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## **Reading and Writing Habits of Preservice Teachers**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Reading and writing experts agree that, to teach effectively, teachers must first be readers and/or writers themselves. In this study, we examined beliefs and habits related to reading and writing in preservice teachers based upon interview data. The results revealed a variety of reading and writing histories and patterns of involvement in ongoing reading and writing. Both readers and writers, and nonreaders and nonwriters, were able to identify strategies for reading and writing in their future classrooms that matched strategies taught in university methods courses. None of the students were able to articulate suggestions for fostering a love of reading or writing in their own future students. Implications focus on examining preservice teacher education programs to identify what we do and do not model for students.

### **READING AND WRITING HABITS OF PRESERVICE TEACHERS**

Reading and writing experts agree that to teach effectively, teachers must first be readers (Mueller, 1973; Scott, 1996; Searls, 1985) and/or writers themselves (Bridge & Heibert, 1985; Faery, 1993; Hollingsworth,

1988). Some researchers (Bowie, 1996; Claypool, 1980; Decker, 1986; Hollingsworth, 1988) take the assertion further by stating that teachers who are unsure of their writing ability assign fewer writing assignments to their students.

In regards to reading, Daisey and Shroyer (1993) commented about their preservice teachers, "[The students] have never learned to read books. . . They just had to skim until they found the key word and then get it into the worksheet" (p. 627). Frager's (1986) work, and our own observations, suggest an alarming number of preservice teachers did not consider themselves to be good readers, did not enjoy reading, and had not read a book within the last six months. This points to an aliteracy problem among some preservice teachers (Draper, 1997).

There are mixed findings about preservice teachers' reading habits. Cramer and Blachowicz (1980) found 59% of a group of preservice teachers on a five-point Likert scale reporting that they like reading "more" or "much more than most" as opposed to 18% liking reading "less" or "much less than most." McNinch and Steelmon (1990) found in their research that all of a similar sample considered themselves to be frequent (60%) or occasional readers (40%). In another study, Healy (1990) found that more than 25% of the potential teachers at a certain university confessed to a "lifelong discomfort with print"(p.22). Gray and Troy (1986) found that 64% of their education majors were not reading a book at the time of their research. Preservice teachers consistently ranked reading low among choices for leisure activities (Mour, 1997; Worden & Noland, 1984).

The data are similar with regard to writing habits. Bowie (1996) discovered that when teachers are not confident writers themselves, they do not feel adequate to teach writing or to use it as a tool. In most cases, negative attitudes about writing were the result of previous writing experiences (Levin, 1993; Richardson, 1992; Phillips, 1992). In Levin's study, only one of 67 preservice teachers, made a connection between the word "interest" and the word "writing." Yet, in this same study, 25 out of 67 (37%) indicated that they enjoyed writing and often wrote stories and poems. Forty-two (63%) had negative feelings about writing, claimed not to have any time, and wrote only when required. Only half of the non-writers could remember learning to write, and even those who remembered cited examples that were related to penmanship rather than the production of written creations.

Roe and Vukelich (1998) recognized that links may exist between the "contexts under which preservice teachers acquire literacy and the beliefs about literacy learning they come to hold" (p. 281). Similarly, Cohn and Kottkamp (1993) acknowledge the difficulties involved in grappling with deeply held assumptions identified through reflective activities in which preservice teachers critically examine their past histories through the lenses of current knowledge of pedagogical practices. Many researchers (Duchain, et al., 1994; McLaughlin, 1994; Manna & Mischell, 1987) have used autobiographies to explore these histories. Roe and Vukelich (1998) carried this process a step further by examining these histories in comparison with students' responses to methods they would and would not use in class.

Because reading and writing are so intertwined, we were interested in examining both the reading and writing habits of our preservice teachers. Our perspective can be considered a biased one in that we do not believe that teachers who dislike reading and writing can effectively foster the love of reading and writing in the children they teach. Thus, we want our preservice teachers to love to read and to "view writing as a worthwhile and enriching endeavor in order to motivate children to think of themselves as writers" (Levin, 1993, p. 17). In the current study, we asked, (a) what factors have influenced the development of beliefs about reading and current reading habits in preservice elementary teachers, (b) what factors have influenced the development of beliefs about writing and current writing habits in preservice elementary teachers, (c) How do students' histories of reading and writing relate to present attitudes and habits? and (d) How do students relate their own histories, attitudes, and habits to their plans for teaching reading and writing in the classroom?

