The knowledge base for teaching is growingly steadily. Professional consensus and research findings have begun to provide authoritative support of knowledge related to many of the tasks, responsibilities and results of teaching. But much remains to be learned.

—National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 
What Teachers Should Know and Be Able to Do
One day early in the year Ms. D. posed the following problem to her first
graders: “Jenny had 4 pieces of gum and Esther had 7 pieces of gum.
How many pieces did they have together?” After students had worked a few
minutes, the class discussed what they found.

Ms. D.: Luis, how did you solve that problem?
Luis: I counted the blocks.
Ms. D.: But how did you count them?
Luis: I counted Jenny’s pieces 1, 2, 3, 4 and then I counted the other girl’s 5, 6,
7, 8, 9, 10, 11.
Ms. D.: Thanks, Luis. Sarah, how did you do it?
Sarah: I counted in my head.
Ms. D.: OK. Do you remember what numbers you said?
Sarah: I started at 5 and said 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.
Ms. D.: How did you know to stop at 11?
Sarah: I don’t know. I guess I just counted seven times and stopped.
Ms. D.: How did you keep track that you counted seven times?
Sarah: I don’t know.
Ms. D.: Did anyone else do it Sarah’s way? I’m trying to figure out how she
kept track of seven when she was counting.
Juan: I did it like that. Sometimes I keep track on my fingers and sometimes I
just keep track in my head.
Ms. D.: OK. I’m going to keep thinking about that. Did anyone else do it a dif-
ferent way?
Rasheed: I started at 8 and went 8, 9, 10, 11.
Mira: I knew that 4 and 6 is 10 so 4 and 7 would be 11.
As she watched her students solve simple addition and subtraction problems,
listened to their descriptions, and discussed what she was hearing with her col-
leagues, Ms. D. began learning a good deal about how her students solved these
problems. She learned that many of her students moved through a progression
of methods for solving the same kind of problem. For addition problems, the
progression looked much like the sequence of methods presented by students in
the classroom episode presented above.

Ms. D. learned that the methods themselves contained important properties
of numbers and operations. For example, the fact that Sarah’s method and
Rasheed’s method both produced the correct answer was an early encounter
with commutativity, but with a form of this property that Ms. D. had not thought
of before. The question of whether this would always work became a rich ques-
tion for students to explore. Mira’s method contained a decomposition and re-
composition of numbers that Ms. D. began to recognize as an essential character
of numbers, especially as students began adding and subtracting two- and three-
digit numbers (Hiebert, Gallimore, and Stigler 2002, 5–6).
Focus Questions

1. What essential knowledge do you need to teach?
2. What are five ways of viewing the teacher knowledge base?
3. How do reforms in teacher education affect you?
4. What can you learn from observing in classrooms?
5. How can you gain practical experience for becoming a teacher?
6. How can you develop your teaching portfolio?
7. How can you benefit from mentoring relationships?
8. What opportunities for continuing professional development will you have?

What Essential Knowledge Do You Need to Teach?

Students preparing to become teachers must have three kinds of knowledge before they can manage effectively the complexities of teaching: knowledge of self and students, knowledge of subject, and knowledge of educational theory and research. It is to this essential knowledge that we now turn.

Self-Knowledge

Effective teachers are aware of themselves and sensitive to the needs of their students. Although it is evident that teachers should understand their students as fully and deeply as possible, it is less evident that this understanding depends on their level of self-knowledge. If teachers are knowledgeable about their needs (and, most important, able to take care of those needs), they are better able to help their students. As Arthur Jersild (1955, 3), one of the first educators to focus attention on the connection between the teacher’s personal insight and professional effectiveness, pointed out, a teacher’s self-understanding and self-acceptance are prerequisites for helping students to know and accept themselves.

Teachers’ self-evaluations often are influenced by emotions that teachers may experience when they teach, such as anxiety or loneliness. Promoting anxiety are the realities of teaching outlined in Chapter 1. For example, three conditions that
cloud teachers’ efforts are (1) the interminable nature of teaching (i.e., their work is never completed), (2) the intangible and often unpredictable characteristics of teaching results, and (3) the inability to attribute learning results to specific teachers’ instruction. Unlike architects, lawyers, and doctors, teachers can never stand back and admire their work. If a student does well, that success rightfully belongs to the student.

Teachers thus need to develop the ability to tolerate ambiguities and to reduce their anxieties about being observably effective. Without this ability, a teacher ‘can feel that one is ‘wrong,’ ‘missing something,’ a ‘bad fit’ with students and with teaching itself. One can feel that one’s circumstances are unfair, that one is giving but not receiving. One can feel helpless, not knowing what to do, not even knowing how to get the frustration out of mind let alone how to resolve it in practice” (Hansen 1995, 60).

Teachers can also experience loneliness or psychological isolation, since most of their time is spent interacting with children and youth, not adults. Though increased opportunities for professional collaboration and networking are reducing teacher isolation, teachers are behind classroom doors most of the day, immersed in the complexities of teaching and trying to meet the diverse needs of their students. Most teachers would welcome more interaction with their colleagues, especially time to observe one another. Without opportunities to receive feedback from one’s peers, teachers are deprived of an important catalyst for professional growth. As Elliot Eisner puts it: “The result of professional isolation is the difficulty that teachers encounter in learning what they themselves do in their own classrooms when they teach. [How] can a teacher learn that he or she is talking too much, not providing sufficient time for student reflection, raising low-order questions, or is simply boring students? Teachers unaware of such features of their own performance are in no position to change them” (1998, 160–161). Additionally, by observing how a colleague responds to the challenges of teaching, the observer has an opportunity to reflect on his or her approaches to meeting those same challenges. For example, a fourth-grade teacher came to the following insight as a result of observing his teaching partner: “Being a teacher is so much more than an extensive repertoire of strategies and techniques. [To] be a teacher is to find a way to live within an environment filled with dilemmas” (Hole 1998, 419).

Knowledge of Students

Knowledge of students is also important. Student characteristics such as their aptitudes, talents, learning styles, stage of development, and their readiness to learn new material are among the essential knowledge teachers must have. The importance of this knowledge is evident in comments made by an intern at a middle school: “To teach a kid well you have to know a kid well.... Teaching middle school takes a special breed of teachers who understand the unique abilities and inabilities... of those undergoing their own metamorphosis into teenagers” (Henry et al. 1995, 124–125). As Ms. D. illustrated in the opening scenario, teachers gain this
kind of knowledge through study, observation, and constant interaction. Without considerable understanding of children and youth, teachers’ efforts to help students learn and grow can be inappropriate and, in some cases, counterproductive. Teachers’ expectations of students directly affect student achievement. The Professional Reflection activity is designed to guide you in reflecting on opportunities you have already had to acquire knowledge about learners.

**Knowledge of Subject**

With the title of teacher comes an assumption of knowledge. Those outside the field of education expect a teacher to be a ready reference for all sorts of information. Clearly, teachers who have extensive knowledge of their subjects are better equipped to help their students learn. However, knowledge of subject matter does not translate into an understanding of how to share that knowledge with students—a point illustrated in a case study conducted by a team of researchers at the National Center for Research on Teacher Learning. The case focused on “Mary,” an undergraduate literature major enrolled in a teacher education program at a major university. By any standards, Mary was a subject-matter expert—she was valedictorian of a large, urban high school; had straight A’s in the literature courses she had taken; and had a sophisticated understanding of literature, especially poetry. The case study revealed that Mary had little understanding of classroom activities that would show her students how to read with sophistication and concluded that “some prospective teachers may come to teacher education unaware of how they have learned the processes they use and that render them expert. Unaided by their disciplines in locating the underpinnings of their

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**Professional Reflection**

To be accepted into a teacher preparation program, you may be required by your college or university to have prior experiences working with children and youth. The knowledge of children and youth acquired through such experiences provides an excellent foundation on which to begin your preparation for becoming a teacher.

Use the following outline to inventory your experiences working with children and youth. Your experiences might include working with service clubs such as Girl Scouts or Boy Scouts, 4-H, Campfire, and youth groups; volunteering at a child care center; coaching a sport as part of a parks and recreation program; or tutoring young children in reading or mathematics.

After completing your inventory, reflect on your experiences. During which experiences were you functioning, at least partially, in the role of “teacher”? For example, did you have to demonstrate the skills involved in a particular sport? As a member of a club in high school, did you explain club activities to new members or to parents? While holding a leadership position in a group, were you expected to function as a “role model” to other members of the group?

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**Inventorying Your Knowledge of Children and Youth**

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**Setting** | **Activity** | **Participants’ Age and Sex** | **Your Role** | **Date**
---|---|---|---|---
Example: | | | | 
Summer sports program | Taught swimming | Coed, ages 6–8 | Camp counselor | Summer 2002
1. | | | | 
2. | | | | 
3. | | | |
expertise, these skilled, talented, and desirable recruits may easily become, ironi-
cally, those who can do but who cannot teach” (Holt-Reynolds 1999, 43).

Extensive knowledge of subject matter, as the National Board for Professional
Teaching Standards (1994, 19–20) puts it, “entails more than being able to recite
lists of dates, multiplication tables, or rules of grammar. [Accomplished] teachers
possess what is sometimes called ‘pedagogical content knowledge.’ Such under-
standing is the joint product of wisdom about teaching, learning, students and
content. It includes knowledge of the most appropriate ways to present the sub-
ject matter to students through analogies, metaphors, experiments, demonstra-
tions and illustrations.”

**Knowledge of Methods for Applying Educational Theory and Research**

Theories about learners and learning guide the decision making of professional
teachers. Not only do such teachers know that a certain strategy works, but they
also know why it works. Because they recognize the importance of theories, they
have at their disposal a greater range of options for problem solving than teach-
ers who have not developed their repertoire of theories. Your ultimate goal as a
professional is to apply theoretical knowledge to the practical problems of
teaching.

To illustrate the usefulness of research on students’ learning, we present six
teaching strategies that Barak Rosenshine (1995, 267) recommends, based on his
and others’ research on cognitive processing, studies of teachers whose students
have higher achievement gains than students of other teachers, and research on
cognitive strategies.

1. Present new material in small steps so that the working memory does not
   become overloaded.
2. Help students develop an organization for the new material.
3. Guide student practice by (a) supporting students during initial practice
   and (b) providing for extensive student processing.
4. When teaching higher level tasks, support students by providing them with
cognitive strategies.
5. Help students to use cognitive strategies by providing them with proce-
dural prompts (e.g., questions students ask themselves while learning new
material—“who,” “what,” “why,” “when,” etc.) and modeling the use of pro-
cedural prompts.
6. Provide for extensive student practice.

