

# Profiles of Teaching Competency

*Form A: Pre-Service Professional Development*

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## Profiles of Teaching Competency

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What kinds of teacher behaviors are related to successful teaching? What kinds of characteristics do we see as important in the competent, effective, highly professional teacher?

This instrument identifies twenty behavioral profiles that are seen as related to competent classroom performance. These profiles do not include **everything** that a good teacher does. They do, however, represent what we consider to be some of the most important teaching functions that contribute to pupil learning.

Recommended in examining and assessing classroom functioning, this instrument is helpful in identifying teaching strengths, and determining areas of needed professional growth.

## Directions

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There are 20 pairs of behavioral profiles in this instrument. Each pair contains two views of a particular kind of teaching behavior — a “positive” view and a “negative” view.

As you study what the student teacher is doing in the classroom, observe how the behavior “lines up” with each particular pair of profiles. Then, rate the behavior observed according to the following scale:

### Positive View:

Assign a rating of +5 if you observe these behaviors to be **clearly evident** in the student teachers’ functioning. A rating of +5 suggests that this student teacher is an **outstanding example** of this profile.

Assign a rating of +3 or +4 if you observe these behaviors to be in evidence **some of the time**. A rating of +1 or +2 suggests that this student teacher reveals this behavior **from time to time**.

+5.....+4.....+3.....+2.....+1.....0.....

### Negative View:

Assign a rating of –5 if you observe these behaviors to be **clearly evident** in the student teacher’s functioning. A rating of –5 suggests that this student teacher is an **outstanding example** of this profile.

Assign a rating of –3 or –4 if you observe these behaviors to be **frequently evident** in the student teacher’s functioning. A rating of –3 or –4 suggests that this student teacher is a **very good example** of this profile.

Assign a rating of –1 or –2 if you observe these behaviors to be evident **some of the time**. A rating of –1 or –2 suggests that this student teacher reveals this behavior **from time to time**.

.....0.....-1.....-2.....-3.....-4.....-5

## **“No Op” Assessments**

In some cases, student teachers will not have had an opportunity to demonstrate some of these teaching behaviors. In these instances, a No Op rating should be used. No Op ratings are not negative assessments. For student teachers who are doing self-assessment, and who believe that they **might have** behaved in the way specified in the profile, but did not get a chance to do so, the appropriate rating is, nonetheless, No Op. Assessments are made on the basis of what is observed in performance, not on intent.

## **Plus 5 Assessments**

The positive profiles in this instrument show what is considered to be the *highest level* of teaching ability. Consequently, +5 assessments would be those that reveal “teaching as art.” Plus 5 assessments are given when the student teacher is seen to have consistently demonstrated the highest level of competency in that particular teaching function — a level reached after many years of classroom practice. Student teacher ratings are considered good when they have reached +3 and +4 levels.

## **What do the assessments tell us?**

Assessments that are consistently rated at –5 would reveal classroom behavior considered to be negative. Student teachers who consistently obtain numerous –5 and –4 ratings are likely teaching in ways that are counterproductive to pupil learning.

Assessments at the –1, –2 and –3 levels identify those areas in which much growth is needed in order to promote effective classroom learning.

Assessments at the +1 and +2 levels identify those areas of functioning in which additional growth is needed in order to promote more effective classroom learning.

Assessments at the +3 level indicate that a student teacher’s classroom behavior is competent in that area of professional functioning.

## **Promoting Professional Growth**

Evaluating a teacher’s classroom functioning is a difficult task. It is more difficult for the student teacher under scrutiny, who may be very anxious about the assessment and whose teaching may reflect that stress. It is also difficult for the classroom observer (school associate, faculty associate, etc.) who wants to insure that the conditions of observation and the procedures used are both fair to the student teacher as well as reflective of that student’s overall functioning.

Yet, without such scrutiny, without the opportunity of evaluating classroom functioning against clear standards of excellence, we have little hope of increasing competence, and little chance of learning about which teaching skills require some additional development. We also lose the chance of knowing with some confidence about those professional functions in which some teachers are perceived to excel.

