

Fourteenth Edition

Those Who Can,
TEACH



KEVIN RYAN • JAMES M. COOPER • CHERYL MASON BOLICK

Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Standards for Teacher Licensing and Development

A CORRELATION CHART with *Those Who Can, Teach*, 14th edition

InTASC Standard	Description of Teacher Performance	Text Chapter/Page Number
1 Learner Development	Understands how children learn and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.	Ch. 3: pp. 54-87 Ch. 4: pp. 91-102; 105-114 Ch. 6: pp. 169-172; 172-181 Ch. 7: pp. 191-207
2 Learning Differences	Uses understanding of individual differences and diverse communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that allow each learner to reach his/her full potential.	Ch. 2: pp. 30-35; 40-48 Ch. 3: pp. 54-87 Ch. 5: pp. 138-148 Ch. 6: pp. 160-167; 172-181 Ch. 7: pp. 191-207 Ch. 9: pp. 276-301 Ch. 12: pp. 283-286
3 Learning Environments	Works with learners to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, encouraging positive social interaction, active engagement in learning and self-motivation.	Ch. 3: pp. 55-58; 59-63; 66-87 Ch. 4: pp. 99-101; 110-114 Ch. 5: pp. 138-148 Ch. 6: pp. 157-160; 161-167; 169-181 Ch. 7: pp. 191-207; 211-213; 216-219
4 Content Knowledge	Understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners.	Ch. 2: pp. 35-40 Ch. 5: pp. 119-131; 138-148 Ch. 6: pp. 167-168; 179-182 Ch. 7: pp. 191-207
5 Innovative Applications of Content	Understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical/creative thinking and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.	Ch. 3: pp. 61-63; 64-66; 68-70; 74-77; 79-81; 83-84; 86 Ch. 5: pp. 120-131; 138-149 Ch. 6: pp. 179-182 Ch. 7: pp. 191-207
6 Assessment	Understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to document learner progress, and to inform the teacher's ongoing planning and instruction.	Ch. 5: pp. 119-122; 132-135 Ch. 6: pp. 157-158; 179-182 Ch. 7: pp. 193-194; 209

(continued on the inside back cover)

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Fourteenth Edition

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Cover and Text Designer: Liz Harasymczuk

Cover Image Credit: © iStock/Cesar Okada

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WCN: 02-200-203

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2014942025

Student Edition:

ISBN: 978-1-305-07769-0

Loose-leaf Edition:

ISBN: 978-1-305-49686-6

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20 Channel Center Street

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Brief Contents



Preface xiv

So Let's Get Started xxii

PART I: School and Students

1

- 1** Why Teach? 1
- 2** What Is a School and What Is It For? 26
- 3** Who Are Today's Students in a Diverse Society? 54
- 4** How Do Social Issues Affect Students? 90
- 5** What Is Taught? 117

PART II: Teachers

155

- 6** What Makes a Teacher Effective? 155
- 7** What Should Teachers Know about Technology and Its Impact on Schools? 184
- 8** What Are the Ethical and Legal Issues Facing Teachers? 221

PART III: Foundations and the Future

273

- 9** What Are the Philosophical Foundations of American Education? 273
- 10** What Is the History of America's Struggle for Educational Opportunity? 304
- 11** How Are Schools Governed, Influenced, and Financed? 339
- 12** How Should Education Be Reformed? 364

PART IV: The Teaching Profession

395

- 13** What Are Your Job Options in Education? 395
- 14** What Can the New Teacher Expect? 420
- 15** What Does It Mean to Be a Professional? 453

Before You Close the Book . . . 482

Appendix A-1

Endnotes E-1

Glossary G-1

Index I-1



Contents

Preface xiv

So Let's Get Started xxii

Knowing Your Own Motives xxii

The Habit of Reflection xxiii

Your Motives xxiii

PART I: School and Students

1

1	Why Teach?	1	2	2	What Is a School and What Is It For? 26
1-1	Examining Your Motives for Teaching	2	2-1	28	What Is a School?
	1-1a Comparing Your Motives to Others'	2	2-2	28	Education and Schooling
1-2	The Rewards of Teaching	4		28	2-2a Education
	1-2a Extrinsic Rewards	4		28	2-2b Schooling
	1-2b Intrinsic Rewards	6	2-3	30	Schools as Cultures
	TeachSource Video Case: Teaching as a Profession: Collaboration with Colleagues	7		31	2-3a Socialization
	Voices from the Classroom: Are You Born with It?	8	2-4	32	Schools as Transmitters or Re-Creators of Culture
1-3	Sources of Useful Experience	9		32	2-4a Transmitting Culture
	1-3a Real Encounters	9		34	2-4b Reconstructing Society
	1-3b Guidance	11	2-5	35	The Four Basic Purposes of School
	1-3c Reflection	11		36	2-5a Intellectual Purposes
1-4	Case Studies in the Motivation to Teach	12		37	2-5b Political and Civic Purposes
	1-4a Case One: The Desire to Teach a Particular Subject	12		38	2-5c Economic Purposes
	1-4b Case Two: The Desire to Aid in the Renewal of Society	15		39	2-5d Social Purposes
	Leaders in Education: Erin Gruwell (b. 1969)	18	2-6	40	What Do Studies Reveal about the Nature of Schools?
1-5	Opinions about Teachers and Teaching	18		41	2-6a Life in Elementary Schools
	1-5a What Does the Public Say about Teachers and Teaching?	19		41	Voices from the Classroom: What Is a Good School?
	1-5b What Do Students Think about Teachers?	19		43	2-6b Life in Middle and Junior High Schools
	1-5c What Do Administrators Say about New Teachers?	20		45	2-6c Life in High Schools
	1-5d What Do New Teachers Think about Teaching?	20	2-7	48	What Is a Good School?
1-6	Why Teachers Teach	21		49	2-7a Characteristics of an Effective School
	1-6a A Special Intrinsic Reward	23		50	TeachSource Video Case: Parental Involvement in School Culture
	Our Final Word	24	2-8	52	The Unfinished Work of the Schools
	Why Teach? Your Final Word	24		52	Our Final Word
	Key Terms	24		52	Why Teach? Your Final Word
	For Further Information	25		53	Key Terms
				53	For Further Information

3 Who Are Today's Students in a Diverse Society?	54	4 How Do Social Issues Affect Students?	90
3-1 Sources of Student Diversity	55	4-1 Recognizing Risk Factors	91
3-1a Cultural Pluralism: Not There Yet	58	4-2 New American Family Patterns	92
3-1b Multicultural Education	59	4-2a Family Composition	93
Up Close: Ethnic Studies Controversy in Arizona	61	Voices from the Classroom: Families and School	94
TeachSource Video Case: Culturally Responsive Teaching	62	4-2b Family Relationships	95
3-2 Children of Immigrants and English Language Learners	63	4-2c School and Teacher Responses	95
3-2a The Government Response	63	Leaders in Education: James Comer (1934–)	96
3-2b No Child Left Behind and English Language Learners	64	4-3 Poverty	97
3-2c Bilingual Education Models	64	4-3a Who Are the Poor?	98
3-2d Bilingual Education Controversies	65	4-3b Homelessness	99
3-3 Diverse Abilities	66	4-3c School and Teacher Responses	100
3-3a Multiple Intelligences	67	4-4 Teenage Parenting	102
Voices from the Classroom: Reflections on Individualizing Instruction	69	4-4a Sex Education	102
3-3b Students with Disabilities	71	4-5 Abused and Neglected Children	105
Up Close: Reaching Out: One Teacher's Journey to Support Her Autistic Adolescents	75	4-6 Alcohol and Drug Abuse	106
TeachSource Video Case: Inclusion: Classroom Implications for General and Special Educators	76	TeachSource Video Case: Social and Emotional Development: The Influence of Peer Groups	107
3-4 Gifted and Talented Students	77	4-7 Adolescent Suicide	107
3-4a Identifying Gifted and Talented Students	78	Up Close: Whom You Will Teach	108
3-4b Programs for Gifted and Talented Students	79	4-8 School Violence and Vandalism	109
3-5 Gender	81	4-8a Gangs	110
TeachSource Video Case: Gender Equity in the Classroom: Girls and Science	81	4-8b Bullying	110
3-5a Gender Gaps, School Achievement, and Career Selection	81	TeachSource Video Case: Social and Emotional Development: Understanding Adolescents	112
Up Close: Urban Prep Charter School: Single-Sex Education Success Story	84	4-8c Steps to Reduce School Violence	112
3-6 Sexual Orientation	84	4-9 Student Cheating	113
3-7 The Teacher's Response to Diversity	86	4-10 High School Graduation and Dropout Rates	114
3-7a Teacher–Student Disparity	86	Our Final Word	115
3-7b Diversity: A Complex Phenomenon	87	Why Teach? Your Final Word	115
Our Final Word	88	Key Terms	115
Why Teach? Your Final Word	88	For Further Information	116
Key Terms	88	5 What Is Taught?	117
For Further Information	89	5-1 What Is a Curriculum?	118
		5-1a Standards-Based Reform Movement	119
		5-2 What Is the Present Curriculum?	122
		5-2a English Language Arts	123
		TeachSource Video Case: Elementary Reading Instruction: A Balanced Literacy Program	124
		5-2b Mathematics	124
		5-2c Science	126