## DESIGN

The study uses qualitative methodology. To gather general data on the reading and writing habits and attitudes of preservice teachers, we selected participants to be interviewed for the present study and developed and administered a survey. We conducted interviews for in-depth inquiry into preservice teachers who differed in terms of positive and negative perspectives on reading and writing. In this paper, we report on the interview data from 24 participants.

### *Survey*

The researchers designed a reading survey and administered it to three classes of students enrolled in a course on Literacy in the Intermediate Grades (N=26 special education majors and N=54 elementary education majors). A similarly designed writing survey was later administered to one class of students enrolled in Language Arts Methods (N=27 elementary education majors). The reading survey was designed to identify: (1) How will this sample describe themselves in terms of reading ability, motivation to read for pleasure and motivation to read for information? (2) Are students able to provide a list of books and authors read during college? What types of books are listed? Are students able to provide a plot for one book listed? and (3) Is there a correspondence between Likert scale self-reporting and listed titles? For the writing component of the study, the survey was designed to determine: (1) Do students consider themselves to be writers? (2) How do students feel about writing? and (3) What types of writing do the students perceive themselves to do best, or to enjoy the most?

Together the researchers analyzed the survey data to identify emerging patterns in student responses for both the reading and writing populations. Frequency counts, percentages, and lists were used to summarize the data.

### *Interviews and participants*

Based on the survey data, purposive sampling was used in the selection of interviewees. We invited 24 students to participate in the interviews. Twelve were interviewed regarding reading - six each who showed positive habits/attitudes and negative habits/attitudes toward reading. Twelve students were interviewed regarding writing - six each who held positive habits/attitudes and negative habits/attitudes toward writing. All of the selected students elected to participate in the research.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to insure that all interviewees were asked the same questions, while allowing for probing questions and authentic discussions related to the questions. Interviews took between 45 minutes and 2 hours. The interview questions focused on students' histories (of reading or writing), the relationship between current attitudes and habits and students' histories, the relationship between personal histories, attitudes, and habits and future plans for teaching reading and writing in the classroom.

Interviews were transcribed and read by all members of the research team; we then met and analyzed the data together. Interviews were segmented into units of meaning using the approach described by Hycner (1985). Careful attention was given to the preservation of context within units of meaning, and individual units were double-coded if they contained information relative to multiple categories. After segmenting the interviews, the units of meaning were grouped in categories sharing common themes or characteristics using the guidelines suggested by Bogdan and Biklen (1998). After organizing these data in emerging themes, we categorized data with a label representative of commonalities within the grouped units of meaning.

## RESULTS

### *Reading interviews*

The interviews regarding student reading demonstrated that survey responses had been influenced by students' definitions of the terms "reading for pleasure" [RP] and "reading for information" [RI]. Our choice of terms defining purposes for reading in the survey had unfortunately reinforced perceptions that reading for information cannot be reading for pleasure. Thus, students whose greatest enjoyment came from reading for information had sometimes rated themselves as low RP (reading for pleasure) despite sometimes being avid readers of books, magazines, and/or newspapers that provided them with information.

There were differences in students who read only newspapers and magazines, and students who read from these sources and also read books. Newspaper and/or magazine readers reported that they did not like to read for enjoyment. Book readers tended to perceive themselves as individuals who hold more positive attitudes toward reading, who read more types of texts, and who have a greater variety and a higher intensity of motivations for reading. They also view themselves as better readers than non-book readers.

### *Students' histories.*

Students' histories were studied in terms of both learning how to read and memorable reading experiences. Our goal was similar to that of Duchein (1993), who surveyed students enrolled in a developmental reading course, but we aimed for more thorough responses through use

of interview data. Most interviewees remembered little about their initial reading instruction, but five participants revealed a history of reading difficulties. Of these, one rated herself as high and two rated themselves as low RP. The high RP student learned to read within seven months while in sixth grade, following the suicide of her mother. One low RP student was so self-conscious about her difficulties that she asked that the tape recorder be turned off while she revealed her reading history.

