**Reflective Reading Journals**

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.Listening is a key skill for success, but rarely mentioned. Most people just assume everyone knows how to listen. | p. 76 “Interestingly, we spend about 55 percent of our lives listening, but listening is one of the least taught skills in schools.” | I chose this quote because my job is all about listening – not necessarily to words, but to notes and intervals. I cannot recall being told how to listen in a context outside of music. It was just “listen” to the teacher, the instructions, etc. I like the idea of asking students to paraphrase what another student said before they add their own comments. | Because music is not a topic which most people study in-depth from an early age, we have to teach from the ground up. With language, it is assumed that most people know how to listen and respond. I have to teach my kids what to listen for – the intervals between each note, the waves between identical pitches that indicate correct intonation, and how to listen to other sections while playing their part to line it up. When it comes to speaking, it is very easy to slip into bad listening habits. It is easy to hear, but hard to listen because the human mind is easily distracted. Many of my kids are still at “the world revolves around me” stage, so they do not listen attentively. They get distracted, dream, compare themselves to others, and try to derail any topic that is not interesting to them. For sixth grade especially, their favorite thing to do is argue. It is a way to test their boundaries, but many times prevents them from listening. I believe that true listening is closely tied to impulse control. |
| 2.Process, strategies, and steps are important | p. 80-81 “Sometimes teachers are so anxious for students to find correct answers that they omit discussions of the processes, strategies, and steps that produce the answer.” | This quote hit close to home for me. It reminds me of every math class I took until I got to college. The drive in public school math was to find the correct answer. Yes, we had to show our work, but that did not matter if we did not come up with the correct answer. | Once I got to college, I had a wonderful math professor for my algebra class. Math is a struggle for me, but he made it fun and understandable. The first thing he said to our class was that participation was about 70% of our grade – we worked problems on the board together as a class, called out answers, and shared our thoughts on processes and strategies. Secondly, he is the only math teacher I ever had who gave credit for an incorrect answer. It was only partial credit based on how far you got before your mistake was made, but it was still some credit. He also pointed out where you went wrong and made notes on how to solve it. He forced us to think out loud during class. It trickled into thinking step-by-step on paper. His math class is the only math class I have ever made an “A” in and I credit it to him teaching the processes and making us do it outside of our brains. |
| 3.Accuracy, accuracy, accuracy! | p. 83 “Students must come to see that striving for accuracy is of great value not only in the classroom but in the world as well. Pharmaceutical research, surgery, piloting, bookkeeping – all require a commitment to accuracy.” | I cannot think of a job or topic that does not require accuracy. Sometimes my students will fire back that “I will just work at McDonald’s,” but even that requires accuracy. The customer won’t be happy if they ordered a burger and fries, but get a chicken sandwich instead. | Accuracy is one of the easiest and hardest things to point out in my classroom. My favorite example is playing wrong notes. I have two students play a short passage – one with the correct key signature (F-naturals) and the other playing all F’s as F-sharps. The kids are amazed at how badly they clash on those notes! My next step is to pull out a recorder and tell all the kids to play together. Everyone gets to miss five notes, and we record it. Next round is three notes missed, then two, then one, then zero. I play the recordings back to them. The first round gets horrible reactions, as do the second, third, and fourth recordings. The last round is finally acceptable. We discuss how we would never listen to a group on the radio that sounds like the first recordings. In music, everything has to be at 100% accuracy to be acceptable. Then we go on to talk about tuning (which ties back to listening) to bring it up to a different version of 100%. Sometimes it is hard to explain that, yes you are playing the right note, but since it doesn’t match it is not totally correct. It’s enough to make their little heads spin sometimes! |
| 4.Don’t ford a river when you have a bridge near | p. 85 “Teachers must take time to both scaffold and bridge new learning. Scaffolding means building a knowledge structure by going back into previous information and drawing it forth. The recalled information then serves as a framework for incorporating new information.” | I scaffold and bridge in my class every day. Once the kids start seeing patterns and drawing conclusions from previous information, it makes adding new concepts and ideas easier for them and me. | The first thing my kids learn in beginning strings class is the musical alphabet. Everything is built from there. We learn to say it forwards and backwards, so once we put notes on the staff they say it forwards and backwards while moving up and down. Then we start throwing in fingerings. We constantly review the musical alphabet. What comes next? What came before this note? So if first finger is E and we add another finger, it makes\_\_\_\_\_. When my kids get to their second or third year or string playing, they are introduced to a new playing position and we go back to the base concept of the musical alphabet to count up and down ledger lines and finger notes that they have never seen before.  |

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 encourage true listening in your classroom?
2. How do you teach kids to persist when their first reaction is to shut down after failure?
3. How is creativity a part of your classroom?