5-2d Socials Studies	127		
5-2e Foreign Languages	128		
5-2f The Arts	128		
5-2g Physical Education and Health	129		
5-2h Elective Courses	130		
5-2i Career and Technical Education	131		
5-3 Assessing Student Academic Performance	132		
5-3a National Assessment of Educational Progress	132		
5-3b International Comparisons	133		
5-4 Additional Influences on the Curriculum	135		
5-4a Textbooks	136		
TeachSource Video Case: Reading in the Content Areas: An Interdisciplinary Unit on the 1920s	138		
5-4b Innovative Instructional Approaches	138		
TeachSource Video Case: Cooperative Learning at the Elementary Level: Jigsaw Model	140		
			TeachSource Digital Download TABLE 5.2 Selected Cooperative Learning Strategies 141
			TeachSource Video Case: Cooperative Learning: High School History Lesson 143
			Voices from the Classroom: Triumphs and Setbacks 144
			TeachSource Video Case: Academic Diversity: Differentiated Instruction 145
			Up Close: Looping (Multiyear Teaching) 147
5-5 Current Curriculum Controversies	148		
5-5a Core versus Multicultural Curriculum	148		
5-5b Tracking	150		
5-6 Is the Existing Curriculum Relevant to Today's Society?	151		
			Up Close: The Saber-Tooth Curriculum 152
Our Final Word	153		
Why Teach? Your Final Word	153		
Key Terms	153		
For Further Information	154		

PART II: Teachers

155

6 What Makes a Teacher Effective?	155		
6-1 Carol Landis: A Case of Classroom Decision Making	157		
6-2 Teachers as Reflective Decision Makers	159		
6-2a Planning Decisions	159		
6-2b Implementing Decisions	159		
6-2c Evaluating Decisions	159		
6-3 Competencies Needed for Effective Decision Making	160		
6-4 What Attitudes Do Effective Teachers Possess?	161		
Leaders in Education: Anne Mansfield Sullivan (1866–1936)	162		
6-4a Teachers' Attitudes toward Themselves: Self-Understanding	163		
6-4b Teachers' Attitudes toward Children	163		
6-4c Teachers' Attitudes toward Peers and Pupils' Parents	164		
6-4d Teachers' Attitudes toward the Subject Matter	165		
TeachSource Video Case: Elementary Writing Instruction: Process Writing	165		
Up Close: What Would You Do?	166		
Up Close: How Do Teachers Treat Low Achievers?	166		
			6-5 What Subject-Matter Knowledge Do Effective Teachers Need? 167
			6-6 What Theoretical Knowledge Do Effective Teachers Need? 169
			6-6a Theories-in-Use 169
			6-6b Why Study Educational Theory? 169
			6-6c How Can Theoretical Knowledge Be Used? 170
			Up Close: Teaching: Art or Science? 171
			6-7 Personal Practical Knowledge 172
			6-8 Which Teaching Skills Are Required of Effective Teachers? 172
			6-8a Classroom Management Skills 173
			Up Close: Differences between Expert and Novice Teachers 176
			TeachSource Digital Download Up Close: Kevin and Jim's Suggestions for Classroom Management Problems 179
			6-8b Questioning Skills 179
			6-8c Planning Skills 181
Our Final Word	182		
Why Teach? Your Final Word	182		
Key Terms	182		
For Further Information	183		

7 What Should Teachers Know about Technology and Its Impact on Schools? 184

7-1 A Brief Look at Education's Technological Past 186

7-2 How Is Technology Impacting Schools and Society? 188

TeachSource Video Case: Twitter and First Graders 188

TeachSource Video Case: An Expanded Definition of Literacy: Meaningful Ways to Integrate Technology 189

7-3 What Is Technology Pedagogical Content Knowledge? 190

7-4 How Are Technologies Affecting Student Learning? 191

7-4a English/Language Arts Education 195

TeachSource Video Case: Multimedia Literacy: Integrating Technology into the Middle School Curriculum 196

7-4b Science Education 198

Up Close: Cognitive Tools and Constructivist Teaching 198

TeachSource Video Case: Integrating Technology to Improve Student Learning: A High School Science Simulation 199

7-4c Social Studies Education 201

7-4d Mathematics Education 203

7-4e Foreign Language and ESL Education 204

7-4f Virtual Schools 205

7-4g Technology for Students with Special Needs 206

7-5 How Are Technologies Affecting Teaching? 207

7-5a A Different Role for the Teacher 208

7-5b Professional Communication 210

7-6 How Are Computer Technologies Organized for Student Use? 211

7-6a Computer Labs 211

7-6b Single-Computer Classrooms 212

7-6c Classroom Clusters 212

7-6d Laptops and Handheld Computing Devices 212

7-7 How Do Issues of Equity, Teacher Education, and Budgeting Impact Technology in Schools? 213

Voices from the Classroom: Technology 214

7-7a Education of Teachers 214

Up Close: Collections, Courses, Community: LEARN NC 215

7-7b Equity 216

7-7c Integration into the Curriculum 218

Our Final Word 219

Why Teach? Your Final Word 219

Key Terms 220

For Further Information 220

8 What Are the Ethical and Legal Issues Facing Teachers? 221

8-1 Laws, Ethics, and the Teacher's Responsibility 222

8-2 The Ethics of Teaching 223

8-2a The Characteristics of Ethical Teaching 223

8-2b The Characteristics of Ethical Teaching 224

8-2c Needed: A Guiding Code of Ethics 225

8-2d Ethical Dilemmas in Teaching 227

8-2e A Big Deal or a Little Fudge? 227

8-2f Righting Wrongs? 228

8-2g The Everyday Ethics of Teaching 229

8-2h Codes of Professional Ethics 230

Up Close: Boston University Educator's Affirmation 230

8-3 The Teacher and the Law 231

TeachSource Video Case: Legal and Ethical Dimensions of Teaching: Reflections from Today's Educators 231

8-3a Teachers and Due Process 232

8-3b Contracts, Tenure, and Dismissal 233

8-3c Teachers' Liability 238

8-3d Teachers and Liability 238

8-3e Reporting Child Abuse 240

8-3f Self-Defense 241

8-3g Freedom of Expression 242

8-3h Copyright Laws 245

8-4 Lifestyle and Teachers 247

8-4a Personal Appearance: Hair, Clothes, and Weight 248

8-4b Private Sexual Behavior 248

8-4c Conduct with Students 249

8-5 Law, Religion, and the School 250

8-5a Prayer and Scripture in the School 250

8-5b Religious Clubs and Prayer Groups 252

8-5c Religion and Secular Humanism 253

8-5d Guidelines for Religious Neutrality 254

8-6 Students and the Law 257

8-6a Students and Due Process 258

8-6b Suspension and Expulsion 258

Voices from the Classroom: Dress Codes 260

8-6c Corporal Punishment 261

8-6d Search and Seizure 262

8-6e Freedom of Speech 265
 8-6f Sexual Harassment 267
 8-6g Records and Students' Right
 to Privacy 270

Our Final Word 271
Why Teach? Your Final Word 271
Key Terms 271
For Further Information 272

PART III: Foundations and the Future

273

9 What Are the Philosophical Foundations of American Education? 273

9-1 What Is Philosophy? 274

9-1a Fundamental Questions of Existence 274
 9-1b The Nature of Philosophy 275
 9-1c The Philosopher's Method and Language 275

9-2 The Terrain of Philosophy 276

9-2a Metaphysics 276
 9-2b Epistemology 277
 9-2c Axiology 278
Leaders in Education: Socrates (469–399 B.C.) 279
 9-2d Logic 280

9-3 Schools of Educational Philosophy 281

TeachSource Digital Download Up Close: Your Philosophy of Education Self-Inventory 282
 9-3a Subject-Centered Philosophies 283
TeachSource Video Case: Middle School Reading Instruction: Integrating Technology 284
 9-3b Education as Preparation for One's Life 284
Preservice to Practice: A Perennialist Teacher 285
Preservice to Practice: An Essentialist Teacher 288
 9-3c Child-Centered Philosophies 288
Preservice to Practice: A Romantic Teacher 290
TeachSource Video Case: Middle School Science Instruction: Inquiry Learning 291
Leaders in Education: John Dewey (1859–1952) 292
Preservice to Practice: A Progressive Educator 294

9-4 The Influence of Two Psychological Theories 295

9-4a Behaviorism: Conditioning Students or Setting Them Free? 295
TeachSource Video Case: Constructivist Teaching in Action: A High School Classroom Debate 296
 9-4b Cognitive Psychology: Students as Makers of Meaning? 296
Voices from the Classroom: Constructivist Philosophy 297

9-5 Your Philosophy of Education 298

TeachSource Digital Download Up Close: Identifying Your Own Philosophical Leanings 300
 9-5a Eclecticism: Not an Excuse for Sloppy Thinking 301
 9-5b Philosophy and Liberal Education 301

Our Final Word 302
Why Teach? Your Final Word 302
Key Terms 303
For Further Information 303

10 What Is the History of America's Struggle for Educational Opportunity? 304

10-1 Themes in American Education 305

10-2 Elementary Education 307

10-2a Colonial Origins 307
 10-2b The Common School 310
 10-2c Other Developments in Elementary Education 311

Leaders in Education: Horace Mann (1796–1859) 313

10-3 Secondary Education 315

10-3a Early Forms 315
 10-3b The Academy 316
 10-3c The Public High School 318
 10-3d Growth of Junior High and Middle Schools 319
 10-3e Secondary Education Today 320

10-4 Private Education 321

10-5 Education of Minorities 322

10-5a Education of African Americans 323
Voices from the Classroom: Teaching in Segregated Schools 326
 10-5b Education of American Indians 329
 10-5c Education of Hispanic Americans 331
TeachSource Video Case: Bilingual Education: An Elementary Two-Way Immersion Program 332
TeachSource Video Case: Diversity: Teaching in a Multiethnic Classroom 333
 10-5d Education of Asian Americans 333
 10-5e Access and Equality of Educational Opportunity 334

Our Final Word 337
Why Teach? Your Final Word 337
Key Terms 338
For Further Information 338