In order to promote more effective use of the profiles as a means of increasing opportunities for professional development, the following procedures are recommended:

1. Assessment of a student teacher's classroom functioning should be based on several visits to the classroom. This is necessary to insure that the assessments reflect an overall perspective of the student teacher's functioning, and not just a limited "one-shot" view that may not necessarily be representative of the fuller picture.
2. When the observer is making the assessment, the student teacher also rates him or herself on the profiles. This self-evaluation is a critical aspect of the professional growth process.
3. Both observer and student teacher meet afterwards to discuss their individual ratings on all the profiles. Where there is consistency in the ratings, the nature of the rating should dictate the discussion that follows. Where ratings are discrepant, this should provide rich opportunity for discussion about individual perceptions on that particular teaching function. When the ratings fall heavily into negative numbers, this should point clearly to areas of needed growth.
4. Before the conference concludes, it is imperative that specific plans are made for skill development in areas of needed growth. Without such explicit suggestions for growth, the exercise of evaluation itself is likely to lead more to frustration than it is to helpful, effective professional development.
5. It is recommended that the profiles be used at least twice during one student teaching semester, and that they be used as formative evaluation procedures that are primarily concerned with professional development and increased teaching effectiveness.

## SECTION I: TEACHER AS PERSON

### 1. Their behavior is thoughtful

At the highest level, you would say that this student teacher's behavior is thoughtful. They act out of having considered alternatives; their choices for action are reasoned choices; their actions are appropriate to expressed goals. These student teachers seem to have a built-in monitoring system which aids them in analyzing their actions and this analysis is based upon objective criteria rather than on personal bias. You would be apt to conclude about these student teachers that they are "in touch" with what they are doing and what they do seems to have been considered and reflected upon with respect to their goals.

The antithesis of the thoughtful student teacher is one whose actions seem generated out of whim or caprice; their behavior is clearly inconsistent with expressed goals. These student teachers have not considered what to do before they do it; they do not appear to have considered alternatives; there seems to be a gap between what they say and what they do. When confronted with their actions, these student teachers may deny them ("I didn't do that!"), becoming increasingly defensive. The impression that these student teachers give is that they have not thought a lot about what they say or do.

Rating Scale

+5 .....+4 .....      +3 .....      +2 .....      +1 .....      0 .....      -1 .....      -2 .....      -3 .....      -4 .....      -5 .....

Comments:

## TEACHER AS PERSON

### 2. Their behavior is self-initiating

At the highest level, you would say that these student teachers consistently take the initiative. They don't sit around and wait to be told; they don't need help at every step of the way. They are not afraid to take risks, to try things on their own. When their actions result in less than desirable ends, they are able to examine what has happened rationally, rather than considering it a personal defeat. When things don't work out well, they do not use it as an excuse to keep from trying again. Even in situations where resources are limited, they use what is available to make a start; they don't rationalize their inaction by saying that there aren't enough materials, or that the materials are of the wrong type. You might say of these student teachers, "I can count on this person to take the initiative. He/she gets things done!"

The antithesis of the self-initiating student teacher is the one who waits to be told what to do. It's not that what they do is unsuccessful; it is that they rarely seize the opportunity to act on their own. Sometimes, they start out by doing something, but then need to ask for help several times along the way. "Tell me what to do" and "What am I supposed to do?" and "What shall I do now?" characterizes their behavior. They may attempt to excuse their inaction by claiming that there aren't enough materials; or that the materials aren't the right kind. They seem to have to depend on others to get them started.

Rating Scale

+5 .....+4 ..... +3 ..... +2 ..... +1 ..... 0 ..... -1 ..... -2 ..... -3 ..... -4 ..... -5 .....

Comments:

## TEACHER AS PERSON

### 3. These teachers have a clear idea of what they believe and those beliefs guide their classroom practices

At the highest level, you would find student teachers who have clear ideas of what they believe and whose classroom practices are consistent with those beliefs. In speaking with you, they give you the impression that they have thought a lot about their ideas; that the beliefs have been chosen after reflection. You can see that what they do is a reflection of those beliefs. There is a clarity about their purposes, about what they stand for. They come across as classroom practitioners with clear values, knowing where they are going and why. They know what they believe, and they believe in what they do.