Of the five students who revealed histories of reading difficulties, three noted alternate learning style strengths. For instance:

*"I have to be visually stimulated . . . I couldn't just turn on the radio and listen, I have to be watching something."*

*"I just refused to read at home because, when I got home, the first thing I wanted to do was go. . . I was interested in sports."*

*"I am more of a touch learner, you have to touch it, build it, learn it."*

We examined ages at which students became interested in reading and found much variability and no patterns. Seven interviewees could remember one or more influential school teachers, with one student including her parents (both of whom happened to be teachers themselves). Additionally, several students had family members who, in effect, served as influential teachers. The impact of remembered teachers was positive for all but two students, with the positive influence relating to teacher-led activities such as reading aloud every day, embarking on a yearlong multicultural celebration, providing special individual attention, allowing a child to arrive early and read with the teacher, sharing a love of history, and maintaining a safe and caring classroom environment.

A negative reading memory held by the student caused her to ask for the tape recorder to be turned off. She remembered a teacher who would "jump out" at her when she read aloud, making her feel "about an inch tall." This student and the other six low RP peers had no memories of positive reading influences from past teachers.

The interviews revealed much about home reading histories. Grandparents, parents, and/or siblings played a significant role in encouraging home literacy for 11 interviewees, with this influence equally present

among students who had both high and low motivation for reading. The influence ranged from modeling and encouraging to shared reading, resulting in bonds not completely broken in adulthood even for those students for whom the joys of reading were taken sparse.

Of special note are comments about early and later reading pleasures. Some related to feelings of comfort, a grandmother reading to her granddaughter while rocking her and rubbing her back or a family having a special couch for reading, "the greatest couch in the world." Other early reading pleasures came from paradoxical feelings of thrill--reading forbidden material in the closet with a flashlight--or early freedom to read anything at all. One interviewee was faced with conflicting feelings of wanting to resist parents who were always trying to get her to do things like reading and of wanting to be like an older sister who loved to read. She found an outlet by using her closet as a haven where she secretly read Dr. Seuss.

#### *Present reading and its impact on future classrooms*

The students who read found time at night, on weekends, on the job, or by shutting out the family and delving into their books. Some students read for pleasure more frequently between semesters than while encumbered by school work.

The students who read made selections from recommendations of family, friends, and professors, picked up books found while browsing, or focused on a topic or a favorite author. Many talked about their reading with loved ones. Based on the enthusiasm these students displayed when discussing the pleasure of sharing reading with others, we could envision these preservice teachers sharing their love of reading with their students. Indeed, they were able to verbalize ideas for doing just that. For instance, one in this group whom we shall call Yvonne, in addition to engaging in general reading, showed signs of beginning a lifelong habit of professional reading:

*Yvonne: Especially now that I am in my major, I am finding myself every morning, like going into the paper, and I always find articles on teaching methods and different things that are happening in different schools and I thrive on it, so I look for it. I subscribe to two magazines, Teaching K-8 and Instructor, and I read those from cover to back, front to back all the way through because I just get a lot of information that*



*helps me in my classes. I get a lot of ideas for lesson plans, activities, and the do's and the don'ts for teaching.*

Not all of the preservice teachers engaged in reading. A student who we shall call Katie said, "it is too frustrating to just sit down and read a book. . . I have to figure out what they are talking about, and by the time I figure it out, it is just not enjoyable anymore." Another student, Kara, also experienced difficulty:

*Kara: I can read something, but I don't comprehend it. I can read the same paragraph five times and then go on to the next page and have to go back and read that same paragraph again . . . I just lose interest in what I'm reading. . . . When it comes down to reading that lasts just a few minutes, I can't be still that long. I've got to move around.*

When asked how she would motivate children, Kara referred to her grandfather who would take the children out to collect wild flowers and then go in to look up their names. She envisions the emulation of her grandfather as a single solution which will work in all situations, always resulting in learning being interesting. She said,

*I am going to do it the same way my grandfather did. I personally know how I feel about reading. I know about my motivational level, how I put things off until the last minute, and then I do them. I do very well in what I do, but the way I do it is wrong. I don't think it is right to have kids starting off like that.*

Kara was paradoxical. She said that her grandfather could always make reading interesting; however, Kara now "hated to look things up." It appeared that Kara avoided confronting her own comprehension problem as one that may well affect her own students:

We wondered whether or not students like Katie and Kara might have special empathy for reluctant readers. Would they find themselves having higher priorities for areas of instruction other than reading? How would they develop a knowledge of children's literature?

These questions pertained to our high RP students as well. Some, as in any population, clearly preferred reading fiction or nonfiction. Yet, none of the students in our study were able to articulate any specific

plans for instilling a love of both types of literature among their own students in the future. Plans for encouraging reading in future classrooms were generally just at emerging stages. The latter finding is consistent with Fuller and Brown's (1975) stages in preservice teacher education, with preservice teachers seeing themselves more as students; they have not yet moved toward concerns about teaching situations and pupils.

