the outcomes of the residency program. This work involved interviewing each of the teachers who participated in the inaugural year of the residency who are still working as teachers.

It is important to note this continued involvement because it shows the degree to which these teachers and I have developed lasting and trusting relationships. They have allowed me into their classrooms and discussed their teaching with me on numerous occasions over the course of several years. I still feel personally invested in their success, perhaps more than they realize. It is for this reason that I wanted to go full-circle and finish my doctoral studies by studying them now, as experienced

teachers. Although not a stated goal of this study, it is my hope that our relationship has been mutually beneficial and that the teachers who participated in this study came away with a heightened understanding of their own perspectives and teaching practices.

### **Presentation of Findings**

Chapters 4 and 5 present the disclosures from two teachers' classrooms. In the style of an educational criticism, each of these disclosures will include a description, interpretation, and appraisal of the teacher's perspectives and practices. Examples are provided to help illustrate each discussion. Chapter 6 will present a cross-case analysis with the major themes garnered from the experience, as well as a summary of the findings and implications of this study.

## CHAPTER 4 THE CASE OF VIVIAN GRACE

### **Ms. Grace's Background**

Ms. Grace is a White teacher from an educated, middle class family. As the daughter of a university professor, learning and reading were constants in her life. She explained, “My whole culture of having learning as being important was integrated into everything we did, the way we lived, what our amusements and entertainment were”<sup>1</sup> (1.2.17). Ms. Grace grew up in a college town, vastly different from the much larger and more industrial city in which she now resides and teaches. The neighborhoods in the college town in which she lived were not integrated; instead, Ms. Grace remembers that one main street “divided the poor section from the wealthy section” (1.1.23). As a child, Ms. Grace didn't interact much with children of other races:

When I was a little kid I remember thinking to myself that all the little African American children were ‘those people.’ They were kind of like aliens. We didn't really associate and it wasn't because we were mean or angry. We were just different. They didn't live in our neighborhood, they didn't go to the same sports games, they didn't play with us, so they weren't part of our community, so we didn't associate. (1.1.24)

Ms. Grace did remember a few, limited instances where she encountered people living in poverty. At age 16 she recalled playing with the child of a man with whom Ms. Grace's then-boyfriend worked. Ms. Grace recalled thinking that she would “take this little girl and adopt her and make her life better...and I loved her” (1.6.10). Although she admitted that this was naïve thinking, at the time Ms. Grace felt that this was one way that she could “[make] the world better and [solve] world problems” (1.5.18).

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<sup>1</sup> Quotes are drawn from interviews and as is common when speaking, teachers sometimes deviate from standard grammar. The quotes in this chapter use the exact language used by the teacher.

After finishing her master's degree in architecture, Ms. Grace began to question her choice of profession. Ms. Grace felt that construction had "gone from...a business that I was proud to be a part of, where I was proud of the product we produced to being...sold out to subcontractors and lawyers and it was very empty" (1.3.23). After praying for guidance for a new direction, Ms. Grace received an answer: she should teach poor children. Though at first uncertain, Ms. Grace pointed upwards to the heavens, saying, "If you really want me to do this, you're going to have to make it happen" (1.4.12). A fortunate series of phone calls to personal connections, some well-timed meetings, and the launch of a brand-new program led her to the urban residency program.

During the course of this study, Ms. Grace taught first grade at Oceanside Elementary, a Title I school, where 79% of the 336 students received free or reduced cost lunch. Of the 336 students at Oceanside Elementary, 55% identified as Black, Hispanic, Asian, or Mixed Race, and 45% identified as White.

### **Ms. Grace's Classroom**

Through interviews with Ms. Grace and observations of her classroom, two abiding concerns came across as important to this teacher: providing a caring learning environment and ensuring success for all students. These concerns were intertwined; her love for her students stemmed from wanting them to succeed and her desire for their success was due to her love for them. As she put it, "...that's the only thing I can do, is love my kids and try a lot of different things; what works, works and what doesn't, doesn't" (interview 2.16.4-5). For Ms. Grace, providing a caring environment meant praising students, using caring language and actions, giving consistent consequences (positive and negative), and giving students the opportunity to praise and correct each

other using appropriate voices and actions. Ensuring success meant being clear with directions, using varied yet predictable lesson structures designed to meet students' needs, and having high expectations for students. The vignette that follows describes a typical whole-group teacher-led science lesson in this first grade classroom and highlights these qualities of Ms. Grace's practice:

Ms. Grace stands at the front of the room and orients her students to the next activity:

Ms. Grace: "We're going to do something fun. We're going to be scientists. We're going to observe. We're going to use our five senses, all five of them. What are they?"

Students raise their hands and she calls on several of them to name the senses.

Ms. Grace: "Well, we're not going to use taste, but we will use the others. We're going to observe in the daytime like you did at night. Most of you did your homework where you observed outside at night and drew your pictures. I'm going to give you a hint (Students ask, "What's a hint?"). That means a clue. You need to look up and down. Where will you look?" Ms. Grace points up and down.

Isaiah: "Up and down."

Ms. Grace: "Why? What will you see?"

Students answer some things they expect to see.

Ms. Grace: "What is one thing you will see next to you?"

Several students make guesses, and then Ms. Grace calls on Jonathan, who answers, "Shadow!"

In reinforcing his answer, Ms. Grace uses a recurrent strategy in her classroom that enables students to be active, communicates her pride in their accomplishment, and reinforces the correct answer for everyone in the classroom. She also encourages the class to reinforce him.

Ms. Grace: "Shout it to the rooftop!"

Jonathan stands up, smiling, and says it louder: "Your shadow!"

Ms. Grace: "Give him a hand and Jonathan, pat yourself on the back. Your shadow! Why can you see your shadow in daylight?"

Several students respond that it is from the sun. One says that sometimes you can see it at night with the moon.

Ms. Grace: "You may get your science notebook and your pencil. Your science journal has an S on it. When we go outside, you are to write or draw the things you see. Write down everything you see."

Students are clearly excited to go outside to observe. Demonstrating his knowledge of well-learned procedures in the classroom, one student asks if they should write the date on the page.

Ms. Grace: "Absolutely, you should write the date. Who would like to tell me the date?"

Many students put their hands up. She calls on one who says, "November 9, 2011."

Ms. Grace: "Who would like to tell me how we write it?"

Several more hands go up. She calls on one, who answers, "11, dash, 9, dash, 11."

Students write the date on their papers; several are saying the numbers aloud as they write.

As Ms. Grace calls students to line up and they walk through the hall to go outside she reminds them of classroom procedures gently but firmly.

Ms. Grace: "I will time you out for talking. I know you're excited. We're only going out for about 3 minutes."

Once they get outside, she walks them over to the fence next to a retention pond.

Ms. Grace: "Look at the sky, look at the clouds, look at the ground, look at the colors, look at where the sun is. Don't look right at the sun; you'll go blind. Just take a quick look."

The students lean against the fence and write. A few draw pictures. After several minutes, Ms. Grace calls students to go back inside. One student, Sara, starts crying because she got a burr stuck in her foot. Ms. Grace tries to get it out, but it has splintered in. She calls me over and I try, unsuccessfully, to remove it. Another teacher comes over and is able to pull

it out. Meanwhile, the other students are lined up noisily by the door. Once we get the splinter out, Ms. Grace refocuses her attention to the rest of the group and re-orientes them to her expectations.

Ms. Grace: “We’re going to be silent in the hall. We’re having fun, I don’t want to give any time-outs.”

As students walk down the hall, Ms. Grace quickly addresses minor violations of her expectations, using a penalty if necessary:

- Audrey receives a time-out for leaving the line without permission.
- Marcus is reminded not to open the classroom door with a question “Are you the teacher?”

While the students are still standing in line just outside the classroom door, she orients them to their next academic task and establishes her expectations. Notice again that she institutes a consequence to reinforce her expectations.

Ms. Grace: “Now, when you were outside, you saw lots of things. I’m going to give you a piece of white paper. Draw what you saw [names several things the students saw]. We’re on silent and I want you to draw what you saw.”

The students return to their seats. Isaiah starts talking.

Jonathan [to Isaiah]: “Isaiah, please stop, I’m trying to concentrate. Me and Ashley are trying to work.”

Ms. Grace [to Isaiah]: “I was very clear that when you came in to the classroom, it was going to be silent.” [She gives Isaiah a time-out]

Ms. Grace hands out white paper and students draw quietly, with no talking. As they work she orients them to the signal that will tell them work time has ended and communicates the importance of their work by telling them when they will share it with her and their peers.

Ms. Grace: “Ok, when the timer goes off, we are going to stop. We’ll come back to it tomorrow and look at both of our pictures.”

As illustrated in this vignette, the two main concerns for Ms. Grace were providing a caring learning environment and ensuring the success of all students. The remainder of this chapter will include an examination of these two organizing principles of Ms.

Grace's teaching, along with a description and explanation of the strategies that she uses to support each one.

### **Providing a Caring Learning Environment**

For Ms. Grace, "love is the most important thing in the classroom...We need to love our neighbors as ourselves" (interview 2.5.32). In order to create a loving and caring classroom environment where all members feel cared for and respected, Ms. Grace emphasized several behaviors: praising students, acting and speaking in a caring manner, giving fair and consistent consequences (positive and negative), and giving students the opportunity to praise and correct each other using appropriate voices and actions. Each of these qualities encapsulating care is highlighted in the above vignette and will be described in detail below.

### **Praising students**

Ms. Grace regularly praised students' efforts regarding behavior and academics. For example, this praise came in the form of commending students for the way they walk to the carpet: "Isaiah, to the carpet, you look really sharp. Marcus, good job! Kayla, looking good! Stephan, looking good!" (observation 3.3.16). Or it might have meant reinforcing positive interactions among peers as illustrated by the following comment: "Yes, Ronnie, that is very thoughtful and exactly the behavior we like to see" (observation 5.1.18).

Ms. Grace also made sure that other adults heard the praise she bestowed upon her students. During one observation, students were lined up in the hallway after lunch, waiting to use the bathroom. Ms. Grace called Marcus and Stephan over to me as she told me how proud she was that they were behaving so well and have shown tremendous improvement since my last visit. She patted them on the back and they



smiled, clearly happy that she was giving them this personal attention (observation 4.1.11). Ms. Grace regularly shared students' achievements with their parents. When Isaiah showed Ms. Grace his finished spelling assignment, she responded, "Great job, Isaiah! Do you want me to email your mother and tell her what a good job you've done on your work?" As he nodded yes, Ms. Grace answered, "I'll do it!" and Isaiah smiled, returning to his work (observation 2.6.16).

In Ms. Grace's class, praise could be nonverbal as well as verbal, and sometimes included a reward. In one instance as Ms. Grace circulated during independent work, she found that all students at the red table had completed the assignment. She complimented their efforts, leaning in and touching one boy on the shoulder as she looked over his work (observation 1.3.4): "Nice job, Samantha. Very nice job, Ashley and George." Ms. Grace touched George on the shoulder as she gave praise and leaned in to the students sitting at the table. Ms. Grace often paired a "thumbs-up" with verbal praise, such as when Audrey was able to sound out a word on the first try and Ms. Grace responded with "Awesome job!" and a thumbs-up (observation 2.3.9).

Finally, Ms. Grace directed praise toward individuals as well as towards the whole class. For example, when Ronnie was reading aloud, he began to sound out a word on his own: "m-ess, mess." Ms. Grace responded, "Good, I like the stretching." Similarly, after a student shared with the class the story retell he had written, Ms. Grace exclaimed to the class, "Carlos, you did a good job, too. I loved that ending!...He's gone all the way, marching through time." More generally, Ms. Grace could often be heard saying things to the entire class such as, "You guys are getting so smart" (observation 7.1.21) or "You guys are just so good. I'm so proud of you" (observation 6.9.246).

## **Acting and speaking in a caring manner**

In addition to offering praise, Ms. Grace frequently told and showed students that she cared about them. For her, this was a first step in creating a classroom where students saw each other as family. In order to develop these traits in students, Ms. Grace said that she supports students as they build their social skills. For example, Ronnie is a student who struggles with social boundaries. After much reflection, Ms. Grace began to work on this in a manner similar to addressing the needs of a struggling reader. She explained,

I look at Ronnie as being on a level dash [in reference to the lowest Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) level] with social skills and part of my job as a teacher is to teach the social skills...that's what's made this year so difficult was because of him being so disruptive, we're having a difficult time learning because it's so disruptive. So I have to go back to the beginning... just like I attack it in reading, now I have to analyze exactly what part of the reading process such and so doesn't get. Well I have to analyze what part of the social problem such and so doesn't get...and so now I'm going back and trying to constructively re-teach him what his boundaries are and know that the first way to do that is through teaching him that I love him and that he can trust me. (interview 2.20.5)

For Ms. Grace, developing a trusting and loving relationship with each student is the first step to creating a learning community that supports all of her students.

Ms. Grace could often be heard telling her students that she loves them. For example when a student approached her and whispered something into Ms. Grace's ear while giving her a hug. Ms. Grace responded with a hug, saying, "I love you, too, baby" (observation 2.1.19). Another time, Ms. Grace explained to Bridgette that she had the potential to do advanced reading work: "I heard that if you focus and do really well on your reading, we can accelerate you to second grade. Isn't that cool? I love you." Ms. Grace closed the conversation with a hug (observation 5.2.8).

Even without using the words “I love you,” Ms. Grace’s language told students that she cared about them. One morning, Kayla approached Ms. Grace and whispered something to her; Ms. Grace replied boisterously, “That is mighty special! Mighty special!” as Kayla grinned and returned to her seat (observation 3.1.12). When another student announced to her that he would be moving, a visibly saddened Ms. Grace replied, “That’s terrible! Where are you moving? When? Marcus, that is so sad! I’m going to miss you.” (observation 6.3.63). Ms. Grace gave Marcus extra attention throughout the day; though many students make announcements such as these that do not come to fruition, Ms. Grace later said that something about his demeanor suggested he was telling the truth and that she was truly sad to see him go. Ms. Grace was frequently heard using terms of endearment with her students. Words such as “sweetie,” “ladies,” and “gentlemen” were commonplace in her classroom.

Nonverbal care was also evident. Physical contact with students is often rocky terrain as it can be considered inappropriate. However, as seen in the above examples, Ms. Grace did at times hug her students and pat them on the shoulder. In addition, Ms. Grace’s students often showered her with hugs upon their arrival at and departure from school each day. Ms. Grace also made a point of making eye contact with each student during lessons and other whole-group activities. For example, at the end of nine weeks award assembly Ms. Grace congratulated each student by name, looking squarely in each student’s eyes as she presented the awards. This was in contrast to some of the other teachers who rushed through their lists of awards. Ms. Grace made a point of making sure that every child heard his or her name paired with their teacher’s specific congratulations (observation 5.5.10).

## **Giving fair and consistent consequences (positive and negative)**

True to her emphasis on care, Ms. Grace was conscientious about implementing consequences consistently and fairly. Students in Ms. Grace's class knew that there were consequences when they behaved inappropriately, as well as when they behaved appropriately. As Ms. Grace put it, "I'm pretty democratic in my handing out of consequences and rewards" (interview 1.9.10). For her, being fair and consistent helped to both prevent behavior issues and build a caring classroom environment based on trust:

I expect the same out of everybody in the class behavior-wise, or I try to. And then that keeps people from getting mad at each other because they know that they're valued and their opinions are valued and I'm not going to let them get hurt. (interview 2. 19.1)

Ms. Grace believes that this disposition stems from her childhood. She explained,

I come out of a family of engineers and that kind of analytical kind of thought process is really engrained in who I am...but it's not touchy- feely, but I will tell you that my parents were very fair-minded and that influences, that informs my teaching that I try to make sure everything is fair. (interview 2.18.25).

Negative consequences include having to stand at the door to gather oneself, a strike, and a time-out. Ms. Grace explained the difference between these consequences:

Standing at the door is immediate. I don't take time off [from recess]. Kids that do it, they stand so often, they would never get to play. It won't be a consequence anymore. [Standing at the door] is immediate and brings them right back down. A time-out means 5 minutes off of play time...three strikes is one time-out. I have a clip board with codes. I don't even write anything. It's just a code. D is out of seat, L is talking in the hall, H is talking during silent time. I have the most L's. (informal interview)

If these consequences did not work, a student may be sent to another classroom or to the office for a brief time-out or for a longer period of time in which the student completes an assignment or has a conference with the principal.

Ms. Grace habitually informed students of what the appropriate behavior should be for a given activity before the activity began. As Ms. Grace lined students up for lunch, she reminded them, “There is no talking in the hall on the way, and I can hear you if you are talking at the front of the line” (observation 1.7.21). Sometimes, Ms. Grace offered students a reminder of how they should behave once an activity had begun:

This is silent work time. You have just under 12 minutes. You need to get your story cartoon finished today. I hear talking and I’ll time-out for talking. (Observation 4.5.15)

By giving reminders, Ms. Grace was able to help students monitor and correct their behavior before she gave a consequence. A similar reminder sometimes came before students had the chance to act inappropriately and receive a consequence:

My number one job is to keep you safe, so if I see you being unsafe, gentlemen, with horseplay, I will pull you from the movie. (observation 5.6.1)

There are times when Ms. Grace gave a consequence in order to maintain consistency, even if she may have overlooked the behavior at a particular time. For example, Mariah called out to Kayla from across the room, only moments after George called across two tables to ask Jamal a question about an assignment. This incident is described in field notes:

George asks Jamal a task-related question across the tables. Jamal answers him. Ms. Grace watches the exchange but does not react. Mariah calls to Kayla from across the room. Ms. Grace gives her a time-out. Mariah explains that Kayla, who was at her cubby, forgot the papers she needed to put in her agenda. Ms. Grace responds, “I don’t care, you can’t call out.” To George and Jamal, Ms. Grace says, “I have to give you a time-out, too, because I can’t give them one and not give one to you for the same thing. Sorry.” (observation 3.3.1)

In this instance, Ms. Grace demonstrated that rules do not have exceptions; procedures were reinforced and students were encouraged to think of ways to get their needs met without breaking classroom rules.

Positive consequences, such as eating lunch in the classroom, getting to be bathroom monitor, or getting a positive note, email, or phone call home, were also given liberally to students demonstrating good effort in terms of behavior and academics. Another positive consequence given to Ronnie, a student who regularly struggled with his behavior, was an afternoon check-in with the guidance counselor who rewarded good behavior with a comic strip and a lollipop (observation 5.7.11).

### **Giving students the opportunity to praise and correct each other**

Students in Ms. Grace's class were taught the social skills they needed to support each other's behavior and academics and then were given regular opportunities to put those skills into practice, as demonstrated in the vignette at the start of this section.

According to Ms. Grace,

I've always taught the social skills because I think it's really important, because if we're going to have a civilized society and we're going to have a classroom that kids can learn in, then people need to like each other and behave. And without that, you can't teach anything. (interview 2.19.33)

Several times each day, groups of three or four students were sent on a bathroom break to the bathroom down the hall. On a rotating basis, one student in each group was assigned the role of monitor. This person was responsible for watching the rest of the group's behavior and reporting back to Ms. Grace any infractions, such as running or talking in the hall. When students reentered the classroom after their bathroom break, Ms. Grace checked with the monitor and made a note of any misbehavior on the time-out clipboard. All students were given the opportunity to monitor, even if they sometimes

struggled with their own behavior. In these instances, Ms. Grace helped students remember what it should look like to be a monitor. Two such examples are described below:

Ms. Grace: “Blue table and Isaiah, to the bathroom. Audrey, do you think you can be monitor today?” Audrey nods and smiles. Ms. Grace: “Audrey, what will that look like? Come tell me.” Audrey moves toward Ms. Grace and they talk for a moment and then the tables leave. (observation 5.1.22)

Ms. Grace: “Stephan, you are monitor. That means no running and you are leading by example.” (observation 2.5.16)

Ms. Grace’s goal was for all students to develop the social skills they needed to function in a school setting and beyond, and if some students needed reminders to help them develop those skills, Ms. Grace considered it her job to provide them.

In addition to monitoring each other in the hallway, Ms. Grace’s students also learned skills needed to be productive students in the classroom, such as how to deal with disruptive or distracting classmates. To begin, one poster that Ms. Grace hung in plain view was a list of no-bullying rules. These were written as non-examples so students knew exactly what not to do; examples included “No tattling” and “No whining”. Ms. Grace and her students referred to these rules when they saw students engaged in bullying behaviors. In one instance, Ms. Grace referred to the “No tattling” rule when a student approached her about another student’s behavior:

After lunch, students are in line for the bathroom. Students who have already finished are seated, without talking, against the wall in the hallway. One boy stands up from the line and comes over to the teacher. He says that another child is trying to play with him. Ms. Grace: “One, are you talking to me in the hall? And two, are you tattling? Do you need a time-out? (Student says no) What should you do if someone is trying to play with you?” Student- “Ignore them.” Ms. Grace: “Right, ignore them.” Student returns to his seat against the wall. (observation 2.8.27)

In another instance, students had just finished playing an addition BINGO game as part of a math lesson. Ms. Grace asked them to clean up and get ready for lunch:

Several students complain that they have to put the games away and that they didn't win. To two boys, Ms. Grace states- "Gentlemen, this is your last chance. I've given you at least three warnings." George raises his hand. Ms. Grace- "Yes?" George- "One of the bullying rules is whining." T- "Yes, George, you're right. Will you say that again?" He repeats the rule, louder. Ms. Grace- "Thank you for reminding us."

Conversely, students were also encouraged to praise each others' achievements, and Ms. Grace taught them effective ways to do so. Applause was one way that students learned to show each other praise. During observations students applauded each other's efforts several times, for example, following successful completion of math problems, the way a student chose to end his story retell, a student's use of transition words, and when a student observed a pattern in the math problems they were assigned. Ms. Grace also worked to teach students how to applaud quietly:

Ms. Grace: "On a fancy golf course, they do a golf clap, like this [demonstrates lightly tapping her fingers against the palm of her other hand]. Quiet, like this."

Isaiah claps loudly.

Ms. Grace: "That one's noisy; quiet like this." [demonstrates again] (observation 3.6.17)

### **Ensuring Success for All Students**

Care is but one of the principles that guided Ms. Grace's teaching. Ms. Grace was similarly concerned with ensuring student success. For Ms. Grace, ensuring success for all students meant giving clear directions, using varied yet predictable lesson structures to guide instruction, and holding high expectations for students. The vignette at the beginning of the chapter demonstrates this concern for student success in several ways. First, Ms. Grace provided clear directions regarding what students should do



during the observation activity, and then gave another set of directions once students arrived back at the classroom door. There was no question that students should use their senses to observe, draw or write their observations, and then sit without talking as they worked on their drawings. Students who did not follow directions were quickly brought to task. Ms. Grace's use of a whole-group observation activity was a deliberate choice, one that was more exciting and engaging than simply reading a science textbook. Finally, Ms. Grace's expectations for student success were evident in the way that she demanded that they follow the rules. Other examples below illustrate each component of her strategies for ensuring the success of all.

### **Giving clear directions**

Following directions was important in Ms. Grace's class. During a guided reading group meeting, she reminded Stephan of this by asking, "What is part of being a good student? You have to follow...?" He replied, "Directions" (observation 2.3.1). As she emphasized direction-following, she also communicated her long-term expectations for her students: "Are you going to be going to college if you're off task and not following directions?" (observation 1.9.4). In order for students to follow directions, however, their teacher needs to be clear and concise when presenting them, and Ms. Grace frequently was. For example:

Ms. Grace: "We're going to do partner reading. Carlos, how are you and Stephan going to partner read? What will it look like?" Carlos explains to the class that he will read first and then Stephan will read after him. Ms. Grace has Stephan stand up next to her to demonstrate what that will look like: Ms. Grace reads first, finger along the words as she goes. Then Stephan reads the same page, with fingers along as he goes.

Ms. Grace asks Sara and Mariah to repeat the directions. They do so correctly...Ms. Grace explains, "If you are a strong reader, read your own page and you don't have to repeat each page. When you finish, you and your partner should read the questions and answer them in your reader's

notebook. If you finish early, retell the story or draw your favorite animal and write why. Don't forget to look at spelling of the animals at the end of the story." (observation 4.2.4)

In this example, Ms. Grace modeled one way that students could choose to partner read, and had several students repeat the instructions to be sure that students understood what to do.

Ms. Grace often gave students directions in the hallway, before they reentered the classroom after lunch or specials classes as in the following example:

Students are lined up outside the classroom door. Ms. Grace speaks to her students: "When we go into the room, put your book in your bag. Then go to the carpet. I will give you to the count of 10."

She opens the door and students go inside.

Ms. Grace begins to count, "1...2...3.....9<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>....10." (observation 1.12)

At this time, she had their full attention and was able to tell them what they should do upon classroom reentry; there was no confusion and students could get right to work. Giving directions in this manner helped students behave appropriately because they knew what they should be doing now and what they should get ready to do next; there were no surprises.

### **Using varied yet predictable lesson structures**

Ms. Grace's class was organized to incorporate several different lesson structures: teacher-led, peer work, and independent work. Within these lesson structures, several different types of activities took place. From her teacher preparation program and professional development, Ms. Grace learned the value of teaching in different ways to meet different needs, and she explained that she was "making valiant attempts at centers and differentiation" (interview 1.7.27). Ms. Grace stated that her use of different strategies and activities was deliberate: "I try to keep school fun and interesting so I try

to include as many different types of learning as I can. I also pay close attention to student needs so that I know what to address” (personal communication, March 26, 2012). Ms. Grace based her instructional decisions on the copious notes that she took related to student learning. She explained that documenting student progress was what helped her decide where to go next with her teaching in order to meet all of her students’ needs. In her words,

Academically, the most important thing I do hands-down in the first grade is RTI [Response to Intervention]. I have figured, I have broken the code. I can analyze a child down to letter sounds, whether they can blend, whether they can segment, whether they can do rhyming words, alliteration, know their letters, know their uppercase letters, know their lowercase, to the point that I can address their needs...Well I mean the thing is, if you take the time to figure out exactly what they don’t know then you become a pretty good teacher because you go back and you teach them the things they don’t know. (interview 1.11.6-18.23-26).

Splitting students into varied instructional groupings is one way to accomplish that task: I like the cooperative learning and I don’t mind the carpet thing and I work with my kids on the carpet, but...it doesn’t work for everybody and it doesn’t work for everything. (interview 1.21.2-5)

**Teacher-led lessons.** Teacher-led lessons use three different activity structures: whole-group, small-group, and one-on-one. Ms. Grace’s use of whole-group instruction was common when she was introducing new concepts or giving instructions for an activity. Small-group instruction was most frequent when Ms. Grace was working with guided reading groups. One-on-one instruction was least common, but could be seen when Ms. Grace was conferencing with a student, circulating around to several students, or testing students individually.

During whole-group instruction, students were typically seated on the carpet in one of two arrangements, “math position” or “reading position”. When seated in “math position,” students sat along three edges of the carpet; Ms. Grace sat on the floor at the

fourth edge, facing the students. From here, she used a small dry erase board to teach a skill or, with the help of student volunteers, model the way a game should be played. When seated in “reading position,” each student sat on a square made by the grid lines in the carpet, facing the front of the room. Ms. Grace sat on a wooden chair, angled toward both the board and the students so she was able to write on the board while still facing them. Her use of these positions was to maximize the carpet space while making sure students’ attention was focused on the lesson.

During whole-group teacher-led lessons, Ms. Grace explained,

I teach up to my high group as whole group instruction and then small group, RTI [Response to Intervention] or FCIM [Florida Continuous Improvement Model] the students who need help. This seems to help pull all the students up.” (personal communication, March 26, 2012)

She used a variety of strategies to get and keep their attention; these strategies included questioning, “no opt-out” (a strategy Ms. Grace learned from professional literature where the teacher makes sure that struggling students answer the question even if another student answers it correctly first), unison/choral response, illustrating/singing/using attention getters, providing specific learning strategies related to lesson content, praise, guiding students to an answer, elaborating on or repeating student responses, making connections to other information or background knowledge, and building/modeling respectful relationships. During one spelling lesson, Ms. Grace used several of these strategies to help students decode words:

Ms. Grace writes the word ‘tiger’ on the board and asks students to read the word. She calls on Wednesday to read the word. She is unable to read it. Ms. Grace calls on Simon; he can’t read it either. Ms. Grace calls on two other students who are able to read it, and then calls on Wednesday and Simon to have them read the word successfully.

Ms. Grace writes the next word, ‘boat’. “What do we know about double vowels, Greg?” Greg answers that you can’t hear the ‘a’.

Ms. Grace- “Right, the second vowel just walks along, quiet” She draws legs on the ‘a’ in the word. “The first one talks.” She draws a mouth on the ‘o’ in the word. “What word do you see?” A student raises a hand and answers ‘at’.

Ms. Grace responds- “Yes, and there’s another one. Listen to this song I used to sing when I was little, ‘Mares eat oats and...’ What word did you hear there?” Several students respond, “oat!”

Ms. Grace- “Right, oat, it’s a grain. Have you ever had oatmeal? (Several students raise their hands) It comes from oats.” (observation 7.2.1)

In this example, Ms. Grace practiced the strategy she learned from a professional reading, “no opt-out”, with two struggling students. Additionally, she used questioning, illustrations, singing, and connecting to students’ background knowledge to help them learn and learn about their spelling words.

During small-group, guided reading lessons, small groups of four or five students sat with Ms. Grace at a kidney table in a back corner of the classroom. From her own experiences as a student, Ms. Grace saw the benefit of a teacher meeting with a small group of students. When speaking about her own intermediate grades teacher, she explained,

I know she was outstanding because she was essentially doing not only small groups but she was doing RTI. She pulled me when I was struggling on something in math one time – I vividly remember I was having a hard time with it – she pulled me off to the side and she worked with me and I actually got ahead of the other kids in the class and when I look back on it now she was outstanding because she was doing that. (interview 3.1.16)

In these groups, Ms. Grace relied on teaching strategies such as questioning, using specific content-related strategies (such as reminding students to look at the vowel chart or stretch their words), praise, and unison or choral reading.

One-on-one teacher-led activities were least common, but it was clear that Ms. Grace found them important. Often, Ms. Grace stopped to talk individually with students

in order to determine their needs and provide scaffolding to help them succeed. One example of this was a discussion she had with Bridgette about non-fiction books:

Bridgette tells Ms. Grace that her book is non-fiction. Ms. Grace talks with her about how her book is written like a diary or a set of letters, “Non-fiction is when they tell you what? It starts with an ‘f.’” Bridgette responds- “Facts.” Ms. Grace- “Right, they are trying to teach you something.” They talk for a few minutes more and agree that her book isn’t non-fiction because it is not a real diary, it only looks like one. It is a fiction story. (observation 5.2.28)

A second example occurred with Sara, who was struggling with how to write the date in her reading log:

Sara and Ms. Grace go over the calendar: Ms. Grace- “What is the month?” Sara- “November.” Ms. Grace- “What is the day?” Sara does not know how to read the number 16, so they start with 10 and count up from there, and Ms. Grace points to each number on the calendar as they say it together. Ms. Grace asks what number month is November. Sara is unable to answer, so Ms. Grace helps her count through the months until they get to November as 11. Ms. Grace- “What month is the twelfth month?” Sara is able to answer. They spend about 15 minutes going through the calendar, with Ms. Grace explaining how to read and write the month and date. Ms. Grace turns to the class and asks them what month it is, and then what number month it is. She asks what month will be the twelfth month, and how you would write it using numbers. After they finish, Ms. Grace asks Sara how to write the date, and Sara tells her. She sits back down and writes the date on her paper. (observation 5.3.7)

Another opportunity Ms. Grace used for one-on-one teaching was during FAIR testing (Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading). As she administered the tests, she was able to see the specific skills that students were struggling with. After she recorded incorrect answers she spent a few seconds helping each student with the missed skill. She stressed that the answer on the test was still wrong, but taking the moment to help them on an individual level benefitted them then and there, and helped them learn how to avoid the same mistakes in the future (informal interview).

