

## “Literacy Learning Map” Assignment Sheet

### Part I:

#### Professional Abilities Emphasized in this Assignment

Each of the Department’s professional abilities are touched upon in some way in this assignment, however the following are most heavily emphasized in part I:

**Effective Communicator:** In this assignment you are asked to demonstrate your increasingly professional skills as a writer – as well as to demonstrate the use of reflective forms of writing. Here you will prepare for drafting.

**Decision-Maker:** Throughout this assignment you will be asked to make and justify professional decisions based on personal values. You will also be involved with setting personal and professional goals.

**Scholarly Educator:** As you complete this assignment you will be required to self-identify areas of need/interest and to seek out information using a wide variety of sources and technology.

#### Reflections:

1. Think back to your earliest experience as a literacy learner. Think carefully about how you came to know reading and writing. Ask yourself such questions as: Who helped me? How? What tools did I use? Was I encouraged? Discouraged? What were my **earliest** thoughts on what reading and writing were? Which events/experiences significantly impacted my development -- both positively and negatively?
2. Continue to “map out” your experiences as a reader and writer (**from the earliest to the present.**) Ask yourself such questions as: When did I begin to feel like a reader/writer? What have been the joys, frustrations, etc. of my reading/writing experiences to date?
3. Think about how you feel about yourself as a reader/writer today. How do you feel about reading/writing itself? Why?

#### Details:

- a. Spend some time thinking about the above questions, but don't limit yourself to these alone. By adding to the road map we began in class, sketch out your **personal** history as a reader/writer. Think back as far as you can and bring it to the present. (Hint: a call home to the folks who knew you best might be helpful for those early times.)
- b. Think carefully about the details of the metaphor you are using: roadblocks, stop signs, etc. What do they mean for you? Do not write paragraphs explaining each -- but you may want to include a **few** words that help us to understand what the event/experience was -- and how it impacted you. (Example: You sketch a sign that says "Pizza Hut," then you write the words "Book it" to describe the event and "I read lots" to describe its impact on you.)
- c. In evaluating these, I will give much consideration to evidence of careful thought and **thoroughness/detail**. It is also important to provide some balance between reading and writing.
- d. Make sure that you include experiences from before formal schooling, early elementary, later elementary, middle school, and high school years -- all the way to the present. Include both in and outside of school experiences too. **It is essential that your map represent all of these "stages."**
- e. How much detail is "enough" is a tough question to answer. In general, I would expect no less than 20 events/experiences on your map. Remember....that would be the minimum.

Think of this assignment as developing a visual "road map" to you as a reader/writer today.

**Points: You can earn up to 20 points for this assignment**

**Due: Thursday, January 17 -- at the beginning of class**

**Note:** It is clear that literacy learning involves far more than reading and writing -- and that is very complex and overlapping. I have discussed it simply as reading and writing for the sake of simplicity. Feel free to bring in other dimensions if you wish (i.e. -- the role of oral language, etc.)

## Literacy Learning Map Assignment Sheet Part II

### Professional Abilities Emphasized in this Assignment:

Each of the Department's professional abilities are touched upon in some way in this assignment, however the following are most heavily emphasized in part II:

**Decision-Maker:** As you consider your own history as a learner, you will begin to use this information to set personal and professional goals. In addition, you will be asked to consider how you make and justify professional decisions that are based on personal values.

**Effective Communicator:** You will continue to demonstrate the use of professional writing -- using the reflective forms.

**Scholarly Educator:** In this part of the assignment, you will be focused on using your own experiences to self-identify areas of need/interest and prepare to seek out information using a wide variety of sources and technology.

### Introduction:

Sociologist Dan Lortie (1975) has said that preservice teachers serve a long "apprenticeship of observation" before they begin their own professional careers. This apprenticeship begins early in our lives as we observe teaching and learning experiences from the perspective of the learner. In other words, you have had several years of watching others teach and have certainly developed ideas based on this experience about what it means to teach and to be a teacher.