### *Writing interviews*

Similar to the reading interviews, we examined students' writing histories in three stages: (a) early writing histories and how students remembered learning to write, (b) teacher/school influences (both positive and negative), and (c) home influences. Although most students did not have specific memories of learning to write, all participants recalled events such as learning to write their names or the alphabet and having assistance with those tasks from family members or a teacher in preschool or kindergarten.

### *Writing history and home influences.*

When asked about how they first learned to write, all of the participants explained how they learned to form their letters or began to scribble. When asked about writing stories or compositions, the responses changed, and differences between writers and non-writers (NWs) became apparent. Generally, the NWs provided responses related to copying while the writers' responses involved more creative writing.

The interviewees who perceived themselves as writers identified specific events from home and family. Kim, for example, stated that her mother was always asking her to help write lists for various activities. She and her mother wrote notes back and forth frequently. Michael's mother was an English major in college when he was growing up. He discussed having a high level of support from both parents: "When it came to writing, they spent a lot of time with me. . . . They would sit down and explain how I can change it [my writing]."

Bonnie described family writing such as grocery lists, in which the children were asked to add items they wanted. She talked about charts that her parents created for chores with her siblings and their personal participation in this activity. She stated, "My dad, he loved reading and writing too. So, he encouraged it." The participants that did not perceive themselves as writers (NW) described no assistance or direct support for writing at home.

### *Teacher/School influences.*

All of the interviewees were able to elaborate on specifics about their writing histories when describing school. Both the writers and the NWs described positive and negative experiences in writing. Interestingly, the writers showed a reverse pattern of response from the NWs. The writers described strong, positive early writing experiences and shared negative experiences in their later years of schooling. NWs, however, described early writing as "rote" and "drill-like," and referred to these experiences as frustrating and negative. The NWs continued to describe negative aspects of teacher influences throughout their schooling, including incidents at the college level. All but one of the NWs were able to describe at least one positive writing experience related to school writing. For instance, Sara had positive high school writing experiences:

*Well, I remember in elementary school we did--we had to do young authors, and that was somewhat forced because we had to do it, and uh, I remember I would kind of see what my friends were writing about and I would copy them. I didn't really--I didn't really like it then, but in sixth grade I had a teacher, my English teacher, who--she liked descriptive writing and she taught us about how to write descriptively, and poetry and stuff like that, and I liked her a lot. And I started writing.*

Sara went on to explain how different teachers had fostered her interest in various types of writing during her high school years.

Another NW, David, had unpleasant memories of elementary writing. He told about the lack of structure from his first-remembered creative writing experiences in third grade. In this class, when students finished their seatwork, they were given open-ended sentences, and were

expected to be creative in writing endings. David did not enjoy this experience. On the other hand, he remembered a positive experience from tenth grade:

*My 10th grade teacher taught us the five paragraph essay. And that was like the greatest thing to me because it structured everything for me — introduction, body, conclusion— boom. And that — my mind is like that. I don't know if you want to call it logical? That might not be the best word. But structured — it gave me a little structure.*

David described his most negative experience as occurring in a course in college:

*When I got to college, she just didn't like the way — she didn't like the way I wrote, I guess. I never did do, you know, exceptionally well in that class, but I don't know what it was. I really had gotten out of the — the five-paragraph essay really didn't apply here. It was a different kind of style. They didn't expect that. It was more of a free style. I was more out of the structure which I had learned back in high school, so that was the most negative [experience].*

David was comfortable and successful with writing when he was given a specific structure to follow, but uncomfortable and less successful with more creative writing tasks.

Bonnie, a writer, recalled discouraging remarks from her freshman English college professor. She recalled spending a large amount of time on her journal and getting a B. Other students would quickly scribble something into their journals upon arrival in the classroom, and also get B's. She felt that she should not bother to write because the professor would not read it anyway. (Bonnie was one of the students who had her greatest influences from home.) When asked about a positive teacher, she could not recall one specifically, but said, "I think all high school teachers are more positive."

Not all students could recall a specific negative experience with a teacher, and not all could recall what they could classify as a specific positive experience, either. Not surprisingly, the NWs were able to recall many more negative writing experiences and the writers had memories of greater numbers of positive writing experiences.

