Promoting talk: A framework for reading discussions in teacher education courses

As a teacher, I sometimes get tired of listening to myself talk. On more than one occasion when I have relied too much on lecture, I have looked out into my graduate education classes and wondered what might be in the minds of my students. What can I prepare for dinner? What am I going to do now that my babysitter has quit? How might I more productively deal with the persistent misbehavior or underachievement of one student or another? I know that these were the things that many of them were thinking on occasion during the course of whole-class discussions about literacy, because these are the things to which my own mind drifts when I am required to sit for extended periods while others talk. Although a few of my students routinely participated in whole-group discussions by answering questions and sharing personal experiences, a large number sat quietly—politely—without contributing at all. I was usually sympathetic. I know it is easy to disengage when you are but one member of a large group listening to someone else’s words.

Dissatisfied with my students’ overall level of engagement and aware that my “one-size-fits-all” attempts at generating meaningful whole-class discussion were not meeting the very specific needs of the teachers in my graduate course, I began to explore alternative instructional practices. In reflecting upon and refining my own teaching I considered the following assumptions: (a) learning is a social process; (b) the smaller the group, the more likely a person is to participate in a discussion; (c) teachers have different needs,
depending on their experiences; and (d) teachers bring a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the graduate classroom from which their classmates might benefit. Based on these assumptions, I drew from my own knowledge of best teaching practices and decided to add a small-group reading discussion component to my graduate literacy course.

I began using reading discussion groups with graduate students for two reasons. First, I wanted to allow students to choose course readings that were relevant to their professional needs. Second, I wanted to encourage small-group discussions through which students could be active and engaged learners, constructing their own knowledge as they shared their questions, insights, and experiences with one another. I sensed that through exclusive use of professor-directed discussions and professor-selected texts, I was failing to meet the needs of my students. This article outlines the structure that I used to involve students in independent reflection and group discourse about self-selected course readings and describes my study of the effects of engaging students in structured small-group discussions about text.

In the last decade or so, a growing number of educators have discovered that engaging students in rich discussions about what they have read is an effective way to stimulate higher levels of thinking and response to text. This instructional strategy is patterned after real-world conversations that occur when people talk with one another about something that they have read. These discussions, termed "grand conversations" by Eeds and Wells (1989), differ from traditional approaches to reading instruction that place the teacher at the center of attention and in which students attempt to demonstrate comprehension by answering the teacher's questions. Instead, children meet in small groups and participate in student-centered conversations about texts.

Researchers have examined the use of these types of reading discussion groups and have found numerous successful approaches to structuring such discussions (e.g., Daniels, 1994; Kegan & Shraike, 1991; Raphael & McMahon, 1994; Speigle, 1998). Using literature response groups, literature study groups, book clubs, literature circles, or other similar vehicles, teachers can provide regular opportunities for students to react to books, raise questions, clarify points, and relate parts of the texts to their own experiences. Whereas these approaches may vary in some ways, student-centered discussion strategies elicit responses that go beyond simple recounting of story elements and events. Instead, responses reflect an aesthetic stance, whereby students "live through" the text, and interpret it based on their own life experiences (Rosenblatt, 1978).

Eeds and Wells (1989) noticed students responding to text in a variety of ways in their observations of student-led discussions about literature. Students shared problems encountered in text, recounted personal stories, and evaluated different aspects of the text. In addition, they constructed deeper understandings of text by hypothesizing, interpreting, and verifying during their reading discussions.

Teacher educators have successfully used reading discussion groups in both graduate and undergraduate reading education classes to enhance students' learning. Wells (1990) found that students in her graduate-level reading course who participated in literature study groups gave the same types of responses during discussions as children who had participated in discussion groups for the Eeds and Wells (1989) study. Recently, teacher educators have successfully used reading discussion groups to help undergraduate students explore social contexts and value diversity (Peck, 2000; Roberts, Jensen, & Hadjiyianni, 1997), as well as improve attitudes toward using literature in the teaching of reading (Grisham, 2000).