Research on students’ learning is not intended to set forth, in cookbook fash-
ion, exactly what teachers should do to increase students’ learning. Instead, it
may be helpful to think of educational research as providing teachers with rules
of thumb to guide their practice. For example, Rosenshine, Meister, and Chap-
man (1996, 198) point out that, in spite of extensive research on the effectiveness
of procedural prompts, “at the present time, developing procedural prompts ap-
pears to be an art. [It] is difficult to derive any prescriptions on how to develop
effective procedural prompts for cognitive strategies in reading, writing, and
subject matter domains.” Finally, noted educational psychologist Lee Cronbach
(quoted in Eisner 1998, 112) may have put it best when he said “[educational re-
search] is to help practitioners use their heads.”
What Are Five Ways of Viewing the Teacher Knowledge Base?

Just as people hold different expectations for schools and teachers, there are different views on the knowledge and abilities teachers need to teach well. The complexities of teaching make it difficult to describe in exact detail the knowledge base on which teaching as a profession rests. This difficulty results, in part, because there is no universally accepted definition of what good teaching is. Educational researchers are still learning what good teachers know and how they use that knowledge.

In addition, many people believe that a knowledge base for teaching should consist not only of what educational researchers have learned about teaching but also what teachers themselves “know” about teaching—often called teachers’ craft knowledge or practitioner knowledge (Hiebert, Gallimore, and Stigler 2002; Kennedy 1999; Leinhardt 1990). Teachers’ craft knowledge, as this chapter’s opening scenario based on Ms. D.’s first-grade classroom illustrates, is developed by teachers in response to specific problems of practice. Five widespread views of the knowledge and abilities teachers must possess are portrayed in Figure 2.1.

A Personal Development View

One view of what teachers need to know and be able to do places primary emphasis on who the teacher is as a person. According to this view, teachers should be concerned with developing themselves as persons so that they may learn to use themselves more effectively. The importance of personal develop-
ment is described as follows by the authors of *On Being a Teacher*: “Teachers who appear in charge of their own lives, who radiate power, tranquility, and grace in their actions, are going to command attention and respect. People will follow them anywhere. . . . What we are saying is that you have not only the option, but also the imperative, to develop the personal dimensions of your functioning, as well as your professional skills” (Zehm and Kottler 1993, 15).

What this approach requires, then, is that teachers continually develop their powers of observation and reflection so that they can most effectively respond to the needs of students. Teaching becomes an authentic, growth-oriented encounter between teacher and students. An important dimension of this **personal development view** is the teacher’s need for self-knowledge, particularly in regard to oneself as a learner.

**Research-Based Competencies**

Since the late 1980s, several states and a few large cities have developed their own lists of **research-based competencies** that beginning teachers must demonstrate. These competencies are derived from educational research that has identified what effective teachers do. Typically, the states have developed **behavioral indicators** for each competency, which trained observers from universities and school districts use to determine to what extent teachers actually exhibit the target behaviors in the classroom.

The Florida Performance Measurement System (FPMS) was the first research-based performance system to be implemented on a statewide basis. Beginning teachers in Florida must now demonstrate behaviors in six domains: planning, management of student conduct, instructional organization and development, presentation of subject matter, verbal and nonverbal communication, and testing (student preparation, administration, and feedback). Appendix 2.1 presents the Summative Observation Instrument for the FPMS and the “effective” and “ineffective” behavioral indicators for four of those domains.

**State Standards**

In addition to sets of research-based competencies for evaluating practicing teachers, several states have developed performance-based standards for what new teachers should know and be able to do. Known as **outcome-based** or **performance-based teacher education**, the new approach is based on several assumptions:

- Outcomes are demonstrations of learning rather than a list of teaching specializations, college courses completed, or concepts studied.
- Outcomes are performances that reflect the richness and complexity of the teacher’s role in today’s classrooms—not discrete, single behaviors.
- Demonstrations of learning must occur in authentic settings—that is, settings similar to those within which the teacher will teach.
- Outcomes are culminating demonstrations of what beginning teachers do in real classrooms.

Typically, outcome-based standards are developed with input from teachers, teacher educators, state department of education personnel, and various professional associations. To illustrate state standards for teacher preparation, we present Kentucky’s New Teacher Standards in Appendix 2.2.
A Job-Analysis Approach

Another view of what teachers need to know and be able to do is based on the job analyses that some school districts conduct. Typically, a job analysis begins with a review of existing job descriptions and then proceeds to interviews with those currently assigned to the job and their supervisors regarding the activities and responsibilities associated with the job. These data are then analyzed to identify the dimensions of the job. Finally, interview questions based on the dimensions are developed and used by district personnel responsible for hiring.

To illustrate the job-analysis view of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed by teachers, we present the thirteen dimensions used for selecting “star” urban teachers. By comparing the behaviors and beliefs of outstanding urban teachers with those of quitters and failures, Martin Haberman (1995, 779–780) and his colleagues at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, identified thirteen characteristics of successful teachers of low-income urban students. These characteristics, identified by principals, supervisors, other teachers, parents, and the teachers themselves, include the following:

- **Persistence**
- **Protecting learners and learning**—Star teachers see protecting and enhancing students’ involvement in learning activities as their highest priority. . . .
- **Application of generalizations**—[Stars are] able to take principles and concepts from a variety of sources (i.e., courses, workshops, books, and research) and translate them into practice.
- **Approach to students “at-risk”**—Star teachers believe that, regardless of the life conditions their students face, they as teachers bear a primary responsibility for sparking their students’ desire to learn.
- **Professional versus personal orientation to students**—[Stars] use such terms as *caring, respect,* and *concern,* and they enjoy the love and affection of students when it occurs naturally. But they do not regard it as a prerequisite for learning.
- **Burnout: its causes and cures**—[Star teachers] recognize that even good teachers will eventually burn out if they are subjected to constant stress, so they learn how to protect themselves. . . .
- **Fallibility**—[Stars] can accept their own mistakes.

The remaining six dimensions are organizational ability, physical/emotional stamina, teaching style modeled on coaching, explanation of success based on students’ effort rather than ability, rapport with students, and readiness to believe that education will provide students with the best chance of “making it” in American society.

Professional Views

As the Meeting the Standards feature in Chapter 1 points out, various professional associations have outlined what teachers should know and be able to do. For example, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) was created so that teachers, like professionals in other fields, can achieve distinction by demonstrating that they meet high, rigorous standards for their profession. In addition to demonstrating their knowledge and skills through a series of performance-based assessments, teachers must complete written exercises that
What technology related knowledge and skills do teachers need?

Today, thousands of teachers and students routinely use desktop and laptop computers with built-in modems, faxes, and CD-ROM players; camcorders; optical scanners; speech and music synthesizers; laser printers; digital cameras; and LCD projection panels. In addition, they use sophisticated software for e-mail, word processing, desktop publishing, presentation graphics, spreadsheets, databases, and multimedia applications.

To prepare teachers to use these new technologies, many teacher education programs and state departments of education have developed technology competency guidelines for classroom teachers. For example, Colorado teachers are now required to have technology skills in three areas: basic computer/technology operations and concepts, personal and professional use of technology, and integration of technology into a standards-based curriculum. The following competencies are included in the Colorado guidelines. How many of these competencies do you possess, and what steps can you take to acquire those you do not have?

1. Media Communications and Integration
   - Set up and operate video media [e.g., videocassette recorders, laser disc players and digital video disc (DVD)]
   - Connect video output devices and other presentation systems to computers and video sources for large-screen display
   - Use painting, drawing, and authoring tools
   - Plan, create and use linear and nonlinear multimedia presentations
   - Use imaging devices such as scanners, digital cameras, and/or video cameras with computer systems and software

2. Telecommunications
   - Connect to the Internet or an online service
   - Use Internet search engines
   - Use a web browser to access and use resources on Internet and World Wide Web (WWW)
   - Download and print resources from the WWW
   - Use URL management tools (e.g., “bookmarks” and/or “favorite sites”)
   - Telnet to a remote computer on the Internet
   - Connect to and use resources from the Access Colorado Library and Information Network (ACLIN) and the CDE website
   - Use electronic mail (compose, send, retrieve, read, reply to sender, reply to all and forward)
   - Attach files to e-mail messages
   - Retrieve and use attachments (e.g., view, read, save and print)
   - Configure and use specialized e-mail lists relevant to professional information needs
   - Create and use group addresses for electronic mail
   - Collaborate with peers through available tools (e.g., e-mail, websites, threaded and other online discussions)

Source: Adapted from Colorado Technology Competency Guidelines for Classroom Teachers and School Library Media Specialists, Educational Telecommunications Unit, Colorado Department of Education, January 1999.

probe the depth of their subject-matter knowledge and their understanding of how to teach those subjects to students. In November 2001, the NBPTS awarded National Board Certification to 6,509 teachers, bringing the total number of board-certified teachers to 16,044 (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards 2002). The goal of the NBPTS is to have 100,000 board-certified teachers by 2006. Examples of NBPTS portfolio activities and assessment center activities for the early childhood generalist and early adolescence/English lan-
Principle #1: Knowledge of Subject Matter
The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.

Principle #2: Knowledge of Human Development and Learning
The teacher understands how children learn and develop, and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social, and personal development.

Principle #3: Adapting Instruction for Individual Needs
The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.

Principle #4: Multiple Instructional Strategies
The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students’ development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.

Principle #5: Classroom Motivation and Management
The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

Principle #6: Communication Skills
The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

Principle #7: Instructional Planning Skills
The teacher plans instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.

Principle #8: Assessment of Student Learning
The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the learner.

Principle #9: Professional Commitment and Responsibility
The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.

Principle #10: Partnerships
The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support students’ learning and well-being.

Standards proposed by the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) reflect a trend toward performance-based or outcome-based assessment of essential knowledge and abilities for teachers. The INTASC model core standards for licensing teachers are based on ten principles (see Figure 2.2) that should be present in all teaching regardless of the subject or grade level taught. Each principle includes knowledge, dispositions, and performance statements that identify the qualities on which a prospective teacher is assessed. For example, Principle #1, Knowledge of Subject Matter, includes the following statements:

Principle #1: The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and can create learn-
ing experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.

**Knowledge:** The teacher understands major concepts, assumptions, debates, processes of inquiry, and ways of knowing that are central to the discipline(s) s/he teaches.

**Disposition:** The teacher realizes that subject matter knowledge is not a fixed body of facts but is complex and ever-evolving. S/he seeks to keep abreast of new ideas and understandings in the field.

**Performance:** The teacher effectively uses multiple representations and explanations of disciplinary concepts that capture key ideas and link them to students’ prior understandings.

In light of the five differing views of what teachers ought to know and be able to do, it seems clear that becoming a teacher is complex and demanding. We believe that effective teachers use six kinds of knowledge and skills to meet the challenges of the profession. As Figure 2.3 shows, effective teachers are guided by **reflection** and a **problem-solving orientation**. On the basis of reflection and problem solving, they use knowledge of self and students (including cultural differences), craft knowledge, knowledge of subject matter, and knowledge of educational theory and research to create optimum conditions for student learning.