*Present writing and its impact on future classrooms*

One question probed the various kinds of writing in which each interviewee engaged during a given week. Until asked this question, the preservice teachers did not realize how much writing they actually did during one week. For instance, when a writer was asked, "Tell me about the different kinds of writing you are currently involved in," a researcher received this answer, "Well, uh, in college, lately, I've not been writing poetry or anything." Probing, the researcher continued, "Well, what about when you are not taking so many classes?" The response was, "Sometimes I just sit down and write a descriptive, narrative about a place or where I am or what I'm doing, just sitting, or about something that I remember from childhood. I have like a journal that I write in, not every night, but pretty often, at least a few times a month, that I've had for a while. I kept a travel journal. I went to Paris and Germany for spring break last year so I wrote about that. There was a lot to write about." Through additional probes, this preservice teacher revealed that she writes personal letters all of the time, sends email and thank you letters. In addition, she is a "list person," making lists for everything (although she did not consider making lists to fit in the category of "writing").

When asked about her current writing practices, another writer responded, "as far as, just everything?" When the researcher responded with a yes, the interviewee said, "of course I write for class--different projects, papers, essays, reports, more papers. I used to do extracurricular writing like poetry, free style writing, like writing out your thoughts." Probing further, the researcher asked, "Like a journal?" and the interviewee responded, "Yes, a journal. But I wouldn't do it on a structured basis. It was just when I got that feeling that I wanted to express myself, but I didn't want to tell anyone. I would just write it down. Write a poem. I used to do that a lot. But then it just stopped. [The student snapped his fingers.]"

These preservice teachers had not considered lists, letters, email messages, personal notes, or thank you notes to be a part of their writing habits. Their implied definitions of writing included only academic writing and narrative or journal writing during the early phases of the interviews. It was obvious that these students had not yet looked at the complete genre of writing.

When we questioned the preservice teachers about future plans for their classrooms, we received some interesting ideas, most of which matched the methods being recommended in the Elementary Language Arts course they were currently taking. Sara provided the following list: "expose them to a lot of literature, and have them show — expose their feelings about literature; writing centers for making grocery lists, phone messages, job applications, journals, letters. I want to see writing used in more ways than just an essay."

Another writer, Kathy, said, "I already thought of doing journal writing with my kids, but I don't want to make it boring. Not like, okay, write down something — you have to write in your journal today. I want to give them something interesting." She also mentioned using poems and having students write their reactions.

The researchers encouraged the participants to imagine themselves in their own classrooms in a few years and tell what an observer might see in the way of writing instruction. As was the case for reading, these students were not able to articulate any concrete plans for writing instruction in their future classrooms. They could suggest activities like "journal writing," and "writing process," but they could not imagine possible details. Further, these preservice teachers were not able to identify any specific methods of fostering a love of writing in their future students.

## DISCUSSION

"So how do you think you are going to encourage children to read and write if you yourself do not read or write?" Based on our experiences with preservice teachers in literacy education courses, this is the question with which we began the study and what we wanted to ask our preservice teachers, but we approached the problem more diplomatically. As teacher educators, we were concerned about the reading and writing habits and attitudes of our preservice teachers and the implications that these habits and attitudes held for their future practice as teachers and for their future students.

The results revealed several patterns regarding preservice teachers' reading and writing habits in an elementary education program. Of the students surveyed in both reading and writing, none described themselves below a three on a five point Likert scale. Students were less

likely to give themselves extreme ratings in writing than in reading; both writers and NWs rated themselves fairly similarly. This relates to what Cramer and Blachowicz (1980) reported when they stated that the majority of preservice teachers in their study liked reading or writing "more" or "much more than most [other content areas]."

If we agree with the supposition of reading and writing experts that our students must be engaged in reading and writing events themselves in order to become effective teachers of reading and writing (Bridge & Heibert, 1985; Faery, 1993; Hollingsworth, 1988; Mueller, 1973; Scott, 1996; Searls, 1985), we must continue to probe not only our preservice teachers' reading and writing habits and attitudes, but closely examine our preservice programs. The preservice teachers interviewed for writing habits identified themselves as writers or non-writers based on their own early experiences and narrow, academic perceptions of writing. Certainly, these perceptions stand a good chance of influencing their own teaching practices and the lives of their students in years to come.