**Promoting successful reading experiences**

Approaches to implementing reading discussion groups with children and adults are varied. However, while these approaches differ in some respects, they tend to include a number of common components. The structure I used to organize reading discussions included several components associated with effective literacy experiences.

**Self-selected text.** Providing students with choice of reading material is frequently considered "best practice" (Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 1998) in reading instruction for children and is often a component of reading discussion groups. Because
choice of text is likely to increase a reader's motivation and interest, it will also positively affect reading comprehension (Fielding & Pearson, 1994). This seems even more pertinent in a graduate course, where readers often have known professional needs and expectations for learning. It seems likely that practicing teachers would find course readings more relevant if they were able to select a text based on factors such as grade level taught, area of specialization, and specific instructional needs.

**Strategic reading of text.** Understanding of text is enhanced when readers take a "strategic stance" whereby they consciously employ a variety of strategies to make sense of what they are reading (Dowhower, 1999). Metacognitive behaviors such as circling key words, underlining important points, noting questions, and making connections to personal experiences in the margin of the text can help readers comprehend during reading and can facilitate reflection and discussion after reading.

**Written response to text.** Responding to text in writing can be an important aspect of reading discussion groups. Rosenblatt (1991) pointed out that reading should evoke personal reactions to what the author has communicated. Further, readers interpret text based on their own experiences. Writing about reactions to what has been read enables a reader to synthesize information and to comprehend at higher levels. While we often associate personal response with literary texts, professional literature also might evoke deep personal responses from practitioners as they connect the text to their own experiences. For instance, practicing teachers might react enthusiastically to a description of an effective teaching technique or might become irritated, frustrated, or angry about a philosophical position with which they disagree.

**Discussion about text.** Providing an opportunity for readers to talk with others about what they have read improves comprehension of the text (Eeds and Wells, 1989). Vygotsky's social learning theory (1978) emphasized that learning occurs most effectively when learners talk with others, especially those who know more about what is being learned than the learner. When teachers discuss professional literature, they benefit from one another's strengths and areas of expertise. From the viewpoint that reading is a transactional experience whereby readers interpret text based on their own experiences (Rosenblatt, 1978), hearing others' interpretations of text can help teachers refine their own meaning constructions.

**Sharing the text.** Sharing what has been read with those who have not read the text also has benefits for both the readers and the recipients. Readers can further synthesize the text as they extract the most important points to share. Furthermore, class members who have not read the text are introduced to additional sources that they might wish to explore independently.

**Teachers engaging in reading discussions**

In an attempt to heighten learning in a graduate literacy course involving 15 students at a small, private U.S. college, I incorporated reading discussion groups into course activities. All 15 participants were certified teachers; 14 taught elementary school and one was a state Department of Education employee. All were pursuing masters degrees in elementary education and had 5 years or less of teaching experience.

During 9 of the 15 weekly class meetings, the participants were involved in small-group discussions about self-selected course readings in addition to more typical whole-class discussions about core readings. To guide participation in the reading discussion groups, I devised a format, CARDS (see Figure 1), that would involve the students in selecting text (Choose), reading (Active reading) and responding to text (React), and discussing the text with their peers (Discuss and Share).

For each discussion, the teachers selected a reading that pertained to the topic of study based on their interests and needs; these were selected from two books and a short list of professional journal articles for each week. Figure 2 lists the texts from which students chose readings for a class meeting on reading comprehension. At the beginning of the semester, I conducted a mini-lesson emphasizing strategic reading behavior. I demonstrated strategies such as circling key words, underlining important points, and writing notes and questions in the margins of the text. The teachers were expected to use those strategies as they read the self-selected texts before coming to class.
After reading the self-selected texts, the teachers wrote reactions to the texts on index cards. On one side of the card, they wrote a comment that reflected their thoughts about the text; on the other side they wrote a question that they wanted to ask their group members or the author. After whole-class discussions and related activities on the weekly class topics, teachers were grouped with others in the class who had read the same article or chapter. Group sizes ranged from two to eight members. Using the cards and the "actively read" articles to stimulate discussions, the teachers engaged in small-group conversations. Then each group gave a short presentation of the main points of the text and highlights of the group discussions. Presentations involved a variety of materials and modes of expression (e.g., overheads, posters, graphic organizers, illustrations, oral presentations).