**Peer work.** Ms. Grace often structured peer activities such as math games, partner reading, and working with a partner to complete an assignment. Peer work was

important in Ms. Grace's classroom and was something that she tried to include every day for at least fifteen minutes, "which is about right for first grade [engagement limits]" (interview 2.6.28). Ms. Grace would often "partner a strong child with a weak one in order to make sure each child learns the required skills they need to accomplish the higher order thinking" (personal communication, March 26, 2012). Ms. Grace admitted that having the rest of the class engaged in peer work did allow her the opportunity to work with a guided reading group with minimal distraction (interview 2.6.28). Ms. Grace observed that "all these opportunities [to read] are making them really good readers and they're starting to really enjoy it, and I think...it's because they're working with their partner" (interview 2.6.12).

Partner reading was a common way for students to work together. Ms. Grace taught them several ways that students could choose to partner read in order for each reader to have his or her individual reading needs met, as illustrated below:

They sit with shoulder partners, right next to each other with one book and they do... either they have a choice; they can either read one page... one person reads one page, one person reads another page... they can read both at the same time, and in one case where I have a student who's really below, can't read the textbook for instance, I have his partner read – who's high – reads a sentence and then he reads the sentence right after him. And then the other boy, the high one reads the sentence and then the lower boy reads right after him...So he repeats the sentence. (Interview 2.6.16)

Ms. Grace to the class- "You pick how you want to read. I've seen Carlos and Stephan do outstanding work together and it's making Stephan a great reader." (observation 6.7.181)

Giving students so many options to partner read allowed them to meet their reading needs without feeling excluded or singled-out by having to buddy in a particular way.

Math games and other partner work were often structured so students could work in groups of three or four. In addition to building their academic proficiency in

mathematics, students were also learning how to work as a team and play a fair game, including how to be a good winner or loser. The following excerpt details the conversation Ms. Grace had with several students after ending an addition card game:

One group of two boys playing against two girls begins to have a conflict when the girls complain that the boys are bragging about their win. Ms. Grace tells them to be good sports, and then lines them up for recess. Natalie is crying because she feels that the boys are rubbing it in that they won. Ms. Grace has a conversation with the four involved (2 boys, 2 girls) about being good sports versus bad sports, that it is ok to brag a little because that's what games are about- there is a winner- and that we need to be good sports when we lose. She tells the boys that it's ok to rub it in a little, but then we have to stop so we don't hurt people's feelings. The students apologize to each other; the boys apologize for rubbing in their victory too much and Natalie apologizes for being a poor sport. (observation 4.7.2)

Ms. Grace commented that being a first grade teacher is about more than teaching academics; students at this age are also learning how to get along with each other, and teaching them social skills is part of her commitment to the profession (informal interview).

**Independent work.** Students in Ms. Grace's class also engaged in independent work. These tasks most frequently included spelling, writing, and mathematics. Students generally completed independent tasks while Ms. Grace was engaged with a guided reading group. Before students got started on a task, Ms. Grace called them to the carpet, reviewed the instructions for what they should do, and modeled an example. For instance, in order to prepare students to write a reader's response, Ms. Grace "modeled and charted responses to literature so they could learn how to do that" (interview 1.11.28). Ms. Grace considered students learning to work independently to be one of the most important skills they would learn in her classroom and it was something she began to teach on the first day of school. As she explained to her students, "Part of



having fun in the classroom is you learning to work independently and get your work done” (observation 6.9.235).

### **Holding high expectations**

Ms. Grace consistently held high expectations for all of her students. The language she used when speaking to her students conveyed that she expected them to be successful. Often, Ms. Grace used sophisticated language when she taught. Ms. Grace explained,

And everything I do, I use sophisticated language then I try to drop back and explain things to children...I don't use baby terms...we learn the vocabulary of math and of science and so all of those things combine to try to make a more rigorous classroom. (interview 2.5.1)

In the vignette at the beginning of the chapter, Ms. Grace's use of the word “hint” paired with her explanation that it is a clue is one example of her use of sophisticated language. During another observation, Ms. Grace was preparing to read a story aloud to the class. She prefaced the story by saying:

We have a few minutes so I'm going to read a story to you. This story has the same author and illustrator. That means that the same person wrote and drew the pictures. (observation 1.6.31)

A further example was seen when Ms. Grace was talking to her class about the results of one of their weekly assessments:

You guys did very well on your test this week. I could tell that you were looking at the vowel chart. It was obvious, it was apparent; I could see that you were paying attention and using the chart to help you sound out your words. (observation 3.4.3)

Aside from using sophisticated language, Ms. Grace also conveyed high expectations by communicating to students that they would be going to college. She explained, “I start the year talking about college, talking about the importance of going on to college, about the importance of working hard in the classroom” (interview 2.4.16).

During observations, this was seen most frequently when Ms. Grace was working with some of her more behaviorally challenging students as a way to remind them that their behavior was not college-ready: “Are you acting like a college man when you do that?” (observation 1.6.3). Ms. Grace would also mention college to students who were working particularly hard at a task: “Yes, Stephan, you are so smart; you are definitely going to college if you keep working this hard” (observation 2.4.12).

When addressing her class as a whole, Ms. Grace communicated the expectation that students would do well. She regularly encouraged them: “I know you can,” “you’re a smart kid...and I know you can figure it out,” and “I know how smart you are”. In addition, Ms. Grace stated that she used questioning techniques that stress higher-order thinking, such as “tell me why, tell me how, explain, what would be the next step, that type of thing” (interview 2.5.13). Her use of strategies such as “no opt-out” also demonstrated to students that she expected them to learn, even if learning took time.

Ms. Grace had two main goals for herself as a teacher: to create a learning environment where students felt cared for and cared about each other, and to ensure that each student found success. In order to meet these goals, Ms. Grace relied heavily on praise, consistency, and a specific way of speaking and acting that communicated care. She was clear with directions and chose activity structures that gave students the opportunity to meet her high expectations. Though she admitted that not all students were held to exactly the same standard at all times, “the goal is the same standard” (interview 2.19.15), and she was committed to helping them reach it.

### **Analysis in Terms of the Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol**

The Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol (CRIOP) is a tool designed to help an observer understand the degree to which a teacher’s practice is

culturally responsive, meeting the needs of all members of the classroom community. After all observations were completed, the transcripts were reviewed against each category of the CRIOP, and this review will guide the interpretation and analysis of Ms. Grace's practice. As discussed in Chapter 3, the protocol consists of eight, research-based elements that are central to culturally responsive pedagogy: Teacher Care, Classroom Climate, Family Collaboration, Assessment, Curriculum, Instruction/Pedagogy, Discourse/Instructional Conversation, and Sociopolitical Consciousness. Each of these pillars will be discussed in relation to Ms. Grace's perspectives about teaching and her teaching practice.

### **Elements of the Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol Documented Through the Observations**

As guided by the CRIOP, Ms. Grace's strengths lie in five of the eight domains assessed in the protocol: Teacher Care, Classroom Climate, Family Collaboration, Assessment, and Pedagogy/Instructional Practices (Appendix D). She consistently demonstrated an ethic of care, differentiating her classroom management techniques to meet the needs of her students and using caring language in all of her interactions. As discussed in the above sections, she asked some students to stand at the door to gather themselves prior to disciplining them with a strike or time-out. With other students, she talked with them quietly to help them remember what behaviors she expected to see, such as her conversation with several students about being a good sport. In another incident that Ms. Grace shared during an informal interview, she met with a student at the end of the school day to talk with him about his behavior, which had become exceedingly angry after she decided he would stay back from a field trip. Ms. Grace apologized to him for making him angry, telling him that they needed to work

together for their relationship to work. She asked for his forgiveness, which he gave her. Ms. Grace explained that, although he still misbehaved often, the anger of his earlier interactions with her had all but disappeared.

Students in Ms. Grace's class were taught by someone who nearly always spoke in a calm and patient voice, and they nearly always spoke to each other in the same tone. They celebrated each other's accomplishments and struggles together, applauding each other's thinking and providing help and support when their classmates struggled. Ms. Grace believed that it was her responsibility to teach her students the skills they needed to get along with each other, and she had no tolerance for bullying. Her students knew the class rules against bullying and held each other to these rules. Peer collaboration or buddy work happened nearly every day in Ms. Grace's class, and in many instances, students chose between working together at round tables or on the floor. These first graders often had the opportunity to practice the social skills they were building.

While family interactions were not apparent in daily classroom activities, they were a key element in her practice. Early on, Ms. Grace established open communication with her students' families in order to inform parents of classroom goings-on and also to collaborate with them on how to best teach their child. Ms. Grace was readily able to discuss the circumstances of each child's home life; she knew whose parents were divorcing, whose mother was in college, whose family was homeless and living with friends, and who was being raised with help from grandparents. She was able to know all of these things by communicating regularly with parents and by listening to her students when they talked with her about what was happening at home. Because there

were so many different circumstances at home, Ms. Grace created different lines of communication to stay in touch with each family: email, phone, and agenda were all regular means of contact. In addition, Ms. Grace explained that she has also gone on home visits. She related the case of a previous student who was frequently absent. She explained,

Nobody had taken him to school for almost two weeks and I went [to his home] and found him. And I knew when I was driving through...I'm sure they all thought I was probably a DCP worker because it was like everybody was staring at me and going in their house and stuff like that, and when I came up and was knocking on the grandmother's door, an old man came out and asked me what I was doing and I told him I was looking for him [the student]. And about at that time he came, they pulled up in the driveway and [said], "Oh, Ms. Grace," and I said, "They need to be in school." He was one of a twin. They were in school the next day. (interview 1.15.1-8)

In part, this excerpt shows Ms. Grace's willingness to make a home visit if the regular routes were not sufficient means to make contact with a parent. This excerpt also alludes to cultural differences, which will be discussed later.

A fourth strength of Ms. Grace's practice was her assessment practices. Ms. Grace's binders were filled with evidence from formative assessments that provided information to guide her next teaching move. Through these formative assessments, most frequently administered during guided reading sessions, Ms. Grace assessed students' reading ability through running records, listening to the strategies they used during read-alouds, asking them to communicate how they solved a problem, and scaffolding their efforts when necessary. Students often drew pictures to accompany their written retellings and their story cartoons gave them the opportunity to use words and pictures to explain their thinking, often before verbally explaining to each other or to their teacher what they had written. In addition, Ms. Grace was teaching her students how to use a rubric to evaluate their own work. Their first rubric looked like a checklist,

where students read one or two words, searched their work, and checked off whether they had included the criteria in their work:

When you finish your cartoon and your retell, go to your checklist and think, 'Yep, I've done that, yep, did that.' This is something new, but you need to use it to guide you to check that you've done everything you need to do. (observation 2.6.29-31)

Ms. Grace's pedagogy and instructional practices were generally aligned with recommended culturally responsive practices. Students regularly collaborated with each other, working in pairs and small groups as they read, played math games, and completed other assignments together. Ms. Grace often specified which students would work together, as a way to help struggling students make progress by working with more advanced learners. They were encouraged to ask each other questions rather than relying on Ms. Grace, especially when she was engaged with small groups during guided reading. Ms. Grace developed activities that got students out of their seats and moving, as in the science observations outside the classroom. With her own teaching, Ms. Grace consistently modeled, explained, and demonstrated new skills for students, providing appropriate scaffolding to students when they struggled. As described above, Ms. Grace considered academic and content-area vocabulary of prime importance and she expected students to use these words in context. The word wall on one dry erase board was ever-growing, and included sight words along with content-area vocabulary. Students learned how to read these and many other words through targeted reading instruction geared towards teaching students how to decode and analyze words independently.

## **Elements of the Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol with Little or No Evidence**

Though there was a great deal of evidence about the ways in which Ms. Grace structured a caring environment, there are elements of this domain for which there was little evidence. Additionally, there was little evidence of several other areas of the CRIOP, including Curriculum, Classroom Discourse, and Sociopolitical Consciousness.

To begin, as part of a caring teacher disposition, the CRIOP suggests that students share the decision-making process with their teacher. In the case of Ms. Grace, she generally dominated decision-making in the classroom, determining the schedule and what types of books students would read (usually leveled readers). Though students sometimes had the chance to make a decision, the options were generally between two choices provided by the teacher, such as “you may read your library book or your leveled reader.” Also, Ms. Grace typically selected the groups in which students worked, though there were times when she let students choose their partners.

Though she did strive to involve parents in instructional and behavioral decisions regarding their child, parents were otherwise absent from Ms. Grace’s classroom. She explained, “I don’t really have any parents who have ever even shown an interest with helping like in the class like they do in kindergarten, which is fine, but they bring treats and stuff for parties and that kind of thing” (interview 3.7.7-10). This statement suggests that Ms. Grace defined parents’ involvement as “classroom volunteers”; thus, parents’ expertise and funds of knowledge were also not utilized in the classroom. Instead, she relied on her own experiences and background as a source of examples to present to her students. This can be seen as problematic according to the principles of culturally

responsive teaching because it allowed for the experiences of her own, dominant White culture to remain dominant, effectively silencing the experiences and cultures of her non-White students.

Though Ms. Grace's instructional practices were collaborative, engaging, meaningful, and need-based, they also lacked context in students' lives and were predominantly teacher-selected and teacher-driven. Admittedly, Ms. Grace tended to incorporate her own life experiences into her classroom:

You know, I try to put myself in my students' place but I inevitably teach what I've learned and I know that. And in some ways, that's a good thing because I do integrate the importance of learning, where learning can take you, the importance of responsibility. I teach independence. I understand the importance of vocabulary, I'm rigorous. All of these things come out of my culture; they're not out of my children's culture. So in that regard, I'm teaching my culture to them. (interview 1.2.30)

I read a lot of children's literature and I read Beatrix Potter and we talk about those... (interview 2.5.3-4)

By connecting course content to her own experiences rather than those of her students, Ms. Grace was unable to build on students' existing knowledge, and since she was considered the authority in the classroom, rather than co-learner, her White, middle-class dominant paradigm was also the authoritative way of being. Though these quotes also suggest that Ms. Grace holds a deficit view of her students' culture, there is no further evidence that corroborates such a perspective.

In terms of the items measured by the CRIOP, lack of connection to students' culture would be a significant weakness in Ms. Grace's teaching, and was apparent in her curriculum, classroom discourse, and lack of sociopolitical consciousness. In fact culture was largely absent in Ms. Grace's classroom. As suggested by the CRIOP, the curriculum in a culturally responsive classroom would contain many real-life examples



that connect closely to students' lives outside of school. Texts and other books would include characters from diverse backgrounds and present ideas from multiple perspectives, with opportunities for students to discuss and counter those ideas. Though in some instances, Ms. Grace used students' own work to teach writing, she generally used an adopted text for reading and social studies assignments. Issues in the school or greater community guided few and perhaps none of her curricular choices, as real-world issues were not discussed with students.

Ms. Grace's discourse and instructional conversation practices were not consistently aligned with the recommendations for culturally responsive teaching. Although Ms. Grace did ask her students open-ended questions, listening and responding authentically to their responses, there was little opportunity for genuine discussions that stretched students' thinking. Even when she asked them to explain their thinking, as in answering a mathematics question, Ms. Grace had one correct answer in mind. Though Ms. Grace explicates the importance of higher-order questioning, her use of these questions was developing and often inconsistent. During whole group work, students spoke when they were called on and took turns to speak. Ms. Grace used techniques such as wait-time, providing feedback, and 'no opt-out' to increase student participation; all students had the opportunity to speak, yet some students were called on with higher frequency than others which allowed some students to dominate the activity.

The area of the CRIOP in which Ms. Grace scored the lowest was that of sociopolitical consciousness. This category includes behaviors such as allowing students to question the way things are, taking action on real world problems, fostering

an understanding of different points of view, and actively deconstructing negative stereotypes in instructional materials and texts. The CRIOP suggests that all of these would be present in a culturally responsive classroom. In the case of Ms. Grace's classroom, none were present. Instead, Ms. Grace used standard texts, presenting the ideas within as neutral and factual. Though she did not actively discourage the discussion of real-life problems, they simply did not come up in class discussions. Ms. Grace never made stereotypical comments or prejudicial statements and did not allow her students to speak in this way, but also did not promote conversation about the harm in such statements.

There is a great deal of evidence that Ms. Grace is an effective teacher. Her students appeared to feel loved and cared for and she did all she could to help them learn and succeed, including helping them learn how to communicate in ways that enable them to get their needs met. In terms of culturally responsive instruction, however, Ms. Grace may fall short. However, it is important to consider the degree to which culture was a factor for Ms. Grace as she made pedagogical decisions.

### **Interpretation and Analysis: Culture in the Classroom**

The cultural thing is hard because, see, when you're in a culture...you have to make a really big effort to step outside of your culture to even begin to get, even begin to smudge the window, the fogged up window, to be able to look into another person's culture, if I can describe it like that. And then within every culture there's variations because there is not one African American family, there's not one White family, there's not one Hispanic family that is going to be all the same as everybody else in their culture because there's just as much diversity inside their own culture, and some of that diversity, some of my children, I find much more, stronger connections...I have an African American child who has some family structures that are more similar to my family structure that I relate to over and above maybe even a White child because they come from a really radically different family structure. So it becomes so confusing that I just really try to keep my eyes open and love my kids. (interview 2.15.19)

As discussed, Ms. Grace's teaching was guided by two concerns: ensuring the success of all students and creating a caring learning environment. She strove to do her best for her students in order for them to do well academically and socially, yet culture was strikingly absent from her classroom. As explained in the above quote, to Ms. Grace, culture is a muddy, unclear window that is difficult to understand. For this reason, Ms. Grace did not intentionally include in her classroom or instructional practices anything closely connected to her students' cultures, though as discussed previously, her own culture was often incorporated as exposure to the 'norm'.

This year, a new principal was working at Ms. Grace's school. She is Black, and has begun talking with the predominantly White faculty about issues related to teaching Black children. Though she claimed that "because I have somebody who looks at the world differently as a leader it's making me think about some of the things she's saying" (interview 2.15.7), Ms. Grace seemed to struggle with this information because, she said, "I don't see all kids from one culture behaving in that same way which I guess is why it's so hard for me" (interview 2.16.26). Her understanding of this information was surface level, as she honed in on one part of her principal's suggestion about a way to speak to African American children:

She brings up you have to be sweet and talk sweetie pie to the students, especially. And I think she believes this and I don't know this for a fact because I'm just getting to know her, but she is much more about being sweetie pie talking to the students who are African American probably because they come from households that are so different that there's a lot of apparently, and I'm getting this from her, not from me, culturally I've heard more than one African American person tell me that there's a lot more voices raised in African American families. I don't know that's true, truthfully" (interview 2.16.28)

Ms. Grace's focus on the way of speaking "sweetie pie" hindered her ability to think about the larger issue of culture and how it intersects with schooling and education, including family dynamics and ways of learning and communicating.

There is no doubt that Ms. Grace cares about her students and wants to connect with them. However, this idea of connecting is incomplete. There is a difference between connecting with students, as Ms. Grace did, and connecting to students, as is suggested by the ideas of culturally responsive pedagogy. This difference is subtle, yet significant. One way of connecting with students is personal and includes things like knowing who they live with, what they like to do for fun, and what their life outside of school is like. These things are important, and Ms. Grace has a firm understanding of the need for this type of connection. However, Ms. Grace did not use what she knew about students to connect to them by linking what they learned in school to their lives outside of school. In addition to the exclusion of diverse backgrounds and perspectives in reading and other curricular materials, Ms. Grace did not regularly build on the experiences that students brought with them to school; instead, she incorporated her own culture into lessons, singing songs and reading stories that she learned as a child. This is misaligned with her ideas related to teaching students. For instance, in the following excerpt, Ms. Grace discussed how students learn to be better writers:

When you have to teach the kids how to do a narrative story for instance, you've got to think through how, how are they going to do this? Well, first they need ideas. Where do they get ideas? Well, there's multiple places, their own experiences, reading to them, and the places, things, and stuff they've seen in the world, all the connections, and the more connections they have, the more ideas they have, and the more ideas they have the better they can talk and write and stuff. (interview 3.4.3)

From this excerpt, it would seem that Ms. Grace would intentionally incorporate and connect students' experiences with the content she teaches; however, this was not observed in her classroom.

Although she attempted to connect with her students on an emotional level, in many ways Ms. Grace felt disconnected from them due to their different upbringings. As she explained, she tried to connect her own life experiences with those of her students,

I've seen a lot, and that has helped [with social issues and parents]...I've traveled and I've been out of the country...I've seen other ways of living so that has helped me be more empathetic and understanding of my students because they come from a very different background than what I came from. (interview 3.5.15)

In the end, however, there was still a lack of understanding of and perhaps a degree of discomfort with the disparity between her culture and that of her students. Ms. Grace explained,

It gets too gobbly goopy for me to worry about, frankly, it does. It gets too gobbly goopy for me to spend a lot of time with. My concern is what is happening, the actions in my classroom, and maybe I should take the cultural thing more seriously but unless I get to go into people's houses I can't even make an analysis of their culture. (interview 2.16.28-17.17)

This lack of understanding may be a driving factor in her lack of incorporation of culture and diversity in her classroom.

In sum, even without incorporating students' culture into her classroom, Ms. Grace provided her students with an academically-driven environment that stressed the need for all community members to care for each other and be respectful.

## CHAPTER 5 THE CASE OF NATALIE RIGSBEE

### **Ms. Rigsbee's Background**

Originally from Port au Prince, Haiti, Natalie Rigsbee is a Black teacher working at Turner Elementary School. As a small child, Ms. Rigsbee's family fled Haiti and settled in Brooklyn, New York. Though they were considered affluent in Haiti, they lost their wealth upon coming to America. Ms. Rigsbee explained that their Brooklyn home was "the worst of the worst part, where you had to be afraid to come to my house, where you would have to call me on the phone to come and get you from the door" (interview 1.1.6-9). She believes that growing up in such a neighborhood provided her with the opportunity to:

adapt and understand the Black American's role as well as the Haitian community role in education and since...the majority of my teaching, it's with African-American children or Caribbean-African-American children descent, so I think I kind-of understand them, where they're coming from or I could relate to what's going on with them from what I've seen in my childhood and of course through things that I'm seeing today.<sup>2</sup> (interview 1.1.20-27)

Ms. Rigsbee often discussed her childhood with her students, weaving connections between their lives and her own in an effort to help students relate to her and see her as someone whom they could aspire to be (interview 1.2.17-18; interview 1.5.8-9).

Coming from a career in law, Ms. Rigsbee never thought she would become a teacher. However, circumstances related to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on New York's World Trade Center brought her family of four to Florida. Due to the declining economy, Ms. Rigsbee and her husband struggled to find jobs. Left with no

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<sup>2</sup> Quotes are drawn from interviews and as is common when speaking, teachers sometimes deviate from standard grammar. The quotes in this chapter use the exact language used by the teacher.

choice but to forge a new professional identity, Ms. Rigsbee's daughter suggested that she become a reading teacher. Ms. Rigsbee explained,

I didn't know anything about teaching, but I felt that since [when I came to the US as a child,] I didn't speak English myself, I couldn't read myself, in English, I felt that I was going to go and teach children how to read; that was the passion. (interview 1.3.25-28)

Ms. Rigsbee taught reading to all of the fifth graders at Turner Elementary School, which means that she taught three reading blocks each day. In previous years, Ms. Rigsbee taught second and third grades; some of the students whom she taught as fifth graders were also her students as second or third graders. Turner Elementary is a Title I school where 96% of the 436 students identify as Black. Eighty-eight percent of the students at Turner Elementary School receive free or reduced cost lunch.

### **Ms. Rigsbee's Classroom**

Ms. Rigsbee acknowledged that being a teacher required that she fill many different roles but for her, the most important was that of a role model:

You are a social worker, you are a police person, you are a guidance counselor, you are a priest sometime, you are a nurse, you are the warden, you are everything to those kids, and you even become their parents because they expect you to tell them what not to do or what to do and you're definitely their role model...[but the most important role is] being a role model to those kids, being somebody they could imitate, being somebody they could say, "oh, I want to be, I aspire to be like...". I think being a role model is what's important for our kids. (interview 1.4.29-5.12)

For Ms. Rigsbee, being a role model was based on establishing a positive relationship with her students. To her, this was more important than academic instruction. She explained, "You could teach a child to read but you did not make any impact on that child; the relationship that I build with my students is the main [thing] for me" (interview 1.7.19-21). Her experiences as a young student contributed to this stance; her own

troubled childhood was positively affected by the guidance and care of her high school French teacher.

Also highly visible in her classroom practice was Ms. Rigsbee's emphasis on preparing students to pass the state's standardized test through the use of tightly focused and task-driven lessons. Many of her students read well below a fifth grade reading level (for example, the majority of students in one reading block are reading on a second or third grade level, according to their scores on a lexile test), and preparing students so they would demonstrate mastery on the fifth grade reading test was the centerpiece of Ms. Rigsbee's instruction. Ms. Rigsbee explained,

Every year I set myself up for a high goal...it's not just the children's goal...but my goal is to be the best teacher for reading, the best reading teacher, the best writing teacher, period...The moment I put that in my own head, I'm gonna go above and beyond to have my children show that I am. So it's really a selfish reason, but at the same time I'm achieving it, I'm getting them to do exactly what I wanted them to do. (interview 3.6.27)

Though her students entered her classroom achieving at levels far below their district peers, Ms. Rigsbee had set a personal goal for a 100% pass rate. As seen in observations of Ms. Rigsbee's classroom, readying her students to pass their reading test was complemented by the cultivation of a positive teacher-student relationship, as she worked to help them succeed by connecting with them as individual learners while insisting upon excellence.

Ms. Rigsbee's two main goals for her teaching were developing positive relationships with students and preparing all students to pass the state standardized test. She was able to merge these concerns in her fast-paced, task-driven approach to teaching. The vignette that follows describes a typical whole-group teacher-led lesson in this fifth grade classroom and highlights key qualities of Ms. Rigsbee's practice:



The day's final group of students pours into the classroom and immediately begins singing the first of two chants: 12 Powerful Words. In unison, they sing about analyzing, inferring, and ten other reading strategies. If they forget, the powerful words and their meanings which make up the lyrics of the chant are posted on the wall. Ms. Rigsbee dances around the room while students chant, preparing her lesson notes and PowerPoint for the afternoon session. There are moments in the chant where students trail off and Ms. Rigsbee's voice chimes in strongly, bringing all students back to task. Immediately after this song, students lead themselves into the Prefixes and Suffixes chant, set to the words of the popular song by DJ Chipman, "Stick It and Roll It". Students sing out, "Front, that's prefix...back, that's suffix," while some make beats on their desks. Some students become more interested in the beats than the chanting, and Ms. Rigsbee reminds them, "I want to hear your mouth."

As the students finish their chants, Ms. Rigsbee is standing at the front of the room, her hands folded in front of her as she waits.

Ms. Rigsbee: "1, 2, 3, and 4. Janae, I heard you've been great today. Are you going to stay great? I'm going to teach you a new song I want you to sing this week."

Ms. Rigsbee plays a YouTube video for a Figurative Language song. The song is closed-captioned, and students begin singing along immediately. Once it finishes, Ms. Rigsbee plays it a second time. Some students have trouble with the words on one particular section of the song.

Janae: "If people would stop trying to sing the part they don't know, they could hear what they are trying to say so they could learn the words."

Ms. Rigsbee: "We'll all be singing it all week so they will have time to learn the words."

Ms. Rigsbee pulls the slide with the state standard guiding the day's mini-lesson up on the PowerPoint, bringing students' attention to the screen. There is a procedure in place for how students are to behave during mini-lessons, and there are times when Ms. Rigsbee has to remind students of her expectations. Her use of endearing nicknames when speaking to students is also noted.

Ms. Rigsbee: "Today's focus is personification, simile, metaphor. Write today's essential question in your journal. You are writing it down and not looking at me. Once you are finished, please place the pencil down."

A student gets up to use the bathroom, and Ms. Rigsbee reminds him, "Right now I am doing a mini-lesson, Booloo. You need to wait

until it is your time. You are the mighty Falcons. You need to finish.”  
He returns to his seat, pencil in hand.

Ms. Rigsbee gives the class an example of what she did that morning, what she ate for breakfast, what she listened to on the radio in the car, using very few descriptive words. She tells the story again, this time using what she calls “juicy language” to describe her morning.

Ms. Rigsbee: “Which story was better?”

Students call out answers, some raise their hands, others do not. The varied response style does not affect Ms. Rigsbee, who calls on students whether they volunteer a response or not.

Christina: “The second one was better. It was more interesting.”

Jacqui, who is seated next to Christina, protests: “She took my answer!”

Ms. Rigsbee: “She took your question? That’s why you’re sitting beside her. Your brains went straight to her.”

Jacqui, smiling at her teacher: “Oh, they did? That’s cool.”

In responding to Jacqui’s protest, Ms. Rigsbee uses two recurrent strategies in her classroom: humor and deflection. In this manner, she made light of a behavior that could have escalated into a greater upset, while acknowledging the fact that both girls knew the answer to her question.

Ms. Rigsbee moves through the slides showing definitions and examples of similes, metaphors, and personification. At personification, Ms. Rigsbee brings students’ attention to the popular movie, *Shrek*.

Ms. Rigsbee: “Have you seen the movie, *Shrek*? What about Puss in Boots or Donkey? Do they act like a human being?”

Students call out, “Yes!”

Ms. Rigsbee: “That is personification. When something acts like it is a human being.”

The mention of a beloved movie causes students to talk about their favorite parts, but Ms. Rigsbee uses a common strategy to bring them back to the focus of the lesson. She stands silent, face to the ground and hands folded in front of her, calmly stating two small words: “I’ll wait.” Students settle down immediately and return their attention to her.

Ms. Rigsbee brings their attention to a folder that she placed on their desks during the daily chants. She introduces them to the tightly structured group task that will follow, making clear her expectations for group work behavior.

Ms. Rigsbee: “You have a yellow folder on your desk and it has an envelope that says, ‘Literary Devices’. I want you to categorize your literary devices. One person should not dominate. You need to work together.”