### How Do Reforms in Teacher Education Affect You?

Since the publication in 1983 of *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*, the United States has experienced an unprecedented push for reform in education. During that time, numerous commissions were established and scores of reports were written outlining what should be done to improve U.S. schools. Most of these reports called for changes in the education of teachers. In fact, the preparation program you are now involved in probably has been influenced by this **educational reform movement**. Calls for reform in teacher education have emphasized increased academic preparation, an expanded role for schools, and state standards boards.
Increased Academic Preparation

One call for the reform of teacher education was made by the Holmes Group, named after Henry W. Holmes, dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education during the 1920s. The Holmes Group was initially made up of ninety-six major universities. In Tomorrow’s Teachers, a 1986 report written by thirteen deans of education and one college president, the Holmes Group recommended that all teachers have a bachelor’s degree in an academic field and a master’s degree in education. Although the Holmes Group viewed additional academic preparation as a means of enhancing the professional status of teachers, critics maintained that students’ education would be delayed and be more expensive, with no assurance that students who spent five years obtaining a teaching certificate would be paid more.

The Holmes Group held an action summit in 1993 to develop a comprehensive plan for redesigning the schools of education at Holmes Group member institutions. The plan outlined steps for creating Tomorrow’s School of Education (TSE)—an institution that has put into practice the Holmes Group agenda for the reform of teacher education. In early 1995, the Holmes Group released the TSE plan, which recommended that teacher educators become more involved with schools and that students move through a five-year program in cohorts. The report also urged colleges of education to establish professional development schools (PDSs) that are linked to colleges or universities and operate on the same principle as teaching hospitals. Students act as intern teachers, and college faculty and school staff develop new teaching methods and collaborate on educational research projects.

In 1996, after a decade of what it described as “uneven progress” in the reform of teacher education and a realization that “the reform of professional education is so complicated and difficult that it has not yielded to any one reform group’s efforts to improve it,” the Holmes Group joined with other professional organizations—including the NBPTS, the National Education Association (NEA), and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT)—to create the Holmes Partnership. The Holmes Partnership adopted six principal goals: high-quality professional preparation; simultaneous renewal (of public K–12 schools and pre- and in-service education); equity, diversity, and cultural competence; scholarly inquiry and programs of research; faculty development; and policy initiation (Holmes Partnership 2001).

Expanded Role for Schools

Based on his study of teacher education programs around the country, noted educator John Goodlad set forth his plan for the simultaneous renewal of schools and teacher preparation programs in his book, Educational Renewal: Better Teachers, Better Schools. To improve teacher preparation, Goodlad (1998) recommended the creation of Centers of Pedagogy that would operate according to a specific set of principles. These centers would take the place of current teacher education departments, and they would be staffed by a team of teacher educators, liberal arts professors, and educators from local schools. In addition, Goodlad recommended that school districts and universities create jointly operated partner schools. Selected teachers at the partner school would divide their time between teaching students at the school and supervising beginning teachers. Partner schools would thus become centers for the renewal of education as well as laboratory schools for the professional development of beginning teachers.
State Standards Boards

To regulate and improve the professional practice of teachers, administrators, and other education personnel, states have established professional standards boards. In some states, standards boards have the authority to implement standards; in others, they serve in an advisory capacity to educational policymakers. In Washington state, for example, the Washington Advisory Board for Professional Teaching Standards recently made a recommendation to the State Board of Education calling for a three-level teacher certification system. Candidates, on completion of an approved program, would receive a Residency Certificate. With demonstration of successful teaching and a recommendation from the employing school district, a candidate then would be eligible for a renewable, five-year Professional Certificate. Finally, persons who hold national certification from the NBPTS or who hold a combination of advanced degrees, experience, and proficiency in performance-based standards would be eligible for the optional Professional Career Certificate.

In the wake of national reports such as What Matters Most: Teaching for America’s Future (National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future 1996) and Quality Counts 2000: Who Should Teach? (Education Week 2000), which highlighted the common practice of teachers teaching “out-of-field,” professional standards boards in many states have launched extensive reviews of their teacher certification standards. Also, some standards boards have addressed whether education students’ subject-matter preparation should continue to be separate from professional preparation and whether alternative routes to certification such as school district-controlled internship programs should be encouraged.

What Can You Learn from Observing in Classrooms?

Classroom observations are a vital element of many field experiences. Students report that these experiences aid them greatly in making a final decision about entering the teaching field. Most become more enthusiastic about teaching and more motivated to learn the needed skills; a few decide that teaching is not for them. Recognizing the value of observations, many teacher education programs are increasing the amount of field experiences and placing such fieldwork earlier in students’ programs. For example, at Washington State University (WSU), students preparing to become elementary teachers complete one week of classroom observations as part of their first education course. Later in their program, WSU students complete two 45-hour blocks of observations in K–8 classrooms and a five-week advanced practicum (or field experience) that requires several hours of classroom observation each week.

Technology and Classroom Observations

Currently, many universities and school districts are cooperating on the use of two-way interactive compressed video technology to enable preservice teachers on campus to observe live coverage in school classrooms off campus. Compressed video can be transmitted over existing telephone lines or the Internet in a relatively inexpensive, unobtrusive, and time-efficient way. Distance learning—the use of technology such as video transmissions that enables students to receive instruction at multiple, often remote sites—now enables teacher education programs to use the power of models for learning how to teach. For example, distance learning enables students at Texas A & M University and the
University of Memphis to observe inner-city classrooms and afterwards to discuss their observations with the teachers. One of the designers of the interactive video program at Memphis comments on its benefits: “Previously everyone visited different schools and saw very different things. [This] shared clinical experience will lead to a more focused discussion of teaching methods” (University of Memphis 1994/95, 2).

**Focused Observations**

*Observations* are more meaningful when they are focused and conducted with clear purposes. Observers may focus on the students, the teacher, the interactions between the two, the structure of the lesson, or the setting. More specifically, for example, observers may note differences between the ways boys and girls or members of different ethnic groups communicate and behave in the classroom. They may note student interests and ability levels, study student responses to a particular teaching strategy, or analyze the question and response patterns in a class discussion.

Observations may also be guided by sets of questions related to specific areas. For instance, since beginning teachers are frequently frustrated by their lack of success in interesting their students in learning, asking questions specifically related to motivation can make an observation more meaningful and instructive. Figure 2.4 presents a helpful set of focused questions on motivation. Similar questions can be generated for other focus areas such as classroom management, student involvement, questioning skills, evaluation, and teacher–student rapport.

**Observation Instruments**

A wide range of methods can be used to conduct classroom observations, ranging from informal, qualitative descriptions to formal, quantitative checklists. With reform efforts to improve education in the United States has come the development of instruments to facilitate the evaluation of teacher performance, a task now widely required of school administrators. Students preparing to teach can benefit by using these evaluative instruments in their observations. An example is the “Formative Observation of Effective Teaching Practices Instrument” on this book’s website.

**How Can You Gain Practical Experience for Becoming a Teacher?**

A primary aim of teacher education programs is to give students opportunities to experience, to the extent possible, the real world of the teacher. Through field experiences and carefully structured experiential activities, preservice teachers are given limited exposure to various aspects of teaching, from curriculum development to classroom management. Observing, tutoring, instructing small groups, analyzing video cases, operating instructional media, performing student teaching, and completing various noninstructional tasks are among the most common experiential activities.

**Classroom Experiences**

Because of the need to provide opportunities to put theory into practice before student teaching, many teacher education programs enable students to participate in microteaching, teaching simulations, analyses of video cases, field-based practica and clinical experiences, and classroom aide programs.
Microteaching

Introduced in the 1960s, microteaching was received enthusiastically and remains a popular practice. The process calls for students to teach brief, single-concept lessons to a small group of students (five to ten) while concurrently practicing a specific teaching skill, such as positive reinforcement. Often the microteaching is videotaped for later study.

As originally developed, microteaching includes the following six steps.

1. Identify a specific teaching skill to learn about and practice.
2. Read about the skill in one of several pamphlets.
3. Observe a master teacher demonstrate the skill in a short movie or on videotape.
4. Prepare a three- to five-minute lesson to demonstrate the skill.
5. Teach the lesson, which is videotaped, to a small group of peers.
6. Critique, along with the instructor and student peers, the videotaped lesson.

Directions: As you observe, note the ways that students are motivated intrinsically (from within) and extrinsically (from factors outside themselves).

### Intrinsic Motivation

- What things seem to interest students at this age?
- Which activities and assignments seem to give them a sense of pride?
- When do they seem to be confused? Bored? Frustrated?
- What topics do they talk about with enthusiasm?
- In class discussions, when are they most alert and participating most actively?
- What seems to please, amuse, entertain, or excite them?
- What do they joke about? What do they find humorous?
- What do they report as being their favorite subjects? Favorite assignments?
- What do they report as being their least favorite subjects and assignments?
- How do they respond to personalized lessons (e.g., using their names in exercises)?
- How do they respond to activity-oriented lessons (e.g., fieldwork, project periods)?
- How do they respond to assignments calling for presentations to groups outside the classroom (e.g., parents, another class, the chamber of commerce)?
- How do they respond to being given a choice in assignments?

### Extrinsic Motivation

- How do teachers show their approval to students?
- What phrases do teachers use in their praise?
- What types of rewards do teachers give (e.g., grades, points, tangible rewards)?
- What reward programs do you notice (e.g., points accumulated toward free time)?
- What warnings do teachers give?
- What punishments are given to students?
- How do teachers arouse concern in their students?
- How do students motivate other students?
- What forms of peer pressure do you observe?
- How do teachers promote enthusiasm for an assignment?
- How do teachers promote class spirit?
- How do teachers catch their students’ interest in the first few minutes of a lesson?
- Which type of question draws more answers—recall or open-ended?
- How do teachers involve quiet students in class discussions?
- How do teachers involve inactive students in their work?
- In what ways do teachers give recognition to students’ accomplishments?

Figure 2.4 Guiding questions for observing motivation
In the second week of your first teaching assignment, you are confronted with a discipline challenge. You, Mrs. Clark, and Mr. Taylor have begun rotating classes for science, social studies, and language arts. Your science lesson went smoothly for the first two groups, but when Mr. Jones’s students enter your classroom you sense trouble. Their loud talking, physical jostling, taunts, and derisive laughter put you on edge. As they sit down, several look inside your students’ desks and put things into their pockets. You stop them and announce, “Do not to disturb the contents of the desks.”

After you introduce your lesson, you notice a row of boys smiling and looking from left to right at each other. You realize they have taken one of your students’ backpacks off the back of the chair and are passing it under their desks to the outside. When it reaches the person nearest the window, before you can intercede, he stands up and drops the bag out the second-story window. “Now what?” you ask yourself.