To ensure that all group members actively participated in the reading discussion groups, the teachers kept self-evaluation sheets documenting specific individual contributions to the group (see Figure 3). The sheets also included a short list of roles similar to those suggested by Daniels (1994), including reporter, secretary, illustrator, connector, and facilitator. The teachers selected the roles they wished to assume each week but were encouraged to take a variety of roles throughout the semester. I collected the self-evaluation sheets at the end of the semester and considered them as I awarded class participation credit.

Several data sources provided information about the effectiveness of the small-group discussions: (a) teachers' written responses to text, (b) a brief questionnaire, and (c) transcripts of a number of reading discussions.

**FIGURE 1**

**CARDS: A structure for reading discussion groups**

**Choose:** Students choose readings from books or articles based on their interests and needs.

**Actively Read:** Students use strategic behaviors such as circling key words, underlining important points, and writing notes or questions in the margins of the texts.

**React:** Students write reactions to the texts on index cards. On one side of the card, they write a comment that reflects their thoughts about the text; on the other side they write a question that they want to ask their group members or the author.

**Discuss:** After whole-class discussions and related activities on regular class topics, students are grouped with other class members who have read the same text. These small groups spend time sharing and responding to one another's reactions.

**Share:** Groups give short presentations of the texts' main points as well as highlights of the small-group discussions. Presentations can include a variety of materials and modes of expression (e.g., overheads, posters, graphic organizers, illustrations, oral presentations).

**Teachers' reactions to text**

All index cards were collected at the end of each class session so that responses could be analyzed. Written reactions were coded according to emerging patterns, categorized, and counted; comments and questions were analyzed separately.

**Comments on the texts.** Participants' reactions reflected a range of responses to the course readings (see Table on p. 647). Twenty-five percent of

---

**FIGURE 2**

**Texts from which students selected readings for one class meeting**


---

645
### FIGURE 3
CARDS self-evaluation record sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Article/chapter read</th>
<th>My role</th>
<th>Specific group contributions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ICSRIF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ICSRIF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ICSRIF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ICSRIF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ICSRIF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ICSRIF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ICSRIF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ICSRIF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ICSRIF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ICSRIF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I=Illustrator C=Connector S=Secretary R=Reporter F=Facilitator

Comments indicated that the teachers connected what they had read to their own teaching. These comments related to issues such as what was currently occurring in a teacher's classroom or school or how the teacher might use the concept or strategy in her own teaching. Twenty-five percent of the participants' comments identified points in the text that they found significant or with which they agreed. Twenty percent of the comments were general, positive evaluations of the texts or strategies presented such as, "What a wonderful idea." Eighteen percent of the comments reflected new insights that the teachers gained from reading the text. These often took the form of statements beginning with "I'd never thought about..." In 8% of the comments, participants extended points from the reading, adding considerations or ideas. Two percent of comments were coded as miscellaneous.

**Questions about texts.** The participants also reacted to the books and articles through questions that were written on the backs of the index cards. The questions represented a variety of responses to the texts (see Table on p. 647). Forty percent of the questions dealt with procedures and clarification related to implementation of the teaching strategies outlined in the texts. Twenty-nine percent of the questions addressed specific concerns that teachers had about using the concepts or strategies in their own classrooms, including specific limitations that the teachers envisioned based on their own teaching circumstances. Eleven percent of the questions pertained to how the concepts and strategies would affect student learning and performance. These reflected teachers' emphasis on improving their students' literacy achievement. Eleven percent of the questions included teachers' ideas for extending the concepts or strategies beyond what the author(s) presented. For instance, they wondered how specific strategies might work with students at a different age level. Nine percent of the questions related to the teachers' understanding of what was read. These responses sought clarification about points in the text or about the concepts addressed.