11 How Are Schools Governed, Influenced, and Financed? 339

11-1 Who Legally Governs Public Education? 340

- 11-1a State Offices and Administrators 341
- 11-1b The Local School District 343

Voices from the Classroom: Swimming against the Current 347

11-2 Who Influences American Public Education? 347

- 11-2a Professional Education Organizations 347
- 11-2b Parents 348
- 11-2c Business 349
- 11-2d The Federal Government 352

11-3 How Are Schools Financed? 353

- 11-3a School Spending 354
 - 11-3b State and Local Funding 355
- Up Close:** Where Does the United States Stand on Education Funding? 356
- 11-3c School Finance Reform and the Courts 357

TeachSource Video: Charter Schools Meeting Student Needs 357

- 11-3d Federal Funding 358
- Head Start 359

Up Close: Success for All 361

Our Final Word 362

Why Teach? Your Final Word 362

Key Terms 363

For Further Information 363

12 How Should Education Be Reformed? 364

12-1 Recent Reform Initiatives 366

12-2 National-Level Reform Efforts 366

- 12-2a No Child Left Behind Act 367
- 12-2b Race to the Top 368
- 12-2c National Standards 368

- 12-2d A National Curriculum 369
- 12-2e National Voluntary Networks 370
- 12-2f High School Reform 370

Up Close: The Partnership for 21st-Century Skills 370

- 12-2g Implications of National-Level Reform Efforts 371

12-3 State Educational Reform 371

- 12-3a Common Elements in State Reform 371

12-4 School Choice 374

Up Close: Home Schooling 375

Up Close: The Kipp Schools 378

- 12-4a For-Profit Schools 382
- 12-4b Local-Level School Reform 382

Up Close: Steve Jobs on Educational Reform 383

12-5 What Ought to Be the Elements of Educational Reform? 383

- 12-5a Authentic Assessment 383

TeachSource Video Case: Performance Assessment: Student Presentations in a High School English Class 384

TeachSource Video Case: Assessment in the Elementary Grades: Formal and Informal Literacy Assessment 385

- 12-5b Active Learning: The Constructivist's Approach 385

TeachSource Video Case: Portfolio Assessment: Elementary Classroom 386

TeachSource Video Case: Elementary School Language Arts: Inquiry Learning 387

- 12-5c A Sense of Community 387
- 12-5d Lifelong Learning 388

TeachSource Digital Download Up Close: A Sample of the Tools for Learning 389

- 12-5e Reclaiming Character Education 390

Voices from the Classroom: Building Character Education into the PE Curriculum 392

Our Final Word 393

Why Teach? Your Final Word 393

Key Terms 393

For Further Information 393

PART IV: The Teaching Profession 395

13 What Are Your Job Options in Education? 395

Up Close: Wanted 396

13-1 Will There Be Job Openings in Education? 396

- 13-1a Factors Influencing Teacher Supply and Demand 397

- 13-1b The Severe Shortage of Minority Teachers 400

Leaders in Education: Jaime Escalante (1930–2010) 402
 13-1c Employers besides the Public Schools 403

13-2 What Are Teachers Paid? 405
Voices from the Classroom: Teaching in Public versus Private Schools 406

13-3 How Do You Obtain a Teaching Position? 408
 13-3a Campaign Actively 408
 13-3b Prepare Materials 408
Up Close: Typical Questions Asked during Job Interviews 410
 13-3c Develop Interview Skills 411
 13-3d Determine Job Availability 412
 13-3e Gain Experience by Working with Children 413
TeachSource Video Case: The First Year of Teaching: One Colleague’s Story 413

13-4 How Do You Become Licensed? 413
 13-4a Traditional Licensure Programs 414
 13-4b Alternative Licensure 415

13-5 If You Don’t Teach, What Then? 416
 13-5a Transferable Skills 416
 13-5b Other Jobs 416

Our Final Word 418
Why Teach? Your Final Word 418
Key Terms 418
For Further Information 419

14 What Can the New Teacher Expect? 420

Voices from the Classroom: Tips for Your First Year 422

14-1 The School Milieu: The Shock of the Familiar 423
 14-1a Culture Shock 423
Preservice to Practice: Charlotte Tucker: Second Grade 424
Preservice to Practice: Margaret Julia Gomez: High School Mathematics 425

14-2 Administrators: Mixed Bag and Many Hats 425
 14-2a The Multiple Roles of the Principal 425
TeachSource Digital Download Up Close: You Know You’re in Trouble When . . . 427
Preservice to Practice: Peter James: Middle School Science 428

14-3 Colleagues: A Mixed Blessing 429
Preservice to Practice: Mary Lopez: Sixth Grade 429

14-4 Instruction: So Much to Learn 430
Preservice to Practice: Grace Joyce: Third Grade 431
Preservice to Practice: Nicholas Briggs: Middle School Social Studies 431
TeachSource Digital Download Up Close: Kevin and Jim’s Seven Additional Rules for Surviving the First Year of Teaching 432

14-5 Students: Friends or Fiends? 433
 14-5a Sources of a Distorted View 434
Preservice to Practice: Catherine Foley : Fifth Grade 434
TeachSource Video Case: Elementary Classroom Management: Basic Strategies 435
 14-5b Classroom Management 435
TeachSource Video Case: Secondary Classroom Management: Basic Strategies 436
 14-5c Social Distance 436
TeachSource Digital Download Up Close: Kevin and Jim’s Guide to the First Day of School 437
Preservice to Practice: Carole Foster: Fourth Grade 438
Preservice to Practice: Monica Lew: High School Math 439
Up Close: Protecting against Accusations of Sexual Misconduct 440
Preservice to Practice: Gary Cornog: High School English 441

14-6 Parents: Natural Allies with Different Agendas 442
Preservice to Practice: Walter Connor: High School History 442
 14-6a Reasons for Parent–Teacher Problems 443
Preservice to Practice: Scott D. Niemann: Third and Fourth Grades 445

14-7 Surviving the First Year of Teaching 445
 14-7a Begin Now 445
 14-7b Keep a Teaching Journal 446
 14-7c Maintain the Proper Frame of Mind 447
 14-7d Find a Mentor 448
 14-7e Make Your Students’ Parents Your Allies 448
 14-7f Take Evaluation Seriously 449
 14-7g Take Care of Yourself 450

Our Final Word 451
Why Teach? Your Final Word 451
Key Terms 451
For Further Information 452

15	What Does It Mean to Be a Professional?	453		
	15-1 The Status of Teaching: A Profession or Not?	456		
	15-1a The Case against Teaching as a Profession 457			
	Leaders in Education: Robert Parris Moses (b. 1935) 458			
	Up Close: Rules and Duties for Teachers in the Nineteenth Century 460			
	15-1b The Case for Teaching as a Profession 461			
	15-1c A Third Possibility: An Evolving Profession 462			
	15-2 Levels of Professionalism	463		
	15-2a Level One Teachers 464			
	15-2b Level Two Teachers 464			
	15-2c Level Three Teachers 464			
	15-3 National Board for Professional Teaching Standards	465		
	15-3a Core Propositions and Characteristics 466			
	15-3b Advantages of Board Certification 466			
	15-3c Criticisms of the NBPTS 467			
	15-4 What Every New and Old Teacher Should Possess: The INTASC Answer	467		
	15-5 Professional Associations	468		
	15-5a The National Education Association 469			
	15-5b The American Federation of Teachers 470			
	15-5c Reformers in the Ranks: The Association of American Educators 471			
	15-5d Other Professional Associations 471			
	15-5e Wanted: A New Professionalism 473			
	15-6 Your Own Professional Development	473		
	15-6a What Is Professional Development, Anyway? 473			
	15-6b The New Imperative: Your Own Professional Development 474			
	15-6c Professional Development Opportunities 475			
	TeachSource Video Case: Parent–Teacher Conference 476			
	15-6d Taking Control of Your Own Professional Development 478			
	Voices from the Classroom: Professionalism 479			
	Our Final Word	480		
	Why Teach? Your Final Word	481		
	Key Terms	481		
	For Further Information	481		
	Before You Close the Book . . .	482		
	<i>Appendix A-1</i>			
	<i>Endnotes E-1</i>			
	<i>Glossary G-1</i>			
	<i>Index I-1</i>			



Preface

Before we set out to write this text, we had taught in public schools and for many years taught aspiring teachers in their very first education course. Therefore, instructors teaching the introductory course in education were very much on our minds. As we saw it, instructors want to:

- **Help students examine their motives for teaching** so they can determine whether teaching is right for them.
- **Inspire these future teachers to form and sustain a commitment to teaching**—a commitment that is grounded in a realistic understanding of the teaching profession.
- **Offer instructional activities** that incorporate the way today’s students learn, particularly with regard to their use of technology.
- **Prepare aspiring teachers to teach students whose cultural complexities**—such as race, socioeconomic status, and orientation to learning—may differ from their own.
- **Provide course experiences** that help prospective teachers bridge the “theory-to-practice” divide.
- **Make the history and philosophies of education relevant** to the lives and careers of future teachers.
- **Help prospective teachers develop the habits and skills of reflective practitioners.**
- **Prepare all students to do well on mandatory, high-stakes standardized tests** based on national, state, and local standards.
- **Provide honest information and context** for future teachers about the profession they are considering entering.

Another reality that we have kept in mind as we have revised this text is that today’s college students are part of a fresh, new generation, which has grown up in this era of technological and rapid social change. For these students, **technology is a way of life**. They are both connected and insulated through technology, and are accustomed to processing information differently than the generations before them:

- They are **team oriented** due to the significant time spent on social networking sites and on instant messaging platforms.
- Many of today’s students are **unaccustomed to academic difficulty**. Rather, they are used to rewards and accolades, and have high expectations for achievement and little tolerance for failure.
- The lives of today’s students **are often quite programmed**. They suffer more stress and often feel more overwhelmed compared to those in past generations.