In part I of this assignment you were asked to reflect on (and map out) your own experiences as a literacy learner -- your apprenticeship of observation. In this second part of the assignment you are being asked to write about the ideas around literacy learning you bring to your own teaching based on these experiences!

### Details:

1. Spend some time reviewing your visual "Literacy Learning Map." Think carefully about the impact these experiences have had on your own views about reading and writing -- and how to teach them. What philosophy about teaching and learning in classroom settings (related to reading/writing) has emerged from them? More specifically, which teaching practices would

you want to include in your own work? Which would you avoid? Why? (These are just some starting questions. Don't limit yourself to them.)

2. Make a list of statements that represent your views on the teaching of reading and writing based on your own experiences. **These need to be clear, direct and very specific.** They should begin with the phrase: "***I believe.....***"

Examples: "**I believe** that teachers should use phonics drills as the primary way to teach reading." OR "**I believe** that phonics is better than whole language for teaching reading." OR "**I believe** that reading incentive programs (like Book-It) destroy children's desire to read independently."

Each statement should be written as one clear sentence. It will be important to use the word reading OR writing in your statement. (It is typically better to make one for reading and a separate one for writing if necessary -- versus having both words in a statement.)

3. Pick 3 or 4 of your statements -- ones you feel most deeply about. Then, for each one, write two or three paragraphs that talk about why you hold this belief, feeling, etc. **It is very important that these paragraphs relate your statement to the experiences noted in your literacy learning map.** In other words -- justify the statement based on your specific experiences -- not vague or philosophical views. (For example: "When I was in third grade, my class did the Book-It program and .....")

(Please note: You will not be graded on whether or not I agree with your statement/belief. Rather, I will look at the way you have used your experiences to both develop your statements and to support them.)

#### 4. Formatting:

- A. List a belief statement in **boldfaced print**. Hit the enter key.
  - B. Write 2 or 3 paragraphs that explain why you selected it.  
Remember: Use specific examples from your road map or things you have remembered since turning it in.
  - C. Repeat the steps above for your 2 or 3 other statements.
5. Again, in evaluating these, I will give much consideration to evidence of careful thought and thoroughness. It is also important that you provide some balance between reading and writing.
  6. Please limit your papers to **3 double-spaced pages**. (12 or 13 point fonts please and normal margins.)
  7. Do **not** use belief statements around the issue of reading aloud.  
Thanks!

## Literacy Learning Map Assignment Sheet Part III -- Final Project

### Professional Abilities Emphasized in this Assignment:

The Department's professional abilities emphasized most heavily in Part III include:

**Decision-Maker:** In this part you will continue your journey toward making and justifying professional decisions based on personal values.

**Problem Solver:** In this final segment of the assignment, you are asked to reflect on the appropriateness/effectiveness of strategies -- in particular, your evolving beliefs about them.

**Curriculum Developer:** You will be asked to use the professional literature that you have considered to inform your decisions about curriculum development and selection.

**Scholarly Educator:** You will be using the web, ERIC, etc. to explore the literature and research related to your belief statements.

### Introduction:

In part I of this assignment you retraced your own literacy development. In part II you were asked to develop a number of statements about literacy teaching and learning that emerged from your own "apprenticeship of observation." In this final part you will demonstrate/document the process you will use to reflect upon your own growing understandings of literacy learning and teaching.

### Details:

4. Select 1 of the statements you did for part II of this assignment. Post this on DISCUS by this **Friday, February 15**. Note: If you select a statement that was "starred" on part II, just post it exactly as it is written on part II. If your statement needs some revision, please send me both the original statement and the new statement via email -- right away. Mark these as "original" and "revised." We can correspond over email until you feel comfortable with your statement. Then you can post it on DISCUS. **Note:** Do NOT come up with an entirely new statement.

5. Over the next several weeks, locate a variety of sources and document your process of discovery related to this statement. You are looking for things that challenge, expand and reinforce your stated beliefs.