“The biggest barriers to new teachers’ success are poor classroom-management skills (82 percent) and disruptive students (57 percent),” reports David Gordon, editor of the Harvard Education Letter (1999a, p. 2). The statistics result from responses of 118 school districts to a poll conducted by Recruiting New Teachers (RNT) (http://www.rnt.org).

The annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of public attitudes toward education found in 2001 that “lack of discipline, more control” was ranked as “the biggest problem public schools face,” as it had been in numerous earlier polls. A related poll found that students are now bothered by classroom discipline problems as well. As Gordon reports, “In a survey of 1200 teenagers . . . 43 percent of public school students said the behavior of other students interferes with their school performance” (1991b, p. 1).

While these statistics are alarming, new teachers can take comfort in the fact that teachers have always worried initially about how they would manage disruptive behavior and control a roomful of students. Most veteran teachers can share classroom discipline stories they survived and the lessons they learned.

The wisdom of veterans should surely be tapped, but novice teachers can learn even more from their own experiences. Professor Nancy Martin, who teaches classroom management courses, observes, “Training doesn’t mean anything until teachers get in the classroom. It’s like swimming—you can never really know what it’s like just by reading about it” (1999a, p. 2). An RNT survey found that one of the qualities the public regarded as “very important for an excellent teacher to have” was “at least one semester’s experience in a classroom as a student teacher” ( , ). Experience matters.

In his article “Rising to the Discipline Challenge,” Gordon (1999b, p. 1) summarizes tried-and-true guidelines for classroom management: (1) “Get students involved”; (2) “Establish rules and be consistent”; (3) “Take care of the little things”; (4) “Involve community and parents”; and (5) “Report incidents.”

In a study of elementary and secondary classroom environments during the first month of the school year, Edward Emmer, Carolyn Evertson and Murray Worsham (1999, 2002) discovered that teachers who fared best in terms of classroom management were those who spent considerable time in the first few days “teaching” the classroom rules and procedures. A month later these teachers had significantly fewer management and discipline problems than their colleagues who had not spent similar time working with students on classroom rules and procedures.

A common theme in classroom management literature is the importance of the teacher’s relationship with students. Respect and regard are basic to the development of a well-managed classroom environment in which quality learning can thrive. Ninety percent of the respondents to an RNT survey ranked as very important a teacher’s “ability to establish good relationships with children and adolescents” ( ).
New teachers will fare best from a multifaceted preparation for classroom challenges: reading theorists’ proposed approaches and programs; taking courses in classroom management, child and adolescent development, and group dynamics; tapping the wisdom of veteran teachers; and gaining their own classroom experience. Researchers also recommend new teachers learn to trust their own intuition. This recommendation is a welcome recognition and valuing of the gifts that people drawn to teaching bring with them.

**Exploratory Questions**

1. How would you respond to the students’ misbehavior described in the opening scene?
2. Why do you think the first month of school is so important for determining the management tone for the rest of the school year?
3. What “rules of the room” would you establish in your first two days of a school year?

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**Your Survival Guide of Helpful Resources**

The following resources provide helpful hints for surviving “on the frontlines.” Look for more resources on this topic on the Companion Website for this book.

**Books and Articles**


**Websites**

Recruiting New Teachers (http://www/rnt.org)

Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) (http://www.pbis.org/english/)
Simulations As an element of teacher training, teaching simulations provide opportunities for vicarious practice of a wide range of teaching skills. In simulations, students analyze teaching situations that are presented in writing, on audiotape, in short films, or on videotape. Typically, students are given background information about a hypothetical school or classroom and the pupils they must prepare to teach. After this orientation, students role-play the student teacher or the teacher who is confronted with the problem situation. Following the simulation, participants discuss the appropriateness of solutions and work to increase their problem-solving skills and their understanding of the teacher’s multifaceted role as a decision maker.

With recent advances in computer technology, some teacher education programs are experimenting with computer-based simulations that enable students to hone their classroom planning and decision-making skills. Students at Nova Southwestern University in Florida, for example, learn to diagnose learning disabilities among children and youth by analyzing computer-simulated cases (Brown 1994). In some cases, computer simulations are also being used for teacher professional development. For example, a three-dimensional virtual reality (VR) simulation model proved more effective than a workshop method for training kindergarten teachers to understand children’s needs and perceptions (Katz 1999), and a computer-based simulation has been used to train school personnel in crisis management (Degnan and Bozeman 2001).

While progress is being made in the development of VR technology, “it is not possible to say how great the potential may actually be in the realm of teacher education” (Brown 1999, 318). Current simulations are limited to specific skills such as classroom management or tutoring highly motivated individuals. As VR technology improves, however, one day we may see simulations of classrooms that show a variety of students with differing needs as learners.

Video Cases Teacher education students who view, analyze, and then write about video cases have an additional opportunity to appreciate the ambiguities and complexities of real-life classrooms, to learn that “there are no clear-cut, simple answers to the complex issues teachers face” (Wasserman 1994, 606). Viewing authentic video cases enables students to see how “teaching tradeoffs and dilemmas emerge in the video ‘text’ as do the strategies teachers use, the frustrations they experience, the brilliant and less-brilliant decisions they make” (Grant, Richard, and Parkay 1996, 5).

Practica A practicum is a short-term field-based experience (usually about two weeks long) that allows teacher education students to spend time observing and assisting in classrooms. Though practica vary in length and purpose, students are often able to begin instructional work with individuals or small groups. For example, a cooperating teacher may allow a practicum student to tutor a small group of students, read a story to the whole class, conduct a spelling lesson, monitor recess, help students with their homework, or teach students a song or game.

Classroom Aides Serving as a teacher’s aide is another popular means of providing field experience before student teaching. A teacher aide’s role depends primarily on the unique needs of the school and its students. Generally, aides work under the supervision of a certified teacher and perform duties that support the teacher’s instruction. Assisting teachers in classrooms familiarizes college students with class schedules, record-keeping procedures, and students’ performance levels, and provides ample opportunity for observations. In exchange, the classroom teacher receives much needed assistance.
Student Teaching

The most extensive and memorable field experience in teacher preparation programs is the period of student teaching. “Student teaching provide[s] student teachers with realistic evaluations of their strengths and weaknesses as prospective teachers and help[s] them to develop competencies in classroom management” (Wentz 2001, 73). States require students to have a five-week to semester-long student teaching experience in the schools before certifying them as teachers. The nature of student teaching varies considerably among teacher education programs. Typically, a student is assigned to a cooperating (or master) teacher in the school, and a university supervisor makes periodic visits to observe the student teacher. Some programs even pay student teachers during the student teaching experience.

Student teaching is a time of responsibility. As one student teacher put it, “I don’t want to mess up [my students’] education!” It is also an opportunity for growth, a chance to master critical skills. During a typical student teaching assignment, a student teacher will spend about half of his or her time teaching, with the remaining time devoted to observing and participating in classroom activities. The amount of time actually spent teaching, however, is not as important as the student teacher’s willingness to reflect carefully on his or her experience.

Two excellent ways to promote reflection during student teaching are journal writing and maintaining a reflective teaching log.

Student Teacher Journal Writing

Many supervisors require student teachers to keep a journal of their classroom experiences so that they can engage in reflective teaching and begin the process of criticizing and guiding themselves. The following two entries—the first written by a student teacher in a fourth-grade classroom, the second by a student teacher in a high school English class—illustrate how journal writing can help student teachers develop strategies for dealing with the realities of teaching.

Today I taught a lesson on the geography of the Northeast, and the kids seemed so bored. I called on individuals to read the social studies text, and then I explained it. Some of them really struggled with the text. Mr. H. said I was spoon-feeding them too much. So tomorrow I am going to put them into groups and let them answer questions together rather than give them the answers. This ought to involve the students in the learning a bit more and enable some of the better readers to help out those who have difficulty, without the whole class watching. I feel bad when I see those glazed looks on their faces. I need to learn how to be more interesting (Pitton 1998, 120).

I had good feedback on small groups in their responses to questions on Of Mice and Men. They were to find a paragraph that might indicate theme and find two examples of foreshadowing. We found five!

The short story unit was awful during fourth hour. The kids just didn’t respond. I quickly revamped my approach for the next hour. Fifth hour did seem to go better. (Mostly though, I think it was just that I was more prepared, having had one class to try things out.) I can see how experience really helps. Now that I’ve tried the story “The Tiger or the Lady,” I would use the same material, but I would know HOW to use it more effectively! (Pitton 1998, 143).

What strategies can you use to make your student teaching experience truly valuable to you in becoming a teacher? In what sense will you remain a student teacher throughout your career?
Relatively unstructured, open-ended journals, such as the ones from which these entries were selected, provide student teachers with a medium for subjectively exploring the student teaching experience.

**Reflective Teaching Logs** To promote the practice of reflecting more analytically, some supervisors ask their student teachers to use a more directed and structured form of journal keeping, the **reflective teaching log**. In this form a student lists and briefly describes the daily sequence of activities, selects a single episode to expand on, analyzes the reason for selecting it and what was learned from it, and considers the possible future application of that knowledge.

To illustrate the reflective teaching approach to keeping a log, we share here a partial entry for one episode. The entry is of particular interest because it illustrates how a college student can disagree with a supervising teacher’s response to a classroom situation.

**Log for December 1—Erin Tompkins**

**Sequence of Events**
1. Arrival—end of eighth period
2. Ninth period—helped Sharad study science
3. After-school program—worked on science with Ricki, P.K., and Tom
4. Late bus duty with Ms. Soto
5. Departure

**Episode**
I was helping Ricki and P.K. fill out a table about the location and function of the different cell parts. P.K. asked me a question and two other students laughed at him. I began to answer his question when Ms. Soto came over to the table where we were working and yelled at P.K. She said, “P.K. I don’t need you distracting other students who are trying to get their work done.” He started to tell her what he asked me and she said, “I don’t care. You can leave the room if you don’t knock it off. Just do your work and be quiet or you’re out!” She then apologized to me and went back to helping another student.

**Analysis**
I was very frustrated after this episode. This is the first time I’ve seen Ms. Soto raise her voice with a student and accuse him of causing problems when he was getting his work done and other students were being disruptive. P.K. had asked me a legitimate question; the other students who laughed at him were the problem. I was frustrated because Ricki and P.K. were working hard and asking me good questions. I was annoyed that P.K. was being reprimanded for asking a question that was relevant to the topic we were working on. I also felt helpless because I wanted to tell Ms. Soto that it wasn’t P.K. who was the problem. I didn’t feel it was my place to correct her in front of her students and kept quiet. I decided that my saying something would only make things worse because it would encourage P.K. to continue arguing with Ms. Soto and he would be in more trouble (Posner 2000, 137–138).

Though student teaching will be the capstone experience of your teacher education program, the experience should be regarded as an *initial* rather than a terminal learning opportunity—your first chance to engage in reflection and self-evaluation for a prolonged period.