**Teachers' perceptions about their learning**

On the last day of the semester, I distributed a brief questionnaire designed to provide information about the participants' perceptions of how they benefited from the reading discussion groups, and whether or not the CARDS framework was an effective approach to organizing reading discussions. The questionnaire consisted of four open-ended questions inquiring about (a) how the discussions affected the participants' learning, (b) how the discussions affected the participants' teaching, (c) the participants' opinions about the effectiveness of the CARDS strategy, and (d) the participants' suggestions for improving the strategy. Because a number of responses to some
questions also pertained to other questions on the questionnaire, responses to all questions were coded and analyzed together. Coded responses to the questions were categorized to illustrate common themes.

**Improved learning.** Participants were unanimously positive about the effects of the reading discussions on their learning. Sixteen responses indicated that the discussions provided a deeper level of understanding of course readings, concepts, and strategies. Seven responses reflected positive effects at the most basic level—participants simply read the material more carefully. As one put it, “It was a great motivator for reading the assignments. We are all so busy with our classrooms we often run short on time.” Another agreed, “If [CARDS] had not been used I feel like I might not have read some of the articles or chapters very thoroughly.”

Other responses revealed that the strategy stimulated participants’ thinking and deepened their understanding of the course readings and concepts. One wrote, “Some of the discussions made me question some things I was/wasn’t doing in my classroom. I guess you could say they made me really think about how I was teaching certain concepts.” Another wrote, “If we weren’t using CARDS I probably would not have written down my thoughts during reading and maybe not have gotten answers to my questions.”

**Benefitting from others.** Participants reported that they gained much from hearing about others’ ideas and experiences during small-group discussions. A number wrote that they learned from hearing differing perspectives. According to one respondent, “The article/book discussions allowed me to hear other perspectives that I may not have considered had it not been for the group discussions.” Another wrote, “It’s always great to listen to others’ outlook on things.”

Eleven responses reflected the degree to which the participants valued the experiences of the other teachers in their groups. One wrote, “It’s great to hear what others do in their classrooms. It gives me ideas of programs that might be useful to my students.” Another concurred, “The discussions allowed teachers to share what works and/or does not work in their classrooms. They allowed us to ask questions about strategies, possibly even come up with new ideas.”

**Effects on classroom instruction.** Eleven responses indicated that participants gained new ideas that had already influenced or would influence their classroom instruction. A number reported that they had already implemented strategies discussed in their CARDS group. One wrote, “The discussions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of written reactions to professional texts</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comments</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connections to own teaching</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant points in the text</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General evaluations of the text</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New insights gained from the text</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensions of author’s ideas</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Questions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching procedures and techniques</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connections to own teaching situation</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application to student learning</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensions of strategies/concepts</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems encountered while reading</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Promoting talk
led to ideas and strategies that I carried on to my classroom." Interestingly, two indicated that they planned to use the CARDS strategy with their own students next year. "I plan to create new, simpler roles in terms younger students might better understand," one elaborated.

**Suggestions for improving CARDS.** Because I initiated reading discussion groups in my classroom as part of ongoing efforts to improve my teaching, I sought feedback from the teachers on ways in which I might refine my implementation of reading discussion groups. Therefore, one question specifically asked for suggestions for improving the strategy. Of the 11 responses given, over half related to the self-evaluation sheet that students were asked to complete after each discussion. Four teachers found the self-evaluation sheets helpful; three found the sheets unnecessary or distracting. Six provided other suggestions for improving the strategy, such as (a) having the professor give written feedback to the questions on the index cards, (b) allowing more time for small-group discussions, and (c) adding a written reflection after group discussions.

