

## Plans for Future Growth

As a Developmental Kindergarten teacher, I have had the benefit of utilizing my classroom experience to complete my Master of Arts in Education, concentrating on Literacy Instruction. It has been wonderful to learn about the needs of my students in an authentic way and be able to utilize the skills I have been acquiring in real time. This has been great practice for me and I look forward to being able to continue refining the skills that I now have while I am a classroom teacher.

However, as all educators know, learning never stops! So, now that I have some more tools in my toolbox for teaching literacy, I need to continue to stay up-to-date with best practices for early childhood language development skills, reading instruction and writing instruction. My eventual goal for about 10 years from now, once I have an abundance of experience, is to be a Literacy Interventionist. These professional development opportunities will also help me to reach that goal.

I was fortunate to have joined the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) when I was still an undergraduate student. I have been very impressed with the research conducted by child development colleagues and have often found the articles published in the NAEYC Journal, *Young Children*. Therefore my interest has been peaked in attending the NAEYC National Conference. This conference is hosted annually in different locations around the country and professionals speak on all possible topics throughout the scope of child development. I am most interested to learn from my early childhood colleagues about language development and how I can use language to encourage the literacy growth of my students.

Another organization that I am also a member of is National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). NCTE focuses on English and Language Arts throughout all of education, elementary through college. I really appreciate that they cherish the diversity that students walk into our classrooms with and they wish to use English and Language Arts to break down barriers both in life and in education as a whole. Similar to NAEYC, NCTE also hosts its own annual conference. I would love to be able to attend this conference to get professional development on how to utilize children's literature and digital reading essentials for students in order to help guide my reading instruction.

Lastly, I am extremely interested in attending the Teacher's College at Columbia University Reading & Writing Project Summer Institutes. This is a weeklong course where you can earn college credits or professional development hours. The summer Writing Institute sessions are intensive and teachers go through the process as a student in order to truly develop the understanding and experience of building a writing-rich classroom with curriculum. Similarly, in the Reading Institute, teachers use curriculum to venture deeply into critical thinking skills using literature.

Since all three of these organizations have in-person professional development opportunities, I

have already looked into how I can actually get myself to these events. I have discussed my interest with my administrator as well. Thankfully my district encourages and provides funds for educators to seek professional development outside of district provided professional development. Therefore, I will just need to write a proposal and he will be able to approve it, should the budget allow! This is a very exciting prospect for further growth. In fact, one of my colleagues is attending the August Writing Institute right before school resumes this fall.

I feel that through utilizing these professional development opportunities, I will be able to continue on my path toward becoming a literacy interventionist in a few years while still being able to serve my school community in the best way possible until that opportunity presents itself.

#### Resources:

- Teacher's College at Columbia University Reading & Writing Project
  - <https://readingandwritingproject.org/services/institutes/summer-institutes>
- <https://readingandwritingproject.org> (homepage)
- NAEYC Conference
  - <https://www.naeyc.org/events/annual>
  - Attend curriculum and teaching workshops with other professionals
- NCTE Conference
  - <http://www2.ncte.org> (homepage)
  - <http://convention.ncte.org>
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