**Gaining Experiences in Multicultural Settings**
The enrollment in schools in the United States of students from diverse cultural backgrounds will continue to increase dramatically during the twenty-first cen-
tury. As this trend continues, it is vitally important that those entering the teaching profession achieve an understanding of children’s differing backgrounds. For example, students in Washington State University’s teacher education program must document how they have met the following “administrative code” for teacher certification: “All candidates for teacher certification must demonstrate in their field experience their ability to work effectively with students of various backgrounds including (1) students from racial and or ethnic populations other than the candidate’s, and (2) students with exceptional needs (i.e., those with handicapping conditions and the highly capable).”

As a teacher you can be assured that you will teach students from backgrounds that differ from your own—including students from the more than one hundred racial and ethnic groups in the United States and students who are poor, gifted, or have disabilities. You will have the challenge of reaching out to all students and teaching them that they are persons of worth and can learn. You will also be confronted with the difficult challenge of being sensitive to differences among students while at the same time treating all equally and fairly. To prepare for these realities of teaching, you should make every effort to gain experiences in multicultural settings.

Induction and Internship Programs

In response to widespread efforts to improve education, many states and local school districts, often in collaboration with colleges and universities, have begun teacher induction or internship programs. Among the programs that have received national attention are the Florida Beginning Teacher Program, the California Mentor Teacher Program, the Virginia Beginning Teacher Assistance Program, and the Kentucky Beginning Teacher Internship Program.

Induction programs provide beginning teachers with continued assistance at least during the first year. Internship programs also provide participants with support, but they are usually designed primarily to provide training for those who have not gone through a teacher education program. In some instances, however, the terms induction and internship are used interchangeably.

Most induction and internship programs serve a variety of purposes:

1. To improve teaching performance
2. To increase the retention of promising beginning teachers during the induction years
3. To promote the personal and professional well-being of beginning teachers by improving teachers’ attitudes toward themselves and the profession
4. To satisfy mandated requirements related to induction and certification
5. To transmit the culture of the system to beginning teachers (Huling-Austin 1990, 539)

To accomplish these purposes, induction programs offer resources such as workshops based on teacher-identified needs, observations by and follow-up conferences with individuals not in a supervisory role, support from mentor (or buddy) teachers, and support group meetings for beginning teachers.

School-Based Teacher Education

A new model of teacher preparation that provides students with extensive practical field experiences and often uses practicing teachers as instructors or mentors
is known as school-based teacher education. In some cases, school-based programs are designed for students who have received a bachelor’s degree and then wish to obtain teacher certification; in other cases, programs are designed for adults who are employed by a school district as teacher assistants but who don’t have a bachelor’s degree. Examples of each type are the Teachers for Chicago Program and the Northern Arizona University (NAU)-Nogales Unified School District program.

To select, train, and retain effective teachers for Chicago’s schools, a group of schools, the Chicago Teachers Union, deans of education at area universities, and the Golden Apple Foundation for Excellence in Teaching created the Teachers for Chicago Program. Candidates, selected through a rigorous interview process, enroll in a graduate education program at one of nine area colleges and universities. After a summer of coursework, they begin a two-year paid internship under the guidance of a mentor teacher. Interns fill vacant teacher positions in the schools and are responsible for the academic progress of their students. On completion of the program, interns have earned a master’s degree and have met state certification requirements.

The NAU-Nogales Unified School District program prepares special education teachers to work in rural schools. Students in the program are employed as teacher assistants or serve as volunteer interns. The nontraditional program integrates individual courses into a fifteen-hour block of coursework per semester and includes a supervised internship in an inclusive elementary classroom or a special education setting. Courses are taught by NAU faculty at a Nogales school and are enriched by resource specialists and guest speakers from area schools (Ver Velde et al. 1999).

**Substitute Teaching**

On completion of a teacher education program and prior to securing a full-time teaching assignment, many students choose to gain additional practical experience in classrooms by substitute teaching. Others, unable to locate full-time positions, decide to substitute, knowing that many districts prefer to hire from their pool of substitutes when full-time positions become available. Substitute teachers replace regular teachers who are absent due to illness, family responsibilities, personal reasons, or professional workshops and conferences. Each day, approximately 270,000 substitutes are employed in schools across the United States, and one full year of a student’s K–12 education is taught by substitute teachers (Substitute Teaching Institute 2002).

Qualifications for substitutes vary from state to state and district to district. An area with a critical need for subs will often relax its requirements to provide classroom coverage. In many districts, it is possible to substitute teach without regular certification. Some districts have less stringent qualifications for short-term, day-to-day substitutes and more stringent ones for long-term, full-time ones. In many districts, the application process for substitutes is the same as that for full-time applicants; in others, the process may be somewhat briefer. Often, substitutes are not limited to working in their area of certification; however, schools try to avoid making out-of-field assignments. If you decide to substitute teach, contact the schools in your area to learn about the qualifications and procedures for hiring substitutes.

In spite of the significant role substitutes play in the day-to-day operation of schools, “research tells us that they receive very little support, no specialized training, and are rarely evaluated. . . . In short, the substitute will be expected
to show up to each class on time, maintain order, take roll, carry out the lesson, and leave a note for the regular teacher about the classes and events of the day without support, encouragement, or acknowledgement” (St. Michel 1995, 6–7). While working conditions such as these are certainly challenging, substitute teaching can be a rewarding, professionally fulfilling experience.

Figure 2.5 presents several advantages and disadvantages of substitute teaching.

How Can You Develop Your Teaching Portfolio?

Now that you have begun your journey toward becoming a teacher, you should acquire the habit of assessing your growth in knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Toward this end, you may wish to collect the results of your reflections and self-assessment in a professional portfolio. A professional portfolio is a collection of work that documents an individual’s accomplishments in an area of professional practice. An artist’s portfolio, for example, might consist of a résumé, sketches, paintings, slides and photographs of exhibits, critiques of the artist’s work, awards, and other documentation of achievement. Recently, new approaches to teacher evaluation have included the professional portfolio. The NBPTS, for example, uses “portfolios [and] other evidence of performance prepared by the candidate” (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards 1994, 55) as one way of assessing whether teachers have met the high standards for board certification. Teacher education programs at several universities now use portfolios as one means of assessing the competencies of candidates for teacher certification. Also, many school districts are beginning to ask applicants to submit portfolios that document their effectiveness as teachers.

Portfolio Contents

What will your portfolio contain? Written materials might include the following: lesson plans and curriculum materials, reflections on your development as a teacher, journal entries, writing assignments made by your instructor, sample tests you have prepared, critiques of textbooks, evaluations of students’ work at the level for which you are preparing to teach, sample letters to parents, and a résumé. Nonprint materials might include video- and audiotapes featuring you in
simulated teaching and role-playing activities, audiovisual materials (transparencies, charts, or other teaching aids), photographs of bulletin boards, charts depicting room arrangements for cooperative learning or other instructional strategies, sample grade book, certificates of membership in professional organizations, and awards.

Your portfolio should represent your **best work** and give you an opportunity to become an advocate of **who you are** as a teacher. Because a primary purpose of the professional portfolio is to stimulate reflection and dialogue, you may wish to discuss what entries to make in your portfolio with your instructor or other teacher education students. In addition, the following questions from *How to Develop a Professional Portfolio: A Manual for Teachers* (Campbell et al. 2001) can help you select appropriate portfolio contents:

Would I be proud to have my future employer and peer group see this? Is this an example of what my future professional work might look like? Does this represent what I stand for as a professional educator? If not, what can I revise or re-arrange so that it represents my best efforts? (6)

**Using a Portfolio**

In addition to providing teacher education programs with a way to assess their effectiveness, portfolios can be used by students for a variety of purposes. A portfolio may be used as

1. A way to establish a record of quantitative and qualitative performance and growth over time
2. A tool for reflection and goal setting as well as a way to present evidence of your ability to solve problems and achieve goals
3. A way to synthesize many separate experiences; in other words, a way to get the “big picture”
4. A vehicle for you to use to collaborate with professors and advisors in individualizing instruction
5. A vehicle for demonstrating knowledge and skills gained through out-of-class experiences, such as volunteer experiences
6. A way to share control and responsibility for your own learning
7. An alternative assessment measure within the professional education program
8. A potential preparation for national, regional, and state accreditation
9. An interview tool in the professional hiring process
10. An expanded résumé to be used as an introduction during the student teaching experience

**How Can You Benefit from Mentoring Relationships?**

When asked “[what] steps might be taken to attract good people into teaching and to encourage good teachers to remain in teaching,” 82 percent of respondents to the MetLife Survey of the American Teacher 2001 said “providing mentoring and ongoing support for new teachers” would “help a lot” (Harris Interactive 2001, 125). Like the following first-year suburban high school
teacher, the teachers surveyed realized the value of a **mentor**: “I wish I had one [a mentor] here. . . . There are days that go by and I don’t think I learn anything about my teaching, and that’s too bad. I wish I had someone” (Dollase 1992, 138).

In reflecting on how a mentor contributed to his professional growth, Forrest Parkay defined **mentoring** as

> an intensive, one-to-one form of teaching in which the wise and experienced mentor inducts the aspiring protégé [one who is mentored] into a particular, usually professional, way of life. . . . [T]he protégé learns from the mentor not only the objective, manifest content of professional knowledge and skills but also a subjective, nondiscursive appreciation for *how* and *when* to employ these learnings in the arena of professional practice. In short, the mentor helps the protégé to “learn the ropes,” to become socialized into the profession (Parkay 1988, 196).

An urban middle school intern’s description of how his mentor helped him develop effective classroom management techniques exemplifies “learning the ropes”: “‘You’ve got to develop your own sense of personal power,’ [my mentor] kept saying. ‘It’s not something I can teach you. I can show you what to do. I can model it. But I don’t know, it’s just something that’s got to come from within you’” (Henry et al. 1995, 114).

Those who have become highly accomplished teachers frequently point out the importance of mentors in their preparation for teaching. A mentor can provide moral support, guidance, and feedback to students at various stages of professional preparation. In addition, a mentor can model for the protégé an analytical approach to solving problems in the classroom. Table 2.1 shows several problem-solving approaches a mentor can demonstrate to a novice teacher.

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**What Opportunities for Continuing Professional Development Will You Have?**

Professional development is a life-long process; any teacher, at any stage of development, has room for improvement. Indeed, “the continual deepening of knowl-
edge and skills is an integral part of any profession [and] teaching is no exception” (Garet et al. 2001, 916). To meet the need for professional development, many school systems and universities have programs in place for the continuing professional development of teachers.

Self-Assessment for Professional Growth

Self-assessment is a necessary first step in pursuing opportunities for professional growth. A teacher comments on the importance of self-assessment after being certified by the NBPTS: “Serious reflection and self-examination [were necessary] as I gauge[d] my skills and knowledge against objective, peer-developed, national standards in specific teaching areas” (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards 1995, 13).