At the other end of the scale are those whose actions are clearly inconsistent with their stated beliefs. They may say they believe in democracy in the classroom, but they are classic examples of authoritarian teachers. They may say they believe that teachers should have a voice in making decisions about what happens in the school, but they do not participate in committees, or bother to exercise their votes, claiming that “what one person does doesn’t really make a difference.” Their actions and their expressed ideas are often so very far apart that what they do seems puzzling. Sometimes they rationalize what they do by saying, “They won’t let me do that” or “They make me do that” to excuse actions which are inconsistent with expressed beliefs. However, when you ask them clarifying questions, their answers are evasive, or defensive, or inconsistent. It’s hard to know what these student teachers *really* believe.

Rating Scale
+5 .....+4 ..... +3 ..... +2 ..... +1 ..... 0 ..... -1 ..... -2 ..... -3 ..... -4 ..... -5 .....

Comments:

## TEACHER AS PERSON

### 4. They are “problem-solvers”

At the highest level, you would see student teachers who, in the face of a difficult problem, would be able to identify the problem, suggest alternative courses of action, examine underlying assumptions and propose workable strategies. In the face of conflicting data, these student teachers would “open their minds” to them and examine them with objectivity. You might say of them that in the presence of some new and complex problem, “they take the lead in planning the strategy.” They are seen as inquiring, open-minded persons, able to function effectively in the face of new and complex problems.

The antithesis of the “problem-solving student teacher” is one who, in the face of a problem, seems to go to pieces. These student teachers don’t know what to do, or how to start. In the absence of some direction or leadership from others, they don’t know where or how to begin. They seem unable to make a decision. They wait for others to start, and then follow. They have much difficulty in entertaining discrepant data; their minds seem to be closed to them. Once embarked on a course of action, they are hard to budge. When new alternatives are introduced, they may say, “We already have a plan. Let’s not waste any more time by fooling around with new ideas.”

Rating Scale

+5 .....+4 ..... +3 ..... +2 ..... +1 ..... 0 ..... -1 ..... -2 ..... -3 ..... -4 ..... -5 .....

Comments:

## TEACHER AS PERSON

### 5. They can put new ideas into practice

At the highest level, these student teachers can take a new idea and put it into practice. They are able to make assessments of group needs, come up with an idea that is appropriate to those needs and create a scheme for implementing the idea. They are not thwarted by limited resources; they seem to be able to do a lot with a little. They generate excitement about what they are doing. What they do is new and fresh and there is a sense of life and vitality in their work.

On the other end of the scale we find student teachers who apply rigid, formula approaches to most new situations. They seem to do the same things again and again and they seem to do them in the same ways. They have difficulty seeing that a formula approach may be inappropriate to new situations; they are unable to create a new approach that is more relevant. They use what they already know and try to make that stick. They want specific and practical and “how to” kinds of help and have considerable difficulty in taking an educational principle and applying it in classroom practice. There is a staleness and lack of zest in what these teachers do in the classroom.

Rating Scale

+5 .....+4 ..... +3 ..... +2 ..... +1 ..... 0 ..... -1 ..... -2 ..... -3 ..... -4 ..... -5 .....

Comments:

## TEACHER AS PERSON

### 6. You can rely on them

At the highest level, you would find a person that you know you can depend on. If these student teachers say they are going to do something, you can depend on them to do it. If they are unable to fulfill a task, they find a way of communicating this in advance, so that other arrangements may be made. It is rare that these student teachers let you down. You feel a sense of trust in them, comfortable in the assurance that they will do what they say they are going to do.

The antithesis of the reliable student teacher is the one who cannot be counted upon. Again and again they offer to take on a task; and for one reason or another, they do not complete it. You have little faith in their ability to follow through, to do what they say they are going to do. In short, you know that if you needed a job done, you could not depend on them to do it.

Rating Scale

+5 .....+4 ..... +3 ..... +2 ..... +1 ..... 0 ..... -1 ..... -2 ..... -3 ..... -4 ..... -5 .....

Comments:

## TEACHER AS PERSON

### 7. They have a positive outlook

At the highest level, you would find a student teacher who has a cheerful, positive outlook on life. When things go wrong, they are not apt to attribute it to some manifest destiny. They take things in their stride. They smile and laugh a lot and seem genuinely to enjoy what they are doing. They have the capacity of looking at “the brighter side of life” and communicating this positive attitude to those who come in contact with them.