How does *Those Who Can, Teach* meet the needs of today’s learners?

How have we addressed the challenges of teaching today’s students while meeting the goals of an introduction to education course in this 14th edition of *Those Who Can, Teach*?

We know that students who will use this text are facing many challenges. Many are at the beginning of their college experience and are still getting accustomed to their independence. There are almost certainly many activities—other courses, social events, and jobs, to name a few—competing for their time and attention. They, like all of us, struggle to balance all that is on their plate. Still, we believe that exploring what might be their life's work requires that they fully engage in the course and with the questions posed in this text. To help them do this, we have used a number of instructional tools, described as follows, to gain and keep the readers' attention and to inspire them to carefully consider all aspects of becoming one of Those Who *Can*:

- **Examining motives for teaching.** We begin and end the book with chapters that focus on examining “Why Teach?” Two or three times in each chapter, students are asked to “**Pause and Reflect**” on questions of self-examination and understanding. We have made a major commitment to help your future teachers become *reflective practitioners*. Thus, at the end of each chapter, we provide readers opportunities to consider and reflect in the sections entitled, “**Why Teach? Your Final Word.**” In addition, two “bookend” sections, “**Let’s Get Started**” and “**Before You Close This Book,**” offer important reflection questions before and after students read the text. “**Let’s Get Started,**” in particular, was written to make clear to student-readers what we hope they get out of *Those Who Can, Teach*, and what we believe is the most productive way to engage the book.
- **Developing a realistic understanding of teaching.** A frequent complaint of beginning teachers is “that no one ever told us what it would *really* be like in the classroom.” Although these complaints are sometimes unfair (people tried to tell them but they may not have been listening), we have tried to capture the real world of schooling. Throughout the book, we have presented many case studies both within the text and in the “**Preservice to Practice**” boxes that portray the realities (both the good and bad) of teaching. The “**Voices from the Classroom**” feature is a reflection or comment on one of each chapter’s key topics from actual classroom teachers. The classroom voices bring a fresh and realistic perspective to these topics and issues. The “**TeachSource Videos,**” feature footage from in and out of the classroom to help students relate key chapter content to real-life scenarios. Critical-thinking questions, artifacts, and bonus videos help students reflect on the content in the video.
- **Learning through technology.** Because today’s students learn so much through technology, we have integrated technology throughout the book. One whole chapter, “What Should Teachers Know about Technology and Its Impact on Schools?” addresses the many uses of technology to increase and enhance learning for all students, including those with disabilities. The “**TeachSource Videos,**” mentioned previously, also provide multimedia ways of observing and studying teaching, and at the end of each chapter, there are three or four **websites** for students to explore in greater depth the topics and issues discussed in the chapter.
- **Understanding cultural complexities.** Women and whites predominate in both teacher education programs and in the teaching force, whereas over 40 percent of students in public schools are students of color. Many education students have had few interactions with students who differ from them in terms of race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. The chapter “Who Are Today’s Students in a Diverse Society?” describes various diversities and implications for teachers. Throughout the book, we provide multiple examples of the diversities that teachers will encounter, and discuss implications for teachers and schools.
- **Bridging the “theory-to-practice” divide.** The book assists students to bridge this gap by providing realistic **case studies**, “**TeachSource Videos,**” **Reflection**

Questions, “Voices from the Classroom” features, “Up Close” boxes, and many “Pause and Reflect” questions throughout the book.

- **Bringing history and philosophy alive to students.** We try to enliven the history of American education through a lively writing style and by focusing on the people who have made or are making educational history. Our “**Leaders in Education**” feature presents biographical sketches of both historical (e.g., Horace Mann, John Dewey, and Anne Sullivan), as well as contemporary educational leaders (e.g., Robert Moses, Erin Gruwell, and Ron Berger). In discussing educational philosophies, we have developed statements by teachers who embrace each philosophy, so readers can see how those individual philosophies guide teachers’ actions and behavior in classrooms. Chapter 9 includes “**Your Philosophy of Education Self-Inventory**” to help students bring their educational views to greater consciousness.
- **Reflective practice.** Throughout the book, we ask readers to stop and think: to reflect. We are convinced that our readers, like ourselves, live in a noisy world of words and pictures that is continually demanding and competing for our attention. We have tried to make a case for reflection but have also built into the text requests that readers stop and reflect what particular content means personally. Using a variety of devices throughout the book, such as cartoons and boxed inserts on research findings, we are unabashedly committed to helping students start on the road to become reflective practitioners. One such effort is our special feature, “**Truth or Fiction?**” which appears at the beginning each chapter. To quickly engage the readers in the chapter’s subject, we present them with three or more statements having to do with the subject of the chapter and ask them to make a judgment as to whether each statement is true or false. Later in the chapter, they will encounter the subject of each statement (marked in yellow) and discover whether the statement was “truth” or “fiction.”
- **Informal writing style.** Although there are many changes in this 14th edition, key qualities have been retained. Chief among them is the book’s informal writing style. We have tried to communicate the seriousness surrounding professional topics and at the same time reflect the humor and humanity that is part of a teacher’s professional life. We are helped in this “experiential” aspect of our book by the presence in the text of the actual words of practicing classroom teachers. We believe (and hope) that this writing style and heavy use of narrative give the text a greater sense of reality.
- **Standards testing for teachers.** Recognizing that virtually all prospective teachers must meet state and national standards to be licensed, *Those Who Can, Teach* tries to make the connection between standards and content crystal clear by including a correlation chart in the inside of the front and back covers of the book. The 10 core principles of InTASC are correlated to the chapters and pages in our 14th edition (see inside cover), and at the beginning of each chapter we identify the principles addressed in that chapter.
- **Educational currency.** The field of education is in a particularly dynamic state. The federal government has initiated programs such as “The Race to the Top,” and exemptions are being granted to requirements of the landmark No Child Left Behind legislation. Most of the states have embraced the idea and reality of Common Core State Standards. At the same time, state and local educational authorities are deeply involved in a variety of educational reform efforts. The policies of key players such as teachers’ unions, as well as foundations such as the Gates Foundation, are changing. New groups and organizations are influencing the lives of teachers. All this and the ever-increasing research base in education need to be brought to the attention of those considering becoming teachers.

New and Improved for the 14th Edition

We have reviewed past editions of *Those Who Can, Teach*, and received some excellent suggestions from the teacher educators using the text with future teachers. As a result we have made a number of overall changes in this 14th edition. Among the major ones are the following:

1. **Learning Objectives:** The learning objectives correlated to the main sections in each chapter show students what they need to know to process and understand the information in the chapter. After completing the chapter, students should be able to demonstrate how they can use and apply their new knowledge and skills.
2. **Standards:** New and improved coverage of InTASC standards includes a chapter-opening list of standards to help students identify where key standards are addressed in the chapter. These callouts and the standards correlation chart help students make connections between what they are learning in the textbook and the standards.
3. **Digital Downloads:** Downloadable and often customizable, these practical and professional resources allow students to immediately implement and apply this textbook's content in the field. The students download these tools and keep them forever, enabling preservice teachers to begin to build their library of practical, professional resources. Look for the TeachSource Digital Downloads label that identifies these items.
4. The **TeachSource videos** feature footage from the classroom to help students relate key chapter content to real-life scenarios. Critical-thinking questions provide opportunities for in-class or online discussion and reflection.
5. **MindTap for Education** is a first-of-its kind digital solution that prepares teachers by providing them with the knowledge, skills, and competencies they must demonstrate to earn an education degree and state licensure, and to begin a successful career. Through activities based on real-life teaching situations, MindTap elevates students' thinking by giving them experiences in applying concepts, practicing skills, and evaluating decisions, guiding them to become reflective educators.

CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER COVERAGE AND UPDATES

- Chapter 1 contains new research on the level of public trust in the American public school teacher; the long-term impact on children who have attended kindergarten; and a dramatic decline in teacher job satisfaction that occurred during the recent (2007–08) financial recession.
- In Chapter 2, the distinctions between education and schooling (in a section titled the same) have been sharpened by the addition of a new table contrasting the two concepts. The discussion of the political and civic purposes of schools has been augmented by Jefferson's views on the link between a viable democracy and an educated citizenry. The recent addition of "trust" to the constituents of an effective school has been added and explained, as has new research on career academies and reported differences in achievement scores by students attending middle schools versus K–8 structured schools.
- Chapter 3 has been updated to reflect the changing demographics of today's schools. As the U.S. school population becomes more and more diverse, schools are responding to the diverse needs of students. The revised chapter discusses the changing demographics and highlights instructional strategies to meet the needs

of diverse learners. Specifically, new strategies for English language learners have been added to this chapter.

