

**Summer Preparation Homework**

**April 2016**

As you prepare for the start of your teaching career, we would like you to spend some time framing your thinking about effective teaching and learning.

Below you will find a series of questions and prompts in response to a set of articles and a video. We hope these questions and prompts will prepare you for the conversations you will engage in during your time at Urban Teachers. The materials are designed **to generate thought as well as begin an exploration of your beliefs about effective teaching and learning.**

You are not required to submit a formal response to the questions and prompts. We do ask that you **come to Summer Institute with notes and responses to this work** that you will bring into your Foundations course. But, please be mindful that you will also want to be prepared to share your thoughts during your content coursework as well.

Let’s begin…

**Part 1: Establishing a Pedagogical Stance**

**Rosenshine, Barak (2012). Principles of instruction: research-based strategies that all teachers should know. American Educator, Spring, 12 -39.**

1. Some would argue that the hardest part of teaching is learning to push beyond your comfort zone - effective teachers do what is best for children and not what is necessarily comfortable for them. The ways in which UTC may ask you to teach students may or may not be different from your own educational experiences.

Of the principles presented in the article, which one challenges your comfort zone the most?

* 1. Why?
  2. What will you do to push beyond what you now know and accept?

1. If you were to prioritize the ten principles, how would you?
   1. Why are your top three more important than your bottom three?
2. Think of your educational experiences across elementary, middle, and high school. What learning experiences do you still vividly recall?
   1. If it is a positive experience, why does this experience still resonate with you? Which of the ten principles do you think it illustrates? Why?
   2. If it is a negative experience, why does it still linger with you? Which principle, if implemented by your teacher, could have made this experience more positive? Why?
3. Using what you now know about the principles of instruction and the learning process, in your own words (a short, concise elevator speech) describe what is necessary for students to learn.

**Wolf, Mikyung, Crosson, Amy, and Resnick, Lauren (2005). Classroom talk for rigorous reading comprehension instruction. Reading Psychology, 26:27-53.**

1. UTC believes that classroom discourse is an essential component of teaching and learning in all content areas. In your own words, why is talk essential? Why does it matter for students?
2. Resnick’s Principles of Learning work, delineates 3 different categories of talk. Why do you think these categories of talk have been identified? What makes the so essential?
3. What kind of classroom environment must a teacher create to support this kind of talk? What key lessons need to be taught to students? What does the teacher have to explicitly model and demonstrate for students?
4. Take a few moment to practice prompting student responses. Look at the weak examples given starting on page 39. What would you as the teacher to make the conversation continue? What would you say to prompt for linking, accountability to accurate knowledge, and accountability to rigorous thinking?

**Part 2: Engaging with Instruction**

**Allington, Richard and Gabriel, Rachael (2012). Every Child, Every Day. *Educational Leadership*, March 2012, 10-15.**

1. What elements of reading instruction have the clearest alignment to the principles of instruction?
2. How do the six elements that Allington and Gabriel present resonate with your experiences of reading instruction?
   1. What elements were in place?
   2. Which ones were not?
3. What would be the long term benefits of classroom that implemented all six elements? What long term reading and writing behaviors would classrooms that implemented these six elements promote?
4. Why is the sixth element necessary? What would this look like across grade levels – primary, intermediate, secondary?
5. The six elements that Allington and Gabriel lay out seem very simple. Why do you think most classrooms are not implementing them?

**Green, Elizabeth (2014). Why do Americans Stink at Math? available at** [**http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/27/magazine/why-do-americans-stink-at-math.html?\_r=0**](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/27/magazine/why-do-americans-stink-at-math.html?_r=0)

1. In your own words, please describe this ”new math” that the article discusses?
2. In what does that traditional method of teaching math differ from the practices proposed in the article?
3. In reflecting on your own experiences learning math in school, what are the ways in which you need to shift your mindset about effective mathematics instruction? How will you have to teach differently from the ways you may have been taught?
4. As you think about incorporating the teaching and learning paradigm discussed in the article, how would your own math classroom look and sound? Describe a class lesson that incorporates some of the tenets outlines in the article.
5. What principles of learning do you being implemented in this approach?
6. What math connections can you draw to the six elements of reading instruction?

**Part 3: Synthesis and Reflection**

1. As you initiate your journey to becoming an effective teacher, what beliefs about effective instruction do you now hold to be inviolable?
2. Think of the mini-lesson you conducted during your final interview day. Knowing what you do now about effective instruction, how would you change the lesson? What would you do differently? What would happen if you had 40 extra minutes?
3. As you reflect on what you have read and seen, what do you see as essential components of your own teacher preparation?
   1. What are goals for your own development as an effective teacher?
   2. What do you think you walk into this work knowing or at least being aware of?
   3. What do you need to learn more about?
   4. What do you need to practice over and over again?