### **Ways to Document:**

**a. Annotated Text:** As you read the research and come across things related to your statement, annotate the text itself. This involves writing comments in the margins of the book that clearly relate how what you have read relates to your statement. ("This made me wonder about my views on how writing should be taught because...., etc.)

Highlighting alone will not be sufficient. You will want to photocopy the pages you're using for inclusion in your project.

**b. Summaries of Articles/Other Texts:** Find and read other materials related to your statement. These should both challenge or reinforce your thinking. Write a short summary of each that demonstrates how they relate to your statement -- and/or annotate these as described above. (See our text for starting points.)

**c. Other:** For journal entries, interviews, etc., please see the specific documentation requirements listed in the section below.

### **Sources for Information (Variety is important):**

**Web sites, etc.:** Find and explore web sites that relate to your statement. Give the address and a short summary of how what you found there relates to your statement OR print up the information and annotate -- as described above. **Remember:** All web sites are not created equally, so use discretion. Also, a one-page printout that has little reliable information will not suffice here.

**ERIC and Other Databases:** Use the ERIC system to find and explore research related to your topic. Pull up or find the actual documents (full text) and annotate or write a summary. (There are several other databases you will want to explore via FirstSearch: Wilson, etc. Some of these have full documents.) At least one source found through ERIC is required.

**Journaling:** Keep a journal of your own personal reflections as you encounter new information in class about this statement. (Reflections might be about related class discussions, activities, assignments, etc.) Note: Typically, a series of journal accounts will be counted as one source.

**Interviews:** Interview professionals in the field related to your topic. You should submit the typed questions that you prepared in advance, their answers and a summary of your conversation (including its impact upon your beliefs). Remember, all parts should be typed up in professional format. At least one interview is required

**Other:** There are probably dozens of other ways to locate information on what you are thinking, learning, wondering about, etc. Feel free to be creative! Just remember to relate everything to the statement you have selected for part II.

**IMPORTANT: PLEASE USE THE SEPARATE CITATION GUIDE FOR YOUR PROGRESS REPORTS AND YOUR FINAL PROJECT.**

**NOTE: No less than 20 good and reliable sources related to your belief statement are required. These must represent a variety of sources. 20 is the minimum number.**

6. You must demonstrate your efforts to find information that both reinforces and challenges your belief statement. (Note here that "challenges" could mean "opposes" and/or "expands" your thinking in new directions.)
7. At some point you will want to begin organizing the documentation of your own learnings. There are a variety of ways to do this:

**Notebook:** Organize your documentation into a three-ring notebook in a way that clearly demonstrates your growth in relation to your statement of belief. This tends to be the most common way that people in this course have handled this in the past.

**File:** Another option is to compile your information into some kind of file -- like the accordion type files you can purchase at most office supply stores.

**Journal:** This option would probably use a bound notebook of some kind and would perhaps be a chronological way of demonstrating your growing understandings.

**\*\*All of the above must have clear documentation -- as indicated in #2 above.**

Again, highlighting won't be adequate. Write summaries or annotations that connect to your belief statements. You need to include the documentation itself. (I'd also urge you to include -- in a separate section -- things you found but couldn't use.)

8. **Regardless of the way you chose to organize your work, you will need to provide a written narrative that guides me through your documentation.** Your narrative should talk about how your thinking was challenged/expanded and supported along the way. Be sure to reference specific titles and experiences. This is not a term paper. It is a documentation of your intellectual journey. See the grading rubric for guidelines on the content and structure of this narrative. This is generally 3 - 4 pages long.
9. See the separate rubric for guidance in how I will assess this final project.

10. You will be asked to give short "progress reports" on your efforts throughout the semester.  
See the syllabus for due dates.

**Remember: Your goal is not to "prove" your statement. Rather, it is to show how your thinking about this issue (based on experiences prior to this course) is evolving as you encounter theory, research and new experiences (including practice models).**