As she frequently does, Ms. Rigsbee sets a timer for 3 minutes and circulates from group to group to monitor students’ progress. She does not interrupt, but uses this time to circulate and observe their thinking before reviewing the task with them once the timer beeps, signaling the end of group work. Ms. Rigsbee often uses a timer to keep her lessons moving on schedule. She has a lot to teach and doesn’t want to get off track.

As illustrated in this vignette, the two main concerns for Ms. Rigsbee were developing positive relationships with students and preparing all students to pass the state standardized test. The way she developed positive relationships with students was specifically demonstrated in many ways: using humor and deflection when she spoke to Jacqui and Christina, encouraging Janae’s behavior, using an endearing nickname, Booloo, when reminding a student of procedures, sharing details about her personal life, as well as using song and relevant examples to catch and keep students’ interest. Her clear and high expectations for academics and behavior, as well as her tightly focused, task-driven, and scaffolded lesson about figurative language demonstrate her dedication to making sure that all students have the opportunity to learn and practice necessary skills. The remainder of this chapter will include an examination of these two organizing principles of Ms. Rigsbee’s teaching, along with a description and explanation of the strategies that she uses to support each one.

### **Developing Positive Relationships with Students**

For Ms. Rigsbee, the relationships that she built with students were the most important part of her job as teacher. In her opinion, the best kind of teacher is one who

makes a student “want to come to school no matter what’s going on at home” (interview 3.2.23). Ms. Rigsbee fostered this type of relationship with her students in several ways: using a variety of classroom management techniques to meet students’ individual needs, speaking to students in a particular manner, sharing her personal life with students, and by connecting class content to students’ lives. Each of these qualities encapsulating the development of positive relationships with students is highlighted in the above vignette and will be described in detail below.

### **Using a variety of classroom management techniques to meet students’ individual needs**

Though the room hummed with energy and chatter, disciplinary action was uncommon in this classroom. Students in Ms. Rigsbee’s class were rarely given referrals, asked to leave the room due to misbehavior, or even marked down for behavior infractions on the clipboard that is passed from teacher to teacher. Ms. Rigsbee saved these consequences for the most serious examples of disrespect or misbehavior, instead selecting her management approach to meet the needs of a particular student at a particular time. These approaches included but were not limited to reminding students of how they should be acting, giving students the space they need to correct their own behavior, or redirecting students through the use of humor. This indicates that Ms. Rigsbee was attuned to the personalities of her students and was able to adjust her style to meet their disciplinary needs. Her actions implied that she would rather have students in the classroom and learning than out of the room, losing valuable learning time waiting to be disciplined by an administrator.

The excerpts that follow provide a sample of the techniques that Ms. Rigsbee used to manage her classroom. In the first example, Ms. Rigsbee responded with humor to a student who was making animal sounds in class:

Ms. Rigsbee: "I'm going to send you straight to the farm."

A few students laugh at her response, asking, "Did you say farm?"

Ms. Rigsbee: "Yes, that's what it sounds like, an animal. My accent fooled you." The student laughed at her comments and stopped making animal noises. (observation 6.6.6-8)

With this response, Ms. Rigsbee attended to the misbehavior while making light of it in order to keep students from getting too distracted from their classwork. In the following instance, Ms. Rigsbee addressed a student's actions by giving him the space he needed to gather himself:

Martin enters the room, clearly angry. He untucks his shirt and slams his books on his desk before throwing himself into his chair.

Ms. Rigsbee, resolutely, to Martin: "You go. Just go."

Martin gets up from his seat and walks over to the bathroom but does not go in. Although aware that he did not leave the room, Ms. Rigsbee ignores him. He stands near the bathroom for a moment, facing the wall, before returning to his desk, tucking his shirt back in. He sits back down and does not chant with the class, but appears to have calmed down and Ms. Rigsbee does not ask him to leave again. (observation 3.7.22)

By giving Martin the opportunity to collect himself before insisting that he leave the room, Ms. Rigsbee diffused his anger and kept him in the classroom, enabling him to get settled and join the class for instruction.

Another of Ms. Rigsbee's management techniques was that of reminding students of the value of education and that she wouldn't tolerate wasted time because none of them had time to waste. She stated firmly that she did not have time for

misbehavior and that students should take their time in the classroom seriously. The following examples illustrate this strategy:

Ms. Rigsbee: “Take your basketball and leave my classroom. I don’t have time to babysit you.” The student stops playing around with his pretend basketball and returns his attention to her lesson. (observation 6.8.27)

Ms. Rigsbee: I want your parent to sign it. I’ll call tonight. You’re not taking your education seriously. Both of your parents sign it.” (observation 3.8.27)

Each of these examples shows Ms. Rigsbee putting students in control of their own behavior, while telling them clearly what her expectations are for their behavior during instruction or work time.

A final example of Ms. Rigsbee’s varied management techniques was from Literacy Day, when students traveled to different classrooms around the school to hear stories read by other members of the faculty. In this instance, students were seated on the floor, listening to the guidance counselor read a book about being respectful:

Janae is distracting other students, trying to talk to them and moving around in her seat. Ms. Rigsbee, seated at a table in the back of the room, notices Janae’s actions and moves across the room to sit on the floor beside her. Janae stops playing around and turns her body to face the guidance counselor. After a few minutes, Janae watches as Ms. Rigsbee stands up, walks to the back of the room, places her finger to her eye and points to her, indicating that she is watching her. Janae nods and Ms. Rigsbee returns to her chair. Janae is well-behaved for the remainder of this reading session. (observation 2.9.14)

This excerpt shows Ms. Rigsbee’s ability to manage a potentially disruptive situation using proximity and nonverbal communication. In addition to the techniques that have been highlighted, Ms. Rigsbee also called or texted parents, such as the time when Ayana forged her mother’s signature on a homework assignment (observation 7.4.13), and sometimes ignored misbehavior, such as the time when Shanise grumbled under her breath, yet loud enough to be heard, about directions Ms. Rigsbee had given her

(observation 4.4.26). Ms. Rigsbee also reminded students when they needed to check their behavior, like when she asked Celeste, “Is that an attitude?” Celeste’s smiling response, “Miss Rigsbee, I love you and I don’t have no attitude” communicated that she heard her teacher and she would correct herself (observation 8.2.30). Her knowledge and understanding of her students and her comfort with asserting her own authority allowed her to adjust her use of management strategies to meet the needs of a student and situation.

Ms. Rigsbee agreed that classroom management is a particular strength of hers, and that, by knowing her kids, she was able to manage her classroom effectively:

Some people think I’m mean. I like my title, to be honest with you. If I wasn’t mean, that means my classroom would not be the way I want it to run. I will tell my kids, “I’m mean, I’m mean,” and they will say, “No, you’re not mean” later on... “No, you’re the fun teacher.” They find me fun...I came in with the attitude where I’m just going to know my kids, I’m just going to expect what I want for you to get and that’s what it is. (interview 1.8.26)

For her, being strict and firm was a positive attribute, and she expected students to meet her expectations for their behavior. If they struggled to do so, she had at her fingertips a variety of ways, as illuminated above, to help them get back on track.

### **Using endearing nicknames, encouraging students, and thanking them for their hard work**

The way that Ms. Rigsbee spoke to her students was almost always firm yet was not angry. She thanked students for their hard work and encouraged their efforts while pushing them to work harder. She used nicknames and other terms of endearment when speaking to them. This manner of speaking communicated her care as well as her high expectations for their achievement.

Students often heard encouraging words when they were in Ms. Rigsbee’s classroom. For example, when a student and her twin sister both responded to one of

Ms. Rigsbee's questions, Ms. Rigsbee knowingly replied, "You are so smart. Are you from the same mommy and daddy? Yes. So smart." (observation 3.12.26). Sometimes this encouragement came in the form of a thank you when students were doing the right thing, such as when all members of a group were on task: "Thank you for doing the right thing" (observation 1.5.18) or when a student had a particularly good day: "Thank you for being the student that you are" (observation 2.10.16). Other times, Ms. Rigsbee offered a compliment to a small group or the whole class such as, "I'm loving what you're doing. I just love this team" (observation 1.7.1), or when she paired a compliment with a thumbs-up: "I'm hearing the conversations and you are staying on task. This is an A+ for us" (observation 3.9.7), or when she addressed the whole class as they lined up to leave: "Great class today, by the way. Thank you" (observation 6.7.4). Occasionally, Ms. Rigsbee thanked students by her actions rather than by using the words, "thank you". For example, two students began stacking chairs at the end of the day without being asked. Ms. Rigsbee noticed and told them, "Oh, you need a positive referral because you are the only ones who remembered to do it" (observation 2.10.22). The smiles on the students' faces communicated their appreciation that their teacher noticed and was rewarding their actions.

More often than not, Ms. Rigsbee addressed her students using a nickname or other term of endearment. Sometimes these nicknames were shortened versions of their own names, like "Fergi"- short for a student's last name (observation 3.8.12) or "Malqui"-short for a student's first name (observation 2.6.17), and sometimes the words were of Ms. Rigsbee's creation, like "Booloo" (observation 4.4.21) or "Boobaloo" (observation 3.2.28). Ms. Rigsbee also used words like "Daughter" (observation 8.2.2),



“Sweet pea” (observation 6.6.29), “Sweetheart” (observation 1.12.17), “Baby” (observation 3.2.16), “Ricky, love” (observation 3.11.29) and occasionally told students that she loved them: “I love you, Baby” (observation 3.10.22). These terms of endearment were sprinkled generously throughout the day, and though students sometimes rolled their eyes or laughed at her terminology, it was clear from their smiles and laughter that they did not mind being addressed with one of Ms. Rigsbee’s nicknames.

### **Sharing her personal life with students**

As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, Ms. Rigsbee felt that her upbringing was very similar to that of many of her students. Asked how she showed them that she relates to them, she responded,

Well, one thing, if you don’t tell somebody they’ll never know; they’ll just assume that you don’t know their world. So for me by having a conversation, twice a week I do have a meeting with the kids and twice a week I do talk about my life. Lessons of course, but I do talk about my life and I want them to understand that my life isn’t any different than their own; we just sound different and look different and come from different places, but my life is just as similar to them as any other thing. (interview 1.2.3)

Ms. Rigsbee often talked about her own life, sometimes at length, in an effort to get students to understand that their childhood does not have to determine their future. One morning, when students were being particularly hostile to one another, Ms. Rigsbee spoke about coming to the United States as a child and the challenges her family faced in starting over:

When I lived in Haiti, I was rich...I came to American with one suitcase. My mommy and my daddy had to leave. My mommy dressed me in yellow. Yellow is for good luck...I’m not too far from you. I know your life...People don’t think, because I am from Haiti, that I was a rich little girl...[My mommy] said to me, ‘We are going to start over.’ I grew up in poverty, just like you, some of you...I had drug dealers offering to me every day...I know what it’s like to be hungry. I know what it’s like to have bad friends. I know

what it's like to have to come to school no matter what it's like at the house at night...It is similar to some of your lives....But school was my rescue...Instead of only coming to school, find school as your refuge. (observation 2.1.23-4.1)

Ms. Rigsbee's goal with these conversations was to link her life with her students' lives:

"So when I'm making my connections, although it's my own life, I bring theirs in it"

(interview 1.2.17).

In addition, Ms. Rigsbee used what she told students about her own life as a jumping off point in reading lessons. After she finished telling students about her childhood, she told them, "I did not tell you a story just to tell it to you. Write down one or two questions you have for me. How can questioning help us evaluate information and make a judgment about a story?" (observation 2.6.8). From there, Ms. Rigsbee asked students about her use of figurative language in her story and asked them to determine whether her purpose was to persuade, inform, explain, or entertain (observation 2.5.24; observation 2.6.12). Another example also focuses on developing questioning skills:

Ms. Rigsbee: "Like when you are watching a movie. When I watch a movie, I can't figure out the plot. I'm always asking my husband questions, 'What's going on, what did he do, what's happening?' He laughs at me. He thinks I'm ridiculous."

Students respond to her by connecting to their own families: "That's like my mom," or "I just watched a movie like that."

Ms. Rigsbee: "Yes. It's like when you read. It's the same thing when you have questions about what you read." (observation 1.12.4)

By sharing her own life experiences with students, Ms. Rigsbee kept them engaged in discussions about reading and showed them that they already did many of the things that would help them become better readers, such as questioning.

Important to note is the fact that when invited Ms. Rigsbee has also spent holidays with students' families, bringing her own family when she accepts these

invitations. She explained, “Somebody [will] just invite you for Thanksgiving dinner, think you’re so special and say ‘Ms. Rigsbee, I want you to eat with us this year’” (interview 1.7.4). She has attended weddings, religious celebrations, and birthdays, bringing her family along as she celebrates milestones and gets to know her students’ families more intimately than is possible simply standing in front of a classroom.

### **Connecting class content to students’ lives**

In order to get to know her students and teach them in the best ways possible, Ms. Rigsbee researched them, looking them up and checking their cumulative folders even before the first day of school:

I know who’s living in foster home, I know who’s living with a grandmother, I know who’s living in a shelter, I know who had a fire in their house and lost everything, I know who got married, I know who got baptized, who got saved. I know whose parents been in jail, whose parent just got released, who never talk to their parents. (interview 1.2.11)

You could know your content area, you could know your subject, but if you don’t know the children, you don’t know their family...you just need to have better communication with parents, with students, and build a bridge in order to help you because just knowing it is not going to cut it. (interview 3.4.28-5.10)

After purchasing a class set of a book of motivational stories, Ms. Rigsbee told students that there was one in particular that she wanted to share with them, and that it might resonate with some of them: “This is about a man who was considered the dummy of his fifth grade class. But do you know, he is now a surgeon. He was raised by his single mother only, and now he is a surgeon” (observation 2.9.3). Though the sharing of this story was not observed, even this brief reference to this man’s life may have been motivational to some students.

This year, Ms. Rigsbee noticed that her students were not internalizing the chants as they had in previous years; she felt they struggled to understand why they were

singing them. However, Ms. Rigsbee discovered, “If I just bring technology to back it up, I find it more, they get more involved” (interview 1.6.18). For this reason, Ms. Rigsbee often played YouTube videos so students could sing along, read the lyrics, and see images that supported the video’s content. An example was the Figurative Language video described in the vignette. In creating chants, Ms. Rigsbee used the tunes of songs students already knew, like the aforementioned DJ Chipman song, “Stick it and Roll it”. Similarly, when they discussed their reading selections, Ms. Rigsbee connected their vocabulary to things they were familiar with, nearly always music, as shown in the following excerpt where Ms. Rigsbee gave an example to illustrate a vocabulary word, ‘rhythm,’ found in a story about ice skater Michele Kwan:

Ms. Rigsbee stands at the front of the room and dances: “If I’m singing ‘Boom, Boom, Pow’ and I’m doing this (dancing slowly), am I listening to the music?”

Students call out in unison: “No!”

Ms. Rigsbee: “If I’m doing ‘Stick it in the Front” and I’m doing this (she does the choreographed dance), am I listening to the music?”

Students again call out in unison: “Yes!”

Ms. Rigsbee: “So her skating has to have the rhythm.” (observation 1.9.12)

These connections to students’ lives showed them that Ms. Rigsbee recognized, validated, and made use of the knowledge they had outside of class. By linking new knowledge to their background knowledge, she increased their access to the content she was trying to teach them. This showed students that she valued them enough to use what they know and love to support their learning.

Ms. Rigsbee also made a point of exposing students to things they may not have understood when they read a story in order to increase their comprehension of what

they read. After reading a story about a boy's skit for the school talent night and his daydreams about how the crowd would react to his performance of the song, "La Bamba," Ms. Rigsbee played a video of the song, calling students' attention to the ways in which the crowd went wild over the singer, cheering and dancing along (observation 3.2.7). She also brought to class a record of Michael Jackson hits so they would understand what a record is and what would happen if it skipped (observation 3.2.21). In this way, Ms. Rigsbee was able to increase students' background knowledge, thus increasing the chances that they would make personal connections to what they were reading.

### **Preparing All Students to Pass the Statewide Standardized Reading Tests**

One of Ms. Rigsbee's stated goals was to be the best reading and writing teacher. In order to meet this goal, she needed to prepare her students to meet her other goal of a 100% pass rate on the state's standardized reading test. She explained the importance of students' passing the standardized test as being more than just a passing score:

It is not just fine to teach lessons and not teach students how to be great test takers. As for myself, I'm not a great test taker. I know that some of us test well and some of us don't. I feel that is also imperative to teach students how to take test[s]. Passing each test has become a primary focus because passing means mastery and mastery means you have done well. Those are the keys to motivation and self-esteem. (personal communication, 5/30/12)

Her expectations for the way students should behave during mini-lessons and student led work were clear, as were her expectations for the work they would produce. Ms. Rigsbee's lessons were thorough, organized, and included PowerPoint and video to complement the lesson's content. These efforts supported her goal for her own and students' success, serving to prepare them to do well on the high-stakes test.

## **Holding clear and high expectations for students' behavior and academics**

Turner Elementary School used the CHAMPs behavior model (C-Conversation Level, H-Help, A-Activity, M-Movement/Materials, P-Participation) as a system to manage student behavior. Prior to nearly every teacher-led mini-lesson or group activity, Ms. Rigsbee reviewed the expectations for behavior verbally and by including a CHAMPs slide at the start of her lesson PowerPoint; she typically introduced the expectations in this manner: "We are going over CHAMPs again. Conversation is zero. Help, raise your hand. Movement is zero. Participation is everyone at your seat" (observation 1.4.5). From these instructions, students knew how they should act and if they forgot, Ms. Rigsbee reminded them simply: "Stop talking. You're violating conversation" (observation 1.3.31). During other times of the day when students have not been directed to follow CHAMPs, Ms. Rigsbee is likely to explicitly state her expectations. For instance, she said things like, "If you see me ignoring you, it means you are not raising your hand" (observation 2.1.8), or "Once you are finished, simply put your pencils down and I will know. Do not call to me" (observation 2.4.21). In these cases, Ms. Rigsbee was still stating her expectations in a way that was easy for students to understand and follow.

Academically, Ms. Rigsbee was equally clear with her expectations and showed students that she expected excellence. There were no excuses for not putting forth one's best effort at all times. She explained her motivation behind this expectation of excellence:

I look at my kids and the expectation is so high that I think I'm failing myself or failing them because my expectation is too high for them, but at the same time if my expectation is not as high, I'm going to fail them no matter what. So I feel like I'm not winning at this moment until all scores come out, but I feel like my expectation is too high, but I'm not budging. (interview 2.10.4)

In order to meet the goal she set for herself and her students, Ms. Rigsbee was constantly reminding students to check their work, fix their spelling or punctuation, write more detailed paragraphs, and to use sophisticated language. The following excerpts illustrate these expectations:

Ms. Rigsbee: “You are missing a question mark” (observation 2.4.25).

Ms. Rigsbee: “Where are your questions?”

Student: “I don’t got any.”

Ms. Rigsbee: “You don’t got any? What is ‘got’?”

Student: “I don’t have any.”

Ms. Rigsbee: “Ok, write it down and write it proper.” (observation 2.4.29)

Ms. Rigsbee: “Check your subject/verb agreement. Do you want ‘was’ there? Is ‘limelight’ two words? Look at it. Fix it and I’ll be back.” (observation 3.4.20)

Ms. Rigsbee: “You are getting much better but I need you to have paragraphs” (observation 4.4.10)

Ms. Rigsbee: “When you say the word ‘tricks,’ I think of my dog. I want you guys to use different words. She is not doing magic. What are other words?”

Students brainstorm and call out other words, such as ‘moves’ and ‘stunts’.

Ms. Rigsbee: “Yes, I like those words better- ‘stunts,’ ‘moves’.” (observation 1.11.28)

Each of these examples demonstrates the way Ms. Rigsbee gave feedback to students; using clear and specific language, she told them what was wrong or missing and how they could improve their work. Ms. Rigsbee also always moved back around to the students she corrected to check their work again.

Ms. Rigsbee made clear to students that the work they did in school should come first, and that there were no excuses for when it doesn’t get done. For example, a student tried to explain to Ms. Rigsbee why the night’s homework was not completed; Ms. Rigsbee stopped her and said, “I don’t want to know you left it. I don’t make excuses” (observation 3.2.14). Although she sometimes gave students an extension for

getting work turned in, the expectation was clear that students were to do what she asked them to do. While the school frequently held fund-raiser dances during what would be instructional time, Ms. Rigsbee made clear that they must finish her lesson before they were dismissed to the dance: “Let’s finish my lesson first or nobody goes” (observation 5.3.27). This conveyed to students that she valued academics, that school work was most important, and that she expected it to be completed before leisure activities.

### **Implementing tightly focused, scaffolded, and task-driven lessons**

Ms. Rigsbee believed that one of her strengths is researching- researching her students as well as researching her craft. This means that every lesson was carefully considered and well-planned before she walked in the door:

Everything I do in this classroom is not by coincidence. I plan it. I plan what I am going to say in the morning, I plan what I am going to do in the morning, I plan how my day’s gonna go, I plan my questions based on what I’m going to say. (interview 1.9.9)

The reason for such detailed planning is clear: her students. She explained,

I’m afraid the day that I sit down [and don’t plan] is the day that they really lose out and I cannot make it up...If you don’t teach one day, those children, you cannot repair that day; you cannot bring it back. (interview 3.7.26)

For her, it was crucial that she not lose any teaching time with students; she taught with intensity and believed her children could not afford to waste one instructional minute because learning is important.

Lessons in Ms. Rigsbee’s class were fast-paced and well-planned. She explained that each is organized into three parts: “I do it first, scaffold it, and then we do it together, and then after we do it, you do it by yourself. After that we close it, yes, we have to close it together” (interview 2.5.15). By structuring her lessons in this way, Ms.



Rigsbee was able to scaffold students, drawing them in to the content and modeling her thinking before asking them to work with their team or independently (interview 2.5.6). Her PowerPoint presentations were labeled with each part of the lesson at the top of each slide. In this way students knew whether the example was one where “Teacher models,” “Teacher and students do together,” or “Students do independently.” For a typical mini-lesson, Ms. Rigsbee spent several days modeling and doing a task with students before she sent students off to work without her guidance, first with a partner or their group, and then on their own. During this time, she constantly circled the room, listening to their thinking and checking their work. She explained that, with this type of practice, “They get more out of it than just me...[I can tell from the lesson closing.] If they’re closing and then one is guiding and feeding from each other, I could tell it works” (interview 2.6.15).

Ms. Rigsbee taught three classes of reading; the classes were generally organized by reading level and homeroom classes were not grouped together. While the school year didn’t begin with such an organization, Ms. Rigsbee coordinated the change to leveled groups and said that since they reorganized, “behavior is better and I can gear the lessons to meet the needs of the group. I do more hands-on things with the earlier [lower] group to help them with vocabulary, such as acting the words out” (informal interview 11/10/11). Knowing that many of her students struggled, Ms. Rigsbee made a point of not moving on until everyone knew what to do and was ready: If “one child doesn’t get it, the whole class doesn’t get it” (interview 2.6.4). If one student did not understand, Ms. Rigsbee challenged the whole class to help that student: “If you don’t get it, we’re all going to chip in to help you out” (interview 2.6.9). Each class received

nearly the same instruction, with slight modifications based on need, driven by chants, posters, unison call and response, repetition, and a well-used timer.

Students began their chants the moment they walked in the door. As discussed previously, there were two that they sang daily. Asked how she learned this skill, she replied that they “just came on. I just start saying it, it roll out...The chants just come” (interview 1.10.6). Ms. Rigsbee has had a lot of success with the chants in the past; she said that she could see students singing them to themselves while they took tests. Along with giving students verbal cues they can memorize, Ms. Rigsbee had helpful instructional posters hung on every wall. These posters included lists of reading strategies, text features, author’s purpose, the 12 powerful words, “juicy” words to make students’ writing more exciting, and figurative language, to name just a few. Students were constantly referred to these posters when they were stuck or if Ms. Rigsbee was prompting a response, for example, “What strategy are they referring to? Look up at the strategies” (observation 3.9.19). Ms. Rigsbee explained to students, “I am forcing you to read the room” (observation 3.12.8) and that she wanted them to “look at the wall. When you take the FCAT, look at the wall” because, although the posters will not be up, “you’ll have it in your mind” (observation 3.14.22). Here, Ms. Rigsbee was using multiple senses to help students solidify their learning.

Ms. Rigsbee rarely required students to raise their hands to participate in class because she expected that all students be engaged at all times. Instead, lessons were driven by unison call and response and repetition, where students answered together and repeated answers after Ms. Rigsbee. This technique is illustrated below:

Ms. Rigsbee: “The illustration and caption are text features. Read them.”

Students read the caption aloud.

Ms. Rigsbee: Why did the author include them? You have to take it from the caption. From where?"

Students, in unison: "The caption."

Ms. Rigsbee: "From where?"

Students, in unison: "The caption."

Ms. Rigsbee: "The purpose is what? To show us what?"

Students, in unison: "The state fruit."

Ms. Rigsbee: "Put caption down. Cap-tion. Cap-tion. Write it down."  
(observation 6.2.21)

Ms. Rigsbee and her students frequently repeated words, circling them or making notes beside them in their journals or on reading handouts. She used this technique in nearly all teacher-led, whole group lessons. In doing so, Ms. Rigsbee was able to hear all of her students' voices, checking for understanding in a way that allowed her to hear potential problems if a student did not answer with the class.

Each block of students was with Ms. Rigsbee for about 90 minutes; however, this schedule shifted almost daily, with dances, early dismissals every other Wednesday, and other school functions creating obstacles to an uninterrupted class session. Because time was of the essence in Ms. Rigsbee's classroom, she controlled the flow of her lessons with the use of a timer. Almost every activity in the classroom was timed, even increments as short as 30 seconds. Ms. Rigsbee frequently had students turn to a neighbor for a quick partner-pair-share or join with their table groups to decide on a strategy, and because she was circulating around the room, listening to students' conversations, she used the timer to keep her on track.

Ms. Rigsbee's two main goals for her teaching were developing positive relationships with students and helping her students master the state standardized test.

In order to meet these goals, Ms. Rigsbee used a variety of techniques to meet students' needs, encouraged them and uses endearing nicknames, shared her personal life with her students, and connected her lessons to their lives outside of school. She created tightly focused and task-driven lessons, kept students' attention in a variety of ways, and set high and clear expectations for their success, which she helped them achieve through careful and intentional scaffolding. When students were not around, she admitted that the job was not easy and that there were times when she "can't pinpoint why it works at that moment and it doesn't work the next morning" (interview 2.6.24), she also believed that this was her goal and "once you have a goal you will have a will, and if you have a will you have a way" (interview 1.10.15). For Ms. Rigsbee, success for all students was only a matter of time.

### **Analysis in Terms of the Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol**

As explained in Chapter 4, the Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol (CRIOP) is a tool designed to help an observer understand the degree to which a teacher's practice is culturally responsive, meeting the needs of all members of the classroom community. In the following section, the eight pillars of this protocol (Teacher Care, Classroom Climate, Family Collaboration, Assessment, Curriculum, Instruction/Pedagogy, Discourse/Instructional Conversation, and Sociopolitical Consciousness) will be discussed in relation to Ms. Rigsbee's perspectives about teaching and her teaching practice.

### **Elements of the Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol Documented Through the Observations**

As informed by the CRIOP, Ms. Rigsbee's strengths lie in six of the eight elements assessed in the protocol: Teacher Care, Classroom Climate, Family Collaboration,

Assessment, Pedagogy/Instructional Practices, and Discourse/Instructional Conversation (Appendix E). Ms. Rigsbee's greatest strengths lie in the domains related to Family Collaboration and Teacher Care. As evident in the sections above, Ms. Rigsbee put forth great effort in getting to know all of her students and their families. She referenced these connections in class, talking with students about their lives outside of the classroom. Though parents were not involved in the classroom on a daily basis, the lines of communication were always open and Ms. Rigsbee made herself available to students and parents at nearly all times of the day. In interviews, Ms. Rigsbee discussed the ways that she had been able to bring parents into the classroom during previous school years to share their experiences:

I make sure that I embrace their own skill, although they are not [traditionally] educated, I embrace whatever they could bring to the classroom. For example, I have a parent who does the yard, so I bring that parent in when we talk about fertilization, when it's time to talk about rain, and killing the bugs. Another parent I have is a grandparent that talks about babies. I will bring that grandmother in just to help me out as a volunteer in the classroom. I believe in not just having mom in the classroom. (summer interview 6.25)

Ms. Rigsbee consistently looked to families and expected their support in their child's learning, and she accepted nothing less. She explained that parents had to be on her side if children were going to be successful in her class, even though her style can be off-putting at first:

I want everybody on board, parents going to be on board by the time I finish. They're going to get angry, they're going to remove their children, but they're going to be on board. It's my goal. It's either my goal or I cannot teach my child, so which one would you prefer? Would you prefer I teach your child or would you prefer your child come here and make an F?...It's ok; the rest that stay they're gonna have good grades. That's just how it is. (interview 1.10.21)

According to Ms. Rigsbee, some parents moved their kids from Turner Elementary because “I’m too strict and they don’t understand my practices and rules. Most likely is that, they simply don’t get their ways or they relocated” (personal communication 5/30/12). During the course of my classroom observations, one student was removed from Turner. Ms. Rigsbee claimed that this may happen a couple of times a year. However, the opinions of some families did not bother her; she will teach the ones who are left and they will pass.

Ms. Rigsbee demonstrated an ethic of care by referring to students by their names or by endearing nicknames and other personalized language. She praised students’ efforts and thanked them for their hard work. She also set high expectations for students, both in terms of academics and behavior, requiring that all students participated appropriately and actively. Ms. Rigsbee insisted that students get their work done and did not accept excuses. Students were encouraged to treat each other with respect, like the time when she asked students to “Make room for Jacob; he’s family” (observation 6.3.10), and to help each other if a classmate did not know an answer, and Ms. Rigsbee modeled these behaviors daily.

Similarly, the physical classroom environment was designed to promote active learning. Desks were arranged in groups of five or six, and students moved from one seat to another on a daily basis. As discussed in the previous sections, students worked together on a regular basis, sharing their thinking as they learned how to apply reading strategies and decode text. The walls of the classroom were covered with instructional posters, nearly all of which were handmade by Ms. Rigsbee to provide the information she considered most meaningful to students.

Other strengths Ms. Rigsbee demonstrated in terms of the CRIOP were her assessment practices, instructional practices, and classroom discourse. Ms. Rigsbee relied heavily on formative assessments, most of which were informal and part of the lesson or its closing. During these times, Ms. Rigsbee was able to observe every student's thinking by walking around the room, checking students' papers and listening to group talk, or during the unison responses of her lesson's closing series of questions. For example, during an independent activity where students wrote down their responses to a question, Ms. Rigsbee was able to spot several students who had trouble with punctuation. This led her to declare, "There are too many of you with no punctuation. This is a language arts class. Let me put that in my calendar" (observation 2.4.27); she then made a note in her plan book to return to punctuation at a later date. Her careful observation of students' progress allowed her to clarify misconceptions, scaffold their learning, and assess their understanding.