- Chapter 4 reports on contemporary social issues and discusses their impact on schools. A new section on cyberbullying has been added to the chapter. Specific strategies that help teachers and schools address the persuasive nature of social issues on schools are discussed.
- Chapter 5 contains updated information on the Common Core State Standards; the Next Generation Science Standards; and College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards. Newest developments and trends in each of the subject-matter areas have been updated. Discussion on flipped classrooms is a new addition to the chapter. The newest results of NAEP, TIMSS, and PISA assessments are also discussed.
- In Chapter 6, the section on classroom management has been revised to incorporate discussion of organizing the physical environment, and how to build positive student relationships and a sense of community in the classroom.
- Chapter 7 has been rewritten to help readers consider technology in schools as it relates to the ubiquitous nature of technology in society. One of the big changes to this chapter is the addition of the Technology Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework to conceptualize the ways teachers use technology in the different disciplines. Specific classroom examples have been woven throughout that focus on how technology can be used to enhance teaching and learning.
- Chapter 8 reports on court actions that affect a range of educational issues. Among the recent changes reflected here are more leeway for administrators seeking to fire nonperforming or inadequate teachers; the elimination of tenure in two states and the trend toward tighter tenure requirements; the new attention by the courts toward what LGBT teachers can do within their professional life; and a recent development in the ongoing issue of teaching evolution in the schools.
- Chapter 9 has been reorganized so that the student's philosophical self-inventory comes before student readers study the major schools of educational philosophy. In addition, the chapter continues new evidence of the public's support for character education; a report on the growth in popularity of E. D. Hirsch Jr.'s Core Curriculum; and reference to new scholarly work on progressive education.
- Chapter 10, the history of American education chapter, contains updated information on the education of African American, Hispanic American, and Asian American students.
- In Chapter 11, the profile of American administrators has been updated, along with local, state, and federal school spending data.
- Chapter 12, the school reform chapter, contains updated information on NCLB and federal waivers to states, Race to the Top, Common Core State Standards, and other educational reform efforts. A summary of Steve Jobs's thoughts on educational reform is also included.
- Chapter 13 contains updated information on the job markets in education, updated teacher salary—data both nationally and by state, information on teaching in private schools, and new suggestions on how to land a teaching job.
- Chapter 14 updates national data on our schools' increasing need for new teachers. Research on the increased complexity of a principal's job is reported along with a study showing that the more hours a new teacher spends with a mentor, the greater the achievement of their students. In addition, the increasing trend of states to provide mentors for new teachers is noted. Finally, the chapter alerts teachers to the growing dangers of careless use of social media.

- Chapter 15 reports on the NBPTS's new teaching standards and their use in assessment for board certification. Fresh data are reported on the two major teacher associations, the NEA and AFT, along with recent criticism of their political involvements. A new perspective on the effects of teacher collaboration as social capital and its relationship to student achievement is offered. In the same vein, this chapter contains information and commentary on the movement to develop professional learning communities in schools and the benefits to new teachers. Also, recent research on what contributes to teacher happiness is presented. This chapter includes a new "Leader in Education" profile, that of a civil rights activist turned curriculum innovator.

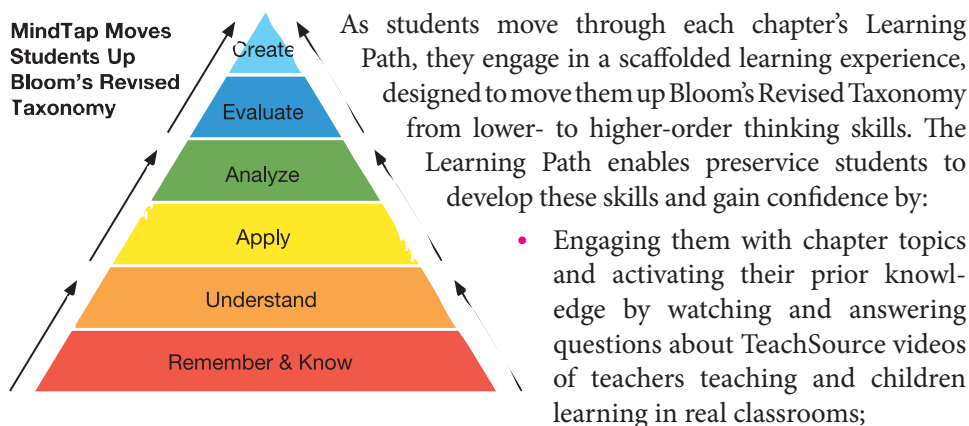
Accompanying Teaching and Learning Resources

The 14th edition of *Those Who Can, Teach* is accompanied by an extensive package of instructor and student resources.

MINDTAP™: THE PERSONAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE

MindTap for Ryan, Cooper, Bolick, *Those Who Can, Teach*, 14e, represents a new approach to teaching and learning. A highly personalized, fully customizable learning platform, MindTap helps students to elevate thinking by guiding them to:

- Know, remember, and understand concepts critical to becoming a great teacher;
- Apply concepts, create tools, and demonstrate performance and competency in key areas in the course;
- Prepare artifacts for the portfolio and eventual state licensure, to launch a successful teaching career; and
- Develop the habits to become a reflective practitioner.



- Checking their comprehension and understanding through *Did You Get It?* assessments, with varied question types that are autograded for instant feedback;
- Applying concepts through mini case scenarios—students analyze typical teaching and learning situations and create a reasoned response to the issue(s) presented in the scenario; and
- Reflecting about and justifying the choices they made within the teaching scenario problem.

MindTap helps instructors facilitate better outcomes by evaluating how future teachers plan and teach lessons in ways that make content clear and help diverse

students learn, assessing the effectiveness of their teaching practice, and adjusting teaching as needed. The Student Progress App makes grades visible in real time so students and instructors always have access to current standings in the class.

MindTap for Ryan, Cooper, Bolick, *Those Who Can, Teach*, 14e, helps instructors easily set their course because it integrates into the existing Learning Management System and saves instructors time by allowing them to fully customize any aspect of the learning path. Instructors can change the order of the student learning activities, hide activities they don't want for the course, and—most importantly—add any content they do want (e.g., YouTube videos, Google docs, links to state education standards). Learn more at www.cengage.com/mindtap.

POWERPOINT® LECTURE SLIDES

These vibrant Microsoft® PowerPoint lecture slides for each chapter assist you with your lecture, by providing concept coverage using images, figures, and tables directly from the textbook!

ONLINE INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL WITH TEST BANK

An online Instructor's Manual accompanies this book. It contains information to assist instructors in designing the course, including sample syllabi, discussion questions, teaching and learning activities, field experiences, learning objectives, and additional online resources. For assessment support, the updated test bank includes true/false, multiple-choice, matching, short-answer, and essay questions for each chapter.

COGNERO

Cengage Learning Testing Powered by Cognero is a flexible online system that allows you to author, edit, and manage test bank content from multiple Cengage Learning solutions; create multiple test versions in an instant; and deliver tests from your LMS, your classroom, or wherever you want.

Acknowledgments

Whenever any of us puts pen to paper or fingers to the keyboard, we stand on the shoulders of others. This is certainly true of this book. We are indebted to many people. In writing this book, we are especially appreciative of the help given by the following individuals: Most notably, Cheryl Mason Bolick for her chapter entitled “What Should Teachers Know about Technology and Its Impact on Schools?” and for her substantial contribution to the revision of several other chapters. Additionally, we thank a number of scholars for the invaluable contribution of their research and writing to various chapters, specifically: Cathleen Kinsella Stutz for Chapters 2 and 8; Susan Tauer for Chapters 9 and 12; and Larry Kaufman for Chapter 10. We also wish to thank Steven Tigner for his helpful suggestions on the chapter entitled “What Are the Philosophical Foundations of American Education?” Special thanks go to our colleagues and students for their many good ideas and continuing support, in particular, the teacher contributors to the “Voices from the Classroom” feature. An advisory board of reviewers also made key contributions to the organization and content of this edition, most notably:

Jing Babb, Los Angeles Trade Technical College
 Cheryl Bolick, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
 Cory Callahan, University of North Carolina Wilmington
 Douglas Carothers, Florida Gulf Coast University
 Erin Counihan, Washington College
 Kathy Finkle, Black Hills State University
 Kathleen Fite, Texas State University–San Marcos
 Renee Funke, Jamestown Community College
 Pam Green, Southwestern College
 Sherry Green, Georgia Highlands College
 Rhonda Gregory, Greenville College
 Monique Henderson, Lone Star College, Montgomery
 Kerbe Lee, Martin Methodist College
 Frances Lowden, Medgar Evers College
 Dianne Mark, Coastal Carolina University
 Chelsea Martinez, Highland Community College, Freeport
 Marsha Moody, Fort Hays State University
 Lois Parette, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
 Terrie Poehl, Northwestern State University
 Karen Porfiri, Bakersfield College
 Jessica Purvis, State University of New York at Buffalo
 Carol Ramsay, Lake Erie College
 Michelle Reiff, Walla Walla Community College
 Rita Verma, Adelphi University
 Betsy Werre, Pensacola State College
 Eleanor Wilson, University of Virginia
 Joanne Yantz, Colorado Mountain College

A special acknowledgment is due to Marilyn Ryan for the substantial intellectual and psychological contributions she made to the several editions of this book. Writing and revising a textbook is a multifaceted process, particularly today with the addition of ancillary supports such as video cases and our website. Many people provide advice—some solicited and some not. We believe, however, that our best source of advice on this book has been the team we've worked with at Cengage Learning. Mark Kerr, senior product manager, had the responsibility of overseeing the “big picture” surrounding this project. We are enormously appreciative of his energetic and insightful leadership and his enthusiastic support. Samen Iqbal, content project manager, has deftly handled the copyediting process and all of the final stages of production. The developmental editor plays a key role in the production of a textbook, and we count ourselves enormously fortunate to have been assisted by Kate Scheinman. Kate has been a font of organizational wizardry and a rock of sanity throughout the long and complicated revision process. Finally, we acknowledge the thousands of students for whom this book is written. Your new learning as you become teachers is central to our work as authors.

Kevin Ryan
 James M. Cooper
 Cheryl Mason Bolick

So Let's Get Started . . .

And get to what this book is all about: students and teachers, schools and subject matter, ideas about learning, and the fascinating challenges of education today. If you take a look at the chapter titles, you can see that we have built the book around questions—questions you should try to answer if you are thinking about becoming a teacher. Questions such as, “What makes a teacher effective?” and “How should our schools be reformed?” The *most important question*, however, is the first chapter’s question, “Why teach?” This question—and its potential answers—is the focus not only of the initial chapter; it captures the purpose of the entire book.