**Discussions in action**

Seven small-group discussions were audiotaped and transcribed to provide triangulating information about participants' responses to the texts. The transcripts were used to illustrate the degree to which the participants' discussions actually reflected the kinds of learning that they reported on the questionnaires. Five discussions from the beginning of the semester were transcribed and coded according to emerging response-type patterns. Transcription continued until it became apparent that no new response-type categories were emerging from the data. In addition, one discussion in the middle of the semester and one from the end of the semester were coded to explore whether the types of responses changed through the course of the semester. Interestingly, no new patterns of discussion emerged from these later transcripts. Perhaps the structure that the response cards provided promoted certain types of responses from the beginning which were carried throughout the semester.

Transcripts of small-group discussions confirmed the participants' perceptions about their learning. An examination of the content of several discussions revealed that the small-group discourse provided opportunities to reflect further on the readings, to clarify understandings, and to share insights from their own experiences. In the many exchanges between and among the participants in the study, construction of knowledge occurred in a number of ways.

A look at the sample discussions supports the notion that the group setting served as an opportunity for the participants to help one another comprehend the texts in a deeper way. For instance, they frequently identified and extended important points from the text. In addition, they commonly asked for and received clarification about concepts and vocabulary presented in the readings. When they did not completely understand how a strategy should be implemented, the participants appeared willing to ask questions and accept suggestions from others in the group.

Another theme that emerged from the discussions was that the participants seemed to readily connect the text to their own professional experiences. They often conveyed how the readings related to the children with whom they worked and shared additional strategies that worked for them. Furthermore, they evaluated the concepts and instructional strategies presented in the readings based on their own teaching experiences. They were quick to identify problems with particular instructional topics and occasionally deemed approaches "unrealistic" given their professional situations. However, criticisms of strategies were often tempered by fellow group members who reported using the strategy successfully.

The following vignette of a discussion about the use of word walls, a popular word identification strategy in which words are posted on the classroom wall, illustrates the types of responses that teachers typically shared. All participants' names are pseudonyms.

**Jenny:** I like the part in the article that talked about how kids don't read because they're not motivated. They feel like they are struggling to get the words. They feel like they can't read. I think it's really important, especially with kindergarten that we come in really enthusiastic about it and try to get
them motivated and wanting to read and making them all feel like they can do it.

Cathy: When they talked about the rhyming, don't you think that gets confusing 'cause they had such large words like interesting and they had it broken down into four separate things. Wouldn't that get confusing for the kids?

Jo: I definitely know what you're saying.

Sara: It can't be any worse than what they are already doing.

Jo: Maybe it wouldn't work for a word like interesting, but just like for the word neighbor, I think it could work. If sleigh was up on the word wall you could say the first chunk in that word is like sleigh. And has that same sound.

Jenny: I've seen my better readers do that in second grade, but my struggling readers wouldn't [use the strategy]. They're more concerned with "let's get it and move on. Is this right? Yes or no. Let's move on."

Cathy: I really like this article. I thought it was interesting when she talked about how 500 first- through third-grade words have 37 rhymes. I didn't realize that. This is something that I want to do in my own classroom, and I probably will to an extent but I may modify it. When I've seen word walls I've seen the words cut out in the shapes of the words. I'm interested in that.

Jenny: For kids that are having trouble writing the text, they can go to the word wall.

Jo: I do that for my spelling every week. Instead of just writing the words they're supposed to use the boxes and then they switch. They give it to their neighbor and then their neighbor has to....

Cathy: My question was, when you're coming up with words for the word wall...in the article she was talking about core words and key words, and I had trouble making the distinction between what was a core word and what was a key word.

Sara: You have to learn it by sight.

Jenny: Like because or what.

Jo: Your key words would be like night and light.

This short exchange depicts a variety of responses as the teachers engaged in social construction of knowledge. For instance, it shows teachers evaluating the strategy and sharing examples from their own experiences that support their contentions. At the beginning of the vignette, all four teachers identify problems with using word walls, but then Jenny points to a way in which the strategy might be useful. She then shares an effective strategy that she has used with her students. Cathy shares a new insight about frequently occurring rhymes, and in doing so she emphasizes an important concept. When she later asks for clarification about core words and key words, Jenny, who uses word walls in her classroom, explains this confusing point.