Instructional Practices and Instructional Discourse are very closely related. In general, these pillars are often characterized by culturally responsive features in Ms. Rigsbee's classroom. The most salient features of both categories present in Ms. Rigsbee's class included the use of engaging and collaborative activities that allowed students to talk to each other in ways that matched their home environment. This included group work, call and response, chants, and responding in unison. As noted in previous sections, these techniques were highly utilized in Ms. Rigsbee's classroom. Additionally, instruction was rigorous and engaging, and expectations for student achievement were high (i.e., Ms. Rigsbee's goal of 100% of her students passing the standardized reading test). In order for students to meet those expectations, however,

they were provided with clear instructions for what they needed to do, such as Ms. Rigsbee's directions for what students should include in a complete response: "I want to see punctuation. I want to see capital letters and 2 to 3 sentences" (observation 1.10.19). Ms. Rigsbee also emphasized the use of academic language, constantly working to help her students use more sophisticated language in meaningful contexts, such as in the following example:

Troy, answering a question: "The picture..."

Ms. Rigsbee stops him: "The illustration. We don't say 'picture' anymore in 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

Troy: "In the illustration..." (observation 6.2.11)

Ms. Rigsbee's two main goals for her teaching (developing positive relationships and preparing all students to pass the standardized test) were clearly reflected in these categories of the CRIOP. Her caring disposition, connectedness with students and their families, and her focus on meaningful instruction and assessment have created a classroom environment where success was not only expected, but also possible.

### **Elements of the Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol with Little or No Evidence**

Though there is a great deal of evidence about the ways in which Ms. Rigsbee has structured a classroom that is consistently characterized by the features discussed above, there are elements within those criteria for which there was little evidence. Additionally, there was little evidence of two other areas of the CRIOP, Curriculum and Sociopolitical Consciousness.

The greatest challenge to a caring classroom environment was the fact that the students did not treat each other in a respectful manner. Ms. Rigsbee modeled and set a tone for respectful interactions, but students often bickered, bullied, and tried to out-



perform one another, sometimes even to the point of being “mean-spirited” (observation 2.2.19) to one another. Although somewhat inconsistent in this regard, Ms. Rigsbee showed very little tolerance for this type of behavior in her classroom reminding students that “being disrespectful...is a problem” (observation 2.2.27) that they must work to change. Although she was able to foster positive one-on-one relationships with each student, these relationships were not consistently demonstrated across the class as a whole.

The two areas in which the least number of indicators were observed were Curriculum and Sociopolitical Consciousness. These areas are similar in that they require the teacher to hand over to students more control over what is learned and how this information should be presented. Ms. Rigsbee did make an effort to include real-world examples and connect content to students’ lives, but little else was done in these areas to move students beyond basic connections to investigate or challenge the content of their books or other significant issues within their own school. As such, the textbook and test preparation worksheets formed the bulk of the instructional materials used by Ms. Rigsbee and her students. Though she often helped students connect to those materials to their own lives, there was little evidence of other efforts to use more relevant texts or students’ own experiences as an alternative text source. Although engaging, most tasks and activities assigned were teacher-directed, in that Ms. Rigsbee selected and initiated the work. These lessons did require active engagement, but it is worth noting that none were based on students’ own questions or interests. There were no observed instances where Ms. Rigsbee facilitated student advocacy or challenged the status quo in any way, with the exception of her suggestion that students write a

letter to the principal regarding a delayed lunch time (observation 1.6.6); however this issue was not further addressed and the suggestion was not taken seriously by students.

Data from observations and interviews indicate that Ms. Rigsbee has many attributes of a culturally responsive fifth grade teacher. She has developed positive relationships with her students, even though they may not always demonstrate similarly respectful relationships with each other. She planned and implemented engaging, focused, and task-driven lessons that scaffolded students so they were able to succeed both in class and on their state standardized test. In many ways, Ms. Rigsbee's classroom consistently demonstrated attributes of a culturally responsive learning environment. However, her school context was riddled with challenges that may not facilitate culturally responsive practices; therefore, it is important to consider the degree to which the environment at Turner Elementary created barriers that prevented Ms. Rigsbee from fully embracing culturally responsive practices in her classroom.

### **Interpretation and Analysis: A School in Constant Transition**

Over the course of 10 observations, there were many interruptions. Although each instance can be seen as important or appropriate, the cumulative effect was the constant interruption of instructional time. During the period I observed, some or most of the fifth graders at Turner Elementary participated in a field trip to the symphony, Literacy/Pajama Day, two dances, an awards ceremony, and one day where at least half of the students were out of class for performances in their magnet area (dance or band); there were also two days when Ms. Rigsbee administered district-wide or school-wide tests so the administration and coaches could give students a "trial run". In other words, there was a modified schedule for eight of the 10 days I observed Ms. Rigsbee's

class. On these days Ms. Rigsbee either did not have all of her students present or was not able to use the full class time for instruction. The schedules for these days, informing teachers of revised lunch and special subjects times, tended to be either incorrect or were not provided to teachers in a timely manner. In addition, during this same period of 10 observations, the principal was removed and replaced by the assistant principal. The person who filled the assistant principal's position was a retired principal who agreed to return to the district temporarily. Additionally, the fifth grade math teacher was moved out of fifth grade and into third grade; the third grade teacher was then moved into the fifth grade math position. Each of these instances on its own required transitions and adjustments by both faculty and students; taken together, they suggest that the average day at Turner Elementary is one of constant transition and adjustment.

As explained by Ms. Rigsbee, the majority of her students were reading below a fifth grade reading level and in 2011, nearly one-third of students did not pass the state's reading test. Thus, there was a great deal of pressure for her to bring up her students' reading levels and test scores. This pressure is both external, from the school and district, and internal, because it was important to her that the children learn and be successful.

In sum, Ms. Rigsbee taught in a test driven environment working with children who struggled and one-third of who were at risk of failure, and she provided them with a motivating, fast paced, culturally connected classroom.

## CHAPTER 6 CROSS-DISCLOSURE ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS

### **Introduction**

The purposes of this study were 1) to understand the perspectives about effective teaching practice held by teachers who graduated from a year-long residency and 2) to examine the relationship between their perspectives and practices. It addressed the following research question: What are the perspectives and practices of graduates of a yearlong urban teacher residency who are teaching in schools with a student population that is predominantly low income and/or children of color? Sub-questions guiding the study included: 1) How do the teachers define effective teaching? 2) What practices do these teachers use that they believe are highly effective and why do they believe those practices are effective? 3) What factors do these teachers identify as influential in the development of perspectives and practices? In this chapter I answer these questions, discuss the findings from this study, and examine the teachers' perspectives and practices in terms of the recommendations for effective teaching that are encapsulated in the literature on culturally responsive pedagogy. Following this discussion, I explore the implications of these findings for educational leaders, teacher educators, and researchers.

### **Discussion of the Research Questions**

Both of the teachers who participated in this study felt that effective teaching meant that they did whatever was necessary to help their students to be successful. For Ms. Grace and Ms. Rigsbee, this included building relationships with students and making sure that students felt cared for, as well as implementing instruction that was designed to help students learn and experience academic success. As discussed, both

teachers emphasized care as a crucial component of their teaching though care manifested in different ways in each classroom. Ms. Rigsbee focused on developing strong relationships with students and their families, while Ms. Grace strove to create a loving classroom environment where students treated their peers with respect. Though Ms. Rigsbee was more likely to know and use students' culture as a means for instruction, there is no question that Ms. Grace also knew her students well.

Academically, both Ms. Grace and Ms. Rigsbee stressed the use of formative assessments to gauge students' progress. These were done on a regular basis, during daily reading groups and whole group instruction in Ms. Grace's class and during whole-group instruction and small-group work in Ms. Rigsbee's class. These formative assessments were one way that these teachers could tell whether their teaching was effective. Listening to students as they circulated from table to table during instruction, observing students' interactions with their peers, and the results of summative assessments, often mandated by the district, were other ways that the teachers determined the effectiveness of their instruction.

Ms. Rigsbee and Ms. Grace alike talked about the influence that their own childhood teachers had on their teaching practice. In her study of Black teachers' perceptions of their practice, Ware (2002) noted that it was often the case that teachers' memories of their own teachers who had challenged them influenced their later teaching. For Ms. Rigsbee, her most memorable teacher was a high school French teacher. This teacher did not stand out to her because of her content area; coming from Haiti, Ms. Rigsbee already spoke fluent French. Instead, this teacher was important to Ms. Rigsbee because she showed care: she learned about Ms. Rigsbee's life outside of

school, talked with her on a personal level, and made sure that she had what she needed in order to be successful at school. In other words, Ms. Rigsbee's teacher exemplified the caring and relationship-building attributes of a culturally responsive teacher. Ms. Rigsbee used this relationship as a baseline for what she wants to achieve with her own teaching. Ms. Grace's most influential teacher was a math teacher who used one-on-one and small group instruction to make sure that Ms. Grace learned the math with which she struggled. Ms. Grace credited her teacher with showing her the benefit of this type of instruction, and the ways that focusing on a student's weaknesses can help those areas of difficulty become strengths. In practice, small group and one-on-one instruction are hallmarks of Ms. Grace's teaching. Although Ms. Rigsbee and Ms. Grace stated that their teacher residency program was helpful, neither teacher referred to the program when she talked about where she learned certain skills. Instead, each looked to her own teachers, her own research, or found mentors as the source of her knowledge about teaching.

### **Cross-Disclosure Analysis**

As explored in Chapters 4 and 5, Ms. Grace and Ms. Rigsbee had much in common. Specifically, the goal of helping students grow academically while developing caring relationships with them was a common thread. Both of these big ideas are noted in the literature related to culturally responsive instruction. As discussed in Chapter 2, several different definitions and frameworks detail culturally responsive pedagogy. In sum, this type of teaching maximizes student learning through the use of approaches that take into account students' backgrounds, cultures, experiences, and learning styles, as well as empowers students to be critical thinkers and change agents.

According to Powell and Rightmyer (2011), research related to successful teaching in schools with a high population of African American children who are living in poverty suggests that teachers in these settings focus on the following elements: Teacher Care, Classroom Climate, Family Collaboration, Assessment, Curriculum, Instruction/Pedagogy, Discourse/Instructional Conversation, and Sociopolitical Consciousness. Although not reflected as independent components of Powell and Rightmyer's framework, striving to challenge one's own beliefs about teaching and learning (Gay, 2000; Howard, 2010) and culturally responsive classroom management (Weinstein et al., 2003) are also considered to be part of successful teaching in this context. Throughout this study, challenging one's beliefs was discussed independent of the other elements and classroom management was considered a part of classroom climate. Using the Powell and Rightmyer framework, the observed teaching practices of Ms. Grace and Ms. Rigsbee were compared. Several similarities and differences related to their instructional patterns emerged. These similarities and differences and the way their patterns of instruction connected to extant literature on culturally responsive teaching are discussed in the sections that follow. They are organized according to the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 rather than according to the framework suggested by the CRIOP. The CRIOP does not include a component related to challenging one's beliefs or classroom management, yet these are included in much of the literature related to culturally responsive pedagogy. Therefore organizing this analysis in this manner seemed most appropriate.

There are many similarities between the cases of Ms. Grace and Ms. Rigsbee. Though they come from vastly different backgrounds, they set strikingly similar goals for

their teaching: to develop positive and caring relationships with their students and to help their students experience academic success. In both cases, the teachers set clear and high expectations for learning, tightly planned lessons in order to model and scaffold learning, used formative assessments to document students' progress, used caring language when talking with students, and got to know students and their families in order to learn how to best meet their needs. Moreover, though both Ms. Grace's and Ms. Rigsbee's classrooms demonstrated a moderate degree of evidence related to empowerment through building students' academic power, the remaining two goals of CRP, transformation and emancipation, were not evidenced. Chapters 4 and 5 examined these characteristics in relationship to each teacher's practice. Here, these characteristics are examined in terms of existing literature related to culturally responsive pedagogy.

### **Challenging Beliefs**

Literature suggests that culturally responsive teachers look critically at their own beliefs, assumptions, and experiences in order to identify the ways in which their backgrounds and beliefs differ from their students' (Bondy & Ross, 2008; Gay, 2000; Howard, 2010; Phuntsog, 2001; Rightmyer, 2011). These teachers moved beyond simply noting differences, but also understood how those differences help them learn from and teach their students (Bartolome, 1994). Both Ms. Grace and Ms. Rigsbee identified what Bergeron (2008) calls "cultural disequilibrium," in that their own upbringing did not fully prepare them to work with students like theirs. However, Ms. Rigsbee was able to connect with her students' experiences growing up in poverty in ways that Ms. Grace was not. By finding threads in her childhood that connected with students' experiences, Ms. Rigsbee forged connections that she considered to be



crucial in developing relationships with students. When she talked about her experiences growing up in Brooklyn, Ms. Rigsbee admitted to students that she lived with both of her parents, but also highlighted the fact that she knew what it was like to be offered drugs and to have to come to school no matter what happened at home. In this way, Ms. Rigsbee was honest with students, showing them that they had different experiences while still expressing that she, too, had challenges to overcome. Ms. Rigsbee was able to recognize those differences while using them to help her understand her students' needs.

Ms. Grace, on the other hand, expressed in interviews that she did not understand many of her students' realities. She did not know what it was like to live in poverty and she did not know first-hand the challenges faced by minorities. Rather than thinking reflectively about how her experiences differed from her students' and finding ways to use their experiences to shape her instruction, Ms. Grace inserted her own culture into her lessons. By intentionally including the stories that she loved as a child and singing songs that she learned growing up, Ms. Grace privileged her upbringing over her students'. Though not a deficit perspective as there is no evidence to suggest that Ms. Grace blamed her students for any lack of success or believed that her students did not have the experiences they needed to succeed academically (Tileston & Darling, 2009; Villegas, 1991), Ms. Grace did seem to believe that her students needed access to certain types of content, such as Beatrix Potter stories, which arguably stem from the hegemonic White middle class. By focusing on these parts of her childhood rather than finding commonalities or by presenting stories that more closely relate to her students' own experiences, Ms. Grace demonstrated that she had not challenged her own beliefs

and assumptions about what her students needed in order to be successful learners (Bartolome, 1994; Bondy & Ross, 2008; Gay, 2000; Howard, 2010).

### **Building Relationships with Stakeholders**

Building relationships with all stakeholders is necessary for a culturally responsive teacher to do her job well. Relationships with students, families, and the neighboring community should be cultivated in order to maximize student learning.

### **Relationships with students**

Both Ms. Grace and Ms. Rigsbee believed that the relationships they built with their students were a central part of their job as teachers. The literature cites several elements to relationship building between teacher and students: presenting oneself as a person rather than just an authority figure, demonstrating care, and promoting equitable and respectful relationships (Bergeron, 2008; Bondy et al., 2007; Brown, 2004; Irvine, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Patrick et al., 2003; Toliver, 1993; Ware, 2006). Ms. Rigsbee and Ms. Grace displayed these elements to varying degrees.

Care is one of the most significant builders of a classroom community. When students feel cared for, they are able to connect emotionally and academically (Bondy et al., 2007; Brown, 2003; Irvine, 2003; Noddings, 1988; Scott et al., 2009; Toliver, 2003; Ware, 2002, 2006). Both Ms. Grace and Ms. Rigsbee believed that their classes were like family, and as such, they were determined to build relationships that showed care and love. Both teachers acted in ways that seemed to be perceived by students to be caring, although the ways in which they built this familial community differed (Irvine, 2003).

In speaking with students, Ms. Grace consistently used a soft voice, sprinkled with language that demonstrated care and appreciation for their efforts. Ms. Grace's actions

similarly showed students that she cared for them, as she gave them hugs, made eye contact with them and listened closely when they spoke to each other (Brown, 2003; Irizarry, 2007; Rightmyer, 2011), spoke to students about their personal lives, and also treated them respectfully by allowing them to take responsibility for their own actions and by giving them the opportunity to praise and congratulate each other on their efforts, such as after sharing a story retell. Her focus on respect, hard work, and trying one's best showed students that she expected them to succeed. In Ms. Grace's classroom, relationships were "equitable and reciprocal" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 480). She expected her students to communicate with her and each other in the same manner that she communicated with them: calmly and respectfully. Although students sometimes argued and got upset, Ms. Grace made a point of talking with students to sort things out and also taught them how to talk with each other in a calm and productive manner, as she did in the example provided in Chapter 4 when a student got upset about losing a math game.

Ms. Rigsbee also demonstrated care in her classroom by using caring language like nicknames, showing gratitude for students' hard work, and focusing on the ways that their behaviors and attitude would affect them in the future. Ms. Rigsbee strove to help students understand what it would take in order for them to be successful and she also stated her expectation that they would become professionals (Poplin et al., 2011). She was motivated by her desire for students to succeed in school and in life, but was not worried about how they perceived her (Irvine, 2003; Ware, 2006). Students at Turner Elementary voted monthly for the teacher who demonstrates certain character traits, and this was sometimes considered a sort of popularity contest. Ms. Rigsbee

explained that she was not concerned with whether or not students voted for her each month. It was not her job for them to like her but it was her job to make sure that they learned (Poplin et al., 2011). Ms. Rigsbee's care for her students and their learning was more important than her care for herself and she was motivated more by their successes than by their opinion of her (Ware, 2006).

Though Ms. Rigsbee communicated care and respect to her students, they often struggled with treating each other respectfully. As mentioned in Chapter 5, Ms. Rigsbee's students often argued, bickered, and complained about each other and about other teachers. At times, she was inconsistent with her responses to these and other disrespectful student-student interactions. Therefore, although Ms. Rigsbee made an attempt to forge equitable and reciprocal relationships with her students, these relationships did not tend to extend from student to student. This signifies an area of concern because classroom environments where students do not treat each other respectfully may be indicative of an ambiguous, rather than supportive, atmosphere (Patrick et al., 2003). Ambiguous environments may lead students to avoidance behaviors where students actively avoid academic engagement by withdrawing effort, not asking for help even if they know they need it, being disruptive, or being academically dishonest (Patrick et al., 2003). Thus, Ms. Rigsbee's inconsistencies may undermine her end goal of student success and achievement.

### **Relationships with parents and families**

Literature related to culturally responsive teaching suggests that teachers who succeed in predominantly low-income and/or high minority schools build partnerships with students' parents and families (Bergeron, 2008; Bondy et al., 2007; Brown, 2004; Cooper, 2002; Howard, 2010; McKinney et al., 2008; Scott et al., 2009; Powell et al.,

1990; Seitz, 2011; Ware, 2002, 2006). As noted previously, these partnerships should take into account the needs of each family, reaching out to families that are hesitant to collaborate, holding meetings at times convenient to families, meeting in locations outside of school, and linking instruction to the “funds of knowledge” (Seitz, 2011, p. 61) that families can contribute to the classroom. Both Ms. Grace and Ms. Rigsbee expressed that parents were not highly involved in their classrooms on a volunteer basis and although both teachers were willing to accommodate parents’ schedules for conferences and meetings, neither teacher was observed incorporating families’ experiences and expertise when planning lessons, class activities, or guest speakers. In interviews, however, Ms. Rigsbee discussed the ways that she brought parents into the classroom during previous school years to share their experiences. It is possible that Ms. Rigsbee’s use of parents’ funds of knowledge was easier to achieve in a primary grade classroom where she was teaching multiple subjects. Additionally, the pressure from the state standardized test may have served to limit the amount of time she could dedicate to guest speakers, regardless of their potential benefit.

However, Ms. Rigsbee created partnerships with families in other ways. As illustrated in Chapter 5, Ms. Rigsbee regularly shared information about her life with her students. Examples showed her talking about her childhood, her husband, her morning routine, and sharing photographs of her children. She also made a point of attending all events to which her students and their families invited her, including holidays, weddings, and baptisms. She dressed up for spirit days, such as School Color Day, Pajama Day, and Dress for Success Day. As noted in the research, these behaviors help a teacher form genuine bonds with students, where students feel that their teacher cares for them

and is interested in their success (Bondy et al., 2007; Irizarry, 2007; Sampson & Garrison-Wade, 2010).

### **Relationships extend to the community**

Culturally responsive teachers should extend their classroom-family partnerships into the community (Cooper, 2002; Hermes, 2005; Howard, 2010; Ware, 2002). In doing so, teachers develop an understanding of the context of the school and neighboring community, including the ways that poverty and location affect the degree to which resources are available. Neither Ms. Rigsbee nor Ms. Grace discussed any collaboration within the neighborhood.

### **School and Classroom Culture**

As stated by Powell (2011), the climate of a teacher's classroom often mirrors that of the school. Although both teachers indicated that their principals generally did not limit or dictate the ways in which they taught, Ms. Rigsbee's and Ms. Grace's classrooms did indeed reflect the perceived school climate. The principal at Oceanside Elementary, where Ms. Grace taught, was new to the school during the observation period. A Black woman, she had begun discussing culture differences with teachers and suggested ways for teachers to respond to their students in a culturally appropriate way. When Ms. Grace sent one particular student to the office repeatedly, the principal came back to the classroom with the student and observed him for about an hour, after which she met with Ms. Grace to discuss strategies she might try to help him improve his behavior (observation 3). These actions showed that Ms. Grace's principal was building an atmosphere where she expected thoughtful teaching where teachers took into account many aspects of students' lives, including culture (Cooper, 2002). Additionally, the manner in which the principal observed a student's behavior before strategizing with

Ms. Grace showed that she wanted her teachers to take responsibility for finding solutions to instructional dilemmas, reflectively considering the ways in which they could implement strategies that may positively impact student behavior. This approach to calm and reflective administrative leadership complements the classroom leadership in place in Ms. Grace's classroom.

Similarly mirroring the school environment, Ms. Grace's classroom contained little physical evidence of culture. On the hallway walls hung motivational posters related to testing and state standards, and student work decorated the bulletin boards outside of each classroom doorway. Posters hung on Ms. Grace's classroom walls were typically teacher-created and centered on academics. As such, very few contained pictures of children or demonstrated anything related to students' lives. Ms. Grace's classroom, as every other classroom at Oceanside Elementary, was fully equipped with pull-down maps, sets of books for reading groups, and a classroom library that was accessible to students. Though Ms. Grace stated that she had to be persistent when asking for supplies, it appeared that she had what she needed to teach as she saw fit.

The atmosphere at Ms. Rigsbee's Turner Elementary can be described as in transition. As described in Chapter 5, the administration changed in late November when the principal took a district position and the assistant principal took over the principalship. Additional staffing changes moved faculty across grade levels mid-year. The high number of extra-curricular activities, such as dances, taking place during the school day also served to disrupt any attempted instructional continuity. Because teachers were not informed of schedule changes often until the last minute, Ms. Rigsbee noted that it was difficult to plan appropriately. This may have contributed to

the sometimes hurried pace of instruction, as well as the frequent interruptions from the other fifth grade teachers as they tried to adjust their schedules for switching students from one subject to the next.

Beyond the posters of famous African Americans hung on the walls near the school's entrance and the dance fundraisers offered to students during the school day, there was little evidence that Turner Elementary incorporated students' culture into the school culture. Although student artwork was present in the hallways at Turner Elementary, classroom libraries and world maps were virtually nonexistent. There was no evidence that students' culture was marginalized by other cultures; instead, culture seemed to be altogether absent from Turner Elementary. Ms. Rigsbee's classroom, decorated with teacher-made and academically-focused posters, did not have world maps or a classroom library that was accessible to the students. However, as described in Chapter 5, she made a concerted effort to incorporate her students' culture into her instruction. Through the use of chants, music, technology, and students' other interests, Ms. Rigsbee showed students that what they had to offer was valuable and that she believed in them (Irizarry, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Powell, 2011; Ware, 2006).

Both teachers took on several responsibilities in their schools in addition to those required of a classroom teacher, including faculty union representative, grade level chair or School Advisory Committee. In addition, Ms. Rigsbee also served as faculty coordinator of the school's after-care program. In taking on these roles, both Ms. Rigsbee and Ms. Grace had the opportunity to learn first-hand about matters that affected their schools and their students. Gehrke (2005) explained that knowledge



about these types of administrative issues enables teachers to more effectively support their students.

Though not included in Powell and Rightmyer's framework, an additional component of classroom culture is classroom management. The literature related to culturally responsive classroom management suggests that teachers create a classroom environment that encourages student learning, establish and uphold expectations for behavior, communicate with students in culturally congruent ways, act in a caring manner, and collaborate with families to meet their student's needs (Bondy et al., 2007; Cooper, 2002; Toliver, 1993; Ware, 2006; Weinstein et al., 2003). In addition, a business-like atmosphere should prevail, where learning is the priority (Brown, 2004). To varying degrees, both Ms. Grace and Ms. Rigsbee employed these approaches. Both teachers had clear and explicit expectations for students' behavior (Bondy et al., 2007; Irvine, 2003; Patrick et al., 2003; Ware, 2002) and students in both classrooms were given fair consequences if they behaved inappropriately (Bergeron, 2008; Bondy et al., 2007; Brown, 2004; Patrick et al., 2003; Ware, 2006). Examples of consequences included a phone call or email to a parent or asking a student to take a moment to gather him- or herself before rejoining the class. Without fail, Ms. Grace addressed students' misbehavior and was thus able to create a more consistently respectful and supportive environment. As noted previously, Ms. Rigsbee was less consistent in addressing inappropriate student to student misbehavior and so misbehavior, especially talking, walking around the room, and being disrespectful to classmates, occurred more frequently in her class. Her inconsistency in addressing

these behaviors contributes to the possibility that students viewed her classroom as an ambiguous rather than supportive environment (Patrick et al., 2003).

Similar to what was described by other research, Ms. Rigsbee did not spend a great deal of time disciplining students (Patrick et al., 2003; Toliver, 1993; Ware, 2002). Since procedures were established early in the year, Ms. Rigsbee focused on maintaining instructional momentum rather than reminding students how to behave. As explained by teachers in Brown's (2004) study, the goal in these classrooms is for students to learn. If their behavior suggested that students were not interested in learning, or acted in ways that prevented their classmates from learning, both Ms. Rigsbee and Ms. Grace told students that they would need to leave. In Ms. Rigsbee's case, her fifth graders typically corrected their behavior and remained in the classroom. Ms. Grace's younger students were sometimes sent to another classroom or to talk with the principal. In both classrooms, consequences were non-punitive. Even in the case of losing five or ten minutes of recess in Ms. Grace's first grade class, the focus was on instruction rather than punishment. Students were asked to explain their troublesome behavior, why it was problematic, and what they could do differently next time (observation 2.14.1).

### **Instruction**

Holding high expectations, incorporating students' frames of knowledge and experiences into lessons, explicitly teaching problem solving and critical thinking skills while increasing students' responsibility for their own learning, and providing opportunities for students to collaborate are all elements of culturally responsive instruction (Brown, 2004; Cantrell & Wheeler, 2011; Georges, 2009; Irvine, 2003;

Ladson-Billings, 1995; Ware, 2002). Both Ms. Rigsbee and Ms. Grace successfully incorporated many of these elements into their teaching.

### **Hold high and explicit expectations**

Both Ms. Rigsbee and Ms. Grace held high expectations for their own teaching as well as for students' academics and behavior. In both classrooms, teachers held themselves responsible for finding solutions to challenges that arose, whether a student struggled to read or just to sit still (Bondy et al., 2007; Brown, 2004; Hermes, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Patrick et al., 2003; Poplin et al., 2011; Ware, 2006). If a student continued to struggle, Ms. Rigsbee and Ms. Grace tried new strategies and sought advice from colleagues in order to find a strategy that would work. These teachers were clear and consistent and modeled for students what was expected so students would know just what to do and how to act (Bondy et al., 2007; Gehrke, 2005; Hermes, 2005; Knapp et al., 1990; Weinstein et al., 2003). Additionally, as they circulated to check students' progress, both teachers communicated the ways that students' work could improve, such as the addition of a capital letter or an adjustment to letter spacing. In doing so, these teachers reiterated for students in the moment what was expected and what they should look for in their work to be sure it was on target.

Ms. Rigsbee regularly stated the behavioral expectations for each new activity using the CHAMPs model. Ms. Grace, although not using CHAMPs, also communicated her expectations for a task prior to students getting started. Students in both classes were aware of how they should behave, and in both classrooms, consequences were fairly given for any infractions. It was clear that both teachers knew their students well. For this reason, the consequences were often specific to the student and the issue.

## **Incorporate students' frames of reference and experiences into instruction**

Effective teachers of students living in poverty build their instruction upon what students bring with them to the classroom. In this way, students' background experiences and expertise are used to determine and guide further instruction (Bennett, 2008; Chenoweth, 2009; Knapp et al., 1990; McKinney et al., 2008; Scott et al., 2009; Toliver, 1993). Though both Ms. Rigsbee and Ms. Grace used formative assessments of students' skills to guide their instruction, Ms. Rigsbee was more proficient at taking into consideration her students' backgrounds and experiences as she planned for and delivered instruction. Using a strategy described by Williamson et al. (2005), Ms. Rigsbee frequently used the familiar to teach students what was unfamiliar and consistently provided multiple exposures to content over several days of instruction. As discussed previously, she also included songs in her teaching in an attempt to help students who may not be successful with other forms of instruction.

Differentiation is another characteristic of culturally responsive instruction (Tileston & Darling, 2009). Ms. Rigsbee used principles of differentiation when she grouped the entire fifth grade class based on their reading achievement so she could best meet their needs. In day-to-day practice, however, her instruction from class to class varied little. Essentially, Ms. Rigsbee differentiated by grouping students based on a global assessment of reading achievement but did not make small group or individual adjustments. Therefore, differentiation wasn't a pervasive characteristic in Ms. Rigsbee's classroom. Conversely, Ms. Grace differentiated much of her reading instruction. Students were placed in reading groups based on their reading achievement and the books and teaching strategies she used with each group depended on students' needs. In addition, her assessments were generally flexible as she provided multiple

opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning, including oral, written, and pictorial assessments (Toliver, 1993).

### **Promote critical thinking while increasing students' responsibility for their own learning**

Students can be taught how to think critically when their teachers explicitly state and model their thinking processes, eventually expecting students to do the thinking on their own (Knapp et al., 1990; Poplin et al., 2011). This can be done by beginning a lesson with explicit teaching, modeling how a problem can be solved, and then moving into guided practice, independent practice, and review (Gay, 2000; Patrick et al., 2003; Poplin et al., 2011; Williamson et al., 2005). These techniques were common in Ms. Rigsbee's and Ms. Grace's classrooms. As discussed in Chapter 5, Ms. Rigsbee labeled her PowerPoint slides with a heading that led students through this process, letting them know when she would model, when they would work together as a class, when they would work with a partner, and when they would work independently.

Ms. Grace used a similar approach, though she did not provide guiding headings. Her system was to sit with students at the carpet, working through examples on the whiteboard and speaking aloud as she solved math problems or thought about vocabulary, asking students questions as she worked. Ms. Grace frequently helped students make connections between the words that they knew, helping them find similarities in spelling, pronunciation, and meaning. In either case, students were privy to the inner workings of their teacher's minds. They were able to listen as she worked, guiding students through her process of thinking and problem solving. However, although both teachers used a guided problem solving approach and modeled their problem solving thinking, neither consistently taught using a critical approach or asked

students questions that required critical thought. Therefore, the degree to which students were thinking critically in order to synthesize or analyze information was minimal.