The antithesis of the student teacher with the positive outlook is the one who tends to see life in terms of blacks and shades of gray. They carp and nag a lot about things that “never go right” and expend an unusual amount of time and energy in complaining. Sometimes, even after a situation is rectified, they want to talk about “how bad it was.” “What’s the use?” is typical of their negative attitude. They seem to infect others with their pessimism and with their bleak outlook on life.

Rating Scale

+5 .....+4 .....      +3 .....      +2 .....      +1 .....      0 .....      -1 .....      -2 .....      -3 .....      -4 .....      -5 .....

Comments:

## TEACHER AS PERSON

### 8. They are “reflective practitioners”

At the highest level, these student teachers are thoughtful, intelligent observers of what goes on in the classroom. In situations of uncertainty, in situations where children behave in ways that are not immediately understood, they do not resort to simplistic explanations or judgmental labeling (e.g. “He’s doing that because he’s just lazy.”). Rather they are able to size up and make sense of complex situations and risk self-initiated actions that seem appropriate to the situation. Their actions are thoughtfully and intelligently conceived -- often representing new and original interventions that clearly fit. These student teachers’ actions demonstrate a marriage of problem identification and problem solving.

In their problem-solving actions, they are able to watch themselves and watch the impact of their actions on the problem situation. This they do non-defensively--with an open attitude that allows for assessing the effect of their actions on the situation. They do not see their actions as ways to *solve the problem* once and for all. These student teachers understand that while others may help them, they are ultimately responsible for educating themselves through this process. For these student teachers, teaching is an “examined act,” and in their ability to take risks to deal with problems creatively they elevate teaching to an art.

At the other end of the scale are student teachers who adhere strictly to predetermined sets of procedures and apply them regardless of the need to assess each new classroom situation thoughtfully, on its own differential terms. Rather than making intelligent assessments of complex situations, they resort to simplistic explanations or judgmental labeling (“He’s doing that because he’s lazy”)-seeing only what they wish to see and neglecting to probe for deeper, more complex meanings.

These student teachers have neglected *to see the problems* and consequently they apply “wrong strategies” to deal with the situation. They are unaware of this mismatch between action and problem, chiefly because they have not learned *to watch* --to observe and make sense of what they see. Actions come out of convention instead of what is appropriate to the situation. When the action does not work, these teachers are likely to blame others for not responding as *they* should have done. When confronted with the inappropriateness of their action-on-problem, they respond defensively, unwilling to take a deeper look at how they themselves have mis-applied strategies or misread the problem.

Because they have not learned to watch (either the situation or themselves in action), these student teachers have limited capability to learn from their own actions. They look for “packaged solutions” to problems and often look to others for those “solutions.” If the “solution” does not work, they hold others to account instead of themselves. Teaching, for these student teachers, is an “unexamined act.” There is no art to what they do.

Rating Scale

+5 .....+4 ..... +3 ..... +2 ..... +1 ..... 0 ..... -1 ..... -2 ..... -3 ..... -4 ..... -5 .....

Comments:

## SECTION II: THE TEACHER AND THE KIDS: INTERACTIONS

### 9. They prize, care about each individual

At the highest level, you will find student teachers who allow their pupils to express their ideas, opinions, beliefs, feelings, and who accept these. Not only are they sensitive to and considerate of their pupils' feelings, but they communicate this sensitivity in ways the pupils can understand. "I am with you" is what is communicated to their students. In their interactions with them, their facial expressions, the tone of voice and language give explicit evidence of warmth, praise and encouragement. Their interactions reveal their close relationship with pupils, free of attempts to dominate them. After a brief interaction with these student teachers, pupils usually come away feeling a little better about themselves.

On the other end of the scale are those student teachers who show a lack of sensitivity to their pupils. In their interactions, they may appear indifferent rather than warm, disinterested rather than encouraging, mechanical rather than sincere in giving praise. They frequently reject the ideas and opinions of their pupils. Their criticisms are cutting and devaluing and seem to be made without regard to pupils' feelings. They don't seem to be able to understand how their pupils feel. In fact, they seem hardly to be aware that pupils' expressions of feeling have a place in the classroom.