Several questions can help you make appropriate choices as a teacher: In which areas am I already competent? In which areas do I need further development? How will I acquire the knowledge and skills I need? How will I apply new knowledge and practice new skills? Answers to such questions will lead you to a variety of sources for professional growth: teacher workshops, teacher centers, professional development schools, the opportunity to supervise and mentor student teachers, and graduate programs. Figure 2.6 illustrates the relationship of these professional development experiences to your teacher education program.

Teacher Workshops

The quality of in-service workshops is uneven, varying with the size of school district budgets and the imagination and knowledge of the administrators and teachers who arrange them. It is significant that the most effective in-service pro-
Even the most experienced and effective teachers realize that teaching is complex and can never be mastered fully. This is why veterans of twenty or thirty years still find teaching fascinating. Teachers who meet the standards articulated above continuously evaluate their own teaching, sometimes informally in the moments immediately following a lesson, sometimes in the evenings through a reflective journal, and at other times through an intentional, focused process known as action research. They assess what is working and what needs to work better in their teaching and designing of learning experiences. They stretch their knowledge about teaching through studying in a graduate program, reading professional journals, talking with experienced colleagues, and participating in professional development opportunities. They also continually update their content knowledge and enliven it by gathering current, student-relevant illustrations from the world outside their classrooms—in newspapers, films, music, fiction, sports events, and personal experiences. Test yourself in terms of this standard by completing one of the following:

1. Conduct an action research exercise in a simulation or actual teaching situation. Begin by selecting a teaching or learning challenge that concerns you (for instance, teaching students how to add fractions with 2, 4, and 8 as denominators). Propose two ways to teach the concept. You might use a demonstration approach to teach the concept for one strategy and use an inductive, hands-on approach to teach for the second strategy. In both cases, use mock and real Hershey Bars, the former for the teaching or learning activity, the latter for rewards when the concept is mastered.

2. Evaluate the results of the above action research exercise or a similar comparative teaching or learning exercise. Reflect on what you thought worked well and on which parts of the lesson seemed to falter, and consider how you think students responded to it. Then examine the students’ work you assigned to assess how well they understood the concept. Finally, provide an evaluation form for the students to complete anonymously, asking questions regarding their response to the lesson. Explain the benefits to them of completing the form thoughtfully. Consider what you learned from the three sources of information—your personal reflection, student performance, and student feedback. Decide on the approach you intend to use the next time you work on the same concept.

Teachers increase their effectiveness by actively evaluating their instruction and their students’ responses to it. Formal action research endeavors and informal, ongoing reflective analyses are promising ways teachers use to evaluate teaching efforts and learning designs.

Some workshops focus on topics that all teachers (regardless of subject or level) can benefit from: classroom management, writing-across-the-curriculum, multicultural education, and strategies for teaching students with learning disabilities in the general education classroom, for example. Other workshops have a sharper focus and are intended for teachers of a subject at a certain level—for example, mathematics and science teachers might find workshops on the use of manipulatives and computer software for teaching specific mathematical or scientific concepts particularly relevant. In addition, a national study of 1,027 mathematics and science teachers found that professional development activities such as workshops are most effective if they “(a) focus on content knowledge, (b) [provide] opportunities for active learning, and (c) [have] coherence with other learning activities” (Garet et al. 2001, 916).
example, whole-language techniques for middle school students, discovery learning for high school science students, and student-centered approaches to teaching literature in the high school classroom.

**Teacher Centers**

Teacher centers provide opportunities for teachers “to take the lead in the decision making and implementation of staff development programs based on the needs of teachers. [They] provide the structure for teachers to take charge of their own professional growth” (Teacher Centers of New York State 1999). In contrast to in-service programs, these are more clearly initiated and directed by teachers. Some centers cooperate with a local or neighboring college of education and include members of the faculty on their planning committees.

Many teachers find teacher centers stimulating because they offer opportunities for collegial interaction in a quiet, professionally oriented setting. The busy, hectic pace of life in many schools, teachers often find, provides little time for professional dialogue with peers. Furthermore, in the teacher center, teachers are often more willing to discuss openly areas of weakness in their performance. As one teacher put it:

At the teacher center I can ask for help. I won’t be judged. The teachers who have helped me the most have had the same problems. I respect them, and I’m willing to learn from them. They have credibility with me.
Professional Development Schools

Professional development schools (PDSs) have emerged recently as a way to link school restructuring and the reform of teacher education in the United States. These school–university partnerships offer teachers the following opportunities:

- Fine learning programs for diverse students
- Practical, thought-provoking preparation for novice teachers
- New understanding and professional responsibilities for experienced educators
- Research projects that add to all educators’ knowledge about how to make schools more productive (Holmes Group n.d., 1).

For example, a teacher at a PDS might team with a teacher education professor and teach a university-level course, participate in a collaborative research project, offer a professional development seminar for other teachers, arrange for the teacher educator to demonstrate instructional strategies in his or her classroom, or jointly develop relevant field experiences for prospective teachers.

Supervision and Mentoring of Student Teachers

After several years in the classroom, teachers may be ready to stretch themselves further by supervising student teachers. Some of the less obvious benefits of doing so are that teachers must rethink what they are doing so that they can explain and sometimes justify their behaviors to someone else, learning about themselves in the process. Furthermore, because they become a model for their student teachers, they continually strive to offer the best example. In exchange, they gain an assistant in the classroom—another pair of eyes, an aid with record keeping—and more than occasionally, fresh ideas and a spirit of enthusiasm.

Graduate Study

A more traditional form of professional development is to do graduate study. With the recent reforms, most states now require teachers to take some graduate courses to keep their certifications and knowledge up to date. Some teachers take only courses that are of immediate use to them; others use their graduate study to prepare for new teaching or administrative positions; and still others pursue doctoral work to teach prospective teachers or others in their discipline at the college level.

Study on the Internet

If you have access to the Internet, you can locate many possibilities for continuing professional development. Teachers use the Internet to exchange ideas and experiences and to acquire additional expertise in teaching or to share their expertise with others. See the Appendix “Professional Development Opportunities on the Internet,” on this book’s website. In addition, at the website for Becoming a Teacher, you will find a periodically updated list of professional development opportunities available for teachers on the Web. If you decide to visit any of these sites, remember that websites are frequently changed or withdrawn from the Internet. The web addresses given throughout this book were active at the time of printing. Also, because it is estimated that 10,000 websites are added each day, periodically you should use key words related to education and your favorite search engine to gather the latest information and resources.
Summary

What Essential Knowledge Do You Need to Teach?

- Professional teachers reflect on their classroom experiences.
- Teachers need three kinds of knowledge: knowledge of self and students, knowledge of subject, and knowledge of educational theory and research.
- Teachers’ self-knowledge influences their ability to understand students.
- The ambiguities of teaching can cause teachers to experience anxiety.
- Elementary teachers can experience loneliness because they are isolated from adults; secondary teachers can experience loneliness because of departmentalization.
- Teachers must know their students’ aptitudes, talents, learning styles, stage of development, and readiness to learn new material.
- Teachers must understand their subjects deeply so they can modify instructional strategies based on students’ perception of content.
- Knowledge of educational theory enables professional teachers to know why certain strategies work.
- Educational research provides teachers with rules of thumb for practice.

What Are Five Ways of Viewing the Teacher Knowledge Base?

- There is no universally accepted definition of “good” teaching.
- Many people believe that a knowledge base for teaching should consist not only of what educational researchers have learned about teaching but also what teachers themselves “know” about teaching—often called teachers’ craft knowledge or practitioner knowledge.
- The teacher knowledge base (essential knowledge and abilities) can place primary emphasis on personal development, research-based competencies, state standards, job analyses, or the views of professional organizations.
- Many states have developed standards for outcome-based or performance-based teacher education. Outcomes are based on what beginning teachers do in real classrooms.
- The job-analysis view of teaching is based on identifying job dimensions—the knowledge, skills, and attitudes teachers need.
- The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) has developed standards for voluntary national certification.
- Effective teachers are guided by reflection and a problem-solving orientation.

How Do Reforms in Teacher Education Affect You?

- As part of the educational reform movement, the Holmes Group recommends that teachers obtain a bachelor’s degree in an academic field and a master’s degree in education.
- The Holmes Group recommends establishing professional development schools linked to colleges of education.
- In Teachers for Our Nation’s Schools, John Goodlad recommends the creation of Centers of Pedagogy.
- State-level professional standards boards set criteria for the certification and professional development of education personnel in some states; in others, state standards boards are limited to advising educational policymakers.

What Can You Learn from Observing in Classrooms?

- The opportunity to observe in classrooms helps some students make a final decision about becoming a teacher.
- Many teacher education programs are providing students with more and earlier opportunities to observe in classrooms.
- Distance-learning classrooms, using compressed video, link teacher education programs to schools off campus.
- Observations can focus on a particular aspect of classroom life or be guided by a set of questions related to a specific area, such as how the teacher motivates students.
- Observation instruments range from informal, qualitative descriptions to formal, quantitative checklists.

How Can You Gain Practical Experience for Becoming a Teacher?

- Teacher education students can gain practical experience through focused classroom observations, microteaching, teaching simulations, analyses of video cases, field-based practica and clinical experiences, and classroom aide programs.
- In microteaching, students practice specific skills by teaching brief lessons that are later analyzed.
- Computer simulations and virtual reality—as well as written, videotaped, and audiotaped cases—are being used for teaching simulations.
- Journal writing and reflective teaching logs increase the benefits of the student teaching experience.
To prepare to teach students from diverse backgrounds, teacher education students should actively seek field experiences in multicultural settings.

- Induction programs provide assistance to beginning teachers. Internship programs and school-based teacher education programs provide extensive practical experiences.
- Substitute teaching provides additional practical experience after completing a teacher education program.

**How Can You Develop Your Teaching Portfolio?**

- A portfolio documents professional growth and development over time.
- A portfolio can be organized around specific outcomes or standards.
- Portfolio contents should represent one’s best work.
- Professional portfolios can be used in teacher evaluation, self-evaluation, and hiring.

**How Can You Benefit from Mentoring Relationships?**

- Ask for advice from teachers you admire.
- Mentoring can be a source of professional growth for experienced teachers.
- Mentoring enables the protégé to “learn the ropes.”

**What Opportunities for Continuing Professional Development Will You Have?**

- Self-assessment is necessary to select appropriate professional development experiences.
- Opportunities for professional development include teacher workshops, teacher centers, professional development schools, supervision and mentoring of student teachers, graduate study, and the Internet.

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### Key Terms and Concepts

- distance learning, 51
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### Applications and Activities

**Teacher’s Journal**

1. What does self-knowledge mean to you? Why is self-knowledge important in teaching? What steps can you take to achieve greater self-knowledge?

