A Reflective Teaching Road Map for Pre-service and Novice Early Childhood Educators

Abstract

Teaching requires skillful and continual analysis of student performance. The need for self-questioning and self-analysis is heightened as historically used teaching practices may hold only limited effectiveness in today’s currently diverse classrooms. A reflective teacher looks beyond day-to-day practices and commonly held beliefs to investigate teaching practices and assign meaning to student performance. Reflectivity centers on the responsibility of the teacher for the student’s response to instruction and enables the teacher to make effective instructional decisions. Reflective analysis enables teachers to make appropriate instructional decisions; however, the skills to make such analysis may take instruction and experience, and, therefore elude many pre-service and novice teachers. In this article, we present guidelines and strategies to facilitate reflective behaviors appropriate for pre-service and novice teachers. Suggested guidelines are based on the mnemonic “CAR” (Context, Attention, Response). Guiding questions, known as “CAR-keys” were developed to provide a specific model for instructional decision making.

Keywords: Reflection, teacher preparation, instructional decision making.

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