Rating Scale

+5 .....+4 ..... +3 ..... +2 ..... +1 ..... 0 ..... -1 ..... -2 ..... -3 ..... -4 ..... -5 .....

Comments:

## THE TEACHER AND THE KIDS: INTERACTIONS

### 10. They know how to observe, diagnose and deal with pupils with behavioral difficulties

At the highest level are student teachers who are able to make informed, intelligent observations of pupil behavior and use these as data to make diagnoses of problems that interfere with pupil learning. These diagnoses are then used to plan teaching strategies that are appropriate to the individual learner.

The observations made by these teachers are free from personal bias and value judgments. Behavioral descriptions are grounded in what has been observed. They do not label, condemn, attribute or judge harshly. In describing behavior, these student teachers say, "This pupil did such and such" rather than "This pupil acted irresponsibly."

If a pupil needed special help, these student teachers would refer the pupil to the appropriate agency. While competent to act, they also recognize the limits of their own ability.

In short, these student teachers observe, interpret and deal with pupil behavior in the most professional ways.

At the other end of the scale, you will find student teachers who see behavior that deviates from what they consider normal as "bad." Rather than attempting to unearth what lies behind such behavior, they are apt to attribute motives to the pupils (e.g., "She's just lazy," or, "He is not trying," or, "She doesn't want to learn."). Sometimes, these student teachers may try to explain the behavior in terms of their own arbitrary standards (e.g., "He behaves that way because he's an underachiever," or, "That's the way most of the non-academics act."). Once having "explained" the behavior, these student teachers will write the pupil off in terms of their own expectations.

These student teachers use punishment and other manipulative tactics as their chief tools for bringing about behavioral changes and advocate their use for bringing pupils into line.

Rating Scale

+5 .....+4 ..... +3 ..... +2 ..... +1 ..... 0 ..... -1 ..... -2 ..... -3 ..... -4 ..... -5 .....

Comments:

## THE TEACHER AND THE KIDS: INTERACTIONS

### 11. They use reflective responses to help pupils think about what they are saying

At the highest level are student teachers who are skilled in using reflective responses as a means of helping pupils to examine their utterances more thoughtfully. When pupils express ideas, thoughts, beliefs, these student teachers use responses that enable pupils to become clearer in their own thinking. Reflective responses are used to help pupils “work” their ideas, and assume responsibility for those ideas.

These student teachers are able *to hear* the pupils’ ideas, and they are able *to attend* to the nuances of pupils’ expressions. They are able to formulate appropriate reflective responses--knowing when to reflect basically what is being said, when to paraphrase, and when to interpret the pupils’ ideas. Whichever reflective response is used, the tone is always nonjudgmental, conveying respect for the pupil *and* for the idea.

These student teachers are able to use reflective interactions in ways that help pupils to find deeper and more substantive meanings in the curriculum being studied.

At the other end of the scale are those student teachers who are overly directive. Their practices include manipulating their pupils to agree with their own ideas. They are expert at maneuvering them into producing the “right” response. “Wouldn’t you like to empty the basket, Peter?” and “Isn’t that right, boys and girls?” are typical of their responses to their pupils. Instead of using reflective responding they are given to arguing. The intention is not to help pupils to think about their own ideas but rather to bring pupils’ ideas more into line with their own.

Misuse of reflective responding is another form of antithetical behavior. In their attempts to be non-authoritarian, these student teachers will almost never be directive, even when the situation demands direction. In the extreme, such a student teacher would ask a clarifying question when life and limb are at stake, rather than take a directive stance. Reflective responding is used indiscriminately in responding to pupils, rather than as a means for helping pupils think about issues of substance.

Rating Scale

+5 ....+4 ....      +3 ....      +2 ....      +1 ....      0 ....      -1 ....      -2 ....      -3 ....      -4 ....      -5 ....

Comments:

## THE TEACHER AND THE KIDS: INTERACTIONS

### 12. They promote pupils' thinking

At the highest level you will find student teachers who are skilled in promoting the thinking of their pupils. The questions they choose to ask pupils are concerned with the higher cognitive skills of interpreting data, problem solving, applying principles, and generating new principles, rather than with the recall of factual information. You will hear these teachers ask more questions like, "Do you have any idea of why that might be so?" and, "What might be another explanation?" and, "How can we go about deciding which one of these is correct?" rather than questions like, "In what year was metal first discovered?" and "What were the three causes of the French Revolution?"