2. As a teacher, you will encounter challenges related to student variability (differences in developmental needs, interests, abilities, and disabilities) and student diversity (differences in gender, race, ethnicity, culture, and socioeconomic status). To begin thinking about how you will acquire and use knowledge about your students, write a brief profile of yourself as a student in elementary school, in middle school or junior high school, and in high school.

3. Reflect on your education as a teacher. What are your primary concerns about the preparation you are receiving? What experiences do you think will be most helpful to you as you move toward becoming a teacher? What qualities would you look for in a mentor?

4. On the basis of your field experiences to date and the information in Chapters 1 and 2, ask yourself these questions and respond in your journal: Do I have the aptitude to be-
come a good teacher? Am I willing to acquire the essential knowledge and skills teachers need? Do I really want to become a teacher?

Teacher's Database

1. Find out more about Tech Corps, a national network of volunteers that uses technology to enhance teaching and learning. Each of these leaders share his or her knowledge and expertise by mentoring five colleagues.

2. Instead of using "outside experts" to deliver professional development workshops to teachers, some states are implementing teacher networks in which teachers address problems of mutual concern. For example, to help teachers implement portfolio assessments of fourth- and eighth-grade student learning in mathematics and eighth-grade writing, Vermont's Department of Education has developed a teacher network. Teacher leaders from the state's educational regions meet periodically with state department personnel to plan three to four teacher network meetings each year. To learn more about the Vermont network, visit the Vermont Department of Education website at http://www.state.vt.us/educ

3. Investigate the California State Telemation Program, a statewide network of teachers who mentor one another. The program focuses on integrating online resources into site-level planning, curriculum development, learning strategies, and student-centered activities.

Observations and Interviews

1. Think about areas for focused observations of teaching, such as classroom management, student involvement, questioning techniques, evaluation, or teacher–student rapport. For one or more areas, brainstorm and order in logical sequence a set of questions you could use to guide your next observations. Include a list of questions to ask the teacher whom you will observe.

2. As a collaborative project with classmates, interview students who have completed student teaching at your college or university. What tips do they have for developing a positive relationship with a cooperating teacher? For establishing rapport with students? For developing confidence in presenting lessons?

3. Arrange to interview a school administrator about the knowledge, skills, and aptitude he or she thinks teachers must have. To help you plan for the interview, ask your instructor for handout master M2.2, “Interviewing School Administrators about Teachers’ Knowledge and Skills.” Which of the knowledge and skills discussed in this chapter does the administrator mention? Does he or she mention knowledge and skills not discussed in this chapter?

4. Observe a teacher in the classroom for the purpose of identifying examples that help to answer the following questions. How does the teacher demonstrate or use knowledge of self and students? Knowledge of subject matter? Knowledge of educational theory and research?

5. Observe a classroom in which there is likely to be some teacher–student interaction (for example, questions and answers, discussion, or oral review and feedback). On the basis of the data you collect, what conclusions can you draw about life in this classroom? To help record your observations, ask your instructor for handout master M2.1, “Recording Classroom Interactions.”

Professional Portfolio

1. Create a plan for developing your portfolio. What specific outcomes or standards will you use to organize your portfolio entries? What artifacts will you use to demonstrate your professional growth and development?

2. Evaluate the products of your studies in education so far in your preparation for becoming a teacher. Identify a few examples of your best work to include in your portfolio. Also, evaluate your Teacher’s Journal, Teacher’s Database, and Observations and Interviews for possible inclusions in your portfolio.

Video Workshop Extra!

If the Video Workshop package was included with your textbook, go to Chapter 2 of the Companion Website (http://www.ablongman.com/parkay6e) and click on the Video Workshop button. Follow the instructions for viewing videoclip 1 and completing this exercise. Consider this information along with what you’ve read in Chapter 2 while answering the following questions.

1. Reforms in teacher education are necessary to ensure optimal training for classroom teachers. What can you infer about society's expectations of teachers from such reforms (e.g., mandatory teacher exams)? Write a brief analysis of how society’s expectations are manifest in the classroom context.

2. Explain the relationship between a teacher’s self-knowledge and knowledge of students. How does this knowledge affect everyday practice?
### Florida Performance Measurement System Screening/Summative Observation Instrument

**Observer’s Notes:**

**Source:** Florida Department of Education, Division of Human Resource Development, Tallahassee, FL. Copyright © 1989 State of Florida Department of State. Used with permission.

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#### FRAME FACTOR INFORMATION (PLEASE PRINT)

| Teacher’s Name | ____________ | ____________ | ____________ |
| Source: Florida Department of Education, Division of Human Resource Development, Tallahassee, FL | Copyright © 1989 State of Florida Department of State. Used with permission. |

#### Type of Classroom/Facility in Which the Observation Occurred

- ☐ Regular Classroom—Self-contained, Open, Pod
- ☐ Laboratory or Shop
- ☐ Field, Court, Gymnasium
- ☐ Media Room or Library

#### Total Number of Students in Class ________

#### Observation Information

- Date __/__/____
- Type of Observation
  - ☐ Prof. Orien.
  - ☐ Dis. Assess
  - ☐ Other (Specify) ____________________________

#### Methods Used in the Observed Lesson

- ☐ Lecture
- ☐ Interactive/Discussion
- ☐ Independent Study/Lab or Shop Work
- ☐ Other Study/Lab or Shop Work

#### Teacher’s Name ______________________

- Number ________
- District Name ______________________
- School Name ______________________

#### Observer’s Name ______________________

- Number ________
- Position 1. Principal 2. Ass’t Principal 3. Teacher 4. Other
- Class ______

#### Grade Level (Specify one level only—For Adult Ed. mark level 13 For Kindergarten or Preschool mark level 00.)

#### Subject Area Observed

|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

#### Type of Classroom/Facility in Which the Observation Occurred

- ☐ Regular Classroom—Self-contained, Open, Pod
- ☐ Laboratory or Shop
- ☐ Field, Court, Gymnasium
- ☐ Media Room or Library

#### Total Number of Students in Class ________

#### Observation Information

- Date __/__/____
- Type of Observation
  - ☐ Prof. Orien.
  - ☐ Dis. Assess
  - ☐ Other (Specify) ____________________________

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#### Teacher’s Name ______________________

- Number ________
- District Name ______________________
- School Name ______________________

#### Observer’s Name ______________________

- Number ________
- Position 1. Principal 2. Ass’t Principal 3. Teacher 4. Other
- Class ______

#### Grade Level (Specify one level only—For Adult Ed. mark level 13 For Kindergarten or Preschool mark level 00.)

#### Subject Area Observed

|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

#### Effective Indicators

1. Begins instruction promptly
2. Handles materials in an orderly manner
3. Orientates students to classwork/maintains academic focus
4. Conducts beginning/ending review
5. Questions descriptive/constructive—lesson development
   - a. single factual (Domain 5.0)
   - b. requires analysis/reasons
6. Recognizes response/amplifies/gives correct feedback
7. Gives specific academic praise
8. Provides practice
9. Gives directions/assigns/checks comprehension of homework, seatwork assignments/gives feedback
10. Circulates and assists students
11. Treats concepts—definition/attributes/examples/nonexamples
12. Discusses cause-effect/uses linking words/applies law or principle
13. States and applies academic rule
14. Develops criteria and evidence for value judgment
15. Emphasizes important points
16. Expresses enthusiasm verbally/challenges students
17. Uses vague/scrambled discourse
18. Uses loud, grating, high pitched, monotone, or inaudible talk
19. Uses body behavior that shows interest—smiles, gestures
20. Stops misconduct
21. Maintains instructional momentum

#### Ineffective Indicators

1. Delays
2. Does not organize materials systematically
3. Allows talk/activity unrelated to subject
4. Allows unison response
5. Poses multiple questions asked as one
6. Ignores student or response/expresses sarcasm, disgust, harshness
7. Uses general, nonspecific praise
8. Extends discourse, changes topic with no practice
9. Gives inadequate directions on homework/no feedback
10. Remains at desk/circulates inadequately
11. Gives definition or example only
12. Discusses either cause or effect only/uses no linking words/)
13. Does not state or does not apply academic rule
14. States value judgment with no criteria or evidence
15. Uses vague/scrambled discourse
16. Uses loud, grating, high pitched, monotone, or inaudible talk
17. Frowns, deadpan or lethargic
18. Delays desist/doesn’t stop misconduct/desists punitively
19. Loses momentum—fragments nonacademic directions, over dwells

#### Number of Students Not Engaged

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4

*Observer’s Notes:*
Preamble to the New Teacher Standards

The New Teacher Standards describe what first-year teachers should know and be able to do in authentic teaching situations and the academic content, teaching behaviors, and instructional processes that are necessary to promote effective student learning. They imply more than the mere demonstration of teaching competencies. They imply a current and sufficient academic content understanding that promotes consistent quality performance on teaching tasks. Authentic teaching tasks provide opportunities and contexts for performances by beginning teachers. In Kentucky, all teaching and learning tasks address Kentucky’s academic expectations. These identify what students need to be successful in the world of the future. Thus, teachers design and implement instruction and assess learning that develops students’ abilities to:

1. Use basic communication and mathematics skills in finding, organizing, expressing, and responding to information and ideas.
2. Apply core concepts and principles from science, arts and humanities, mathematics, practical living studies, social studies, and vocational studies.
4. Become a responsible group member who demonstrates consistent, responsive, and caring behavior; interpersonal skills; respect for the rights and responsibilities of others; world views; and an open mind to other perspectives.
5. Think and solve problems including the ability to think critically and creatively, develop ideas and concepts, and make rational decisions.
6. Connect and integrate experiences and new knowledge throughout the curriculum, question and interpret ideas from diverse perspectives, and apply concepts to real-life situations.

New Teacher Standards

I. Designs/Plans Instruction The teacher designs/plans instruction and learning climates that develop students’ abilities to use communication skills, apply core concepts, become self-sufficient individuals, become responsible team members, think and solve problems, and integrate knowledge.

II. Creates/Maintains Learning Climates The teacher creates learning climates that support the development of students’ abilities to use communication skills, apply core concepts, become self-sufficient individuals, become responsible team members, think and solve problems, and integrate knowledge.

III. Implements/Manages Instruction The teacher introduces/implements/manages instruction that develops students’ abilities to use communication skills, apply core concepts, become self-sufficient individuals, become responsible team members, think and solve problems, and integrate knowledge.

IV. Assesses and Communicates Learning Results The teacher assesses learning and communicates results to students and others with respect to student abilities to use communication skills, apply core concepts, become self-sufficient individuals, become responsible team members, think and solve problems, and integrate knowledge.

V. Reflects/Evaluates Teaching/Learning The teacher reflects on and evaluates specific teaching/learning situations and/or programs.

