**Reflective Reading Journals**

**#2**

Please write a two-page reflection connecting your reading to your classroom experiences. Use the chart below as a guide.

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| **List 4 meaningful points from the reading.** | **Include 1 relevant quote for each main point. Please rewrite the quote, and reference the page number.** | **Why did you choose this quote? Comment thoughtfully on the quote’s meaning.** | **Draw a connection for each point to the classroom or the community. For this section, I encourage you to reference observations from your own public school experience (as a teacher or as a student), and/or material from your other classes.** |
| 1.  Searching for solutions together makes for more powerful learning | p. 35 “If a teacher poses questions to which the answers already are known, students try to guess what’s in the teacher’s head and search for conformity or agreement. But if neither the teacher nor the students know the answers, they can share sincere, collaborative inquiry as they search for solutions.” | I chose this quote because upon first reading I disagreed with it. Most of the learning taking place at school is about finding the known answer to a problem and learning how to apply that strategy to another problem or situation. Once I started thinking about it in terms of the fine arts and our problem solving, I saw where the author was headed. | In music there are many interpretations of the notes that are written on a page. When I visited the Horn HS Orchestra last week, I walked in on a discussion on stylistic playing relative to a piece they were working on. There is no right answer to the question. Their teacher was guiding them through a thought process, looking for an answer. He did not have it already determined. The kids were engaged in discussing the different styles that could be done for this particular passage. They tried the different suggestions as a class and other students gave feedback on why they thought a particular style was better in the context of the piece. The teacher accepted each comment and eventually it was decided that one of the student suggestions would be the way they played that passage. The kids were using many habits of the mind simultaneously to come up with an answer to the question. |
| 2.  Strategies are meant to be applied outside of school | p. 48 “Metacognition anchors strategies for students so that they can apply them in life situations beyond school.” | Students have to be able to function in the real world. Knowing bits of information is great, but you have to know what to do with that information. We must develop the processes necessary for kids to be successful outside our doors. | One of my friends loves to tell her students “Let’s solve the problem.” This is not in relation to any math exercise or science question – it is what she says when a student says, “My homework is in my locker.” Instead of crying about it, the problem needs solving. She will walk them through the steps to solve the problem. Middle school kids seem to get lost from point A to point B if there are multiple steps between those two points. They also get distracted easily. By the time they reach high school, she hopes that she has walked them through solving the problem often enough that they can focus and do it on their own. In my classroom, I see the lack of problem solving mostly with my beginners. They do not know how to break down a larger problem. Once I show them it is okay to take a small part out to tackle, they are much more successful. After they have solved the small problem, then they can return to the bigger picture. It is my hope that they carry this over into other subjects. |
| 3.  Until persisting is internalized, it needs outside guidance | p. 51 “Teachers report that one of the main outcomes of using graphic organizers is that they provide a concrete system and model for proceeding through a problem that students would otherwise abandon because they have not developed their own organizational structures for persisting.” | The graphic organizers are a visual form of self-talk. Talking to yourself is frowned upon, yet it is very helpful to take you through the thinking process and allows you to thoroughly complete a task. It is talking yourself through something on paper. | Visual organizers allow you to take a large amount of data and information and break it down into manageable chunks. This was never an issue in my schooling – I rarely used graphic organizers to write – but my brothers were lost without them. When my youngest brother had to write a paper on who inspired him, he turned to graphic organizers once he was reminded to use them. He started with a bubble chart of people who influenced his life and each person had branches of what they had done to influence him. That showed him who had truly inspired and influenced him. So his next organizer was a timeline through his life, showing different events and what the results were. From that, he put together a rough draft and eventually his paper. Without those graphic organizers he would have continued with a classic case of writer’s block and never completed the assignment. Having those organizers at his fingertips allowed him to follow a systematic approach to the problem of his paper, something he dreaded writing. |
| 4.  Stretch them to make them gain confidence | p. 57 “When students combine the use of visual tools with the habits of mind to think more deeply, the see their own expanding ideas and thus gain a new sense of themselves as efficacious thinkers.” | It shows that we really have to build confidence in our students. Not just show them that we have confidence in them, but that they should have confidence in themselves. | Once students see themselves as capable thinkers, they are more likely to trust themselves. I have a seventh grader who did not trust her own thinking, and would always ask questions when she already had the answer. I took to answering her question with a series of questions, such as when she asked if a particular note was a C-natural. I guided her through the thinking process by directing her attention to the key signature and how it applied to the note in question. She eventually learned that I always made her answer her own question. I would end our conversation with “You don’t need me, you already knew the answer!” |

In preparation for our discussion in our face-to-face class, write 3 thoughtful discussion questions about the reading (inspired by Bloom’s taxonomy of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation).

1. How do you apply thinking maps to non-written activities in your classroom?
2. Which thinking maps do you use in your classroom on a regular basis and do the kids feel successful when using them?
3. When planning questions for class discussion, what balance do you most often use based on the three-story intellect example on p. 36? i.e. 35% tier 1, 55% tier 2, 10% tier 3