### **Encourage students to work in groups**

Research suggests that students benefit socially and academically from cooperative learning (Georges, 2009; Irvine, 2003; Ware, 2002). Both Ms. Rigsbee and Ms. Grace encouraged students to collaborate with their classmates on a daily basis. In separate interviews, they emphasized the fact that partner or group work was often a more effective learning strategy than a teacher-led lesson because students could often explain things to each other in ways a teacher could not. Ms. Grace, in her effort to teach social skills, also expressed that allowing students to work together helped them learn how to collaborate to get work done in a timely and efficient manner, an idea affirmed by the literature (Brown, 2004; Georges, 2009; Irvine, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Ware, 2002). Indeed, one strength of Ms. Grace's teaching was the cultivation of a classroom environment where flexible student groups allowed students to exercise choice about where and with whom they wanted to work.

### **Curriculum**

Culturally responsive pedagogy literature suggests that the curricular decisions a teacher makes are as important as the manner in which she teaches. Even if a teacher has high expectations for student success, incorporates students' experiences into instruction, promotes critical thinking, and encourages group work, students may still struggle to identify with the curriculum. As described in Chapter 2, theorists and researchers suggest that in order to be most conducive to student learning, the curriculum must be relevant to students' experiences (Cantrell and Wheeler, 2011; Gay,

2000; Ladson-Billings, 2009). In addition, teachers should not rely solely on textbooks, worksheets, and other generic materials. Rather, teachers should consider their students' needs and build their own nontraditional classroom materials to include videos, books, and other resources that provide a cultural context closely related to students' lives (Irizarry, 2007; Souto-Manning, 2009; Toliver, 1993; Ware, 2006). Neither Ms. Grace nor Ms. Rigsbee was adept at building or enriching their curriculum in this manner.

In Ms. Rigsbee's classroom, students regularly read from the mass-produced textbook selected for use by the district. The readings in these books were typically 7-10 pages in length. Ms. Rigsbee and her students read them together aloud and often in unison in order to guarantee students' participation. They used this text to identify text features and used specific reading strategies as called for by the state standards. To supplement this text and to help her students build non-fiction reading skills, Ms. Rigsbee used worksheets, procured from an internet teacher-assistance website. The worksheets included brief passages of about 5 paragraphs, followed by short answer and multiple choice questions about the passage. Ms. Rigsbee used students' assessment scores, rather than their interests, to help her organize and plan future lessons. Important to note, however, is that Ms. Rigsbee considered teaching students test-taking strategies to be a necessary and relevant part of her instruction because not every student is a born test-taker and students had to know how to take tests in order to show mastery on them.

Ms. Grace also used her students' assessment results as a resource for meeting their needs. Her binders were filled with the breakdowns of students' assessments and

she used them to determine which skills would guide her lessons. However, reading groups and vocabulary lessons were based on basal readers; students read their own books only during free-reading time. Though worksheets were absent from her classroom, students worked out of workbooks that accompanied the social studies textbook. As she acknowledged, culture was not a consideration for her as she planned her lessons. Thus, like Ms. Rigsbee her curricular choices did not represent her students' cultural realities, lives or interests.

### **Empowerment, Transformation, and Emancipation**

Though empowerment, transformation, and emancipation are the three end goals of culturally responsive pedagogy, these were the characteristics of culturally responsive pedagogy least seen in Ms. Rigsbee's and Ms. Grace's classrooms. In both classrooms, empowerment was the most observed goal of the three. According to Gay (2000), "empowerment translates into academic competence, personal confidence, courage, and the will to act" (p. 32). Ms. Grace made sure that all students had the scaffolding they needed to become able readers, as well as the confidence needed to share one's work in front of the class or to remind classmates when rules were not being followed. Ms. Rigsbee made a committed attempt to help students gain academic competence through her focused lessons that connected course content to students' lives. However, as mentioned, students read all of their stories from the basal reader or from non-fiction test practice worksheets. Ms. Rigsbee used her lessons to connect those texts to students, but students rarely interacted with the content or made community connections (Gay, 2000). Both teachers expressed a desire to help students become skilled and confident learners, traits that Gay (2000) deems necessary for empowerment, but in practice, neither Ms. Rigsbee nor Ms. Grace were observed



implementing lessons that inspired students to take action in their schools or communities. The goal of empowerment and the ways that it may manifest in classroom instruction will be further discussed later in this chapter.

Transformation and emancipation, the remaining end goals of CRP, were not observed in Ms. Rigsbee's or Ms. Grace's classroom. These goals are related to teaching students to be critical thinkers who reflect upon inequities faced by themselves and others and then take a stand for change, disrupting the power balances that reinforce the status quo (Gay, 2000; Howard, 2010; Sampson & Garrison-Wade, 2010; Ware, 2002). In order to teach these skills, teachers must model how to be a critical consumer of classroom materials, providing students with texts that portray multiple perspectives and challenging stereotypes. Though both teachers held students responsible for their actions and Ms. Rigsbee did point out that students' attitudes had an effect on the way they were perceived by others, including future employers, neither was observed promoting the types of critical thinking that could be considered transformative or emancipating. One might question whether transformation and emancipation are realistic goals within elementary classrooms but examples in extant literature show that this can be accomplished even with young children (Cowhey, 2006; Peterson, 2003; Toliver, 1993).

### **Cross-Case Conclusions**

In sum, there were many similarities between the teaching styles of Ms. Grace and Ms. Rigsbee. Interestingly, both set nearly the same goals for their teaching: to develop positive and caring relationships with their students and to help their students experience academic success. Both teachers set clear and high expectations for learning, explicitly modeled their thinking processes and gradually increased students'

responsibility for their own learning, used caring language when talking with students, and got to know students and their families in order to learn how to best meet their needs. Also similar is that both Ms. Grace and Ms. Rigsbee's instruction demonstrated minimal evidence related to sociopolitical consciousness or a focus on helping students become more critical consumers of their education.

There were also some significant differences between Ms. Grace and Ms. Rigsbee. In general, Ms. Grace's classroom was a more flexible environment. She used flexible grouping to partner students, students were sometimes able to sit where they liked when working together, and Ms. Grace provided multiple ways for students to show what they learned. In contrast, Ms. Rigsbee more frequently incorporated students' culture in her daily routines through the use of chants, music and technology, her communication style, providing students with exposure to content, and through the development of a more personal relationship with students' families. A final difference between these teachers is the aforementioned consistency that Ms. Grace showed in handling students' misbehavior which is in contrast to Ms. Rigsbee's lack of consistency in this area. A discussion of the implications of these similarities and differences with regard to teacher educators, administrators, and researchers follows.

### **Implications**

Based on analysis of the findings and related bodies of research, this study suggests several implications for teacher educators, for educational leaders working in high poverty schools or with populations that are predominantly children of color, and for researchers.

## **For Teacher Educators and Educational Leaders**

As recommended by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, university teacher education programs and school districts should work in partnership to prepare new teachers for the profession (Blue Ribbon Panel, 2010). Working in partnership means that teacher educators and school leaders work together to develop criteria for teacher preparation coursework, cooperating teacher mentorships, and professional development that widens the knowledge base of preservice, novice, and veteran teachers alike in order to improve students' educational experiences. Especially in urban schools, the development of a cohesive faculty is imperative. Therefore, preservice teacher education cannot be considered a separate entity from staff development. Because of this need for more collaboration between teacher educators and school leaders, implications for these areas are presented together.

As introduced in Chapter 1, urban teacher residency programs are a comparatively new approach to preparing teachers specifically for urban, high poverty, and high minority school settings. To date, little literature addresses the impact of such programs. This study is a beginning step in addressing this gap by examining the practices and perspectives of three teachers who completed one such program five years ago (Darling-Hammond, 2008). As described previously, this particular urban teacher residency program included five courses over a three-semester period and a year-long mentored apprenticeship. One online course was held during the summer prior to the residency, and four face-to-face classes were held on site at one of the residency schools one day each week during the residency year. Student teaching experiences in general and cooperating teachers specifically have a "profound influence" (Darling-Hammond & Hammerness, 2005, p. 409) on preservice teachers

(Nilssen, 2010). In this program, the strength of the veteran teacher-mentors assumed major importance because most residents were with their assigned mentor full time, four days each week for a full school year.

In the case of this study, two of the three participating teachers developed a core set of practices that are culturally responsive. However, these two teachers, Ms. Grace and Ms. Rigsbee, did not incorporate other key elements related to curriculum or the three end goals of CRP: empowerment, transformation, and emancipation. While many attributes of culturally responsive pedagogy pervade their classrooms, the components of culturally responsive pedagogy related to the development of students' capacity for critical thought is not apparent. Two issues that may lead to this outcome are the context of the schools in which they taught, discussed in the previous section, and the residency program itself.

Because mentors were so fundamental in the preparation of the teacher residents, it is important to understand their role. Mentors were selected based on a combination of input from the principal, teaching experience and requisite professional development experience, as well as the desire to commit to a full year of mentoring. Further professional development related to coaching was provided once a teacher was selected to be a mentor. Although most of the mentorships lasted for the entire year, Ms. Grace was assigned a second mentor because her first mentor left the profession after the first month of school. None of the teachers who participated in this study mentioned their mentors as having a profound effect on their teaching practice. Instead, both Ms. Grace and Ms. Rigsbee mentioned that it was their childhood teachers who gave them the picture of what they wanted their own teaching to look like. Neither Ms.

Grace or Ms. Rigsbee described their mentor's practice as being culturally responsive and neither teacher demonstrated actions designed to transform the curriculum in their own classrooms into one that was more empowering and, perhaps, more meaningful for students.

Thus, the study suggests that teacher educators and school administrators may need to focus more on this aspect of CRP and be more selective in recruiting mentors who embody culturally responsive practice to work with preservice teachers, especially in high minority and high poverty settings. Not all veteran teachers who are willing to serve as cooperating teachers may be the most effective mentors. Thus, it is up to school administrators and teacher educators to determine which teachers would be most effective at mentoring preservice teachers in order to help them develop reflective and culturally responsive practices (Haberman & Post, 1998). Mentor selection should be a collaborative process, where clear selection criteria are developed by teacher educators in partnership with the school leaders.

Another possibility for improving mentorships is that mentors be provided with professional development focused on CRP so they have the opportunity to learn or relearn some of what their preservice teachers are learning about this type of teaching. The professional development opportunities provided to the mentors in this particular residency program emphasized coaching; although valuable, coaching skills alone cannot assist a teacher with developing, cultivating, and modeling culturally responsive practice. Professional development for mentor teachers should promote habits of reflection so mentors can become more reflective about their own practice, leading them to develop reflection in their preservice teachers. Having effective mentors model

these skills for new teachers may help to impart those practices and states of mind to novices (Anderson, 2007; Haberman & Post, 1998; Nilssen, 2010).

However, mentorships are not enough. Coursework focused on understanding one's identity and assumptions about culture are also necessary for preservice teachers to fully grasp the importance of culture in the classroom as it pertains to teaching and learning (Darling-Hammond & Hammerness, 2005; Howard, 2010; Irvine, 2003).

Darling-Hammond and Hammerness (2005) suggest that the content of learning experiences in preservice teacher education courses had "strong effects on teachers' using those practices in their classrooms" (p. 396). Thus, it is important for teacher educators to provide opportunities for preservice teachers to try a variety of culturally responsive practices and then discuss in class the outcomes of those attempts. In the case of this residency, the coursework provided to the teacher residents incorporated culturally responsive pedagogy into the various content areas but there was no specific focus on identity or culture and residents did not engage in a reflective analysis of their belief systems. In other words, the teachers were not taught explicitly or over an extended period about CRP and what it means or how to take on a culturally responsive stance. Thus, it is not surprising that the teachers who participated in this study did not talk openly about race or culture. All three teachers referred to race and culture in general terms, but none used race words such as "Black" or "White" to refer to themselves or to their students or talked candidly about issues surrounding race and culture. In order to help novice teachers become more comfortable talking about issues of race and culture, teacher educators need to model these desired behaviors by reflecting upon their own identities (Howard, 2010). In creating teacher preparation

programs, teacher educators should consider the balance of time and content. By limiting the course load to five courses, it is possible that the program was limited in its ability to support the development of strong professional knowledge related to culturally responsive teaching.

The third teacher who volunteered to participate in this study, Ms. Winslow, completed the same teacher residency program as Ms. Grace and Ms. Rigsbee and was introduced to CRP in the same manner. However, observations in her classroom did not demonstrate that she was able to maintain a positive and productive learning environment. Because the analyzed data documented a classroom with limited task focus and engagement, her case was not presented in this document. Observation data collected during Ms. Winslow's residency year showed no evidence that she struggled with maintaining order or providing task-driven instruction (Tricarico, 2007), but without observations from teaching assignments after completing the residency, it is difficult to determine whether Ms. Winslow's struggles to maintain a positive classroom environment stemmed from her present teaching assignment or personal challenges, or if these behaviors were typical of her practice. However, the role of context is relevant and must be considered. In today's high stakes world, urban schools such as Turner Elementary may experience more than typical changes in leadership and grade level assignments, curriculum mandates, and state or district intervention. The case of Ms. Winslow suggests that the turmoil inherent to working in this context may have an impact on teachers and their pedagogy.

As mentioned previously in this chapter, while the literature cites a few examples of teachers who do engage their students in critical and empowering instruction and

curricular approaches (Hermes, 2005; Irizarry, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Sampson & Garrison-Wade, 2010), most teachers do not. Administrators, professional developers, and teacher leaders in high poverty and high minority schools could benefit from an examination of the culture at their schools in order to consider ways that their schools could encourage practices that would serve to meet those goals of CRP.

As begun by Ms. Grace's principal at Oceanside, administrators and professional developers may want to engage faculty in a discussion of the ways that culture affects how both teachers and students act and learn, including an examination of teachers' own cultures and assumptions (Bartolome, 1994; Bondy & Ross, 2008; Howard, 2010; Irvine, 2002). Irvine stated that "Cultural self-awareness-- the recognition and enhancement of the cultural self-- must become part of the professional development agenda of preservice and inservice teachers if issues of tolerance and sensitivity toward others are to be realized" (p.6). Though Ms. Grace was not convinced of the legitimacy of her principal's claims that Black families may communicate in ways that are different from White families, her statements showed that she was considering the ideas that were presented. By bringing up the issue at a faculty meeting, Ms. Grace's principal planted a seed and although Ms. Grace and other teachers at Oceanside may not change their practices immediately, small changes may become a larger, school wide movement. Resources such as *Can We Talk about Race? And Other Conversations in an Era of School Resegregation* (Tatum, 2008) or *Courageous Conversations About Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools* (Singleton & Linton, 2005) may help school leaders facilitate these conversations with faculty and staff.



In the interest of cultivating habits of reflection, school leaders might consider implementing teacher inquiry as an option for teacher professional development (Caro-Bruce & Klehr, 2007). Reflective conversations about culture and learning paired with inquiry would help teachers become more aware of their own teaching while challenging them to solve instructional dilemmas with intention (Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2009; Irvine, 2003; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). This could be done with the specific goal of addressing and increasing culturally responsive teaching behaviors while developing a learning community of teachers and students alike. Intentional examination of one's teaching practice is likely to lead teachers to a more thorough understanding of how to best meet their students' academic and emotional needs. In addition, sharing one's findings with the rest of the school faculty may lead teachers to consider practices they had not thought of before as they see their peers trying new things in their classrooms.

Few models exist that detail how to accomplish this type of teaching in elementary classrooms, especially those under intense testing pressures. Peterson's (2003) essay about the ways that he incorporates a more critical approach could serve as a starting point to help teachers think more broadly about the ways they can expand their students' thinking. Although some readers may doubt the practicality of the curriculum and instructional practices that Mary Cowhey uses with her primary-aged students, a book such as her *Black Ants and Buddhists* (2006) showcases the ways that she empowers her young students to challenge the stereotypes, single perspectives, and misinformation found in texts and reading materials found on any classroom shelf. Gloria Ladson-Billings' (2009) *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children* is another example of a text that illustrates what culturally responsive

teaching looks like in practice. Administrators, teacher leaders, professional developers might consider using a text such as these as a selection for a learning community in order to help teachers consider ways to incorporate a more critical and empowering pedagogy. Similarly, teacher educators could use those or similar texts with preservice teachers to parallel what veteran teachers are studying in their learning communities. In this way, veteran and preservice teachers will have common content to discuss together thereby increasing their opportunities to learn from each other.

Finally, situations like Ms. Winslow's are not unique. Teachers sometimes struggle with instructional or behavioral challenges and there are times when their pedagogy is not reflective of effective teaching practices. In these cases, it is up to a school's administrators and other educational leaders to help a struggling teacher overcome her challenges in order to meet the needs of the students. One possibility for addressing this issue is through the use of non-evaluative peer coaching, where teachers work together to improve their practice (Slater & Simmons, 2001; Swafford, 1998). Swafford (1998) discusses several types of coaching, the difference being the goal of the collaboration, which may be used to help a teacher improve her practice in order to better meet her students' needs. Peer coaching, however, is not a quick fix; teachers may be hesitant to open their classroom doors to their fellow teachers. Thus, administrators should also be prepared to address and overcome issues of reluctance, perhaps through the use of school-wide coaching teams (Slate & Simmons, 2001) so struggling teachers do not feel singled out for mentoring.

### **For Researchers**

Though a small sample, this study identified several aspects of culturally responsive pedagogy that two of the three teachers incorporated into their practice. As

discussed, the most prevalent theme in terms of what motivated the teachers was their desire to create positive and caring relationships with their students while helping them succeed academically. The teachers shared a disposition for creating a caring classroom climate that incorporated a variety of instructional approaches.

As corroborated by existing literature, Ms. Rigsbee's and Ms. Grace's practice incorporated highly significant elements of CRP. Both teachers exemplify many of the characteristics of a *warm demander*, a term used to describe teachers who use culturally responsive practices and are successful working with minority students (Bondy et al., 2007; Ware, 2006). Their relentless work to help students meet and surpass high expectations is noteworthy because, as Gay (2000) states, "Teacher expectations matter" (p. 53). Ms. Rigsbee and Ms. Grace showed their students that their contributions to class were valued. Paired with positive attitudes towards students, these behaviors helped students maintain intellectual engagement in classroom activities (Gay, 2000).

Additionally, the way that Ms. Grace and Ms. Rigsbee built and nurtured their caring classrooms is noteworthy in terms of student achievement because when teacher-student relationships are supportive and caring, the classroom climate is more conducive to learning (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Similarly, "students who perceive teachers as creating a caring, well-structured learning environment in which expectations are high, clear, and fair are more likely to report engagement in school" as well as have better attendance rates and higher test scores (Klem & Connell, 2004, p. 270). Thus, the environments that Ms. Grace and Ms. Rigsbee sought to provide their students were likely to positively affect students' satisfaction with school and their

overall achievement, which is no small feat (Baker, 1999; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Klem & Connell, 2004).

Absent in both classrooms, though, were curricular practices that encouraged students to question and challenge their course materials, provided students with multiple viewpoints on a course topics, or opened a dialogue that promoted transformation or empowerment. It would be beneficial to examine more closely those aspects of CRP in an effort to understand why these parts of a culturally responsive stance are not visible. What holds teachers back from achieving the goals of CRP? In the case of this study, several factors came to light. As discussed previously, CRP was not stressed during the residency program that these teachers completed. Therefore, the components of CRP that were areas of strength for these teachers are such because they believed them to be elements of effective teaching, not because they are elements of CRP.

It is likely that a further examination will show that issues such as the culture of high stakes testing, district or state interventions, the pervasive use of pacing guides that in some cases time instruction down to the minute, and the mandates related to curricular materials will arise as detrimental to a widespread implementation of culturally responsive teaching. Each of these factors affects the freedom that a teacher has to teach in the manner she thinks best, as well as the amount of pressure placed on teachers and students to teach and learn in specified ways. Specifically in Florida, students' standardized test scores determine whether students in some grade levels will be retained, whether teachers receive salary bonuses, and the school's grade, which ultimately can impact the professional careers of both administrators and teachers.

For example, Ms. Rigsbee's school, Turner Elementary, is a turn-around school which means that there is ongoing district and state intervention. There is considerable pressure to follow mandated instructional schedules. At the same time, resources are an issue. As mentioned, Ms. Rigsbee's classroom was not equipped with basic teaching supplies, such as maps. Though she sought out and used many free resources to meet her students' needs, a major concern for her was trying to bring her students up from their below-grade-level reading achievement so they could demonstrate mastery on the state standardized test. For her, the desire to get her students thinking critically may have conflicted with the focus on getting students to pass the state reading test. This begs the question: What is the role of the state? Is a push for all students to pass a grade level test getting in the way of students learning how to think beyond basic levels? Is it possible for a teacher to promote the end goals of CRP while helping students who are 3 years behind in terms of their reading level? Can we expect teachers to do all of this when they do not have all the supplies they need to do so?

It is clear that both Ms. Grace and Ms. Rigsbee are creative, determined, and committed to their jobs as educators, yet they do not demonstrate instruction that empowers, transforms, or emancipates their students academically or politically. In Ms. Rigsbee's case, a prime example is that of the letter that she suggested students write to the principal in order to protest the consistently late lunch start time. When students complained that they were delayed for lunch, again, she jokingly suggested that they write the principal a letter. Students did not take her seriously and the letters were not written. This example illustrates a missed opportunity that had the potential to be empowering and transformative for students, as they would have been practicing

academic writing skills in order to affect change in their daily lives. However, it is possible that the principal, faced with the pressures of running a turn-around school, would not have responded favorably to the students' comments even if they had been written. This leads to more questions that can be addressed in further research. What role does school leadership have in promoting a culture that expects and nurtures this type of teaching? What institutional structures are in place that limit or prohibit teachers' ability to teach students in these ways? Is the structure of schools designed to place these limits on teachers' freedoms to teach against the grain? Are there layers of disincentives at school, community, and state levels that are designed to keep teachers from teaching students to think critically and take action? Is this intentional or a matter of chance?

Further, curricular materials provided by most school districts are often problematic in terms of students' cultures. Over the past few years, this highly politicized issue has come to light in several states as districts select textbooks and course materials. For example, in early 2012, Tucson, Arizona abolished the district's Mexican American Studies program, removing from classrooms books related to Mexican American contributions that had been used previously (Bigelow, 2012; Biggers, 2012). This type of curricular controversy, downplaying or misrepresenting the contributions of minority groups and exaggerating the contributions of Whites, further challenges the potential for support and implementation of culturally responsive pedagogy. Again, what role does the state have in determining the direction that education in general and teachers specifically have in what and how students are taught?

In some instances, it may appear that culturally responsive practices are becoming less rather than more visible. In this age of school reform efforts that tend to represent a deficit orientation, focusing on students' learning deficiencies rather than building on the strengths of schools, teachers, and students, we need to critically examine reform efforts designed to address the achievement gap that lack a focus on culture and critical consciousness. Research in this vein will shed light on whether efforts that ignore or minimize culture undermine the capacity to solve the problem they were designed to address. Although it may be difficult to find widespread school movements that incorporate tenets of CRP, we need to study the impact on achievement when culture and critical consciousness are a stronger part of the school or classroom curriculum (Cammarota, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 1997).

In addition, it is important to examine the types of practices that comprise culturally responsive pedagogy. Many of these practices have been described, such as challenging one's own beliefs as the teacher; building relationships with students and families; creating a classroom community; using learner and culture centered strategies for instruction, assessment, and choosing the curriculum; and striving to make the learning experience one that is empowering, emancipatory, and transformative. A question that comes to mind when examining these elements is the degree to which each is an essential component of culturally responsive pedagogy. In other words, can a teacher be one who is culturally responsive if she practices some or most, but not all, of the recommended practices? Which practices are more important than others? For example, Ms. Grace, although not referencing students' culture in her instruction or teaching students how to take action, was dedicated to making sure that every student

was able to read on or above grade level by the end of the year. Her effort to empower students through literacy is an important first step in becoming a truly culturally responsive teacher. Is this enough?

Becoming stronger academically is not the same as becoming empowered. Yet we might wonder, given the challenges inherent to the first years of teaching, whether novice teachers can take up the challenge of truly empowering instruction. With all that preservice and novice teachers are trying to learn, should empowering pedagogy be a goal for teacher education programs to pursue? Or instead, is this a more likely goal to achieve with practicing teachers through professional development or wider school reform? If we do not expect preservice teachers to graduate their teacher preparation program with the skills to take on a full culturally responsive stance, what should we teach them and what should our expectations be in regard to CRP? Conversely, if CRP is a mindset, should teacher educators be working to help preservice teachers develop that mindset early on in the program, so that conflicting behaviors and attitudes do not have time to become habits? Lastly, if teacher educators and school leaders embark on collaborative efforts related to preservice teacher and staff development as recommended by the Blue Ribbon Panel (2010), what is the potential impact on school reform? Will empowerment and transformation within these structures lead to more empowering and transformational classrooms for teachers and students? Each of these questions present opportunities for future research.

Finally, the use of the CRIOP itself presents opportunities for future research. This protocol is one of few observation protocols that takes students' culture and culturally responsive pedagogy methods into account. As such, it provides a significant



contribution to the field. During the course of this study, several challenges arose that were associated with the protocol, most significantly the absence of two widely considered components of CRP: examining one's own perspectives as a teacher and classroom management. Though these elements may be found to a certain extent in other components of the protocol, their importance in the literature base related to culturally responsive pedagogy suggests that they should have a more visible position in the CRIOP.

### **Conclusions**

In sum, the three cases of this study show that, although an alternative certification urban teacher residency can support the growth of teachers with commitments and practices consistent with CRP, this type of program does not ensure that these dispositions will be visible in all program graduates. In addition, it raises questions related to the role of coursework and mentors in a teacher preparation program, what preservice and novice teachers should be able to do in terms of culturally responsive practice, the influence of school culture as well as state expectations on a teacher's practice, and the challenges of working under testing and accountability pressures.

APPENDIX A  
CHART OF EMPIRICAL STUDIES

Citation	Data Collection and Analysis	Results/Findings
<p>Achinstein, B., &amp; Aguirre, J. (2008). Cultural match or culturally suspect: How new teachers of color negotiate sociocultural challenges in the classroom. <i>Teachers College Record</i>, 110(8), 1505-1540.</p>	<p><u>Sample:</u> Fifteen new teachers of color working in urban high-minority secondary schools  <u>Purpose:</u> examine the induction experiences of new teachers of color in urban high-minority schools as they negotiate challenges about cultural identifications  <u>Research ?:</u> How, if at all, do new teachers of color experience socio-cultural challenges from students? If they do experience such challenges, how do the teachers respond to them in practice?  <u>Data:</u> teacher interviews, classroom observations, and focus groups, over 3 years  <u>Analysis:</u> coded the data on three levels: preliminary coding of socio-cultural challenges, pattern coding of responses to challenges, and Grace-case analysis</p>	<p>Students questioned language, skin color, class, gender, and origin, as well as accused teachers of intercultural racism.</p> <p>Teachers cope with these challenges in the following ways: (1) reflecting on and framing the challenges in ways that went beyond control or management responses; and (2) taking up the challenges as teachable moments and opportunities to describe their experiences and understandings of culture, to strengthen relationships with students, to broaden students' conceptions, and to connect to content learning.</p> <p>Helping to problematize culture and what is expected with students helps students to learn how to navigate dominant culture.</p>
<p>Castro, A.J., Kelly, J., &amp; Shih, M. (2010). Resilience strategies for new teachers in high-needs areas. <i>Teaching and Teacher Education</i>, 26(), 622-629.</p>	<p><u>Sample:</u> 15 first-year elementary and secondary teachers in various high-needs areas  <u>Purpose:</u> to report on a qualitative study of fifteen beginning teachers who taught in high-needs areas and who practiced resilience strategies  <u>Research ?:</u> What strategies do new teachers employ in response to adverse situations? What resources do beginning teachers rely on to overcome challenges and obstacles to teaching?  <u>Data:</u> interview  <u>Analysis:</u> qualitative, constant-comparative method</p>	<p>Urban and rural teachers were challenged by bureaucracy such as paperwork, grading, meetings, non-instructional activities, curriculum delivery, parent communication, classroom management. Special ed. teachers felt isolated and had trouble negotiating relationships with colleagues and parents.</p> <p>Resilience strategies included help-seeking, problem-solving, managing difficult relationships, and seeking rejuvenation/renewal  2 main findings:  1- fundamental role of political and social organization of the school in the experience of beginning teachers  2- resilience strategies, such as advocating for resources, seeking allies and buffers, and forming teacher peer groups, create new resources but also require energy from beginning teachers</p>

Citation	Data Collection and Analysis	Results/Findings
<p>Conaway, B.J., Browning, L.J., &amp; Purdum-Cassidy, B. (2007). Teacher candidates' changing perceptions of urban schools: results of a 4-year study. <i>Action in Teacher Education</i>, 29(1), 20-31.</p>	<p><u>Sample</u>: 218 teacher candidates, 114 interns (same people, 3 years later)  <u>Purpose</u>: to investigate changes in teacher candidates' perceptions of teaching in urban schools as they completed a 4-year teacher education program  <u>Research ?</u>: would perceptions be different after participating in a freshmen-level one-semester field experience tutoring a first- or second-grade student in an urban school? How would perceptions of these teacher candidates change after a 1-year internship in an urban school at the end of the 4-year teacher education program?  <u>Data</u>: survey  <u>Analysis</u>: quantitative</p>	<p>Student teachers felt more comfortable in the school neighborhoods at the end of the internship experiences. After the internship, only 1% of students had concerns about academic achievement (down from 8% before tutoring and 25% after tutoring). 2% had concerns about cultural differences (down from 14% before the tutoring session)- "likely due to consistent interactions with urban students over time" (p. 26).</p> <p>Over time, participants developed more accurate understandings of the characteristics of those who live in urban communities. More than half (54%) of the interns in this study reported that teaching in an urban school was a way to make a positive contribution.</p>
<p>Cross, B.E. (2003). Learning or unlearning racism: Transferring teacher education curriculum to classroom practices. <i>Theory Into Practice</i>, 42(3), 203-209.</p>	<p><u>Sample</u>: 12 graduates of a teacher ed. program teaching in Milwaukee public schools  <u>Purpose</u>: to describe the reflections of teachers graduating from a teacher ed. program about their readiness to teach in multiracial classrooms  <u>Research ?</u>: Did the teacher education curriculum lead to learning or unlearning racism?  <u>Data</u>: interviews  <u>Analysis</u>: constant comparative, inductive analysis</p>	<p>Teachers spoke of 4 things they learned about multicultural teaching: respect children's language, use diverse literature, recognize cultural diversity, acknowledge background knowledge and experiences. However, this knowledge did not transfer to any active behaviors or strategies related to implementing these ideas. These teachers learned about students' backgrounds in order to solve behavior or academic problems rather than to build relationships.</p>
<p>Freedman, S.H. &amp; Appleman, D. (2009). "In it for the long haul": How teacher education can contribute to teacher retention in high-poverty, urban schools. <i>Journal of Teacher Education</i>, 60(3), 323-337.</p>	<p><u>Sample</u>: 26 novice English teachers for five yrs who worked in urban schools after completing a program for urban teacher preparation  <u>Purpose</u>:  <u>Research ?</u>: "What factors help teachers stay in urban teaching?"  <u>Data</u>: collection of demographic data, survey of all participants; interviews with 8 teachers during year 4 of data collection; interviews with 5 teachers during year 5  <u>Analysis</u>: mixed methods</p>	<p>teachers stayed for these reasons: (a) a sense of mission, which was reinforced and developed by the teacher education program; (b) a disposition for hard work and persistence, which was reinforced and developed by the teacher education program; (c) substantive preparation that included both the practical and the academic and harmony between the two; (d) training in assuming the reflective stance of a teacher researcher through teacher inquiry; (e) the opportunity, given the high demand for teachers in high-poverty schools, to be able to change schools or districts yet still remain in their chosen profession; and (f) ongoing support from members of the cohort and other professional networks in the early years of teaching.</p>