These student teachers wait for the pupils to respond to the questions. They give pupils time to think. It is clear that such student teachers are interested in many possible explanations and answers, rather than in finding a single, correct answer. Instead of doing pupils' thinking for them, these student teachers invite the pupils to think for themselves. They value the development of inquiry in their pupils and this emphasis permeates their classrooms.

At the opposite end of the scale are student teachers who place the highest value on the acquisition of information for the purposes of arriving at the single, correct answer. Their questions to pupils are primarily of the recall-of-information type. They believe that their primary job is to get the students to learn the information for that grade. In their interactions with pupils, these student teachers rarely give them time to think things through. They seem to be in a race with the clock to get across as much content as possible. They give the impression that it is the student teacher who is doing most of the thinking in that class and maybe that's the way these student teachers really want it.

Rating Scale																					
+5	....	+4	....	+3	....	+2	....	+1	....	0	....	-1	....	-2	....	-3	....	-4	....	-5	....

Comments:

## THE TEACHER AND THE KIDS: INTERACTIONS

### 13. There's a lot of interaction among pupils in their classes

At the highest level you will find student teachers who encourage and invite much interaction among their pupils. Their classrooms seem to be beehives, where there is an almost constant flow of pupil-to-pupil conversation, as the pupils actively engage in learning. These teachers may interject questions such as “What do you think about that, Harlow?” and “What are some of your ideas, Perry?” to promote further inquiry and to increase pupil responses. You get the impression that the focus in these classes is on the pupils. There's a lot of purposeful pupil activity, pupil inquiry and and exchange of ideas. These student teachers provide many kinds of curriculum experiences in which pupils engage in cooperative learning-- dialoguing together and learning from one another.

These teachers do not cast themselves in the role of dispensers of information. They recognize that pupil interaction and cooperative learning are important dimensions of teaching.

At the other end of the scale are student teachers who “talk all the time.” They believe that everything they say is important and they insist on quiet in their classrooms for most class sessions. They see their main role as imparting information, following through by questioning pupils to see if they have been listening. These student teachers are the dominant people in their classrooms. If they were to step out of the room for a moment, the class would fall apart. They may permit their pupils to talk with each other occasionally, as a recreational activity, but rarely in the context of what they consider a teaching–learning experience.

Rating Scale

+5 .....+4 ..... +3 ..... +2 ..... +1 ..... 0 ..... -1 ..... -2 ..... -3 ..... -4 ..... -5 .....

Comments:

## THE TEACHER AND THE KIDS: INTERACTIONS

### 14. These student teachers are real people to their pupils

At the highest level you will find student teachers who respond to pupils with genuineness. In their interactions with pupils they are “themselves”--not role playing, distant professionals. There is no doubt that they really mean what they say. When a pupil approaches these student teachers with a problem, they don't intellectualize. They are unafraid to say, “I don't know.”

When confronted with pupils' difficult behavior, these teachers respond without defensiveness. Their reactions are honest and open. The message conveyed by them in their interactions with pupils is that they are authentic.

At the opposite end of the scale are student teachers who put on a professional mask in their interactions with pupils. When pupils discuss concerns which affect them deeply, these student teachers become uncomfortable. They respond by intellectualizing. Their interactions come across as phony. They become extremely defensive in the presence of pupils' challenging behavior. The message conveyed by these student teachers is that you don't really know the real person behind the facade.

Rating Scale

+5 ....+4 ..... +3 ..... +2 ..... +1 ..... 0 ..... -1 ..... -2 ..... -3 ..... -4 ..... -5 .....

Comments:

**SECTION III:  
THE TEACHER, THE KIDS AND THE “STUFF”: CLASSROOM LIFE**

**15. They know what they are doing in the classroom and it makes sense**

At the highest level are student teachers who are skillful in what they are doing in the classroom. Their teaching strategies and the curriculum materials they use are appropriate to their educational goals. They are able to describe what they are doing and why they are doing it in a clear and educationally sound way. They generate feelings of confidence in what is happening in their classrooms.