One of life’s most important questions is this: “What am I going to do with my life?” How you spend most of your time and energy—what *work* you decide to do—will determine, more than anything else, how content you are in life. Ideally, a career decision should be based on the best information available about the chosen field and on a deep understanding of who you are.

Knowing Your Own Motives

Centuries ago, Francis Bacon told us, “Knowledge is power.” Much earlier, Socrates (one of civilization’s great teachers, whom we discuss in the chapter entitled “What Are the Philosophical Foundations of American Education?”) recognized the enormous power of self-knowledge when he urged his students to “know thyself.” Understanding yourself and your motives, especially in something as important as a career choice, is crucial to good decision making. Becoming a teacher without taking the time to carefully consider whether you’re truly meant to teach, or without examining *the reasons you want to teach*, can lead to disappointment. For instance, let’s say your fifth-grade teacher had an enormous influence on you. She took the time to get to know you, taught you new and interesting subjects, had loads of patience, and was just plain fun. In fact, you have considered becoming a teacher since fifth grade. You get to college and declare yourself an education major, without ever analyzing precisely why you want to teach or whether you have the ability, skills, attitudes, or drive to become a teacher.

Equally as important as knowing *who you are* is clarifying your motives for teaching. Why is knowing *why* you want to teach so important? Because understanding the reasons you want to teach will help you determine whether teaching is right for you. It will also help you uncover and plan for the unique challenges you may face as a teacher. Let’s say your desire to teach stems from a passion for a particular subject. Someone whose desire to teach grows out of a passion for history, for example, will have to prepare for the reality that not all of his students will share that passion. How will such a teacher motivate students who would rather be learning math? Or playing basketball?

We have written this book to help you to uncover whether you have what it takes to become a successful, fulfilled teacher and to help you uncover the reasons you are considering teaching as a profession. We hope that you will use this book to gain a greater understanding of how you and a career in education might fit together.

The Habit of Reflection

As you will see throughout this book, we believe that effective teachers, indeed effective people in many areas of life, succeed in part because they are mindful of what they are doing. Always looking for ways to improve, they reflect on their performance and on what they are engaged in. Having acquired the habit of reflection, these people are called *reflective practitioners*.

Everyone has experiences. We meet new people. Someone sends us a fascinating Web link. We encounter a destitute, homeless person on the street. We have an unexpected and deeply personal conversation with a roommate. We all have special experiences. Truly effective people, however, *use* their experiences to understand their past and to chart their future. This very crucial practice of *reflection* is a habit you can start developing even now, as part of your career choice process. The way you use this book can help you on the path to be a reflective person. We think that recording what you think today, revisiting your thoughts throughout the term, and then noting what you think at the end of your course work will help solidify any choice you make about teaching.

Everyone can develop the habit of reflection. Begin right now by answering four questions. Take time to write your answers to these questions. By doing so, you will take your first steps to becoming a reflective practitioner, which, in turn, will help you in your life and in your career, whatever that may be.

Your Motives

The following questions will help you get in touch with your true motives for considering teaching as a career path and your personal thoughts about teaching. In this exercise, we ask you to think about four main questions:

1. Why do you want to become a teacher?
2. Which teachers have you admired most, and what made them so admirable?
3. What strengths or qualities do you have that will make you a successful teacher?
4. What concerns do you have about either becoming a teacher or about the teaching field itself?

First, list all of the reasons to become a teacher, and all of the reasons to choose another profession (or why *not* to become a teacher). Be sure to list not only the altruistic reasons you may want to teach—to help others or to inspire children, for example—but also the more selfish motives you may have, such as having the summers off to travel or finishing work at 3:00 in the afternoon. Do the same for choosing another profession in the second column. For this exercise to be valuable, you need to paint a full, complete picture of how you feel and what you think about teaching as well as possible other professions you may consider. As teacher Elida Laski asks in the “Voices from the Classroom” feature in Chapter 1, “Do you have to be born with that certain something in order to be a good teacher? If you are born with *it*, do you always know that teaching is the profession for you?”

1) Why do you want to become a teacher?

Motives for becoming a teacher

Motives for choosing another profession

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Now, think about some of the people—your teachers—who may have inspired you to consider teaching as a profession.

2) Who are three teachers you had in your elementary and secondary education whom you admire most? What made them so admirable?

a.

b.

c.

Next, take an initial look at yourself.

3) What are your strengths? List at least five qualities you have that will make you a successful teacher.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

Lastly, think about what concerns you have. Do you see any blocks or barriers that might keep you from being a successful teacher?

4) What concerns do you have about either becoming a teacher or the teaching field itself? List three questions about teaching and education that you want to know more about by reading this book.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

If you did not stop reading to think about your motives for becoming a teacher or if you failed to commit yourself in writing, please stop now and think about what kept you from seriously engaging one or more of the questions. Your answer may tell you a good deal about yourself as a learner, about the educational system of which you are a product, and possibly about how you will behave as a teacher. Have you been trained to devour pages and pages of textbook reading without really confronting the issues conveyed by the words? Have you learned to disregard your own views, even about issues quite central to you? If your answers to these questions are *yes*, you are like many, many other students. But take heart. With practice, everyone can develop the habit of reflection.

We sincerely hope that this will be a different kind of book and a different kind of reading-questioning-thinking experience for you. Precisely because we are teachers, we want this book to have a very special impact on you. We want to help you make good decisions about whether you want to be a teacher and about what kind of teacher you want to become. For these reasons, you need to read this book in a different way. Take the book on fully. Encounter it. Fight with it! Improve it by adding yourself to it. The truism you probably heard from your parents, “You get out of things what you put into them,” truly applies here.

Our hope is that by the end of the semester, when you have finished reading this text, you will have acquired the habit of reflection and have developed a greater understanding of what it means to teach, of what teachers do, of how schools operate within their communities and society, and of several other issues you will need to consider as you think through the question, “Why teach?”

Why Teach?

InTASC Standard 9



Blend Images/Ariel Skelley/Getty Images

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1-1** List your motives for becoming a teacher.
- 1-2** Explain the rewards that come with a career in teaching.
- 1-3** Describe several sources that expand your understanding of teaching.
- 1-4** Assess two case studies of teacher motivations.
- 1-5** Recount the views of others about teachers and teaching.
- 1-6** State the major reasons why teachers teach and the primary sources of satisfaction.

Truth OR Fiction?

- T F** American teens claim teachers contribute most to our society's well-being.
- T F** Most school superintendents and principals claim that the quality of new teachers has declined.
- T F** Of all the characteristics that contribute to teachers' satisfaction, new teachers rate highest "involves work you love to do."

People take education courses for many reasons, but three are particularly common: First, as citizens, people need to know how a major institution like the school system works so that they can make informed choices within their communities and at the voting booth. Second, as parents or potential parents, they need to know a great deal to be intelligent partners with the schools in their children's education. Third, those who consider a career in teaching need to understand the profession they may be entering.

This text is written with this third group in mind. And this chapter, more than any other, focuses on those people who are exploring the teaching profession. Its purpose is to help you answer a fundamental question: Why should you become a teacher? As you read about the following teachers, we hope you come to understand more fully your own motivations for teaching.

1-1 Examining Your Motives for Teaching

If you teach, it is quite likely that by the end of your second year of teaching, you will have had the following experiences:

1. Someone at a party or other social gathering will ask you what you do and how you like teaching. Soon the person will tell you that he or she has always wanted to be a teacher and regrets having become a stockbroker/bookkeeper/sales representative/flight attendant/disk jockey, and that he or she may still give it all up and become a teacher.
2. You will get to know an experienced teacher who confides that he or she deeply regrets having become a teacher. While in college, the person felt cut out for teaching and actually enjoyed it initially. But gradually, he or she became fed up with the whole thing—bratty kids, pushy administrators, the same old faces in the teachers' lounge, the instant expert parents, and the overemphasis on standards and high-stakes testing. Now the person feels trapped in teaching and sees no way out.

The purpose of this chapter is to keep you from becoming “the other person” in either of these situations. It is intended to help you make a well-thought-out decision about what to do with your life, particularly if you are still undecided about becoming a teacher.

1-1a COMPARING YOUR MOTIVES TO OTHERS'

At this point, you have likely answered the question “What are my motives for wanting to become a teacher?” (and we surely hope you have). Here are a few motives you might check against your own list:

- I really like the idea of having a positive influence on 25 (or 150) kids every day.
- I can't think of anything else to do with my major.
- Teaching seems to be a fairly secure, low-risk occupation with many attractive benefits, including lots of vacation time and time to raise a family.
- I always loved history (or mathematics or science or literature), and teaching seems to be a career that will allow me to work with a subject matter that I love.
- I can't imagine anything more important to do with my life than helping children with disabilities learn to cope with, and even overcome, their barriers.



Pause and Reflect

1. Which three of the motives come closest to your thoughts about a career in teaching?
2. Thinking about these three motives, what does this tell you about yourself?

- The instruction I had in school was incredibly bad, and I want to correct that situation.
- My parents would really be pleased and proud if I were a teacher.
- Quite simply, I love children.
- I enjoy being in charge and being a positive influence on students.
- I really don't know what else I could do. I know about teaching, and I think I could do it.
- I'm concerned that society is falling apart, and I want to look out for the kids.
- Education seems as if it's going to be the action field of the future, and I want to be part of it.
- One of my students might become a famous painter, or the president of a major foundation, or who knows what. It would be great to have a strong impact on just one significant life.
- I really want to become a principal/coach/guidance counselor/college professor/educational researcher, and teaching seems to be the way to start.
- I have strong religious beliefs and see teaching as a good and useful way to live my life.
- Businesses are increasingly interested in training and educating their employees, and I want a career as a private-sector educator working in corporate America.
- I come from a family of teachers, and teaching just seems to be the natural thing to do.
- I want to have fun in life, and as a teacher, I'll have fun and get paid for it!
- I have always felt I have a calling—a vocation—to be a teacher.¹

You may be interested in seeing whether answers to the question “Why teach?” have changed over time. Why did the teachers you had select teaching as a career? Why did your parents’ teachers decide to teach? The data in Table 1.1 come from a study conducted every five years by the National Education Association. Notice the striking stability from one generation to the next of the prime motivation for teaching—“desire to work with young people.” From 1971 to 2006, the change is only 1 percent. Although not as dramatic, the generational stability of the other

TABLE 1.1 Principal Reasons Selected by All Teachers for Originally Deciding to Become a Teacher, 1971–2006 (%)

Reason	1971	1981	1991	2001	2006
Desire to work with young people	72	70	66	73	71
Value or significance of education to society	37	40	37	44	42
Interest in subject-matter field	35	44	34	36	39
Influence of teacher in elementary or secondary school	18	25	27	32	31
Influence of family	21	22	21	19	19

Sources: Adapted from Table 49, *Status of the American Public School Teacher* (Washington, DC: National Education Association, 2003), p. 68; and prepublication data derived from the 2005–2006 administration of the *Status* survey (courtesy of the National Education Association).

motivations is remarkable. Amid all of the social change in recent decades, men and women continue to be drawn to the work of teaching by the same desires. As we'll see, the rewards often match the desires of those who teach.

1-2 The Rewards of Teaching

As we have seen, responses to the question “Why teach?” run the gamut from “Teaching will satisfy me” to “I want to help others.” Our individual motivations can change and may be quite different at different times and when we are in different moods. As social psychologist Peter Drucker quipped, “We know nothing about motivation. All we can do is write books about it.”



At twenty-two, I graduated Phi Beta Kappa. I had choices at my fingertips: law school, grad school . . . corporate America, here I come! Adults swelled their chests in pride. My peers practiced the “on my way to a Lexus” shuffle. Then the question: “And what are your plans after graduation?” Answer: “I’m moving to New York to teach elementary school in the South Bronx.” As a twenty-three-year-old teacher with sore feet and twenty-eight incredible kids, my explanation reminds me of a song. I had a choice to sit it out or dance. I chose to dance.

—THALIA THEODORE,

Washington Post (December 2, 2001), p. F1

At the same time, the motivational *factors*—those qualities that reside within teaching—are clearer and relatively constant. Researchers have identified a set of occupational rewards that can help us sort out both the attractive and unattractive qualities of a teaching career.² These rewards are classified into two broad categories: extrinsic and intrinsic. **Extrinsic rewards** are the public, external attractions of an occupation, such as money, prestige, and power. The **intrinsic rewards** of an occupation are the internal psychic or spiritual satisfaction one receives from one’s work, such as a personal sense of accomplishment or an enjoyment of the work itself. It will come as no surprise that, comparatively speaking, teaching is somewhat out of balance, receiving generally high marks on one set of rewards and low marks on the other.

1-2a EXTRINSIC REWARDS

Teaching has rarely been cited for its abundance of extrinsic rewards. Although it offers more extrinsic rewards than many other occupations, such as law enforcement and coal mining, when compared with other professions, teaching ranks low in extrinsic compensations.

Salaries and Benefits

Teachers’ salaries and benefits (such as retirement plans and health care) have improved substantially in recent years, as you will see in Chapter 13, “What Are Your Job Options in Education?”; there are also encouraging signs that steady gains can be expected. Relative to salaries in occupational fields with similar educational requirements (e.g., a college degree and specialized training), teachers’ salaries do not compare favorably. However, largely as a result of the 2007 recession and the economic tightening that followed, teachers’ salaries and particularly benefits are appearing in a new and more favorable light. One author, summarizing four recent studies concluded, “All of the U.S.-based studies on teacher pay I read found educators making more than 60% of what their peers earned. Teachers aren’t swimming in cash. But they don’t have it *that bad*”³. However, the importance of salary, like the whole issue of monetary needs, varies enormously from one person to the next. And teachers’ salaries vary significantly from one geographical location to the next, as you will also see in Chapter 13.

Status

Status refers to one’s position in a group—that is, where one stands in relation to others. The status of a doctor or a beggar is rather clear, but the status of a teacher is more difficult to gauge. To young parents entrusting their child to school for the first

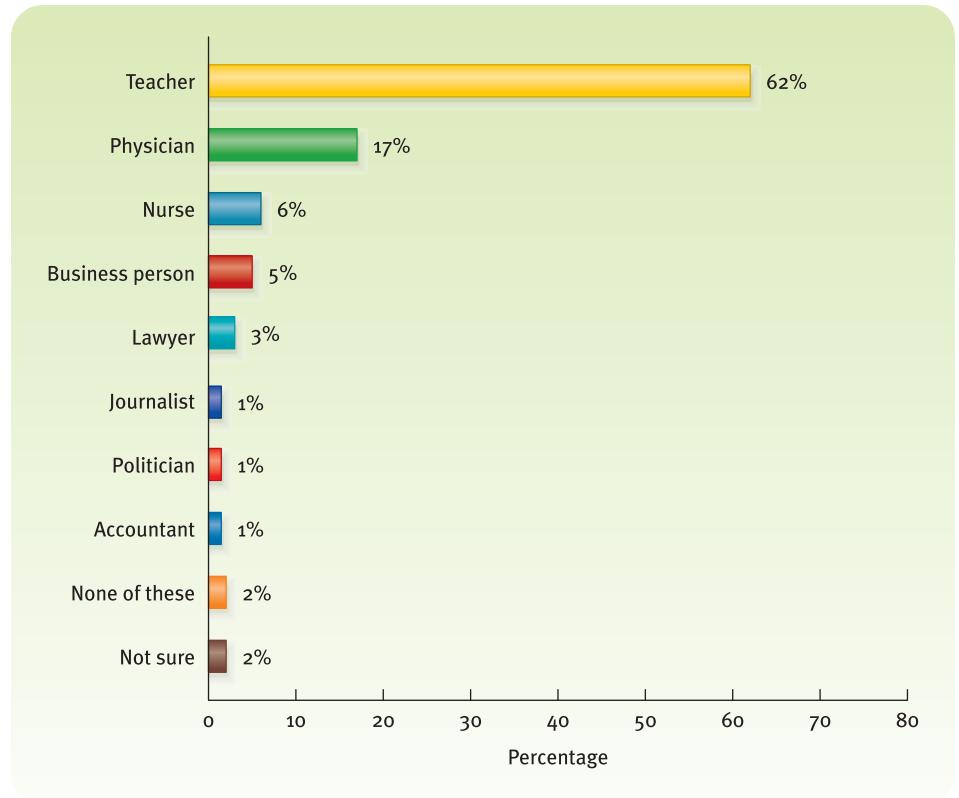


FIGURE 1.1 Profession That Provides the Most Benefit to Society

Source: David Haselkorn and Louis Harris, “The Essential Profession: A National Survey of Public Attitudes toward Teaching, Educational Opportunity, and School Reform.” Reprinted with permission of Recruiting New Teachers, Inc., 1998.

time, the status of the teacher is quite high. To the same parents 12 or 15 years later, on hearing that their child wants to become a teacher, the status may be somewhat diminished. The United States’ current commitment to massively reform its educational system is, however, having a positive effect on the status of teaching.

Figure 1.1 shows the results of a turn-of-the-century public opinion survey that asked which of eight professions (including physician, lawyer, nurse, and journalist) “provides the most important benefit to society.” Respondents put teaching first by close to a four-to-one margin over physicians (62% versus 17%). This was a big improvement over a poll taken a decade earlier, in which only 35 percent of respondents put teaching first.⁴ In more recent research looking at the public’s attitude toward teachers, 71 percent reported that they had trust and confidence in the men and women who are teaching children in the public schools.

Power

Power is not usually seen as a reward of teaching, but it nevertheless is a quality that “resides in the office.” Anyone who claims that teachers do not have power has forgotten what it was like to go to school without having done the homework and to sit in fear of being called on by Mrs. Gotcha. The power of the teacher is not a dollars-and-cents power, like that of a corporate chief executive officer, but any person who can make another’s day or ruin another’s year has power. Although, as sociologist Dan Lortie observed, “Teachers are not supposed to *enjoy* exercising power per se,”⁵ the public opinion survey discussed earlier clearly indicates that the public sees the quality of teachers as the greatest influence on student learning.⁶



The sole advantage of power is that you can do more good.

—BALTASAR GRACIAN,
The Art of Worldly Wisdom, 1647

A recent study by Harvard economists, coined by the press as “The \$320,000 Kindergarten Teacher,” should significantly boost the power and prestige of teachers.

The study focused on the impact of early education on the lifetime earnings of people who attended and did not attend kindergarten. The cumulative financial impact on a single class of early school attendees over their working lives was a staggering \$320 million! Compared with students of similar backgrounds who did not attend, the kindergarten “attendees” not only earned significantly more, but also were more likely to go to college, more likely to be saving for retirement, and less likely to become single parents.⁷

Work Schedule

There is an old joke about a student in an education course being stumped on an exam by the question “What are the three best things about a career in teaching?” Finally, in desperation, he writes, “June, July, and August.”