Citation	Data Collection and Analysis	Results/Findings
<p>Olmedo, I.M. (1997). Challenging old assumptions: Preparing teachers for inner city schools. <i>Teaching and Teacher Education</i>, 13(3), 245-258.</p>	<p><u>Sample</u>: 16 White undergraduates in their first elem. ed. fieldwork course  <u>Purpose</u>: to explore in what ways the fieldwork and related readings affected their views about teaching in an inner city school with a culturally, ethnically, and racially diverse student population  <u>Research ?</u>:  <u>Data</u>: journal writings and essays in which preservice teachers describe their experiences and reactions to doing their fieldwork in urban schools  <u>Analysis</u>: qualitative content analysis</p>	<p>Themes from journals: discipline the unmotivated, pity the victim, be colorblind, the system is the problem; children want to learn, good teaching can happen even in inner city schools, there is diversity within diverse groups, being colorblind is not good pedagogy</p> <p>As a result of their interaction with students of color and diverse language backgrounds in the classroom, these prospective teachers became aware of the fact that issues related to multicultural education were not just "politically correct" doctrines to be discussed in the university, but were real concerns to be addressed by teachers in the schools, including decisions about the curriculum, the selection of materials, and classroom language.</p>
<p>Ross, D., Dodman, S., &amp; Vescio, V. (2010). The Impact of Teacher Preparation for High-Need Schools. In Stairs, A.J., &amp; Donnell, K. (Eds). <i>Research on Urban Teacher Learning: The Role of Contextual Factors Across the Professional Continuum</i>. Charlotte NC: Information Age Publishing.</p>	<p><u>Sample</u>: survey, completed by 94 interns; follow-up survey, completed by 34 HNIP students who graduated in 2005, 2006, and 2007 and 19 IP students who graduated in 2006 and 2007; interview, three graduates from the IP program and 3 graduates of the High Need IP  <u>Purpose</u>: to describe the impact of a one-semester internship experience designed to prepare preservice teachers for teaching in low-income, majority-minority elementary schools  <u>Research ?</u>: 1. Are there differences in reported self-efficacy, intent to teach in high need schools?  2. Are there differences in reported openness to teach in high need schools?  3. Are there differences in rates of acceptance of jobs in high need schools?  4. What are beginning teachers' perceptions of their preparedness for and the challenges of teaching in high need schools?  <u>Data</u>: surveys, interviews  <u>Analysis</u>: mixed methods</p>	<p>HNIP became slightly more inclined to report that they would teach in poverty contexts, whereas IP interns became less inclined.</p> <p>The data indicate that HNIP graduates were more likely than IP graduates to teach in settings with high poverty (47%--HNIP; 42%--IP) and moderate poverty settings. Conversely, IP graduates were more likely to teach in low poverty settings than HNIP graduates. Findings related to minority populations showed similar differences. HNIP graduates were most likely to teach in high minority schools and IP graduates were most likely to teach in low minority schools.</p> <p>Students who experience a coordinated internship in poverty schools are more likely to accept initial teaching positions in schools with high and moderate poverty levels than those who do not.</p>

Citation	Data Collection and Analysis	Results/Findings
<p>Ross, D., Halsell, S., Howie, S., &amp; Vescio, V. (2007). No excuses: Preparing novice teachers for poverty schools. <i>Teacher Education and Practice</i>, 20(4), 395-408.</p>	<p><u>Sample</u>: 10 prospective teachers, post-internship  <u>Purpose</u>: to examine the perspectives about teaching expressed by preservice teachers during an internship in low income, majority-minority classrooms  <u>Research ?</u>:  <u>Data</u>: one retrospective interview, and all postings to the web discussion and observation notes collected by university supervisors  <u>Analysis</u>: qualitative, inductive approach</p>	<p>Clear no-excuses philosophy: 3 interns- constant “problem-solving mode” not blaming, frustrations emerged when they were uncertain about what action to take or were not satisfied with the actions they had taken</p> <p>Emerging no-excuses philosophy: 5 interns- struggled more and each made more than one statement that blamed the home context, or expressed doubt that every child could be reached. Despite these statements, the interns never quit trying to solve the learning puzzles</p> <p>All ten of the interns stated that they would be willing to teach in high poverty schools, though five qualified their responses (need to teach elsewhere first; the school needs to have a supportive professional climate)</p>
<p>Watson, D. (2011). “Urban, but not too urban”: Unpacking teachers’ desires to teach urban students. <i>Journal of Teacher Education</i>, 62(1), 23-34.</p>	<p><u>Sample</u>: 16 graduates of an urban teacher education program  <u>Purpose</u>: to consider how and when these teachers use the words urban and suburban and what values, interpretations, and/or conflicts, if any, they attach to these terms and to teaching in these contexts.  <u>Research ?</u>: How do these teachers make sense of their training experiences in an urban-focused teacher preparation program, and what do they anticipate and think about their future jobs?  <u>Data</u>: interviews  <u>Analysis</u>: coding, constant comparative method- Corbin &amp; Strauss’s emic and etic codes</p>	<p>Many of the teachers in this study are content to teach in schools that have a degree of racial diversity, but minimal challenges with their perceptions of behaviors, values, and beliefs that are usually associated with schools with higher levels of poverty or greater diversity</p> <p>Teachers in this study avoided the use of race words, especially in talking about their own Whiteness- any mention showed White middle-class as “standard” or the norm. This means that a greater emphasis on reflection on identity needs to happen from the start of a teacher ed. program.</p>

Citation	Data Collection and Analysis	Results/Findings
<p>Wiggins, R.A., &amp; Follo, E.J. (1999). Development of knowledge, attitudes, and commitment to teach diverse student populations. <i>Journal of Teacher Education</i>, 50(2), 94-105.</p>	<p><u>Sample:</u> 123 undergraduate teacher ed. students comparably distributed in urban and suburban field placements  <u>Purpose:</u>  <u>Research ?:</u> 1) Which aspect of the elementary education program has the most impact on students' preparation to teach in classrooms with diverse student populations? 2) Why were some aspects of the program more or less effective than others? 3) What could be done to strengthen the program to better prepare students to teach in diverse classrooms?  <u>Data:</u> questionnaire  <u>Analysis:</u> quantitative</p>	<p>Quantitative results -increased experience in diverse settings increases students' ability to teach in these settings, but it does not affect their desire or commitment to do so.</p> <p>A placement in a diverse classroom setting does not guarantee that students will gain an understanding of or appreciation for the culture of the school or community. It also does not ensure that new teachers will be comfortable interacting with parents, students, or colleagues.</p>
<p>Wiggins, R.A., Follo, E.J., &amp; Eberly, M.B. (2007). The impact of a field immersion program on pre-service teachers' attitudes toward teaching in culturally diverse classrooms. <i>Teaching and Teacher Education</i>, 23(5), 653-663.</p>	<p><u>Sample:</u> 62 pre-service or substitute teachers. The 15 substitute teachers were a comparison group.  <u>Purpose:</u> to examine the multicultural readiness of elementary education students in a teacher education program using 3 dimensions: factors that foster, factors that constrain, and experiences that contribute to successfully teaching culturally diverse groups of students  <u>Research ?:</u>  <u>Data:</u> questionnaire  <u>Analysis:</u> quantitative</p>	<p>The more the students reported having experience, the more they perceived themselves as being able to provide a positive classroom experience in a culturally diverse setting  PRETEST results: The substitute teacher group felt the most confidence in teaching and dealing with parent interactions. Students who had 2 semesters of experience teaching in a diverse setting felt the least comfortable and the least desire to do so.  POSTTEST results: substitute and 2 semester groups felt more comfortable to teach in diverse environment than 1 semester interns, believed students had more assets, understood multicultural education better, were able to identify bias in teaching, curricula, and tests, and felt able to engage in discussion on adapting teaching to meet learning styles.</p>
<p>Worthy, J. (2005). 'It didn't have to be so hard': The first years of teaching in an urban school. <i>International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education</i>, 18(3), 379-398.</p>	<p><u>Sample:</u> 1 novice teacher working in an urban elementary school  <u>Purpose:</u> examine a teacher's perspectives of teaching, teacher preparation and support  <u>Research ?:</u>  <u>Data:</u> observations, field notes, interviews over 5 years  <u>Analysis:</u> qualitative. interpretive analysis</p>	<p>3 themes regarding teacher's thinking in his trajectory from a struggling first-year teacher to an effective, confident fifth-year teacher. They were: (a) Becoming a teacher versus a manager; (b) Challenges in finding support systems; (c) Criticisms of and suggestions for preservice teacher preparation and early induction experiences  Learning how to communicate and network with colleagues is a necessary, yet learned, skill</p>

APPENDIX B  
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

**Interview 1: Rapport Building**

1. In what community were you born? Where were you raised? In what ways was that community similar to or different from the community in which you are teaching?
  - a. Probe: Do you think those differences (or similarities) have affected your teaching? How?
2. At what point did you make the definite decision to enter teaching? What were the circumstances at that time?
3. Think back to the time when you were deciding whether to enter the teaching profession. What personal qualities did you feel would fit well with teaching as a line of work?
4. In what ways is teaching different from what you expected it to be like?
  - a. How is it better than expected?
  - b. How is it worse than expected?
5. Of the various things you do as a teacher, which do you consider to be the most important?
  - a. To what extent are you able to do teach in the ways that you think are best? Probe for examples.
6. What are the really important satisfactions which you receive in your work as a teacher?
  - a. Probe for examples.
  - b. Which of those satisfactions do you feel is the most important one?

- c. Are any of those that you listed one that you didn't expect to be there when you began teaching?
7. What are your major strengths as a teacher? What are the things you've done best as a teacher? Probe for examples.

### **Interview 2: Talking About Your Classroom**

1. The next several questions are going to be about your classroom and your teaching. Let's start with the way your classroom is arranged. How do you arrange the students' desks? Why? Does this arrangement change over time? Why or how?
2. Think of a lesson you taught recently where you finished feeling like you had done a really great job. What did you do? [Probe for as many specifics as the teacher can remember—e.g. how children were grouped, how any management issues were handled?...] How did you know it was a good lesson? How often does it all come together like this for you?
3. Think for a minute about your classroom. What are some examples of your expectations and how do you teach them? How do you know if they have been learned?
  - a. Are there any behavioral expectations that you emphasize? How?
  - b. Are there any academic expectations that you emphasize? How? How
4. Describe a time in your classroom when students were interacting with each other. [probe for specifics about lesson structure, nature of interaction, length of time in the lesson when students interacted} How often do you teach lessons like this in a typical week?



5. Describe a time in your classroom when students are interacting primarily with you [probe for specifics as above] How often do interactions like this happen in a typical week?
6. Tell me about a time when a student fell behind the rest of the class academically. What did you do?
7. Think about some activities or strategies that work really well for one/some of your students. What does that activity or strategy look like? How do you know it has worked?
8. Think about a time when you had an idea for a strategy that you wanted to use but you decided not to use it. Tell me about it.
  - a. Probe: Why didn't you end up using that strategy?
  - b. Probe: What are some other examples? Why?
9. What else should I know about your teaching to understand who you are as a teacher?

### **Interview 3: Talking About Learning to Teach**

1. Of the teachers you had as a student in your own K-12 schooling which do you consider to be outstanding teachers? Please describe one of your outstanding teachers. What made that teacher outstanding?
2. Of the teachers you know who are working today, are there any you would consider outstanding? Please describe that teacher.
3. What kind of knowledge do you think a teacher must possess to be able to do a good job of teaching? What else? What else? [Keep probing here until the teacher is out of ideas.] Then: You've said teachers must know a, b, c, d.... Of these things what would you say is most important and why?

4. What experiences do you think have been most influential in teaching you how to teach?
  - a. Probe: Let's talk about that a bit more. Does anything stand out to you that was an "aha" moment? Tell me about it.
  - b. Probe: Does anything stand out to you that has very directly impacted what you do or how you think as a teacher?
5. How can you tell whether you are doing the kind of job you want to do? (What do you watch as indicators of your effectiveness?)
6. In what ways, if any, do you think you have really improved as a teacher? What has helped you improve?
7. What are things you are still working on? What are some things you are doing to improve in these areas?
8. What are some of the occasions in which parents or other community members are involved in your class? For what reasons might you communicate directly with a parent?
9. Tell me about a time when you collaborated with a colleague.
  - a. Probe: What did you do?
  - b. Was that experience something you would like to repeat?
  - c. Or Probe: Would you like to work more closely with other teachers? How?

#### **Possible Questions for Informal Post-Observation Interviews**

1. During your lesson on "x," I noticed "y." Can you tell me about that?
2. I noticed that student --- did --. What caused you to react in the way that you did?
3. Why did you group students the way that you did?

4. How do you think your lesson about --- went? What do you think went well? What might you change for next time?
5. I noticed that you ---. Why did you make that decision?
6. Students took a test/quiz on ---today. What will you do with the results of that assessment?
7. I noticed that your homework policy is ---. Can you tell me about that?

Other possible questions would relate to specific instances that occurred during the class observation, or would probe more deeply into answers to the above questions.

## APPENDIX C CRIOP OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

### **Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol** Revised Edition (Used with Permission.)

Developed by: R. Powell, S. Cantrell, Y. Gallardo Carter, A. Cox,  
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Funded by Kentucky's Collaborative Center for Literacy Development and the U.S. Department of Education Office of English Language Acquisition

School (use assigned number): \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher (assigned number): \_\_\_\_\_

Observer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Observation: \_\_\_\_\_ # of Students in Classroom: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Subject: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Start Time of Observation: \_\_\_\_\_ End Time of Observation: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Time of Obs: \_\_\_\_\_

### **DIRECTIONS**

After the classroom observation, review the field notes for evidence of each “pillar” of Culturally Responsive Instruction. If an example of the following descriptors was observed, place the field notes line number on which that example is found. If a “non-example” of the descriptors was observed, place the line number on which that non-example is found. Then, make an overall/holistic judgment of the implementation of the concept, according to the following rating scale:

- 4** = The classroom was **CONSISTENTLY CHARACTERIZED** by culturally responsive features
- 3** = The classroom was **OFTEN CHARACTERIZED** by culturally responsive features
- 2** = The classroom was **OCCASIONALLY CHARACTERIZED** by culturally responsive features
- 1** = The classroom was **RARELY CHARACTERIZED** by culturally responsive features
- 0** = The classroom was **NEVER CHARACTERIZED** by culturally responsive features

Transfer the holistic scores from pp. 2 through 9 to the table below.

CRI Pillar	Holistic Score
I. CARE	
II. CLIM	
III. FAM	
IV. ASMT	

CRI Pillar	Holistic Score
V. CURR	
VI. INSTR	
VII. DISC	
VIII. PERSP	

**I. CARE CLASSROOM CARING AND TEACHER DISPOSITIONS**      **Holistic score 4    3    2    1    0**

<b>CRI Indicator</b>	<b>For example, in a responsive classroom:</b>	<b>For example, in a non-responsive classroom:</b>	<b>Field notes: time of example</b>	<b>Field notes: time of non-example</b>	<b>Field notes: No example (✓)</b>
1. The teacher demonstrates an ethic of care (e.g., equitable relationships, bonding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher differentiates management techniques (e.g., using a more direct interactive style with students who require it)</li> <li>• Teacher refers to students by name, uses personalized language with students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher uses the same management techniques and interactive style with all students when it is clear that they do not work for some</li> <li>• Teacher promotes negativity in the classroom, e.g., frequent criticisms, negative comments, sarcasm, etc.</li> </ul>			
2. The teacher communicates high expectations for all students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher provides scaffolds to assure student learning, recognizing students' varying background knowledge, readiness, language, preferences in learning, interests, etc.</li> <li>• Teacher advocates for all students</li> <li>• Teacher expects every student to participate actively and establishes structures (e.g., frequent checks for understanding) so that no student “falls through the cracks”</li> <li>• Teacher consistently demonstrates high expectations for all students' academic achievement through insisting that they complete assignments, by providing challenging work, etc. (not letting them “get by” even when their home life is difficult)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher has low expectations (consistently gives work that is not challenging)</li> <li>• Teacher doesn't balance student participation, allowing some students to remain unengaged</li> <li>• Teacher does not call on all students consistently</li> <li>• Teacher ignores some students; e.g., never asks them to respond to questions, allows them to sleep, places them in the “corners” of the room and does not bring them into the instructional conversation, etc.</li> <li>• Teacher tends to blame students and families for lack of student achievement and motivation</li> </ul>			
3. The teacher creates a learning atmosphere in which students and teachers feel respect toward one another	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher sets a tone for respectful classroom interaction</li> <li>• Teacher and students celebrate each other's achievements</li> <li>• Teacher and students work to understand each other's perspectives</li> <li>• Students do not hesitate to ask questions that further their learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher shows impatience and intolerance for student behavior</li> <li>• Teacher establishes a competitive environment whereby students try to out-perform one another</li> <li>• Students are not encouraged to assist their peers</li> <li>• Teacher dominates the decision-making and does</li> </ul>			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are encouraged to provide peer support and assistance</li> <li>• Students are encouraged to respond to one another positively</li> <li>• Students are invested in their and others' learning</li> <li>• Teacher consistently demonstrates high expectations for student social interactions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• not allow for student voice</li> <li>• Teacher does not encourage student questions or ridicules students when they ask for clarification</li> <li>• Teacher stays behind desk or across table from students; s/he does not get "on their level"</li> <li>• Teacher does not address negative comments of one student towards another</li> <li>• Teacher demonstrates low expectations for student social interactions</li> </ul>			
4. The teacher encourages student empathy and care toward one another	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher encourages students to respect a diversity of ideas, perspectives and experiences</li> <li>• Teacher encourages students to share their stories with one another and to show compassion for the struggles of their peers and their families</li> <li>• Biases and discrimination are addressed through the formal and informal curricula</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher suppresses diversity of opinion and primarily presents content, ideas and experiences that are representative of dominant groups</li> <li>• Teacher does not allow students to share personal stories; instruction remains de-personalized</li> <li>• Teacher allows students' open expression of prejudicial acts and statements toward others in the classroom community; biases and discrimination are not addressed</li> </ul>			

**II. CLIM**

**CLASSROOM CLIMATE/  
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

**Holistic score 4 3 2 1 0**

<b>CRI Indicator</b>	<b>For example, in a responsive classroom:</b>	<b>For example, in a non-responsive classroom:</b>	<b>Field notes: time of example</b>	<b>Field notes: time of non-example</b>	<b>Field notes: No example (✓)</b>
1. The physical surroundings of the classroom reflect an appreciation for diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are books, posters, and other artifacts reflecting students' and others' cultures</li> <li>• There are positive and affirming messages and images about students' racial identities</li> <li>• Classroom library and curriculum materials contain multicultural content that reflect the perspectives and experiences of diverse groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are no or few multicultural texts</li> <li>• Posters and displays do not show an acknowledgement and affirmation of students' cultural and racial identities</li> <li>• Classroom library and curriculum materials promote ethnocentric positions or ignore human diversity</li> </ul>			
2. Peer collaboration is the norm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are continuously viewed as resources for one another and assist one another in learning new concepts</li> <li>• The emphasis is on group achievement</li> <li>• There is a "family-like" environment in the classroom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no or very little peer collaboration</li> <li>• The emphasis is on individual achievement</li> </ul>			
3. The physical space supports collaborative work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The seating arrangement is flexible and supports student collaboration and equal participation between teachers and students</li> <li>• Chairs/desks are arranged to facilitate group work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The seating arrangement is designed for individual work, with the teacher being "center stage"</li> <li>• Classroom is arranged for quiet, solitary work only</li> <li>• Teacher discourages student interaction</li> </ul>			
4. Students work together productively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher implements practices that teach collaboration and respect, e.g., class meetings, modeling effective discussion, etc.</li> <li>• Students interact in respectful ways and know how to work together effectively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The students primarily work individually and are not expected to work collaboratively; and/or students have a difficult time collaborating</li> <li>• Lack of respectful interaction amongst students may be an issue</li> </ul>			

*NOTE: When scoring this component of the CRIOP, the XXX survey or teacher interview should be used in addition to field observations. Observations alone will not provide adequate information for scoring.*

<b>CRI Indicator</b>	<b>For example, in a responsive classroom:</b>	<b>For example, in a non-responsive classroom:</b>	<b>Field notes: time of example</b>	<b>Field notes: time of non-example</b>	<b>Field notes: No example (✓)</b>
1. The teacher establishes genuine partnerships (equitable relationships) with parents/caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents'/caregivers' ideas are solicited on how best to instruct the child</li> <li>• There is evidence of conversations with parents/caregivers where it's clear that they are viewed as partners in educating the student</li> <li>• There is evidence that the teacher has made the effort to get to know the "whole child" (his/her background, family culture, outside of school activities) by getting to know his/her parents/caregivers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents'/caregivers' suggestions are not incorporated in instruction</li> <li>• No effort made to establish relationships with caregivers</li> <li>• There is evidence of a "deficit perspective" in which families and caregivers are viewed as inferior and/or as having limited resources that can be leveraged for instruction</li> </ul>			
2. The teacher uses parent expertise to support student learning and welcomes parents/caregivers in the classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents/caregivers are invited into the classroom to share experiences and areas of expertise</li> <li>• Parents'/caregivers' "funds of knowledge" are utilized in the instructional program</li> <li>• Teacher makes reference to parents'/caregivers' careers, backgrounds, daily activities during instruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents/caregivers are never involved in instructional program</li> <li>• Parents'/caregivers' "funds of knowledge" are never utilized</li> <li>• There is no evidence of home/family connections in the classroom</li> </ul>			
3. The teacher reaches out to meet parents in positive, non-traditional ways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher conducts home visit conferences</li> <li>• Teacher plans parent/family activities at locations outside of school</li> <li>• Teacher meets parents in parking lot or other "neutral" locations</li> <li>• Teacher makes "good day" phone calls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication with parents/caregivers is through newsletters, where they are asked to respond passively (e.g., signing the newsletter, versus become actively involved in their child's learning)</li> <li>• Teacher conducts phone calls, conferences, personal notes to parents for negative reports only (e.g., discipline)</li> </ul>			



IV. ASMT ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

Holistic score 4 3 2 1 0

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (✓)
<p>1. Formative assessment practices are used that provide information throughout the lesson on specified learning targets; students are evaluated within the context of scaffolded instruction to determine their potential for learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher frequently assesses students' understanding throughout instruction</li> <li>Students may have "talking partners" for reviewing information during the lesson</li> <li>Students are able to voice their learning throughout the lesson</li> <li>Teacher assesses students' ability to learn with appropriate support</li> <li>Teacher may implement "trial lessons" that use texts or require students to solve problems at a higher level than students' performance might indicate</li> <li>Teacher uses observation to determine students' capabilities, listening carefully to students and learning from their attempts to make meaning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment occurs at the end of the lesson</li> <li>Assessment is not embedded throughout instruction</li> <li>Assessment is regarded as a set of evaluation "tools" that are used to determine what students have learned (e.g., exit slips, quizzes, etc. that are administered after instruction has occurred versus examining students' cognitive processing during instruction)</li> <li>Assessment is solely used to determine what students already know or can do</li> <li>Teacher does not evaluate student understanding while engaged in challenging work</li> </ul>			
<p>2. Students are able to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students with limited English proficiency and/or limited literacy can show their conceptual learning through visual or other forms of representation</li> <li>Multiple assessments are used so students have various ways to demonstrate competence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most or all tests are written and require reading/writing proficiency in English</li> <li>Teacher expects students to tell "the" answer</li> <li>Students have a narrow range of options for demonstrating competence (e.g., multiple choice tests, matching, etc.)</li> </ul>			
<p>3. Formative assessment practices are used that provide information on the learning of every student; no student</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher uses formative assessments that determine individual learning</li> <li>Teacher uses information from formative assessments to scaffold student learning and to clarify misconceptions of individual students when needed during instruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formative assessments are too general to capture individual student understanding (e.g. class discussions where only a few students participate)</li> <li>Teacher uses assessment data only to assign grades; data not used formatively to provide explicit instruction when</li> </ul>			

<p>“falls through the cracks”</p>		<p>needed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher relies on summative assessments to inform instruction</li> </ul>			
<p>4. Authentic assessments are used as the primary means for assessing written and oral language development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students’ written and oral language proficiency is assessed while they are actively engaged in reading, writing, speaking extended discourse</li> <li>• Students’ linguistic competence is evaluated while they are actually using language in purposeful ways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessments measure discrete, isolated skills and/or use short, disconnected passages</li> <li>• Students’ linguistic competence is evaluated solely through standardized measures</li> </ul>			
<p>5. Teacher sets high standards and students understand the criteria by which they are being assessed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher bases feedback on established high standards and provides students with specific information on how they can meet those standards</li> <li>• Criteria for particular assignments are displayed and teacher refers to criteria as students develop their products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher feedback is subjective and is not tied to targeted learning outcomes and standards</li> <li>• Students do not know the criteria upon which they are being assessed</li> <li>• Standards are not rigorous</li> <li>• Teacher responds to student work with short evaluative comments such as “good job” or “√”</li> </ul>			
<p>6. Students have opportunities for self-assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are involved in analyzing their work and in setting their own goals for learning</li> <li>• Students are involved in developing the criteria for their finished products (e.g., scoring rubrics)</li> <li>• Students are encouraged to evaluate their own products based upon a pre-determined set of criteria</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment is always teacher-controlled</li> </ul>			
<p>7. Assessment practices promote the achievement of the group, and not just individuals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher encourages students to work together to learn difficult concepts, and assesses the work of the group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher emphasizes individual achievement; working together is viewed as “cheating”</li> </ul>			

V. **CURR** CURRICULUM/ **Holistic score** 4 3 2 1 0  
**PLANNED EXPERIENCES**

<b>CRI Indicator</b>	<b>For example, in a responsive classroom:</b>	<b>For example, in a non-responsive classroom:</b>	<b>Field notes: time of example</b>	<b>Field notes: time of non-example</b>	<b>Field notes: No example (✓)</b>
1. The curriculum and planned learning experiences use the knowledge and experience of students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Real-world examples that connect to students' lives are included in the curriculum</li> <li>• Learning experiences build on prior student learning and invite students to make connections</li> <li>• Examples of mainstream and non-mainstream beliefs, attitudes, and activities are included</li> <li>• Students' own texts and experiences are used to demonstrate skills and concepts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No attempt is made to link students' realities to what is being studied</li> <li>• Learning experiences are disconnected from students' knowledge and experiences</li> <li>• Skills and content are presented in isolation (never in application to authentic contexts)</li> <li>• Students' and families' particular "funds of knowledge" are never called upon during learning experiences</li> <li>• Teacher follows the script of the adopted curriculum even when it conflicts with her own or the students' lived experiences</li> </ul>			
2. The curriculum and planned experiences integrate and provide opportunities for the expression of diverse perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Texts include protagonists from diverse backgrounds and present ideas from multiple perspectives</li> <li>• Texts are available that represent diverse protagonists or multiple perspectives</li> <li>• Opportunities are plentiful for students to present diverse perspectives through class discussions</li> <li>• Students are encouraged to challenge the ideas in a text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The conventional, dominant point of view is predominating</li> <li>• Few texts are available to represent diverse protagonists or multiple perspectives</li> <li>• Biased units of study that show only the conventional point of view (e.g., Columbus discovered America) are presented</li> <li>• No or very few texts are available with protagonists from diverse cultural, linguistic, and/or socioeconomic backgrounds</li> <li>• No opportunities are provided for students to present diverse views</li> </ul>			
3. The curriculum and planned learning experiences involve students in using written	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The language and experiences of the students and the activity of the classroom are used to teach written and oral language skills and conventions</li> <li>• Students' own writing and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written and oral language skills are taught outside the context of meaningful literate activity</li> <li>• An adopted or pre-made curriculum is used exclusively to teach skills</li> </ul>			

<p>and oral language for real purposes and audiences</p>	<p>a variety of print materials are used to develop literacy skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum experiences include inquiry-based reading, writing, and learning</li> <li>• Authentic learning tasks are an integral part of the curriculum (e.g., developing proposals, presenting information to real audiences, etc.)</li> </ul>	<p>and concepts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worksheets and/or workbook assignments predominate</li> <li>• Students read from textbooks exclusively and responses to reading consist of prefabricated end-of-chapter questions</li> </ul>			
<p>4. The curriculum and planned learning experiences provide opportunities for the inclusion of issues important to the classroom, school and community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are engaged in experiences that develop awareness and provide opportunities to contribute, inform, persuade and have a voice in the classroom, school and beyond</li> <li>• Oral and written language and academic concepts are used to explore real-world issues</li> <li>• Community-based issues and projects are included in the planned program and new skills and concepts are linked to real-world problems and events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The curriculum and learning experiences present written and oral language as “neutral skills” and ignores the sociopolitical context in which language and literacy are used</li> <li>• Learning experiences are derived almost exclusively from published textbooks and other materials that do not relate to the classroom community or the larger community being served</li> <li>• The focus of literacy and content instruction is to teach the skills and information required to “pass the test”</li> </ul>			