At the other end of the scale are student teachers who seem to be teaching “off the cuff.” You get the impression that they are making it up as they go along, that they really haven’t thought much about what they are doing. When questioned about what is happening in their classrooms, they become very defensive and try to rationalize what they are doing by making up objectives to justify the actions. These student teachers may work hard, but they can’t seem to “get it to come right.” There doesn’t seem to be a close connection between their teaching strategies, their choice of curriculum materials, and their stated goals. What happens in their classrooms doesn’t seem to make sense in terms of what is educationally sound.

Rating Scale																					
+5	.....	+4	.....	+3	.....	+2	.....	+1	.....	0	.....	-1	.....	-2	.....	-3	.....	-4	.....	-5	.....

Comments:

## THE TEACHER, THE KIDS AND THE “STUFF”: CLASSROOM LIFE

### 16. They are knowledgeable in their fields

At the highest level, these student teachers exhibit broad and deep knowledge of the curriculum, of principles of learning and of human growth and development as these relate to their levels of teaching. If these student teachers specialize in a particular subject area, they are at home in it. They are well informed and they have read extensively. There is an intellectual depth to their discussions with their colleagues and their work in the classroom reflects this knowledge of the field. When they explain something to a pupil, or to a colleague, they are able to make themselves clearly understood. They recognize the limits of their knowledge and where they are uninformed, they admit it. Their knowledge earns our respect.

At the opposite end of the scale is the student teacher who is uninformed. They lack know-how in their field. If they have read the literature in their field, they do not indicate it, either in their discussions with their colleagues or in the quality of their teaching. Their explanations to pupils are unclear. You wonder if they themselves really understand what they are saying. Their inconsistency, the shallowness of their presentations and their attempts to disguise their limited understanding indicate their lack of knowledge in their field.

Rating Scale

+5 .....+4 ..... +3 ..... +2 ..... +1 ..... 0 ..... -1 ..... -2 ..... -3 ..... -4 ..... -5 .....

Comments:

## THE TEACHER, THE KIDS AND THE “STUFF”: CLASSROOM LIFE

### 17. They use evaluation to promote learning

At the highest level are student teachers who use evaluation to obtain data for promoting further learning. They recognize that evaluation is highly subjective and they are undogmatic and open-minded about using the results. They recognize the difference between evaluation and grading and use evaluation as a way of helping students to learn. These student teachers use many different kinds of evaluation procedures, but whatever procedure is used is carefully chosen and is appropriate to stated goals. Moreover, when they engage in evaluation of their pupils' work, there is a sound purpose for the evaluation. The methods of evaluation do not in any way diminish the dignity of the pupil. Evaluations include suggestions for improvement and these are communicated to the pupils. These teachers exhibit a concern about promoting self-evaluation in pupils and provide for self-evaluative experiences in their classrooms.

Antithetically, you will find student teachers who are primarily concerned with *how much* the pupils have learned and with grading them accordingly. They believe that grading is objective and that pupils' learning can be assessed objectively. Frequently, these student teachers are dogmatic about test results and use these and grades in a punitive way. They operate on the theory that pupils are motivated to learn by failure and they may use the threat of failure as a device to promote learning. Their evaluative procedures usually take the form of short-answer and essay-type tests and they rarely communicate to pupils concrete ideas for improvement. Catch-phrases such as “careless spelling” and “try harder” and “good” pass for suggestions to promote learning. The main purpose for evaluation in these student teachers' classes is to arrive at a grade. If pupils fail, it is because “they are just not capable of doing the work.”

Rating Scale																					
+5	.....	+4	.....	+3	.....	+2	.....	+1	.....	0	.....	-1	.....	-2	.....	-3	.....	-4	.....	-5	.....

Comments:

## THE TEACHER, THE KIDS AND THE “STUFF”: CLASSROOM LIFE

### 18. The classroom is a vital, alive and zestful place

At the highest level are student teachers who have made their classrooms alive and vital places for learning. There seems to be a lot of activity going on and it is purposeful activity. There is evidence around the room of pupils' work and you can see that pupils have been and are engaged in challenging activities. These student teachers continually bring fresh ideas into the classroom and they initiate curriculum experiences which have meaning and relevance for the lives of the students. They provide for individual choice, pacing and cooperative learning in most curriculum activities. The time in these classes passes quickly and the pupils are sorry to hear the bell ring. These classes are intense, stimulating and vital places and it is exciting to be in them.