When asked to describe their reading and writing habits, many students stated that they were not actively engaged in ongoing reading and writing, as previously noted by Daisey and Shroyer (1993), Frager (1986), Levin, (1993), Richardson, (1992), and Phillips, (1992). Some of the participants did not see themselves as readers and/or writers, yet when asked how they saw themselves influencing future students, some were able to respond by identifying strategies for reading and writing in their future classrooms - sound strategies that closely matched recommendations from their literacy methods courses. For instance, several students responded that they would use good literature to model writing, allow for open topic writing choices, and develop reading and writing workshops in their classrooms. Based on the interview responses, it appears that the students intended to use some of the tools recommended in the college classroom. On the other hand, the students did not share any original ideas or plans, and they were quite nonspecific in describing ideas for the future. Of greater concern was the fact that none of the students were able to articulate suggestions for fostering a love of reading or writing in their own future students.

The students who participated in this study had limited experience in actual classroom teaching situations. The language arts group had experienced one beginning level internship, while the reading group was more advanced and was currently involved in a second internship that

included teaching numerous lessons. This study was limited in that there was no follow-up to experiences in classroom settings, and we recommend such methods for future research.

In examining our preservice programs, we need to look at what we model for students in our teacher education courses. We suspect a lack of congruence between the specific kinds of reading and writing activities to which the preservice teachers are introduced during courses and the kinds of opportunities we recommend that they provide children in their future classrooms. For instance, we suggest that when our students become teachers, they should allow opportunities for children to engage in self-selected readings, and they should allow children to write about self-selected topics. But do we provide opportunity for students to self-select titles or topics during their university teacher education experience?

These students referred to various models of teaching reading and writing in the interviews, but when asked to look at their own current reading and writing practices, most saw these processes as merely academic: text-based reading and report-type writing. Many of the students did not report having been engaged in reading and/or writing for pleasure. If our model in teacher education is to keep students strictly involved in academic reading and writing (never experiencing reading or writing for pleasure during their university experience), it follows that when these students become teachers, they will involve their own students in academic literacy events to the exclusion of pleasurable literacy events. From our perspective, this is problematic, and it has caused us to examine methods of infusing reading and writing for pleasure into our literacy methods courses.

It is clear from these data that home histories and past patterns affect preservice teachers' perceptions of themselves as readers and writers, as reported by Roe and Vukelich (1998). The degree to, and ways in which these perceptions will impact future practices, is not known. These preservice teachers were able to recall and discuss methodologies from their college classrooms that they intended to implement in their own classrooms. They wanted their own students to love reading and writing, even if they did not. Based on the interviews, it would appear that these students embraced the concept that children may actually "do as we say - not as we do." They had not grasped the importance of the underlying attitudes that may be modeled for children if they, as teachers, are not able to share a personal love of reading and writing. It appears important



that we, as teacher educators, model our loves of reading and writing and provide experiences designed to foster the development of a love of reading and writing in our preservice teachers. We recommend further research that investigates methods of cultivating a love of reading and writing in preservice literacy education courses.

Due to the fact that these students were able to identify strategies for teaching children to read and write, but could not identify strategies for supporting children in developing a love of reading and writing, it is particularly important that we begin to address this problem in literacy education courses. It is reasonable to assume that if we model the love of reading and writing for our students and engage our students in course-related activities meant to support the development of a love of reading and writing, our students may later model for their students in the same way and provide opportunities for their students to develop a love of reading and writing.

There are many opportunities in literacy education courses for professors to share their own loves of reading and writing. We can model our attitudes by sharing our personal reading with students in the same ways that we would expect teachers to share their enthusiasm for personal reading with developing readers. We can provide opportunities for preservice teachers to self-select books to read within the context of our courses. For instance, we could model the use of literature response groups by engaging our own students in selecting books, having literature response group meetings, and later sharing celebrations of the books they have read with the class.

Similarly, in preservice literacy courses, it is possible for professors to share their current personal writing with students, and to provide opportunities for students to engage in writing for pleasure within the context of a course. Perhaps, this could be a self-selected type of writing. That is, each student might be required to select a strategy for writing for pleasure and engage in using this strategy regularly during the semester. Near the end of the semester, students could share with the class the type of writing for pleasure they selected and share some of the pieces they actually wrote. Much further research is needed to investigate the value of such activities.

We are confident in concluding that preservice teacher educators cannot assume that their students are readers and writers, nor can they presume that their students hold a love of reading and writing. Clearly,

we can only help our students by seeking methods of modeling the love of reading and writing, and by including course activities designed to support students in the development of a love of reading and writing.

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*Note: Our colleague, Marguerite Cogorno Radencich, died in October, 1998. She was an integral part of the research team on this project.*