**VI. INSTR PEDAGOGY/ Holistic score 4 3 2 1 0**  
**INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES**

<b>CRI Indicator</b>	<b>For example, in a responsive classroom:</b>	<b>For example, in a non-responsive classroom:</b>	<b>Field notes: time of example</b>	<b>Field notes: time of non-example</b>	<b>Field notes: No example (✓)</b>
1. Instruction is contextualized in students' lives and experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning tasks and texts relate directly to students' lives outside of school</li> <li>• Classroom interaction patterns and communication structures match those found in students' homes and communities</li> <li>• The teacher builds on students' existing cultural knowledge in lessons and activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning tasks and texts reflect the values and experiences of dominant ethnic and cultural groups</li> <li>• Only interaction patterns and communication structures of the dominant group are deemed acceptable</li> </ul>			
2. The teacher learns with students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher learns about diverse perspectives along with students</li> <li>• The teacher engages students in the inquiry process and learns from students' investigations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher is the authority</li> <li>• Students are not encouraged to challenge or question ideas presented or to engage in further inquiry</li> </ul>			
3. The teacher allows students to collaborate with one another	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students work in pairs and small groups to read, write and discuss texts or to solve problems</li> <li>• The teacher works to equalize existing status differences among students</li> <li>• Teacher arranges shared experiences that build a sense of community (e.g. choral reading, partner reading, drama, working together to solve challenging problems or to create a new product)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students read, write and solve problems in isolation</li> <li>• Students are not permitted to help one another or to work together in pairs or groups</li> </ul>			
4. Students engage in active, hands-on learning tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning tasks allow students to be physically active</li> <li>• Teacher uses learning activities that promote a high level of student engagement</li> <li>• Exploratory learning is encouraged</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students work passively at their seats on teacher-directed tasks</li> <li>• Passive student learning is the norm (e.g., listening to direct instruction and taking notes, reading the textbook, seatwork, worksheets, etc.)</li> <li>• Exploratory learning is discouraged</li> </ul>			
5. The teacher gives students choices based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have multiple opportunities to choose texts, writing topics, and modes of expression</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher selects reading texts, writing topics, and modes of expression for students</li> </ul>			

<p>on their experiences, values, needs and strengths</p>	<p>based on preferences and personal relevance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have some choice in assignments</li> <li>• Teacher allows students some choice in the topic of study and ownership in what they are learning (e.g., student-generated questions that will guide the study, research on a selected topic)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All assignments are teacher-initiated</li> <li>• Students have no choice in topic of study or in the questions that will be addressed throughout the study</li> </ul>			
<p>6. The teacher balances instruction using both explicit teaching and meaningful application</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruction is rigorous and cognitively challenging for students from all ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds</li> <li>• The teacher models, explains and demonstrates skills and concepts and provides appropriate scaffolding for students</li> <li>• Students apply skills and new concepts in the context of meaningful and personally relevant learning activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruction focuses on low-level skills</li> <li>• Students engage in isolated and repetitive tasks that are disconnected from each other</li> <li>• The teacher does not always model, explain and demonstrate new skills and concepts prior to asking students to apply them</li> <li>• The teacher does not provide appropriate scaffolding for students as they learn new skills and concepts</li> <li>• Students practice skills and reinforce new concepts in ways that are not meaningful or personally relevant to them</li> </ul>			
<p>7. The teacher focuses on developing students' academic vocabularies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an emphasis on learning academic vocabulary in the particular content area</li> <li>• The teacher provides explicit instruction in the meaning of words and students practice using new words in a variety of meaningful contexts</li> <li>• Students learn independent word learning strategies such as morphology, contextual analysis, and cognates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little attention is paid to academic vocabulary instruction in the content area</li> <li>• New words are taught outside of meaningful contexts</li> <li>• Students are not taught independent word learning strategies</li> </ul>			

**VII. DIS DISCOURSE/ Holistic score 4 3 2 1 0**  
**INSTRUCTIONAL CONVERSATION**

<b>CRI Indicator</b>	<b>For example, in a responsive classroom:</b>	<b>For example, in a non-responsive classroom:</b>	<b>Field notes: time of example</b>	<b>Field notes: time of non-example</b>	<b>Field notes: No example (✓)</b>
1. The teacher encourages and responds positively to children’s use of home/native language/dialect and culturally-specific discourse styles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is peer conversation in the home language or dialect during both free and academic time</li> <li>• Students share stories in their home language/dialect</li> <li>• ELL students communicate together in their native language</li> <li>• The teacher accepts students’ home languages and dialects, while also teaching the standard vernacular</li> <li>• Students are supported in their use of culturally-specific ways of communicating, such as topic-associative discourse, topic-chaining discourse, and overlapping discourse patterns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are discouraged from using their home language or dialect</li> <li>• ELL students are discouraged from using their native language outside of school</li> <li>• The teacher views topic-associative discourse, topic-chaining discourse, and overlapping discourse patterns as rambling talk</li> <li>• The teacher attempts to control and change student communication styles to match mainstream classroom discourse patterns</li> </ul>			
2. The teacher shares control of classroom discourse with students and builds upon and expands upon student talk in an authentic way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students engage in genuine discussions versus “guess what’s in the teacher’s head”</li> <li>• The teacher uses open-ended questions and various discourse protocols to elicit extended student talk</li> <li>• The teacher demonstrates active listening and responds in authentic ways to student comments; s/he encourages the same active listening from students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are strict boundaries between personal conversation and instructional conversation</li> <li>• Students rarely have opportunities for genuine discussions</li> <li>• There are few or no opportunities for extended student talk; rather, talk is dominated by the teacher</li> </ul>			
3. The teacher promotes student engagement through culturally responsive discourse practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher employs a variety of culturally appropriate discourse protocols to promote student participation and engagement (e.g., call and response, talking circle)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discourse practices of various cultural groups are not used during instruction</li> </ul>			

<p>4. The teacher promotes equitable discourse practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students use collaborative, overlapping conversation and participate actively, supporting the speaker during the creation of story talk or discussion and commenting/expanding upon the ideas of others</li> <li>• The teacher uses techniques to support equitable participation, such as wait time, feedback, turn-taking, and scaffolding of ideas</li> <li>• All students have the opportunity to participate in classroom discussions</li> <li>• There is a sense of congeniality and consensus building; students build on one another's ideas in a respectful way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher controls classroom discourse by assigning speaking rights to students</li> <li>• Students follow traditional norms in turn-taking</li> <li>• Not all students have the opportunity to participate in classroom discussions</li> <li>• Some students are allowed to dominate discussions</li> </ul>			
<p>5. The teacher provides structures that promote student collaborative talk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structures are used that promote student talk, such as think/pair/share, small group work, and partner work</li> <li>• Students collaborate and work together to solve problems</li> <li>• The teacher encourages the use of a "talk story like" participation structure to allow children to produce responses collaboratively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are discouraged from talking together</li> <li>• Collaborating with other students is discouraged and may be regarded as "cheating"</li> <li>• The teacher does not allow students to collaborate in producing answers</li> </ul>			
<p>6. The teacher provides opportunities for students to develop linguistic competence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher articulates expectations for language use (e.g., "I want you to reply using complete sentences. I want you to use these vocabulary words in your discussion")</li> <li>• The teacher develops language objectives in addition to content objectives, having specific goals in mind for students' linguistic performance</li> <li>• Students are engaged in authentic uses of language, (e.g., drama, discussion, purposeful writing and communication)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher does not articulate expectations for language use</li> <li>• The teacher does not have language objectives for students; rather, only content objectives are evident</li> <li>• Students' use of language is limited and they do not use language in authentic ways</li> <li>• Students are not taught how to vary their language use in different social contexts and for different purposes.</li> </ul>			



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students are taught appropriate registers of language use for a variety of social contexts, and they are provided with opportunities to practice those registers in authentic ways</li></ul>				
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**VIII. PERSP SOCIOPOLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS/MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES**      **Holistic score**    **4**    **3**    **2**    **1**    **0**

<b>CRI Indicator</b>	<b>For example, in a responsive classroom:</b>	<b>For example, in a non-responsive classroom:</b>	<b>Field notes: time of example</b>	<b>Field notes: time of non-example</b>	<b>Field notes: No example (✓)</b>
1. Students are allowed to question the way things are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher helps students identify important social issues and facilitates students' investigation of the status quo and how to challenge it</li> <li>Students may identify issues within their own school or texts to investigate and question</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher teaches to the "norm" by using standard textbooks and curriculum and presenting information and ideas as neutral</li> <li>Teacher discourages critical thought or questioning of instructional materials or social issues</li> <li>Teacher engages in mystification in which students are not given the "whole story" in order to avoid controversy</li> </ul>			
2. Students take action on real world problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher and students identify and discuss issues within the community that are of relevance to their lives</li> <li>Teacher facilitates student advocacy for their communities</li> <li>Teacher encourages students to investigate real-world issues related to a topic being studied</li> <li>Teacher encourages students to become actively involved in solving problems at the local, state, national, and global levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher does not bring community and social issues into the classroom</li> <li>Learning occurs only as it relates to the standard curriculum</li> <li>Teacher does not encourage application to real-world issues; accepts or endorses the status quo by ignoring or dismissing real life problems related to the topic being studied</li> </ul>			
3. The teacher fosters an understanding of differing points of view	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher helps students frame differing viewpoints about accepted roles (race, gender, age, ethnicity, class, etc.) depicted in instructional materials</li> <li>Teacher encourages students to challenge statements in written and oral texts and to engage in dialogue that would present alternative views</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher uses materials in class that perpetuate the status quo without presenting diverse perspectives</li> <li>Teacher accepts information in written texts as factual</li> </ul>			
4. The teacher actively deconstructs negative stereotypes in instructional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher facilitates students' understanding of stereotypes and their function in society</li> <li>Teacher discusses biases in popular culture that students encounter in their daily lives (e.g., TV shows, advertising, popular songs,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher does not encourage students to examine biases in instructional materials or popular texts</li> <li>Teacher makes prejudicial statements to students (e.g., girls are emotional; immigrants don't belong</li> </ul>			

<p>materials and other texts</p>	<p>toys)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher helps students to think about biases in texts (e.g., “Who has the power in this book?” Whose perspectives are represented in the text? Whose perspectives are missing? Who benefits from the beliefs and practices represented in this text?)</li> <li>• Teacher challenges students to deconstruct their own cultural assumptions and biases</li> </ul>	<p>here; etc.) that indicate that s/he is not consciously aware of stereotypes and how they are perpetuated</p>			
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APPENDIX D  
CRIOP OBSERVATION PROTOCOL- MS. GRACE

**Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol**  
Revised Edition  
(Used with Permission.)

Developed by: R. Powell, S. Cantrell, Y. Gallardo Carter, A. Cox,  
S. Powers, E. C. Rightmyer, K. Seitz, and T. Wheeler

Funded by Kentucky’s Collaborative Center for Literacy Development and the U.S. Department of Education Office of English  
Language Acquisition

Teacher: Vivian Grace \_\_\_\_\_

# of Students in Classroom: 18

Grade Level(s): 1

**DIRECTIONS**

After the classroom observation, review the field notes for evidence of each “pillar” of Culturally Responsive Instruction. If an example of the following descriptors was observed, place the field notes line number on which that example is found. If a “non-example” of the descriptors was observed, place the line number on which that non-example is found. Then, make an overall/holistic judgment of the implementation of the concept, according to the following rating scale:

- 4** = The classroom was **CONSISTENTLY CHARACTERIZED** by culturally responsive features
- 3** = The classroom was **OFTEN CHARACTERIZED** by culturally responsive features
- 2** = The classroom was **OCCASIONALLY CHARACTERIZED** by culturally responsive features
- 1** = The classroom was **RARELY CHARACTERIZED** by culturally responsive features
- 0** = The classroom was **NEVER CHARACTERIZED** by culturally responsive features

Transfer the holistic scores from pp. 2 through 9 to the table below.

<b>CRI Pillar</b>	<b>Holistic Score</b>
I. CARE	4
II. CLIM	4
III. FAM	3
IV. ASMT	4

<b>CRI Pillar</b>	<b>Holistic Score</b>
V. CURR	2
VI. INSTR	3
VII. DISC	2
VIII. PERSP	0

**I. CARE CLASSROOM CARING AND TEACHER DISPOSITIONS**

Holistic score **4 3 2 1 0**

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (✓)
1. The teacher demonstrates an ethic of care (e.g., equitable relationships, bonding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher differentiates management techniques (e.g., using a more direct interactive style with students who require it)</li> <li>Teacher refers to students by name, uses personalized language with students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher uses the same management techniques and interactive style with all students when it is clear that they do not work for some</li> <li>Teacher promotes negativity in the classroom, e.g., frequent criticisms, negative comments, sarcasm, etc.</li> </ul>	beh-plan, private talks		
2. The teacher communicates high expectations for all students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher provides scaffolds to assure student learning, recognizing students' varying background knowledge, readiness, language, preferences in learning, interests, etc.</li> <li>Teacher advocates for all students</li> <li>Teacher expects every student to participate actively and establishes structures (e.g., frequent checks for understanding) so that no student "falls through the cracks"</li> <li>Teacher consistently demonstrates high expectations for all students' academic achievement through insisting that they complete assignments, by providing challenging work, etc. (not letting them "get by" even when their home life is difficult)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher has low expectations (consistently gives work that is not challenging)</li> <li>Teacher doesn't balance student participation, allowing some students to remain unengaged</li> <li>Teacher does not call on all students consistently</li> <li>Teacher ignores some students; e.g., never asks them to respond to questions, allows them to sleep, places them in the "corners" of the room and does not bring them into the instructional conversation, etc.</li> <li>Teacher tends to blame students and families for lack of student achievement and motivation</li> </ul>	no opt out		
3. The teacher creates a learning atmosphere in which students and teachers feel respect toward one another	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher sets a tone for respectful classroom interaction</li> <li>Teacher and students celebrate each other's achievements</li> <li>Teacher and students work to understand each other's perspectives</li> <li>Students do not hesitate to ask questions that further their learning</li> <li>Students are encouraged to provide peer support and assistance</li> <li>Students are encouraged to respond to one another positively</li> <li>Students are invested in their and others' learning</li> <li>Teacher consistently demonstrates high expectations for student social interactions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher shows impatience and intolerance for student behavior</li> <li>Teacher establishes a competitive environment whereby students try to out-perform one another</li> <li>Students are not encouraged to assist their peers</li> <li>Teacher dominates the decision-making and does not allow for student voice</li> <li>Teacher does not encourage student questions or ridicules students when they ask for clarification</li> <li>Teacher stays behind desk or across table from students; s/he does not get "on their level"</li> <li>Teacher does not address negative comments of one student towards another</li> <li>Teacher demonstrates low expectations for student social interactions</li> </ul>	applause do you have any 2's?	thumbs-up helping each other	hold st to no bullying, they adhere to 2. remind each other

<p>4. The teacher encourages student empathy and care toward one another</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher encourages students to respect a diversity of ideas, perspectives and experiences</li> <li>• Teacher encourages students to share their stories with one another and to show compassion for the struggles of their peers and their families</li> <li>• Biases and discrimination are addressed through the formal and informal curricula</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher suppresses diversity of opinion and primarily presents content, ideas and experiences that are representative of dominant groups</li> <li>• Teacher does not allow students to share personal stories; instruction remains de-personalized</li> <li>• Teacher allows students' open expression of prejudicial acts and statements toward others in the classroom community; biases and discrimination are not addressed</li> </ul> <p>never</p>	<p>does not talk about it, but does not allow any disrespectful behavior in class.</p>		
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II. **CLIM** CLASSROOM CLIMATE/  
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT **Holistic score** 4 3 2 1 0

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (✓)
1. The physical surroundings of the classroom reflect an appreciation for diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are books, posters, and other artifacts reflecting students' and others' cultures</li> <li>There are positive and affirming messages and images about students' racial identities</li> <li>Classroom library and curriculum materials contain multicultural content that reflect the perspectives and experiences of diverse groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are no or few multicultural texts</li> <li>Posters and displays do not show an acknowledgement and affirmation of students' cultural and racial identities</li> <li>Classroom library and curriculum materials promote ethnocentric positions or ignore human diversity</li> </ul>			✓
2. Peer collaboration is the norm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are continuously viewed as resources for one another and assist one another in learning new concepts</li> <li>The emphasis is on group achievement</li> <li>There is a "family-like" environment in the classroom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no or very little peer collaboration</li> <li>The emphasis is on individual achievement</li> </ul>	✓		
3. The physical space supports collaborative work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The seating arrangement is flexible and supports student collaboration and equal participation between teachers and students</li> <li>Chairs/desks are arranged to facilitate group work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The seating arrangement is designed for individual work with the teacher being "center stage"</li> <li>Classroom is arranged for quiet, solitary work only</li> <li>Teacher discourages student interaction</li> </ul>	✓		
4. Students work together productively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The teacher implements practices that teach collaboration and respect, e.g., class meetings, modeling effective discussion, etc.</li> <li>Students interact in respectful ways and know how to work together effectively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The students primarily work individually and are not expected to work collaboratively; and/or students have a difficult time collaborating</li> <li>Lack of respectful interaction amongst students may be an issue</li> </ul>	✓		

III. **FAM** FAMILY COLLABORATION **Holistic score** 4 3 2 1 0

**NOTE:** When scoring this component of the CRIOP, the XXX survey or teacher interview should be used in addition to field observations. Observations alone will not provide adequate information for scoring.

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (✓)
1. The teacher establishes genuine partnerships (equitable relationships) with parents/caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents'/caregivers' ideas are solicited on how best to instruct the child</li> <li>• There is evidence of conversations with parents/caregivers where it's clear that they are viewed as partners in educating the student</li> <li>• There is evidence that the teacher has made the effort to get to know the "whole child" (his/her background, family culture, outside of school activities) by getting to know his/her parents/caregivers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents'/caregivers' suggestions are not incorporated in instruction</li> <li>• No effort made to establish relationships with caregivers</li> <li>• There is evidence of a "deficit perspective" in which families and caregivers are viewed as inferior and/or as having limited resources that can be leveraged for instruction</li> </ul>	YES knows all st situations ✓		
2. The teacher uses parent expertise to support student learning and welcomes parents/caregivers in the classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents/caregivers are invited into the classroom to share experiences and areas of expertise</li> <li>• Parents'/caregivers' "funds of knowledge" are utilized in the instructional program</li> <li>• Teacher makes reference to parents'/caregivers' careers, backgrounds, daily activities during instruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents/caregivers are never involved in instructional program</li> <li>• Parents'/caregivers' "funds of knowledge" are never utilized</li> <li>• There is no evidence of home/family connections in the classroom</li> </ul>	talks about doing this in interviews		
3. The teacher reaches out to meet parents in positive, non-traditional ways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher conducts home visit conferences</li> <li>• Teacher plans parent/family activities at locations outside of school</li> <li>• Teacher meets parents in parking lot or other "neutral" locations</li> <li>• Teacher makes "good day" phone calls ✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication with parents/caregivers is through newsletters, where they are asked to respond passively (e.g., signing the newsletter, versus become actively involved in their child's learning)</li> <li>• Teacher conducts phone calls, conferences, personal notes to parents for negative reports only (e.g., discipline)</li> </ul>	good day emails, calls, notes		



IV. ASMT ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

Holistic score 4 3 2 1 0

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (✓)
1. Formative assessment practices are used that provide information throughout the lesson on specified learning targets; students are evaluated within the context of scaffolded instruction to determine their potential for learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Teacher frequently assesses students' understanding throughout instruction</li> <li>✓ Students may have "talking partners" for reviewing information during the lesson</li> <li>• Students are able to voice their learning throughout the lesson</li> <li>✓ Teacher assesses students' ability to learn with appropriate support</li> <li>✓ Teacher may implement "trial lessons" that use texts or require students to solve problems at a higher level than students' performance might indicate</li> <li>✓ Teacher uses observation to determine students' capabilities, listening carefully to students and learning from their attempts to make meaning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment occurs at the end of the lesson</li> <li>• Assessment is not embedded throughout instruction</li> <li>• Assessment is regarded as a set of evaluation "tools" that are used to determine what students have learned (e.g., exit slips, quizzes, etc. that are administered after instruction has occurred versus examining students' cognitive processing during instruction)</li> <li>• Assessment is solely used to determine what students already know or can do</li> <li>• Teacher does not evaluate student understanding while engaged in challenging work</li> </ul>	running records reading group logs partners - buddy work	lots of assistance (peer/teacher) in reading	
2. Students are able to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students with limited English proficiency and/or limited literacy can show their conceptual learning through visual or other forms of representation</li> <li>• Multiple assessments are used so students have various ways to demonstrate competence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most or all tests are written and require reading/writing proficiency in English</li> <li>• Teacher expects students to tell "the" answer</li> <li>• Students have a narrow range of options for demonstrating competence (e.g., multiple choice tests, matching, etc.)</li> </ul>	verbal, written - did it a diff. way, show us.		
3. Formative assessment practices are used that provide information on the learning of every student; no student "falls through the cracks"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher uses formative assessments that determine individual learning</li> <li>✓ Teacher uses information from formative assessments to scaffold student learning and to clarify misconceptions of individual students when needed during instruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formative assessments are too general to capture individual student understanding (e.g. class discussions where only a few students participate)</li> <li>• Teacher uses assessment data only to assign grades; data not used formatively to provide explicit instruction when needed</li> <li>• Teacher relies on summative assessments to inform instruction</li> </ul>	✓ yes - reading - constant work w/ lowest readers		
4. Authentic assessments are used as the primary means for assessing written and oral language development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students' written and oral language proficiency is assessed while they are actively engaged in reading, writing, speaking extended discourse</li> <li>• Students' linguistic competence is evaluated while they are actually using language in purposeful ways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessments measure discrete, isolated skills and/or use short, disconnected passages</li> <li>• Students' linguistic competence is evaluated solely through standardized measures</li> </ul>			
5. Teacher sets high standards and students understand the criteria by which	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher bases feedback on established high standards and provides students with specific information on how they can meet those standards</li> <li>• Criteria for particular</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher feedback is subjective and is not tied to targeted learning outcomes and standards</li> <li>• Students do not know the criteria upon which they are</li> </ul>	use of rubrics		

they are being assessed	assignments are displayed and teacher refers to criteria as students develop their products	being assessed • Standards are not rigorous • Teacher responds to student work with short evaluative comments such as "good job" or "✓"			
6. Students have opportunities for self-assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are involved in analyzing their work and in setting their own goals for learning</li> <li>• Students are involved in developing the criteria for their finished products (e.g., scoring rubrics)</li> <li>• Students are encouraged to evaluate their own products based upon a pre-determined set of criteria</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment is always teacher-controlled</li> </ul>	rubric		
7. Assessment practices promote the achievement of the group, and not just individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher encourages students to work together to learn difficult concepts, and assesses the work of the group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher emphasizes individual achievement; working together is viewed as "cheating"</li> </ul>	ask your neighbor	buddy reading	

V. **CURR** CURRICULUM/  
PLANNED EXPERIENCES

Holistic score 4 3 2 1 0

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (✓)
1. The curriculum and planned learning experiences use the knowledge and experience of students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Real-world examples that connect to students' lives are included in the curriculum</li> <li>✓ Learning experiences build on prior student learning and invite students to make connections</li> <li>Examples of mainstream and non-mainstream beliefs, attitudes, and activities are included</li> <li>✓ Students' own texts and experiences are used to demonstrate skills and concepts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No attempt is made to link students' realities to what is being studied</li> <li>Learning experiences are disconnected from students' knowledge and experiences</li> <li>Skills and content are presented in isolation (never in application to authentic contexts)</li> <li>Students' and families' particular "funds of knowledge" are never called upon during learning experiences</li> <li>Teacher follows the script of the adopted curriculum even when it conflicts with her own or the students' lived experiences</li> </ul>	<p>sign lang. Lion King Fall leaves St sharing their writing</p>		
2. The curriculum and planned experiences integrate and provide opportunities for the expression of diverse perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Texts include protagonists from diverse backgrounds and present ideas from multiple perspectives</li> <li>Texts are available that represent diverse protagonists or multiple perspectives</li> <li>Opportunities are plentiful for students to present diverse perspectives through class discussions</li> <li>Students are encouraged to challenge the ideas in a text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The conventional, dominant point of view is predominating</li> <li>Few texts are available to represent diverse protagonists or multiple perspectives</li> <li>Biased units of study that show only the conventional point of view (e.g., Columbus discovered America) are presented</li> <li>No or very few texts are available with protagonists from diverse cultural, linguistic, and/or socioeconomic backgrounds</li> <li>No opportunities are provided for students to present diverse views</li> </ul>			<p>✓  </p>
3. The curriculum and planned learning experiences involve students in using written and oral language for real purposes and audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The language and experiences of the students and the activity of the classroom are used to teach written and oral language skills and conventions</li> <li>○ Students' own writing and a variety of print materials are used to develop literacy skills</li> <li>Curriculum experiences include inquiry-based reading, writing, and learning</li> <li>Authentic learning tasks are an integral part of the curriculum (e.g., developing proposals, presenting information to real audiences, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Written and oral language skills are taught outside the context of meaningful literate activity</li> <li>An adopted or pre-made curriculum is used exclusively to teach skills and concepts</li> <li>○ Worksheets and/or workbook assignments predominate</li> <li>Students read from textbooks exclusively and responses to reading consist of prefabricated end-of-chapter questions</li> </ul>	<p>variety of print st. work</p>	<p>textbooks workbook</p>	
4. The curriculum and planned learning experiences provide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are engaged in experiences that develop awareness and provide opportunities to contribute, inform, persuade and have a voice in the classroom, school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The curriculum and learning experiences present written and oral language as "neutral skills" and ignores the sociopolitical context in which language and literacy are used</li> </ul>			

<p>opportunities for the inclusion of issues important to the classroom, school and community</p>	<p>and beyond</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral and written language and academic concepts are used to explore real-world issues</li> <li>• Community-based issues and projects are included in the planned program and new skills and concepts are linked to real-world problems and events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning experiences are derived almost exclusively from published textbooks and other materials that do not relate to the classroom community or the larger community being served</li> <li>• The focus of literacy and content instruction is to teach the skills and information required to “pass the test”</li> </ul>			
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**VI. INSTR PEDAGOGY/ INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES** **Holistic score** 4 3 2 1 0

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (✓)
1. Instruction is contextualized in students' lives and experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning tasks and texts relate directly to students' lives outside of school</li> <li>Classroom interaction patterns and communication structures match those found in students' homes and communities</li> <li>The teacher builds on students' existing cultural knowledge in lessons and activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning tasks and texts reflect the values and experiences of dominant ethnic and cultural groups</li> <li>Only interaction patterns and communication structures of the dominant group are deemed acceptable</li> </ul>	unison		
2. The teacher learns with students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The teacher learns about diverse perspectives along with students</li> <li>The teacher engages students in the inquiry process and learns from students' investigations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The teacher is the authority</li> <li>Students are not encouraged to challenge or question ideas presented or to engage in further inquiry</li> </ul>			
3. The teacher allows students to collaborate with one another	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students work in pairs and small groups to read, write and discuss texts or to solve problems</li> <li>The teacher works to equalize existing status differences among students</li> <li>Teacher arranges shared experiences that build a sense of community (e.g. choral reading, partner reading, drama, working together to solve challenging problems or to create a new product)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students read, write and solve problems in isolation</li> <li>Students are not permitted to help one another or to work together in pairs or groups</li> </ul>	starting book groups		
4. Students engage in active, hands-on learning tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning tasks allow students to be physically active</li> <li>Teacher uses learning activities that promote a high level of student engagement</li> <li>Exploratory learning is encouraged - observations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students work passively at their seats on teacher-directed tasks</li> <li>Passive student learning is the norm (e.g., listening to direct instruction and taking notes, reading the textbook, seatwork, worksheets, etc.)</li> <li>Exploratory learning is discouraged</li> </ul>	math games story cartoons seatwork		
5. The teacher gives students choices based on their experiences, values, needs and strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students have multiple opportunities to choose texts, writing topics, and modes of expression based on preferences and personal relevance</li> <li>Students have some choice in assignments</li> <li>Teacher allows students some choice in the topic of study and ownership in what they are learning (e.g., student-generated questions that will guide the study, research on a selected topic)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The teacher selects reading texts, writing topics, and modes of expression for students</li> <li>All assignments are teacher-initiated</li> <li>Students have no choice in topic of study or in the questions that will be addressed throughout the study</li> </ul>	mode	text topic teacher initiated	

<p>6. The teacher balances instruction using both explicit teaching and meaningful application</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruction is rigorous and cognitively challenging for students from all ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds</li> <li>• The teacher models, explains and demonstrates skills and concepts and provides appropriate scaffolding for students</li> <li>• Students apply skills and new concepts in the context of meaningful and personally relevant learning activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruction focuses on low-level skills</li> <li>• Students engage in isolated and repetitive tasks that are disconnected from each other</li> <li>• The teacher does not always model, explain and demonstrate new skills and concepts prior to asking students to apply them</li> <li>• The teacher does not provide appropriate scaffolding for students as they learn new skills and concepts</li> <li>• Students practice skills and reinforce new concepts in ways that are not meaningful or personally relevant to them</li> </ul>			
<p>7. The teacher focuses on developing students' academic vocabularies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an emphasis on learning academic vocabulary in the particular content area</li> <li>• The teacher provides explicit instruction in the meaning of words and students practice using new words in a variety of meaningful contexts</li> <li>• Students learn independent word learning strategies such as morphology, contextual analysis, and cognates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little attention is paid to academic vocabulary instruction in the content area</li> <li>• New words are taught outside of meaningful contexts</li> <li>• Students are not taught independent word learning strategies</li> </ul>			

VII. DIS DISCOURSE/ Holistic score 4 3 2 1 0 INSTRUCTIONAL CONVERSATION

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (✓)
1. The teacher encourages and responds positively to children's use of home/native language/dialect and culturally-specific discourse styles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☺ There is peer conversation in the home language or dialect during both free and academic time</li> <li>• Students share stories in their home language/dialect</li> <li>• ELL students communicate together in their native language</li> <li>• The teacher accepts students' home languages and dialects, while also teaching the standard vernacular</li> <li>• Students are supported in their use of culturally-specific ways of communicating, such as topic-associative discourse, topic-chaining discourse, and overlapping discourse patterns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are discouraged from using their home language or dialect</li> <li>• ELL students are discouraged from using their native language outside of school</li> <li>• The teacher views topic-associative discourse, topic-chaining discourse, and overlapping discourse patterns as rambling talk</li> <li>• The teacher attempts to control and change student communication styles to match mainstream classroom discourse patterns</li> </ul>			✓
2. The teacher shares control of classroom discourse with students and builds upon and expands upon student talk in an authentic way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students engage in genuine discussions versus "guess what's in the teacher's head"</li> <li>☺ The teacher uses open-ended questions and various discourse protocols to elicit extended student talk</li> <li>☺ The teacher demonstrates active listening and responds in authentic ways to student comments; s/he encourages the same active listening from students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☹ There are strict boundaries between personal conversation and instructional conversation</li> <li>☹ Students rarely have opportunities for genuine discussions</li> <li>• There are few or no opportunities for extended student talk; rather, talk is dominated by the teacher</li> </ul>			
3. The teacher promotes student engagement through culturally responsive discourse practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher employs a variety of culturally appropriate discourse protocols to promote student participation and engagement (e.g., call and response, talking circle)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discourse practices of various cultural groups are not used during instruction</li> </ul>	unison		
4. The teacher promotes equitable discourse practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students use collaborative, overlapping conversation and participate actively, supporting the speaker during the creation of story talk or discussion and commenting/expanding upon the ideas of others</li> <li>☺ The teacher uses techniques to support equitable participation, such as wait time, feedback, turn-taking, and scaffolding of ideas</li> <li>☺ All students have the opportunity to participate in classroom discussions</li> <li>• There is a sense of congeniality and consensus building; students build on one another's ideas in a respectful way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☹ The teacher controls classroom discourse by assigning speaking rights to students</li> <li>☹ Students follow traditional norms in turn-taking</li> <li>• Not all students have the opportunity to participate in classroom discussions</li> <li>Some students are allowed to dominate discussions</li> </ul>			