Antithetically, you will find student teachers whose classrooms are boring and tedious places. More often than not, all the pupils are doing the same work at the same time. When one pupil finishes early, he or she must wait for the rest of the class to finish. Much emphasis is placed on reading from the text, doing worksheets or answering questions from the blackboard. When there is group discussion, the topic may be unimaginative or trivial, and the pupils seem too bored to participate. The apathy in these classrooms is usually attributed to pupils who “don't care.” These teachers don't recognize that it is they who are uninspiring and humdrum. When the recess or lunch bell sounds, pupils explode out of these classes. One hour in these rooms seems like a year.

Rating Scale

+5 .....+4 .....      +3 .....      +2 .....      +1 .....      0 .....      -1 .....      -2 .....      -3 .....      -4 .....      -5 .....

Comments:

## THE TEACHER, THE KIDS AND THE “STUFF”: CLASSROOM LIFE

### 19. The teaching materials used are varied, imaginative and relevant

At the highest level you will find student teachers who use a wide variety of resources as teaching materials. In an elementary classroom, you will find a good supply of arts and crafts materials, library books, paperbacks, magazines, photographs, science equipment, concrete mathematical materials, newspapers. In a secondary classroom, many different kinds of materials are available that are relevant to the subject matter of the class. These student teachers may use field trips, film strips, films and recordings as part of the curriculum. Visitors are invited to the class as resource people. Pupils engage with learning materials in “hands-on” and “minds-on” ways. Materials created and developed by the student teachers contribute to pupils’ thinking about what is important in the curriculum. Materials reflect the deeper, more substantive curriculum issues — the “big ideas” — rather than the trivialities. These teachers have created rich learning environments in their classrooms through their selection and development of a large and varied learning materials resource.

At the other end of the scale you will find student teachers who use a very limited range of classroom materials. Major emphasis is placed on the use of textbooks, library reference books and workbooks. Classroom walls may provide no stimulus to thought. They may be empty, or adorned with old posters expressing banal sentiments and patterned art work. Very little use is made of curriculum materials in the arts, or the rich “stuff” of other curriculum areas. Pupils have little opportunity to touch or handle materials. Curriculum experiences in this classroom are mostly of the paper-and-pencil and textbook type.

Rating Scale																					
+5	.....	+4	.....	+3	.....	+2	.....	+1	.....	0	.....	-1	.....	-2	.....	-3	.....	-4	.....	-5	.....

Comments:

## THE TEACHER, THE KIDS AND THE “STUFF”: CLASSROOM LIFE

### 20. These teachers unify their groups

At the highest level, these student teachers have succeeded in the development of harmonious working groups in their classrooms. The pupils seem to appreciate each other; they have respect for each other, and the morale in the class seems unusually high. The class seems to have pride in itself as a group; what’s more, pupils seem to be very productive, working together like a team. These teachers have contributed to the development of group unity by assuring that each pupil has had an opportunity to earn status and respect in the group; by providing the opportunity for pupils to get to know each other; by prizing the different skills that different pupils have to offer; by creating a climate in the classroom which helps every learner to feel secure, prized, cared about, accepted.

At the other end of the scale you will find student teachers who are not concerned with group morale. If they are concerned, they do not seem to know how to bring it about. In the classrooms of these teachers, the pupils may seem downright rude to each other. There may be a lot of bickering and nagging and fighting. These classes do not seem to be “groups” at all. There is no sense of camaraderie, no *esprit de corps*, no real feeling of respect of one pupil for another. These student teachers contribute to this discontent by openly criticizing pupils, by being intolerant of other than academic skills, by having “favorites” and “victims”; by “picking” on certain pupils; by generally showing a lack of respect for their students. These classrooms are not security-giving but intimidating. These student teachers generate fear rather than acceptance. Their pupils dislike school and their interactions with each other are hostile and subtractive.

Rating Scale

+5 .....+4 ..... +3 ..... +2 ..... +1 ..... 0 ..... -1 ..... -2 ..... -3 ..... -4 ..... -5 .....

Comments: