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Now's the Time! Preparing Teacher Leaders through Leadership Experiences.

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Now's the Time! Preparing Teacher Leaders through Leadership Experiences

CEL Houston 2018

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Overview

This session invites teacher leaders to consider activities promoting leadership for undergraduate and graduate students.

Presenters will share methods to help cultivate positive qualities and behaviors in future leaders.

Participants will create literacy quadrants, a reflexive tool fostering metacognition, dialogue, and discovery, and leave with new mentoring and leadership strategies.

Proposal

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In a 2007 Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) *Educational Leadership* article, Cindy Harrison and Joellen Killion describe ten roles for teacher leaders, including resource provider, mentor, and catalyst for change. In this interactive session, we (as two teacher educator researchers) will expand on Harrison and Killion's ideas about leadership, focusing specifically on helping preservice teachers, teachers, and alumni to embody leadership roles in English Language Arts Education. The Conference on English Leadership (CEL) urges language art leaders to share common problems and to offer one another insights, resources, and advice. What's more, CEL focuses on investigating issues of greatest concern to leaders, whether they are situated in the classroom, administration, or elsewhere. This session goes to the heart of CEL's mission in examining how we can promote leadership qualities in those who haven't yet self-identified as leaders.

This session will invite teacher leaders to consider which kinds of activities can foster leadership in undergraduate and graduate students who are preparing to enter the ELA classroom or who are already teaching in public and private settings. We will share with session attendees a variety of methods we have found beneficial in fostering positive qualities and behaviors in future teacher leaders. These include regularly communicating through social media networks (e.g., special Facebook page); mentoring students into membership in essential teacher organizations (e.g.; NCTE, CEL, MCTE, CFLC, etc.); inviting students, teachers, and alumni to present at local, regional, state, and national workshops and conferences; bringing in experts from the field as guest speakers in courses; and providing students with inquiry-driven experiences through which they can engage in action research.

Participants will engage in creating literacy quadrants, a reflexive tool which promotes metacognition, dialogue, and discovery. Through this process, they will identify, evaluate, and discuss effective methods of mentorship and their influence on students' learning, teaching, and leadership.

Introduction to literacy quadrants

Definition:

Definition of “literacy quadrants” - adapted from the Frayer model (1969), literacy quadrants include prompts for each quadrant about students’ thinking, writing, identity, and cultural awareness. Literacy quadrants are used as a metacognitive tool that helped students to explore their cultures, learning, and literate lives.*

**For more information, see Olan, E.L.; Richmond, K. J & McDermott, M. (2017). Literacy Quadrants and Teacher Narratives: Pedagogical Tools to Foster Reflection and Improve Dialogue about Diverse Democracies. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association (AERA) 2017, "Knowledge to Action: Achieving the Promise of Equal Educational Opportunity". San Antonio, TX. <http://www.aera.net/Publications/Online-Paper-Repository/AERA-Online-Paper-Repository>

Literacy Quadrants background information

Semiotics - Morris (1964)

Symbols - Langer (1948)

- Images - What images say about students' perceptions of mental illness (key terms, emotions)
- Language - What words say about students' perceptions of mental illness (themes)

Literacy Quadrants convey students' perceptions of mental illness and other social issues, their knowledge of literature (including YA texts), and their cultural beliefs/backgrounds.

Literacy Quadrants Instructional Sequence

Draw an image of what a *teacher leader* looks like.

Draw an image of *what a teacher leader's classroom* looks like.

Draw an image of what a *teacher leader's bookshelf/library* looks like?

Draw an image of what *students of teacher leaders* look like or do in the classroom.

CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

Identify list of controversial issues on giant post-it note/poster board

Participants will exchange literacy quadrants and identify controversial issues that may be depicted in the drawings.

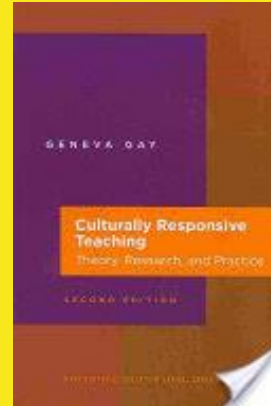
This will be followed by a discussion of how these controversial issues are seen in leadership roles.

Journey of discomfort

Avoiding personal examples and using professional or young adult literature (e.g., microaggressions, racial disparities, sexism, rank, etc.)

Talk about these issues through literature rather than through personal examples.

For example, term “full professor” versus “junior faculty” in our conversations. We discussed Geneva Gay’s book and we also talked about our reading of *When Reason Breaks*.



Applications of this model
for professional
development

You give us examples!

Implications from our AERA presentation

These teacher candidates' responses were not surprising to researchers due to the predominance of images and narratives in popular culture and educational culture depicting teachers as loving, caring listeners who live for their students' successes and who believe they can make a difference in their lives (Grumet, 1988; Shaw, 2005; Delamarter, 2015).

In our previous research (shared at AERA 2017), we identified two phenomena which permeated the teacher candidates' images and written responses during the literacy quadrants activity.

1. reflections on teacher identity and efficacy
2. issues of diversity and teacher agency.

With regard to teacher identity and efficacy, teacher candidates in this study seemed to overwhelmingly identify "teacher" (that is, secondary English Language Arts teacher) as one who should be authentic, empathetic, caring, and giving.

For example, one teacher candidate stated that "the best way to live" is to help others, noting, "Throughout my years, I helped the kids by tutoring them, counseling them, and simply being there for them when no one else was."

Another said she wanted to provide "emotional and mental support" to students because that is what she looks for from teachers as a student herself.

What other ways can we use literacy quadrants in our leadership roles (not in professional development) ?

Drawing images in order to demonstrate our metacognitive or reflective thinking about issues related to instruction, to assessment, to personal growth/goals, to professional relationships, to curriculum development, to supervision, etc.?

Dealing with microaggressions, emotions, or concerns about one's colleagues?

Others?

Handout with literacy quadrants instructional sequence

See handout from Elsie Lindy Olan. :)

Thank you!

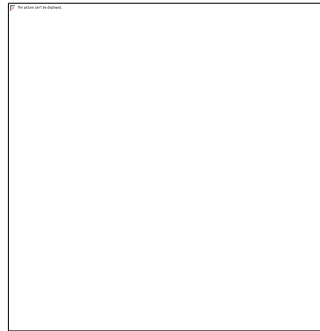
Feel free to contact us for more
information!

“Here, let me break it down for you,
so you know what I say is true:

Teachers make a goddamn difference!

Now what about you?” - *Taylor Mali (2002)*

[https://taylormali.com/poems/what-teachers-
make/](https://taylormali.com/poems/what-teachers-make/)



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