That student probably flunked, but he did have a point. Compared with other workers, teachers spend much less time at their work sites. If we ignore what teachers do at home by way of preparing lessons, correcting papers, and checking homework, we can say they work six or seven hours a day for fewer than half the days of the year. Compared with those in power-and-status occupations, such as corporate finance or law, teachers have less demanding work schedules. Also, teachers have much more flexibility and personal control over how they use their time. For many men and women, family life is a top priority, and the time spent close to home and on summer vacations is a major plus associated with a teaching career. These teachers see sharing a schedule with their children or friends as a significant benefit. Teachers’ work schedules, therefore, are one extrinsic reward that carries a great deal of weight.

1-2b INTRINSIC REWARDS

Extrinsic rewards, like company stock options or year-end bonuses, are tangible. Intrinsic rewards are, by their very nature, “in the eye of the beholder.” What might be one person’s intrinsic reward, such as taking a busload of students on an overnight field trip to the state capital, is another’s living nightmare. However, the most satisfied teachers are usually those attracted to such intrinsic rewards.

Students

The attraction of working with students has long been one of the strongest rewards perceived by teachers. The daily contacts, the conversations and exchanges, and even the struggles to motivate students are a deep source of satisfaction for many teachers. Seeing children learn, grow, and develop—seeing them able to do things in May that they were unable to do at the beginning of the school year—is a genuinely fulfilling experience. Being

important to others satisfies profound human needs, and teachers know about and appreciate this potential to affect the lives of others. And this does not go unnoticed. Nearly three out of five (58% of) teenagers surveyed mentioned teachers when asked by researchers who or what had influenced them to become the kinds of people they are.⁸

This reward is particularly meaningful to elementary school teachers, who spend so much time with the same group of 15 to 30 children. Secondary school teachers, who focus on a particular subject matter and may see as many as 150 students in a day, identify working with students as an important attraction, but not always to the same degree as their elementary school counterparts.



To hear lessons and control restless children six hours a day through thirty-six weeks in a year is wretched drudgery, but to train and develop human minds and characters is the most inspiring work in the world.

—ELLEN HYDE,
to the graduating class of the Framington
Normal School, 1886

“A man of humanity is one who, in seeking to establish himself, finds a foothold for others and who, desiring attainment for himself, helps others to attain.

—CONFUCIUS (551–479 B.C.),
Chinese philosopher

Performance of a Significant Social Service

In the award-winning film about early Renaissance England, *A Man for All Seasons*, Sir Thomas More says to Richard Rich, the man who eventually betrayed him but who at the time was seeking a cushy job at court, “Why not be a teacher, Rich? You’d be a fine teacher. Perhaps a great one.” Disappointed, Rich replies, “And if I were, who would know it?” Thomas More then says, “You . . . your pupils . . . your friends . . . God—not a bad public, that.”⁹

To many teachers, their greatest satisfaction is the sense that they are doing important work for the common good. This realization buoys them up and helps them tolerate the less attractive aspects of teaching. As we saw in Figure 1.1, the general public seems to agree that teaching provides valuable benefits for society. Whereas workers in government and business are aware in an abstract sense that they are contributing to the social good, teachers have daily flesh-and-blood testaments to the importance of their service right before them. Many college professors report that they see more

college students not only seriously considering teaching as a career but also selecting teaching specifically because they see it as service to the nation and a way to pay back the country. For some students, the deeper motive behind this service for others is a religious one; that is, they see teaching as a way to serve God by serving the young.

TeachSource Video Case



Teaching as a Profession: Collaboration with Colleagues

Watch the video clips, study the artifacts in the case, and reflect on the following questions:

1. Were you aware that the collaborative process shown in this case goes on among teachers? In your own education, have you seen evidence of this collaborative planning process?
2. Does the planning process these teachers engaged in look like something you would enjoy as part of your career?

Stimulation and Support from Fellow Teachers

When describing the work of teaching, researchers used to report on the sense of isolation many teachers reported they were experiencing.¹⁰ As will be discussed in Chapter 15, “What Does It Mean to Be a Professional?” this is changing as more and more teachers are working in groups and sharing in-school leadership roles. This trend aside, for many teachers, their contacts and interactions with colleagues are an important intrinsic reward. Teachers enjoy the shoptalk and camaraderie that are a natural part of school life. Because teachers are not always rewarded for their individual job performance or for their expertise, feelings of competition are less prevalent than among such occupational groups as salespeople or lawyers who must compete for customers and grow their clientele. Teachers know they are part of a highly and increasingly cooperative venture. (The Video Case, *Teaching as a Profession: Collaboration with Colleagues*, provides a more in-depth look at how teachers can work together.)

The Work of Teaching

For many teachers, the process of teaching is a significant reward in itself. Whether they are explaining an idea, working with small groups, or designing instructional units, the actual work itself is highly gratifying. Like a pianist moving through a favorite sonata or a lawyer cross-examining a witness, teachers often draw their deepest satisfactions from the act of applying their craft. One teacher describes this feeling in this chapter’s “Voices from the Classroom” feature. Of course, teachers vary in which activities they find rewarding. Some draw their rewards from establishing a nurturing, cooperative

There is real joy when a student “gets it!”



Pause and Reflect

1. Which of the extrinsic rewards discussed in this section apply to you most? Which of the intrinsic rewards? Are there other rewards not mentioned here?
2. As you probe your own motives for considering teaching, what have you learned about yourself?



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environment; some from unraveling complicated problems for students; and some from seeing students work and learn independently. For many teachers, all else pales before their deep sense of fulfillment in simply doing the work of teaching.

As you continue reading and doing the work of this course, we urge you to keep in mind the issues of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, personal satisfactions, and the “fit” between you and the work of a teacher. Begin now with some quiet reflection.

VOICES From the Classroom

Are You Born with It?

Elida Laski taught kindergarten for three years in Chula Vista, California, was a literacy coach in the Boston public school system, and is now an assistant professor at Boston College.



In my second year of teaching, a colleague told me, “Good teachers are born, not made, and you were born with it.” After four years of teaching, I still wonder about this comment. What is it?—That certain something that distinguishes excellent teachers? Do you have to be born with that certain something to be a good teacher? If you are born with it, do you always know that teaching is the profession for you? Is it true that some people are just not made for teaching, or can anyone learn what it takes? How do you know whether you are meant to be a teacher?

I never intended to be a teacher. In fact, it was not until my senior year of college that, as a frustrated premed student, I entertained the idea of teaching and took two education courses. Immediately, I knew that teaching was for me! I had done very well in the premed track, but I never felt invested in what I was studying. Education courses required just as much, if not more, time and thought, and they were

exciting in a way premed had never been. Education offered the academic rigor of the sciences but also appealed to my heart.

Teaching demands systematic thought and reflection to deliver instruction and analyze situations. It requires a solid understanding of content and pedagogy to be critical of new trends and develop curriculum. However, I believe it is instincts that humanize teaching—the gut feeling of what will work or not, the sense of how to connect with each child, and the ability to juggle 10 things at once and be fired up rather than stressed out, and so much more. Being in the classroom is still an adrenaline rush. I put in 12-hour days without thinking twice. I cannot go to a store, museum, or park without thinking how I might apply what I see to my classroom. The joy of teaching, itself, drives me. That, I think, is the *it*. Whether you can learn *it* or must be born with *it*, I still cannot say.

1-3 Sources of Useful Experience

One of the major educational insights applied to schooling in recent years concerns individual differences. There is a new appreciation for the unique learning styles and learning problems of children and youth. As a result, the “one true way” approach to education is gradually slipping by the boards. The same insight about individual differences applies to making an intelligent career choice. Because people learn in such diverse ways and differ so much in what they already know and need to learn, we can offer only sketchy guidelines here. We consider four categories of experience, however, that may help you answer the question “Should I teach?” You should use the four sources in whatever combination best fits your present stage of life and career decision making.

1-3a REAL ENCOUNTERS

Students who aspire to be teachers should test their commitment by putting themselves in actual school situations. As much as possible, students of teaching should observe in schools and participate in various activities that give them **real encounters** with students. Some teaching candidates avoid contact with the young until they begin student teaching, only to find that young people are much different from the romantic images they have manufactured. “Those nasty little fifth-graders are so disgustingly . . . juvenile!” one shocked student teacher told us. Further, and all too frequently, teaching candidates limit their encounters to typical elementary and secondary school students. They do not consider teaching children with mental or physical disabilities or even becoming a specialist such as a reading teacher. As a

result of limited experiences, they may have been exposed to only a narrow segment of the opportunities and challenges of teaching.

Increasingly, school districts are using college students as teacher aides and assistant teachers, both during the school year and in summer school. Also, a large number of teacher education programs have cooperative arrangements with schools that give college students opportunities to play various roles within the

school, usually as part of their coursework in teacher education. In addition, we urge prospective teachers to explore opportunities to be substitute teachers in nearby schools. Although the work is demanding, much can be learned from it. Besides the valuable experience and the money earned, these substitute teaching stints often lead to regular teaching positions. School districts typically are more interested in hiring someone they have seen “in action” and who is a “known quantity” rather than strangers they only know from résumés and references. If your schedule doesn’t permit substitute teaching, many schools will gratefully accept part-time volunteer help from education students.

Schools, however, do not exhaust the opportunities. There is much to be said for nonschool contact with children, such as camp counseling, playground work, after-school recreation projects, work in orphanages and settlement houses, and youth-related church work. Other possibilities include coaching a team or sponsoring a youth club. The most important thing is to get your feet wet—to get the feel of working with young people in a helping relationship.

Vicarious Experiences

Not all learning has to take place in the school of hard knocks. In fact, civilization itself requires that we be able to capitalize on the experiences of others. Artists and

“
You cannot acquire experience by making experiments. You cannot create experience. You must undergo it.

—ALBERT CAMUS (1913–1960),
French author