VI. Collaborates with Colleagues/Parents/Others The teacher collaborates with colleagues, parents, and other agencies to design, implement, and support learning programs that develop students’ abilities to use communication skills, apply core concepts, become self-sufficient individuals, become responsible team members, think and solve problems, and integrate knowledge.

VII. Engages in Professional Development The teacher evaluates his/her overall performance with respect to modeling and teaching Kentucky’s Learning Goals and implements a professional development program that enhances his/her own performance.

VIII. Knowledge of Content The teacher demonstrates a current and sufficient academic knowledge of certified content areas to develop student knowledge and performance in those areas.

IX. Demonstrates Implementation of Technology The teacher uses technology to support instruction; access and manipulate data; enhance professional growth and productivity; communicate and collaborate with colleagues, parents, and the community; and conduct research.

Source: Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board, Kentucky’s New Teacher Standards. Copyright ©1999 Kentucky Department of Education. Used with permission of the Kentucky Department of Education, Frankfort, Kentucky, 40601.
Appendix 2.3

SAMPLE NBPTS PORTFOLIO ENTRIES

Early Childhood Generalist Portfolio, for Teachers of Students Ages 3–8

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards has suggested portfolio entries to give candidates (or potential candidates) a clear picture of the kinds of entries to include in a portfolio. The entries below are for the Early Childhood Generalist certificate for the 2002–2003 cycle.

Entries Based on Student Work Samples

Entry 1: Examining Children’s Literacy Development

In this entry, you select two children to feature as examples of your work with children in fostering literacy development. Your approach to assessment of the children’s abilities and needs, response to that assessment in the design and implementation of instruction, and selected work samples demonstrating the children’s literacy development are the focus of this entry.

Entries Based on Videotape

Entry 2: Building a Classroom Community

In this entry, you submit a videotape and instructional materials that demonstrate your knowledge and ability to deepen students’ knowledge of a social studies topic/concept/theme, your ability to integrate the arts, and your interaction with children during group discussion/activities that illustrates your approach to creating a climate in the classroom that promotes children’s development of social and interpersonal skills.

Entry 3: Integrating Mathematics and Science

In this entry, you submit a videotape and instructional materials of an integrative learning experience designed to deepen children’s understanding of mathematics and science concepts through a “Big Idea” in science and develop skills in using mathematical and scientific ways of observing, thinking, and communicating.

Entries Based on Documented Accomplishments

Entry 4: Documented Accomplishments: Contributions to Student Learning

In this entry, you illustrate your partnerships with students’ families and community, and your development as a learner and collaborator with other professionals by submitting descriptions and documentation of your activities and accomplishments in those areas.

Reflections on Education

The Rewards and Challenges of Those First Years of Teaching

by Jan Richards

The rewards of teaching are unique and immeasurable. A teacher’s gratification knowing that he or she has made a difference in a child’s life, rekindling hope and awakening curiosity about the world, cannot be captured in words. A teacher contributes to a child’s character every day, building confidence and enhancing self-esteem. Great teaching is an act of lighting a candle in the darkness, of modeling tolerance and compassion, and of offering hope for the future. Such are the rewards mentioned most by successful teachers. But the increasing challenges of teaching are also a very real part of the package—challenges that have contributed to the problem of teacher attrition. Studies have shown that teachers are most at risk for leaving the profession in their first five years (Johnson et al. 2001).

Teacher shortages, attrition, and retention are growing problems in education today. Education researchers have warned of a severe teacher shortage in the next ten years, largely due to the fact that most teachers are in the forty-five to fifty-five age groups and may plan to retire during this period. At the same time, the nation’s school enrollment is projected to increase by one million children. This means that approximately 50,000 additional teachers will be needed to fill the gap (U.S. Department of Education 1999, ¶ 8).

In a day when retaining enough teachers to do the job of educating our nation’s young has become a persistent problem and the stress of teaching has markedly increased, many teachers are leaving the profession. The ills of society are entering the classroom. Children often come to school unprepared (academically and emotionally), and teachers sometimes sense that their roles have shifted to that of social workers and counselors as well as instructors. According to Richard Ingersoll (2001, 14), many new teachers who enter the classroom drop out within the first five years (up to 50 percent in some school districts)—a far greater rate than that of other occupations. The average employee turnover in the United States is 11 percent while teacher turnover is closer to 14 percent. Teacher retention is an ongoing problem. Teachers report they are leaving the profession because of a lack of money, administrative support, and respect, as well as a lack of discipline support in school.

But with or without ideal working conditions, many teachers choose to stay. Studies of experienced, resilient teachers suggest what attitudes new teachers might learn and implement. Beverly H. Stanford (2001), Gerard J. Brunetti (2001), and Gloria Ladson-Billings (1994) interviewed resilient teachers who stayed for many years in schools where they were needed most—among children who were often poor, educationally disadvantaged, and minority. Reported reasons for staying in such challenging school environments were the teachers’ commitment to children and the satisfaction they found knowing they had made a great difference in these children’s lives. They cared deeply about their students.

Even for a new teacher determined to make a difference and to successfully persevere through the pressures of those first five years, learning to handle the challenges of teaching is not easy. Just taking the required education courses and participating in discussions on classroom management or the effects of poverty on children’s academic performance is little preparation for the sudden realities new teachers encounter. Not surprisingly, beginning teachers often report feeling anxious and inadequate for the task.

Adopting three attitudes modeled by successful, experienced teachers may help a beginning teacher stay focused on the big picture rather than becoming sidetracked by trivial irritations or minor setbacks. First, successful teachers allow for mistakes and view them as a part of their professional growth. All teachers have days they do not feel well, when a lesson falls flat, or when they are short-tempered because the class behavior is less than ideal. Teachers also enjoy those shining moments when a grateful student smiles in appreciation because a new concept suddenly becomes clear. Reflecting on both days of disaster and moments of success is a practice that strengthens and builds confidence. Persevering teachers reflect continuously on why a discipline plan is not working or on the best way to arrange the classroom, walk to the library, or implement cooperative learning groups. They often keep a journal as a record of their insights.

Second, persevering teachers look for sources of help, opportunities for in-services or workshops that will strengthen their skills and increase their knowledge of teaching strategies. Other sources of help take the form of experienced teachers willing to share their expertise on classroom management options or success dealing with students or parents. Often a principal will arrange a time new teachers can observe talented teachers in action. Another wonderful source of information and help is the Internet. The websites listed at the end of the feature are just a few of the many that offer lesson plans, ideas for math or science projects, or ways to handle behavior problems.

Third, persevering teachers create a support system, knowing they need the support of others to help them succeed. Many new teachers have reported that they formed their own support group, sharing their successes and failures with other new struggling teachers who understand their frustrations firsthand. The group may eat lunch together or plan on a weekly get-together after school. Most schools have some form of mentoring program as added support as well. New teachers who do not have the luxury of a mentor in their school may find an experienced teacher close by who is willing to offer help when needed. It is important that beginning teachers seek professional models who demonstrate positive attitudes and obviously love their work.
Maintaining emotional well-being is critical because as a teacher, your moods, attitudes, humor, and morale spill over to the students in your care. Students are watching, and they depend on and often reflect the attitudes their teachers project. No job requires more flexibility, patience, tolerance, and desire to make a difference in the lives of so many as that of a teacher. And no job offers the sense of deep satisfaction and reward. When asked about how satisfied she was with the experience of being in the classroom, one second-year teacher named Abby responded:

I love working with my kids and I’m really satisfied when I look at them at the beginning of the year, and the wonderful individuals that they’ve become at the end of the year. That’s my satisfaction—just being in that classroom with those kids because I know nothing else matters but what I do in there (Richard 2002).

Jan Richards is currently an Assistant Professor at National University in San Diego, CA after twenty years of teaching in public schools, grades 1–8. Her published writings and reviews about teaching have appeared in Principal, Educational Horizons, KDPi Record, New Teacher Advocate, Educational Forum, and Childhood Education.

Internet Resources

Carol Hurst’s Children’s Literature Site (http://www.carolhurst.com/)

This site offers reviews of children’s books and ideas for using them in the classroom. Recommended books and activities are also integrated into other subjects such as math and history for creating thematic units. “Themes and Other Subjects” will connect you to literature, art, and history as they relate to your subject as well as to dozens of other valuable sites that can enhance the lesson. This is the site to visit when you are putting together a thematic unit.

Enchanted Learning (Grades K–6) (http://www.enchantedlearning.com)

This wonderful site for students provides information on a variety of subjects and includes a rich collection of pictures and information on the rain forest, dinosaurs, and many other topics. Your students will enjoy exploring their own interests in the computer lab or at a learning center, or they can use the site as a resource for writing research reports.

Kathy Shrock’s Guide for Educators (http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/)

Sponsored by the Discovery Channel, this is one of the best online sites providing teachers with a variety of resources, practical tools, and materials. Many subjects are covered: history and social studies, mathematics, language arts, science, and special education resources, to name just a few. There is also a section on lesson plans for any grade level. Just go to the lesson plan section (http://school.discovery.com/lessonplans/), copy a plan that fits your needs, then modify it for your particular students. If you are desperate for a bulletin board idea on a specific topic, go to http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/bulletin/element.html and look at “Bulletin Board Ideas.”


This site offers access to millions of copyright-free photographs for classroom use. For example, these well-known images can be used when presenting information about the Great Depression. This site offers some great possibilities. The page American Memory Timeline helps teachers use primary sources in their lesson planning. The links are arranged in chronological order with listings such as Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861-1877; Rise of Industrial America, 1876-1900; or Great Depression/World War II, 1929-1945. Teacher-created lessons are offered as well.

Lesson Plans Page (http://www.lessonplanspage.com)

This website offers valuable lesson plan ideas for students of all ages, with over 1,500 lesson plans on math, science, social studies, art, physical education and health, language arts, computers, and the Internet, and many others. It includes lessons for special holidays and back-to-school ideas.

Mars Exploration (Grades 3–8) (http://mars.jpl.nasa.gov/)

This terrific site offers many opportunities for interactive fun while learning about Mars. It includes classroom activities with step-by-step instructions. Exploring this site is a great way to introduce your unit on the solar system.

Math Goodies (http://www.mathgoodies.com/)

This award-winning site has over four hundred pages of math lessons, puzzles, and worksheets for teachers, students, and parents. Interactive lessons include such topics as geometry, number theory, percent, integers, probability, pre-algebra, and introductory statistics. There is an answer key as well. In the “Math Fact Café,” you can build your own worksheets for grades 1 through 4 or print out flash cards for grades 1 through 3. When your students need added practice on a math concept, this site will keep their interest.

Teacher Talk (http://education.indiana.edu/cas/tt/tthmpg.html)

This online publication is devoted specifically to the questions and needs of beginning secondary teachers. It offers tips for creative teaching and ideas for understanding the needs of adolescents. Teacher Talk addresses the concerns of new teachers such as student teaching and classroom management.

References


