

Katherine Turcios presents

# LEARNING STATEMENT: THE SAGA CONTINUES





## KATHERINE'S LEARNING JOURNEY

# LEARNING STATEMENT

I am learning that mentoring others helps me to reflect and progress in my teaching practices.

I am learning that to be able to reach my students I need to begin from the inside out.



The nesting dolls are representative of both my learning statements. Recognizing that within me there are different parts that make up my story. Within my students, my mentee and myself we only see the outer doll. I'm learning to get to the inner parts in order to better understand how to teach and mentor them. I have found that I am able to see the different layers that fit inside me as a teacher and a learner.

Elder Ellen White said, "They should learn the base, the very basic, the inside, the stem, and the core. It sort of sounds like it when you translate it, the core of what you are learning and then expand out. The teacher will already know that--it is like a big tree, never mind the apples or if it's flowers, we're going to learn inside first and then out, they said. Never from outside first (White and Archibald, 1992, 154)





• Elaborations •

How is this important to me

I have found that being a mentor has given me the opportunity to see my students in a different way. Being with my students constantly I often do not get the chance to see them interact with other teachers. I have discovered that some decisions I have made previously were made because it was what I was comfortable with. In dialoguing with my student teacher I have found my perspective change in some of my teaching practices.

## Being a mentor

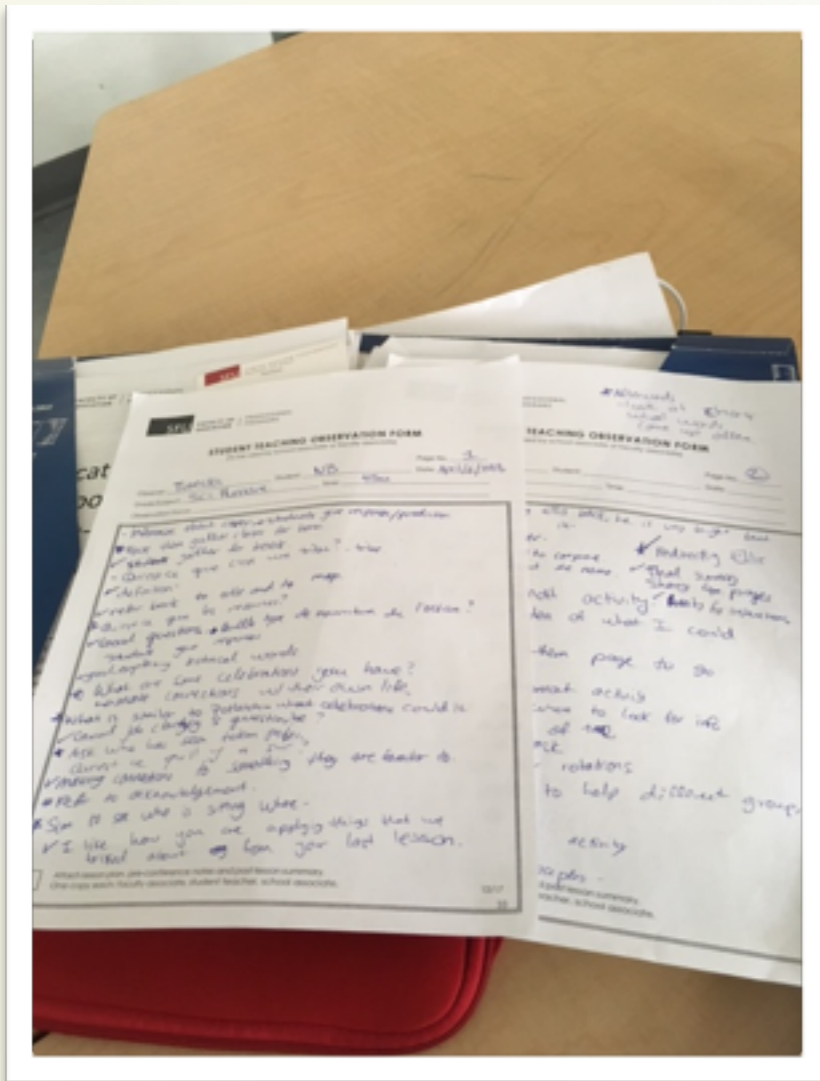
Mentoring others has made me more aware of the decisions that I make in the classroom. During the observation phase of my student teacher's practicum I was very aware of him taking notes on what I was doing. I became more cognizant of myself as a learner, teacher and how these parts of me fit within each other.