<p>5. The teacher provides structures that promote student collaborative talk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structures are used that promote student talk, such as think/pair/share, small group work, and partner work</li> <li>• Students collaborate and work together to solve problems</li> <li>• The teacher encourages the use of a “talk story-like” participation structure to allow children to produce responses collaboratively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are discouraged from talking together</li> <li>• Collaborating with other students is discouraged and may be regarded as “cheating”</li> <li>• The teacher does not allow students to collaborate in producing answers</li> </ul>			
<p>6. The teacher provides opportunities for students to develop linguistic competence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher articulates expectations for language use (e.g., “I want you to reply using complete sentences. I want you to use these vocabulary words in your discussion”)</li> <li>• The teacher develops language objectives in addition to content objectives, having specific goals in mind for students’ linguistic performance</li> <li>• Students are engaged in authentic uses of language, (e.g., drama, discussion, purposeful writing and communication)</li> <li>• Students are taught appropriate registers of language use for a variety of social contexts, and they are provided with opportunities to practice those registers in authentic ways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher does not articulate expectations for language use</li> <li>• The teacher does not have language objectives for students; rather, only content objectives are evident</li> <li>• Students’ use of language is limited and they do not use language in authentic ways</li> <li>• Students are not taught how to vary their language use in different social contexts and for different purposes.</li> </ul>			



VIII. **PERSP** SOCIOPOLITICAL **Holistic score** 4 3 2 1 0  
**CONSCIOUSNESS/MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES**

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (✓)
1. Students are allowed to question the way things are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher helps students identify important social issues and facilitates students' investigation of the status quo and how to challenge it</li> <li>Students may identify issues within their own school or texts to investigate and question</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher teaches to the "norm" by using standard textbooks and curriculum and presenting information and ideas as neutral</li> <li>Teacher discourages critical thought or questioning of instructional materials or social issues</li> <li>Teacher engages in mystification in which students are not given the "whole story" in order to avoid controversy</li> </ul>			
2. Students take action on real world problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher and students identify and discuss issues within the community that are of relevance to their lives</li> <li>Teacher facilitates student advocacy for their communities</li> <li>Teacher encourages students to investigate real-world issues related to a topic being studied</li> <li>Teacher encourages students to become actively involved in solving problems at the local, state, national, and global levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher does not bring community and social issues into the classroom</li> <li>Learning occurs only as it relates to the standard curriculum</li> <li>Teacher does not encourage application to real-world issues; accepts or endorses the status quo by ignoring or dismissing real life problems related to the topic being studied</li> </ul>			
3. The teacher fosters an understanding of differing points of view	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher helps students frame differing viewpoints about accepted roles (race, gender, age, ethnicity, class, etc.) depicted in instructional materials</li> <li>Teacher encourages students to challenge statements in written and oral texts and to engage in dialogue that would present alternative views</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher uses materials in class that perpetuate the status quo without presenting diverse perspectives</li> <li>Teacher accepts information in written texts as factual</li> </ul>			
4. The teacher actively deconstructs negative stereotypes in instructional materials and other texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher facilitates students' understanding of stereotypes and their function in society</li> <li>Teacher discusses biases in popular culture that students encounter in their daily lives (e.g., TV shows, advertising, popular songs, toys)</li> <li>Teacher helps students to think about biases in texts (e.g., "Who has the power in this book?" Whose perspectives are represented in the text? Whose perspectives are missing? Who benefits from the beliefs and practices represented in this text?)</li> <li>Teacher challenges students to deconstruct their own cultural assumptions and biases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher does not encourage students to examine biases in instructional materials or popular texts</li> <li>Teacher makes prejudicial statements to students (e.g., girls are emotional; immigrants don't belong here; etc.) that indicate that s/he is not consciously aware of stereotypes and how they are perpetuated</li> </ul>			

APPENDIX E  
CRIOP OBSERVATION PROTOCOL- MS. RIGSBEE

**Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol**  
Revised Edition  
(Used with Permission.)

Developed by: R. Powell, S. Cantrell, Y. Gallardo Carter, A. Cox,  
S. Powers, E. C. Rightmyer, K. Seitz, and T. Wheeler

Funded by Kentucky’s Collaborative Center for Literacy Development and the U.S. Department of Education Office of English  
Language Acquisition

Teacher: Natalie Rigsbee

# of Students in Classroom: approximately 25-30, depending on class

Academic Subject: reading Grade Level(s): 5

**DIRECTIONS**

After the classroom observation, review the field notes for evidence of each “pillar” of Culturally Responsive Instruction. If an example of the following descriptors was observed, place the field notes line number on which that example is found. If a “non-example” of the descriptors was observed, place the line number on which that non-example is found. Then, make an overall/holistic judgment of the implementation of the concept, according to the following rating scale:

- 4** = The classroom was **CONSISTENTLY CHARACTERIZED** by culturally responsive features
- 3** = The classroom was **OFTEN CHARACTERIZED** by culturally responsive features
- 2** = The classroom was **OCCASIONALLY CHARACTERIZED** by culturally responsive features
- 1** = The classroom was **RARELY CHARACTERIZED** by culturally responsive features
- 0** = The classroom was **NEVER CHARACTERIZED** by culturally responsive features

Transfer the holistic scores from pp. 2 through 9 to the table below.

CRI Pillar	Holistic Score
I. CARE	3.5
II. CLIM	3
III. FAM	4
IV. ASMT	3

CRI Pillar	Holistic Score
V. CURR	1
VI. INSTR	3
VII. DISC	3
VIII. PERSP	0

teacher disposition is caring though  
 students do not always treat each other  
 in a caring way.

I. CARE CLASSROOM CARING AND TEACHER DISPOSITIONS Holistic score 4 3 2 1 0

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (✓)
1. The teacher demonstrates an ethic of care (e.g., equitable relationships, bonding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher differentiates management techniques (e.g., using a more direct interactive style with students who require it)</li> <li>Teacher refers to students by name, uses personalized language with students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher uses the same management techniques and interactive style with all students when it is clear that they do not work for some</li> <li>Teacher promotes negativity in the classroom, e.g., frequent criticisms, negative comments, sarcasm, etc.</li> </ul>	<p>diff. manag. approach</p> <p>names, nicknames</p> <p>X</p>	<p>some sarcasm (admits to)</p>	
2. The teacher communicates high expectations for all students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher provides scaffolds to assure student learning, recognizing students' varying background knowledge, readiness, language, preferences in learning, interests, etc.</li> <li>Teacher advocates for all students</li> <li>Teacher expects every student to participate actively and establishes structures (e.g., frequent checks for understanding) so that no student "falls through the cracks"</li> <li>Teacher consistently demonstrates high expectations for all students' academic achievement through insisting that they complete assignments, by providing challenging work, etc. (not letting them "get by" even when their home life is difficult)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher has low expectations (consistently gives work that is not challenging)</li> <li>Teacher doesn't balance student participation, allowing some students to remain unengaged</li> <li>Teacher does not call on all students consistently</li> <li>Teacher ignores some students; e.g., never asks them to respond to questions, allows them to sleep, places them in the "corners" of the room and does not bring them into the instructional conversation, etc.</li> <li>Teacher tends to blame students and families for lack of student achievement and motivation</li> </ul>	<p>all asked partic.</p> <p>Scaffolds: I, we, you</p> <p>Lesson</p> <p>unison, circulating</p> <p>high, clear expect.</p> <p>no excuses accepted</p> <p>X</p>		<p>many st don't always do this</p>
3. The teacher creates a learning atmosphere in which students and teachers feel respect toward one another	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher sets a tone for respectful classroom interaction</li> <li>Teacher and students celebrate each other's achievements</li> <li>Teacher and students work to understand each other's perspectives</li> <li>Students do not hesitate to ask questions that further their learning</li> <li>Students are encouraged to provide peer support and assistance</li> <li>Students are encouraged to respond to one another positively</li> <li>Students are invested in their and others' learning</li> <li>Teacher consistently demonstrates high expectations for student social interactions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher shows impatience and intolerance for student behavior</li> <li>Teacher establishes a competitive environment whereby students try to out-perform one another</li> <li>Students are not encouraged to assist their peers</li> <li>Teacher dominates the decision-making and does not allow for student voice</li> <li>Teacher does not encourage student questions or ridicules students when they ask for clarification</li> <li>Teacher stays behind desk or across table from students; s/he does not get "on their level"</li> <li>Teacher does not address negative comments of one student towards another</li> <li>Teacher demonstrates low expectations for student social interactions</li> </ul>	<p>calls for respect</p> <p>talks to st about how easy treat each other</p> <p>I encourage peer support &amp; help each other</p> <p>X</p>	<p>behaviors don't change</p>	

<p>4. The teacher encourages student empathy and care toward one another</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher encourages students to respect a diversity of ideas, perspectives and experiences</li> <li>Teacher encourages students to share their stories with one another and to show compassion for the struggles of their peers and their families</li> <li>Biases and discrimination are addressed through the formal and informal curricula</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">no</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher suppresses diversity of opinion and primarily presents content, ideas and experiences that are representative of dominant groups</li> <li>Teacher does not allow students to share personal stories; instruction remains de-personalized</li> <li>Teacher allows students' open expression of prejudicial acts and statements toward others in the classroom community; biases and discrimination are not addressed</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">no</p>			<p style="text-align: center;"> </p> <p style="text-align: center;">not observed</p> <p style="text-align: center;"> </p>
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II. **CLIM** CLASSROOM CLIMATE/  
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Holistic score 4 3 2 1 0

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (✓)
1. The physical surroundings of the classroom reflect an appreciation for diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are books, posters, and other artifacts reflecting students' and others' cultures</li> <li>There are positive and affirming messages and images about students' racial identities</li> <li>Classroom library and curriculum materials contain multicultural content that reflect the perspectives and experiences of diverse groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are no or few multicultural texts ✓</li> <li>Posters and displays do not show an acknowledgement and affirmation of students' cultural and racial identities ✓</li> <li>Classroom library and curriculum materials promote ethnocentric positions or ignore human diversity</li> </ul>	all posters are academic		? st never access library
2. Peer collaboration is the norm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are continuously viewed as resources for one another and assist one another in learning new concepts</li> <li>The emphasis is on group achievement</li> <li>There is a "family-like" environment in the classroom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no or very little peer collaboration</li> <li>The emphasis is on individual achievement</li> </ul>	-we help each other constant group talk X		not family like
3. The physical space supports collaborative work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The seating arrangement is flexible and supports student collaboration and equal participation between teachers and students <i>yes</i></li> <li>Chairs/desks are arranged to facilitate group work <i>yes</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The seating arrangement is designed for individual work with the teacher being "center stage" <i>no</i></li> <li>Classroom is arranged for quiet, solitary work only <i>no</i></li> <li>Teacher discourages student interaction <i>no</i></li> </ul>	T moves all the time T often rearranges st. seating X		
4. Students work together productively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The teacher implements practices that teach collaboration and respect, e.g., class meetings, modeling effective discussion, etc.</li> <li>Students interact in respectful ways and know how to work together effectively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The students primarily work individually and are not expected to work collaboratively; and/or students have a difficult time collaborating</li> <li>Lack of respectful interaction amongst students may be an issue ✓</li> </ul>	modeling often collaborative X	st have difficulty staying focused	

III. **FAM** FAMILY COLLABORATION **Holistic score** 4 3 2 1 0

**NOTE:** When scoring this component of the CRIOP, the XXX survey or teacher interview should be used in addition to field observations. Observations alone will not provide adequate information for scoring.

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (✓)
1. The teacher establishes genuine partnerships (equitable relationships) with parents/caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents'/caregivers' ideas are solicited on how best to instruct the child</li> <li>There is evidence of conversations with parents/caregivers where it's clear that they are viewed as partners in educating the student ✓</li> <li>There is evidence that the teacher has made the effort to get to know the "whole child" (his/her background, family culture, outside of school activities) by getting to know his/her parents/caregivers ✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents'/caregivers' suggestions are not incorporated in instruction</li> <li>No effort made to establish relationships with caregivers</li> <li>There is evidence of a "deficit perspective" in which families and caregivers are viewed as inferior and/or as having limited resources that can be leveraged for instruction</li> </ul>	<p>Parent interaction I research families, know parents X</p>		
2. The teacher uses parent expertise to support student learning and welcomes parents/caregivers in the classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents/caregivers are invited into the classroom to share experiences and areas of expertise</li> <li>Parents'/caregivers' "funds of knowledge" are utilized in the instructional program</li> <li>Teacher makes reference to parents'/caregivers' careers, backgrounds, daily activities during instruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents/caregivers are never involved in instructional program</li> <li>Parents'/caregivers' "funds of knowledge" are never utilized</li> <li>There is no evidence of home/family connections in the classroom</li> </ul>			parents not involved but I refer to them. Pres. is minimal
3. The teacher reaches out to meet parents in positive, non-traditional ways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher conducts home visit conferences</li> <li>Teacher plans parent/family activities at locations outside of school</li> <li>Teacher meets parents in parking lot or other "neutral" locations</li> <li>Teacher makes "good day" phone calls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication with parents/caregivers is through newsletters, where they are asked to respond passively (e.g., signing the newsletter, versus become actively involved in their child's learning)</li> <li>Teacher conducts phone calls, conferences, personal notes to parents for negative reports only (e.g., discipline)</li> </ul>	<p>✓ yes. This is always available X</p>		

IV. ASMT ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

Holistic score 4 3 2 1 0

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (✓)
1. Formative assessment practices are used that provide information throughout the lesson on specified learning targets; students are evaluated within the context of scaffolded instruction to determine their potential for learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher frequently assesses students' understanding throughout instruction ✓</li> <li>Students may have "talking partners" for reviewing information during the lesson ✓</li> <li>Students are able to voice their learning throughout the lesson ✓</li> <li>Teacher assesses students' ability to learn with appropriate support ✓</li> <li>Teacher may implement "trial lessons" that use texts or require students to solve problems at a higher level than students' performance might indicate ✓</li> <li>Teacher uses observation to determine students' capabilities, listening carefully to students and learning from their attempts to make meaning ✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment occurs at the end of the lesson</li> <li>Assessment is not embedded throughout instruction</li> <li>Assessment is regarded as a set of evaluation "tools" that are used to determine what students have learned (e.g., exit slips, quizzes, etc. that are administered after instruction has occurred versus examining students' cognitive processing during instruction)</li> <li>Assessment is solely used to determine what students already know or can do</li> <li>Teacher does not evaluate student understanding while engaged in challenging work</li> </ul>	X		
2. Students are able to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students with limited English proficiency and/or limited literacy can show their conceptual learning through visual or other forms of representation</li> <li>Multiple assessments are used so students have various ways to demonstrate competence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most or all tests are written and require reading/writing proficiency in English</li> <li>Teacher expects students to tell "the" answer ✓</li> <li>Students have a narrow range of options for demonstrating competence (e.g., multiple choice tests, matching, etc.) ✓</li> </ul>	mult. assess. → but almost all are modeled X FEAT		
3. Formative assessment practices are used that provide information on the learning of every student; no student "falls through the cracks"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher uses formative assessments that determine individual learning ✓</li> <li>Teacher uses information from formative assessments to scaffold student learning and to clarify misconceptions of individual students when needed during instruction ✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formative assessments are too general to capture individual student understanding (e.g. class discussions where only a few students participate)</li> <li>Teacher uses assessment data only to assign grades; data not used formatively to provide explicit instruction when needed</li> <li>Teacher relies on summative assessments to inform instruction</li> </ul>	error analysis X		
4. Authentic assessments are used as the primary means for assessing written and oral language development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students' written and oral language proficiency is assessed while they are actively engaged in reading, writing, speaking, extended discourse ✓</li> <li>Students' linguistic competence is evaluated while they are actually using language in purposeful ways ✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessments measure discrete, isolated skills and/or use short, disconnected passages</li> <li>Students' linguistic competence is evaluated solely through standardized measures for summative</li> </ul>		X	
5. Teacher sets high standards and students understand the criteria by which	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher bases feedback on established high standards and provides students with specific information on how they can meet those standards ✓</li> <li>Criteria for particular</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher feedback is subjective and is not tied to targeted learning outcomes and standards</li> <li>Students do not know the criteria upon which they are</li> </ul>	X		

<p>they are being assessed</p>	<p>assignments are displayed and teacher refers to criteria as students develop their products <i>rubrics</i></p>	<p>being assessed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standards are not rigorous</li> <li>Teacher responds to student work with short evaluative comments such as "good job" or "✓"</li> </ul>	<p>X</p>		
<p>6. Students have opportunities for self-assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are involved in analyzing their work and in setting their own goals for learning</li> <li>Students are involved in developing the criteria for their finished products (e.g., scoring rubrics)</li> <li>Students are encouraged to evaluate their own products based upon a pre-determined set of criteria</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment is always teacher-controlled</li> </ul>	<p><i>rubric but</i> ↘ X</p>		
<p>7. Assessment practices promote the achievement of the group, and not just individuals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher encourages students to work together to learn difficult concepts, and assesses the work of the group ✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher emphasizes individual achievement; working together is viewed as "cheating"</li> </ul>	<p>X</p>		

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V. CURR CURRICULUM/  
PLANNED EXPERIENCES

Holistic score 4 3 2 1 0

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (✓)
1. The curriculum and planned learning experiences use the knowledge and experience of students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Real-world examples that connect to students' lives are included in the curriculum ✓</li> <li>Learning experiences build on prior student learning and invite students to make connections ✓</li> <li>Examples of mainstream and non-mainstream beliefs, attitudes, and activities are included</li> <li>Students' own texts and experiences are used to demonstrate skills and concepts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No attempt is made to link students' realities to what is being studied</li> <li>Learning experiences are disconnected from students' knowledge and experiences</li> <li>Skills and content are presented in isolation (never in application to authentic contexts)</li> <li>Students' and families' particular "funds of knowledge" are never called upon during learning experiences</li> <li>Teacher follows the script of the adopted curriculum even when it conflicts with her own or the students' lived experiences</li> </ul>	X		
2. The curriculum and planned experiences integrate and provide opportunities for the expression of diverse perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Texts include protagonists from diverse backgrounds and present ideas from multiple perspectives</li> <li>Texts are available that represent diverse protagonists or multiple perspectives</li> <li>Opportunities are plentiful for students to present diverse perspectives through class discussions</li> <li>Students are encouraged to challenge the ideas in a text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The conventional, dominant point of view is predominating</li> <li>Few texts are available to represent diverse protagonists or multiple perspectives</li> <li>Biased units of study that show only the conventional point of view (e.g., Columbus discovered America) are presented ✓</li> <li>No or very few texts are available with protagonists from diverse cultural, linguistic, and/or socioeconomic backgrounds</li> <li>No opportunities are provided for students to present diverse views</li> </ul>		School- assigned text as main resource	
3. The curriculum and planned learning experiences involve students in using written and oral language for real purposes and audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The language and experiences of the students and the activity of the classroom are used to teach written and oral language skills and conventions</li> <li>Students' own writing and a variety of print materials are used to develop literacy skills</li> <li>Curriculum experiences include inquiry-based reading, writing, and learning</li> <li>Authentic learning tasks are an integral part of the curriculum (e.g., developing proposals, presenting information to real audiences, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Written and oral language skills are taught outside the context of meaningful literate activity</li> <li>An adopted or pre-made curriculum is used exclusively to teach skills and concepts</li> <li>Worksheets and/or workbook assignments predominate ✓</li> <li>Students read from textbooks exclusively and responses to reading consist of prefabricated end-of-chapter questions ✓</li> </ul>		X	
4. The curriculum and planned learning experiences provide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are engaged in experiences that develop awareness and provide opportunities to contribute, inform, persuade and have a voice in the classroom, school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The curriculum and learning experiences present written and oral language as "neutral skills" and ignores the sociopolitical context in which language and literacy are used ✓</li> </ul>		X	

<p>opportunities for the inclusion of issues important to the classroom, school and community</p>	<p>and beyond</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral and written language and academic concepts are used to explore real-world issues</li> <li>• Community-based issues and projects are included in the planned program and new skills and concepts are linked to real-world problems and events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning experiences are derived almost exclusively from published textbooks and other materials that do not relate to the classroom community or the larger community being served</li> <li>• The focus of literacy and content instruction is to teach the skills and information required to "pass the test"</li> </ul>		<p>X</p>	
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VI. INSTR PEDAGOGY/  
INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

Holistic score 4 3 2 1 0

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (✓)
1. Instruction is contextualized in students' lives and experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning tasks and texts relate directly to students' lives outside of school</li> <li>Classroom interaction patterns and communication structures match those found in students' homes and communities ✓</li> <li>The teacher builds on students' existing cultural knowledge in lessons and activities ✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning tasks and texts reflect the values and experiences of dominant ethnic and cultural groups ✓</li> <li>Only interaction patterns and communication structures of the dominant group are deemed acceptable</li> </ul>	X		
2. The teacher learns with students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The teacher learns about diverse perspectives along with students</li> <li>The teacher engages students in the inquiry process and learns from students' investigations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The teacher is the authority</li> <li>Students are not encouraged to challenge or question ideas presented or to engage in further inquiry</li> </ul>		X	
3. The teacher allows students to collaborate with one another	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students work in pairs and small groups to read, write and discuss texts or to solve problems</li> <li>The teacher works to equalize existing status differences among students ✓</li> <li>Teacher arranges shared experiences that build a sense of community (e.g. choral reading, partner reading, drama, working together to solve challenging problems or to create a new product)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students read, write and solve problems in isolation</li> <li>Students are not permitted to help one another or to work together in pairs or groups</li> </ul>	X		
4. Students engage in active, hands-on learning tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning tasks allow students to be physically active ✓</li> <li>Teacher uses learning activities that promote a high level of student engagement ✓</li> <li>Exploratory learning is encouraged ✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students work passively at their seats on teacher-directed tasks</li> <li>Passive student learning is the norm (e.g., listening to direct instruction and taking notes, reading the textbook, seatwork, worksheets, etc.) ✓</li> <li>Exploratory learning is discouraged ✓</li> </ul>		X	passive style but active engagement
5. The teacher gives students choices based on their experiences, values, needs and strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students have multiple opportunities to choose texts, writing topics, and modes of expression based on preferences and personal relevance ✓</li> <li>Students have some choice in assignments ✓</li> <li>Teacher allows students some choice in the topic of study and ownership in what they are learning (e.g., student-generated questions that will guide the study, research on a selected topic)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The teacher selects reading texts, writing topics, and modes of expression for students ✓</li> <li>All assignments are teacher-initiated ✓</li> <li>Students have no choice in topic of study or in the questions that will be addressed throughout the study ✓</li> </ul>		X	

<p>6. The teacher balances instruction using both explicit teaching and meaningful application</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruction is rigorous and cognitively challenging for students from all ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds ✓</li> <li>• The teacher models, explains and demonstrates skills and concepts and provides appropriate scaffolding for students ✓</li> <li>• Students apply skills and new concepts in the context of meaningful and personally relevant learning activities ✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruction focuses on low-level skills</li> <li>• Students engage in isolated and repetitive tasks that are disconnected from each other</li> <li>• The teacher does not always model, explain and demonstrate new skills and concepts prior to asking students to apply them</li> <li>• The teacher does not provide appropriate scaffolding for students as they learn new skills and concepts</li> <li>• Students practice skills and reinforce new concepts in ways that are not meaningful or personally relevant to them</li> </ul>	<p>X</p>		
<p>7. The teacher focuses on developing students' academic vocabularies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an emphasis on learning academic vocabulary in the particular content area ✓</li> <li>• The teacher provides explicit instruction in the meaning of words and students practice using new words in a variety of meaningful contexts ✓</li> <li>• Students learn independent word learning strategies such as morphology, contextual analysis, and cognates ✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little attention is paid to academic vocabulary instruction in the content area</li> <li>• New words are taught outside of meaningful contexts</li> <li>• Students are not taught independent word learning strategies</li> </ul>	<p>X</p>		

VII. DIS DISCOURSE/ Holistic score 4 3 2 1 0 INSTRUCTIONAL CONVERSATION

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (✓)
1. The teacher encourages and responds positively to children's use of home/native language/dialect and culturally-specific discourse styles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is peer conversation in the home language or dialect during both free and academic time ✓</li> <li>Students share stories in their home language/dialect</li> <li>ELL students communicate together in their native language</li> <li>The teacher accepts students' home languages and dialects, while also teaching the standard vernacular ✓</li> <li>Students are supported in their use of culturally-specific ways of communicating, such as topic-associative discourse, topic-chaining discourse, and overlapping discourse patterns ✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are discouraged from using their home language or dialect</li> <li>ELL students are discouraged from using their native language outside of school</li> <li>The teacher views topic-associative discourse, topic-chaining discourse, and overlapping discourse patterns as rambling talk</li> <li>The teacher attempts to control and change student communication styles to match mainstream classroom discourse patterns</li> </ul>	X		no ELLs
2. The teacher shares control of classroom discourse with students and builds upon and expands upon student talk in an authentic way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students engage in genuine discussions versus "guess what's in the teacher's head"</li> <li>The teacher uses open-ended questions and various discourse protocols to elicit extended student talk</li> <li>The teacher demonstrates active listening and responds in authentic ways to student comments; s/he encourages the same active listening from students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are strict boundaries between personal conversation and instructional conversation ✓</li> <li>Students rarely have opportunities for genuine discussions ✓</li> <li>There are few or no opportunities for extended student talk; rather, talk is dominated by the teacher ✓</li> </ul>		X	
3. The teacher promotes student engagement through culturally responsive discourse practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The teacher employs a variety of culturally appropriate discourse protocols to promote student participation and engagement (e.g., call and response, talking circle)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discourse practices of various cultural groups are not used during instruction</li> </ul>	X		
4. The teacher promotes equitable discourse practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students use collaborative, overlapping conversation and participate actively, supporting the speaker during the creation of story talk or discussion and commenting/expanding upon the ideas of others ✓</li> <li>The teacher uses techniques to support equitable participation, such as wait time, feedback, turn-taking, and scaffolding of ideas ✓</li> <li>All students have the opportunity to participate in classroom discussions ✓</li> <li>There is a sense of congeniality and consensus building; students build on one another's ideas in a respectful way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The teacher controls classroom discourse by assigning speaking rights to students</li> <li>Students follow traditional norms in turn-taking</li> <li>Not all students have the opportunity to participate in classroom discussions</li> <li>Some students are allowed to dominate discussions</li> </ul>	X		

<p>5. The teacher provides structures that promote student collaborative talk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structures are used that promote student talk, such as think/pair/share, small group work, and partner work ✓</li> <li>Students collaborate and work together to solve problems ✓</li> <li>The teacher encourages the use of a “talk story like” participation structure to allow children to produce responses collaboratively ✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are discouraged from talking together</li> <li>Collaborating with other students is discouraged and may be regarded as “cheating”</li> <li>The teacher does not allow students to collaborate in producing answers</li> </ul>	<p>X</p>		
<p>6. The teacher provides opportunities for students to develop linguistic competence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The teacher articulates expectations for language use (e.g., “I want you to reply using complete sentences. I want you to use these vocabulary words in your discussion”) ✓</li> <li>The teacher develops language objectives in addition to content objectives, having specific goals in mind for students’ linguistic performance</li> <li>Students are engaged in authentic uses of language, (e.g., drama, discussion, purposeful writing and communication)</li> <li>Students are taught appropriate registers of language use for a variety of social contexts, and they are provided with opportunities to practice those registers in authentic ways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The teacher does not articulate expectations for language use</li> <li>The teacher does not have language objectives for students; rather, only content objectives are evident</li> <li>Students’ use of language is limited and they do not use language in authentic ways ✓</li> <li>Students are not taught how to vary their language use in different social contexts and for different purposes.</li> </ul>	<p>X</p>		

**VIII. PERSP SOCIOPOLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS/MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES**

Holistic score 4 3 2 1 0

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (✓)
1. Students are allowed to question the way things are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher helps students identify important social issues and facilitates students' investigation of the status quo and how to challenge it</li> <li>Students may identify issues within their own school or texts to investigate and question</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher teaches to the "norm" by using standard textbooks and curriculum and presenting information and ideas as neutral</li> <li>Teacher discourages critical thought or questioning of instructional materials or social issues</li> <li>Teacher engages in mystification in which students are not given the "whole story" in order to avoid controversy</li> </ul>			X
2. Students take action on real world problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher and students identify and discuss issues within the community that are of relevance to their lives</li> <li>Teacher facilitates student advocacy for their communities</li> <li>Teacher encourages students to investigate real-world issues related to a topic being studied</li> <li>Teacher encourages students to become actively involved in solving problems at the local, state, national, and global levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher does not bring community and social issues into the classroom</li> <li>Learning occurs only as it relates to the standard curriculum</li> <li>Teacher does not encourage application to real-world issues; accepts or endorses the status quo by ignoring or dismissing real life problems related to the topic being studied</li> </ul>			X
3. The teacher fosters an understanding of differing points of view	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher helps students frame differing viewpoints about accepted roles (race, gender, age, ethnicity, class, etc.) depicted in instructional materials</li> <li>Teacher encourages students to challenge statements in written and oral texts and to engage in dialogue that would present alternative views</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher uses materials in class that perpetuate the status quo without presenting diverse perspectives</li> <li>Teacher accepts information in written texts as factual</li> </ul>			X
4. The teacher actively deconstructs negative stereotypes in instructional materials and other texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher facilitates students' understanding of stereotypes and their function in society</li> <li>Teacher discusses biases in popular culture that students encounter in their daily lives (e.g., TV shows, advertising, popular songs, toys)</li> <li>Teacher helps students to think about biases in texts (e.g., "Who has the power in this book?" Whose perspectives are represented in the text? Whose perspectives are missing? Who benefits from the beliefs and practices represented in this text?)</li> <li>Teacher challenges students to deconstruct their own cultural assumptions and biases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher does not encourage students to examine biases in instructional materials or popular texts</li> <li>Teacher makes prejudicial statements to students (e.g., girls are emotional; immigrants don't belong here; etc.) that indicate that s/he is not consciously aware of stereotypes and how they are perpetuated</li> </ul>	X		

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Katie Tricarico completed her undergraduate degree in elementary education at the University of South Florida in 2000. During the next 6 years, she taught 6<sup>th</sup> grade in Goochland, VA and 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades in Tampa, FL, earning her endorsement in gifted education. She returned to school at the University of Florida, earning a master's degree in curriculum and instruction in 2007 and continuing her education towards a doctoral degree. Over the next 4 years, Katie's passion for the foundations of education led her to teach several sections of Social and Historical Foundations of American Education, which led her to realize a new passion: teaching students at the undergraduate level. She earned her doctorate from the University of Florida in 2012 with a focus on curriculum, teaching, and teacher education. Katie's research interests include connecting the foundations of education to modern practice, high poverty education, and teacher preparation in traditional and alternative contexts.