

# Content and Methodology Paper

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I was very excited as I began to finish my first two years of college and started moving towards my junior and senior years. I remember thinking that I was finally going to start taking classes that were going to prepare me for what I really want to do. I was tired of taking general education classes that made me feel as if I were not learning anything. I was finally going to take classes that I could enjoy and I was going to start learning about being a teacher. Today, as a senior over half done with the methods block, I have not been let down by my earlier expectations. The classes I have taken including Literacy Block, Mild Interventions: Strategies for Instruction & Assessment and Implementation, and what I have completed thus far of Methods Block have not only challenged me to give college my all, but they have also transformed me from a college student who was going to be a teacher to a teacher who is finishing his college education.

Looking back at the courses I have mentioned above, I see that I have made great strides from where I was four years ago. Literacy Block was the first class that allowed me to discover age appropriate materials. I feel much of this knowledge was obtained through the trade book binder I compiled and through lesson plans that were written for specific grade levels. The education I received during Literacy Block has given me the confidence that I will need to be able to choose resources and materials that will fit my needs as well as my students' needs. Another important part of Literacy Block that was also helpful was its emphasis on reading. I would like to secure a job in a lower elementary grade. In any grade, reading is a crucial part of the educational day; however, it is an essential part of the lower elementary grade level. We learned about many components of reading and writing that are important to the literacy education of our children today. Some of these specific items include the stages of reading, what types of

books are proper for children, and how to get students to take responsibility for and extend their own thinking and learning. The education I received in Literacy Block will allow me to feel comfortable in teaching these lower grade levels with confidence.

Two of the other classes I mentioned in my opening paragraph are related to my training for special education. These classes have given me the training to give all of my students regardless of ability or disability the education they need. When I signed up to be a special education major, I did not have a clue of how much of the information that I would learn in those classes could be implemented not only in a special education setting but also in a general education classroom. I feel it is vitally important in today's educational setting that all teachers understand how to serve a special education student, whether it is in the special or general education classroom. This is important to me since many of today's special education students are placed in the general education classroom for a large part of the day. This method of placing these special needs students in the general education classroom for the majority of the day is called inclusion. Inclusion is becoming a very popular trend in the field of special education and is not going to stop any time soon. The special education training that I have received has given me the knowledge to help me to serve every student in my class to the best of my ability.

The final class I mentioned in my opening paragraph is actually a group of classes called Methods Block. I do not think there is or could be any substitution for what an education major learns during his/her methods block. This is a time of learning and reflection that has proven to me to be vital to the completion of my education and my training towards being an elementary teacher. The week long field experiences both in my student teaching placement and in a multi-cultural experience has not only given me

an opportunity to learn a mass of information, but it has also given me the experience needed that could not be gained in the college classroom. The individual classes in Methods Block are based on individual content areas. Those areas are reading, science, social studies, mathematics, and classroom management. The influence that each class has placed on my education and my view towards education in an elementary classroom is tremendous. For example, the first day of Classroom Management I had no idea of how to begin to form a discipline plan that would work for a real class. However, during the course, I have learned about many different theorists that have developed many ideas and approaches to classroom discipline/management over the past many years. These theorists have assisted me in formulating a classroom discipline plan that can and will be implemented into a real classroom one day.

If I could sum up one point about my college education and my content and methodology classes in particular it would be that they can not stand alone. It would be impossible to receive the information necessary to teach a class full of eager students from one of these classes alone. It is the combination of all of the classes together that give us, as future teachers, the mass of knowledge that prepares us for the road that lies ahead. I can say with certainty that I have not learned all that I will need to know through my methodology classes to teach a class of elementary students. However, it is definite that they have solidified the fact that teaching is the career for me.