## • Evidence •

I think one of the experiences that has helped me in **reflecting in my teaching practices** and in **reaching my students from the inside out** is doing lesson observations. My main focus during these observations was to focus on my student teacher. At the same time I couldn't help watching my "key players" in action and to see how they react and behave with another teacher. I started to think about how I would react if they behaved that way in one of my lessons and what was the reason behind the behaviour. Something that I wrote in my notes from the Holistic course relates to this **"Understand what the child is bringing in"** This makes me think of questions such as **"What is going on inside them right now?"** **"How can I help them achieve a balance within themselves so they can be successful learners?"**



“A good mentor is a good role model, through both word and action” (Adviser, Teacher, Role Model, Friend: On Being a Mentor to Students in Science and Engineering (1997) Chapter:5 The Mentor as Role Model p. 61)



## • Capacities •

### Connecting my learning

1. Develop a disposition of inquiry and critical reflection to understand and develop my practice
2. Explore contexts and environments that support and respond to learners needs
3. Collaborate in learning communities to support my teaching practice



**Develop:** After each lesson observation I would receive reflections from my student teacher. In reading his reflections I saw these as opportunities for critical reflection on my own teaching practice. Even though I have only been teaching for 5 years I have found that through reading his reflections I have become more willing to change the way I do things in the classroom.

**Explore:** I have found that meeting the needs of my students has helped me grow in this capacity. I can't expect my students in my classroom or my student teacher to learn or understand something if I have not given them the basics to build their foundation. Each student is different

and requires different ways to be supported. In exploring what environment and contexts they come home from I hope to better respond to the learners needs.

**Collaboration:** In being able to collaborate with my student teacher it has helped me in being more purposeful in my planning and as a result being more reflective in my teaching practices. I have also found that collaboration has helped me see different ways to reach students that are most in need. I often find that I have a goal in mind and that sometimes I lose sight of the little parts that make up my students. Having someone to collaborate with helps me see how those pieces fit within each other to make them who they are.



• EDUCATIONAL THEORY •

---

# CONNECTIONS

"Keeping a journal has been a practice in both my teaching and learning. As a way of developing a reflective ongoing relationship with oneself and one's work, a personal journal is hard to beat" (David Hobson, 2001, *Teachers Doing Research: The Power of Action Through Inquiry*)

Careful listening: "A good mentor is a good listener. Hear exactly what the student is trying to tell you-without first interpreting or judging." (Adviser, Teacher, Role Model, Friend: On Being a Mentor to Students in Science and Engineering (1997) Chapter: 1 What is a Mentor? p. 5

"Capturing "thinking" is a challenge for any researcher...Journals provide teachers a tool for reflecting on their own thought processes" (The Reflective Educators guide to Classroom Research, Developing a Research plan, p 109)

*We have three ears to listen with,  
two on the sides of our head and  
one in our heart" (Indigenous  
Storywork, p. 76)*

"We come from a tradition of storytelling, and as storytellers we have a responsibility to be honest to transmit our understanding of the world to other people...In this process, there is something more than information being transmitted: there's energy, there's strength being transmitted from storyteller to the listener and that is what's important in teaching young people about their identity" (Indigenous Storywork, p. 85)



# • VISION •

## Changes

Some changes that I have made into my practice are being more purposeful in my planning.

In being a mentor I am continuously reminded that there is always something I can learn and that I need to work from the inside out. That by continuously working on my own professional development I am better able to support my mentee and my students.



## Questions

I plan to have a student teacher next year. How will my experience this year prepare for next time?

How will my experience this term help me when mentoring others?

How can I continue to have the mindset of reflecting even when no one is “Watching me?”

How can I continue to keep in mind the stories of my students and mentees to help them succeed?

## Goals

To attain a **mutual balance and harmony**. Right now I still feel like “Coyote’s eyes” I’m seeing myself as someone with experience but also stepping into roles that are unfamiliar to me.

I would like to continue to **be more present in moments with my students**, especially with those who have difficult stories to tell.

To seek out **opportunities to learn from those with more experience** as that will help me in my learning journey and in the learning journey of those I interact with.