Transfer to the classroom

Coincidentally, I later encountered one of the teachers in that graduate class during a yearlong professional development experience in which I was involved. She indicated that she was the one who had written on the anonymous questionnaire that she intended to modify the CARDS strategy for use in her own classroom. She hoped that the strategy would help her second and third graders learn to comprehend text at higher levels and that it would facilitate more meaningful talk about text among her students.

When I talked with her again almost a year later, this teacher shared her modification of CARDS (see Figure 4) and her thoughts about the impact of the strategy on her students.

Through the use of CARDS, I could tell that their critical thinking had come into play. In the beginning, they might write responses about Little Red Riding Hood's red dress, but at the end of the year they might say that Little Red Riding Hood really shouldn't have gone into the forest alone; somebody should have gone with her. I got higher level thinking than if I'd not used the strategy.

Implications for teacher educators

The CARDS format provided a beneficial framework for engaging teachers in small-group discussions about professional literature. It promoted
FIGURE 4
Modification of CARDS for the elementary classroom

Preparing for a literature circle (discussion)

The CARDS strategy

1. Choose a short story. Sometimes the teacher will assign a story.

2. Actively read the story.
   • Stop and ask yourself questions about the story.
   • Think aloud.
   • Write new or interesting words down on a sticky note (don’t forget the page #).

3. React in writing to the story. On the front of the index card write the name of the short story in the top margin. Write one or two comments about the story. Comments should be ones that will lead to a good, juicy discussion. Here are a few ideas:
   • Favorite part, least favorite part, and why;
   • a text-to-self, text-to-text, or text-to-world connection;
   • what do you think the author wants the reader to learn; and
   • anything else you’d like to say about the story.

On the back of the card write good questions (thought provoking) for your group members that will help ensure an interesting discussion. Here are some ideas:

   • What kind of person is ________________? What makes you say that?
   • What did you think of ________________?
   • How did you think ________________?
   • Why do you think the character ________________?
   • Why do you think the author ________________?
   • What did the author mean when he or she wrote ________________?

4. Discuss the story with your group members.
   • Take turns sharing your reactions and asking/answering questions.
   • Try to have a natural discussion.

5. Share the story with the rest of the class.
   • Include important ideas that were discussed in the group.

choice, response, and meaningful discussions about text, facets of reading experiences that I value as a teacher educator. In addition, the teachers’ written reactions served as a window into their thinking about course readings with which I was able to assess their knowledge about course concepts as well as their professional needs.

It is important that teacher educators model, through their own teaching, the practices that they hope students will use in their classrooms (Joyce & Weil, 1986; Kelly & Farnan, 1990). When teachers can see how a strategy works in practice, they are more likely to remember and to use that strategy. Thus, if balanced literacy programs for children should include frequent opportunities for students to engage in rich small-group discussions about self-selected texts (Speigel, 1998), then such opportunities should be provided to pre- and in-service teachers as well.

In addition to promoting the use of best practices with children, another benefit of modeling effective instructional strategies is that these can
enhance our students' understandings of course content. It appeared that using reading discussion groups with practicing teachers not only promoted their use with children, but also enabled teachers to glean more meaning from course readings and facilitated their making connections between the text and their own teaching. The teachers in this study used discussion groups to help one another better understand course readings and engage in practical talk about teaching.

Much can be gained by allowing teachers to have some choice in the course materials that they read and by giving them time to discuss books and articles with other teachers. Providing a structure for readers to react in writing to the texts seems to elicit a range of higher level responses that move beyond simply carrying away information. The teachers who participated reported improved understanding of the readings, improved learning overall, and actual application of course concepts due to the reading discussion group strategy. In addition to sharing knowledge and expertise with students in traditional ways such as through whole-class discussions and activities related to common assigned readings, teacher educators might also consider engaging their students in the kinds of successful reading experiences we hope that they will pass on to their students.

Cantrell teaches at Georgetown College (400 East College Street, Georgetown, KY 40324, USA). She may be reached via e-mail at susan_cantrell@georgetowncollege.edu.

REFERENCES


