

**Excelsior**  
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**Article Abstracts**

**Reports of Research**

**Making In-Roads: Connecting Preservice and Inservice Teachers in a School-University Partnership Centered on Inquiry**

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***Abstract***

In this qualitative study the authors explored the experiences of preservice and inservice teachers involved in a second iteration of a university-school partnership. The purpose of the study was to gain insight into how the design and characteristics of the second partnership improved the experiences of the participants. We discuss the relationships among stakeholders and the usefulness of linking with existing professional development practices in the partnership school to join the learning of inservice and preservice teachers in an inquiry-based environment. A design with a limited set of tasks facilitated all involved to enter into a powerful community of practice.

**Using “Strange Texts” in a Content Area Literacy Course**

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***Abstract***

As they prepared to enter a culture of standardized testing, preservice teachers found using trade books in a content area literacy teacher methods course “strange.” In this multiple case study, a teacher educator wondered: What do these preservice teachers’ responses suggest about their willingness to consider using trade books for teaching content area concepts in their future classrooms?, and What do these preservice teachers’ responses suggest about their perceived usefulness of reading, writing, and discussing trade books as instructional activities in their future classrooms? Findings suggest a shift from considering

literature “strange” to deeming it to be a useful pedagogical approach to employ in their future classrooms.

### **Student Teachers: A Case for Cultural Competence in Teacher Preparation**

*Darra Pace*

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#### ***Abstract***

Researchers used qualitative and quantitative methods to examine the cultural influences and cultural competence of student teachers. Their sources of cultural influences were sociocultural, sociopolitical, and socioeconomic. The sociocultural source, largely learned in the home, was the most influential. Coursework had some, but limited influence. A two-tailed t-test found that the mean cultural competence score was similar for participants regardless of coursework, indicating a need to look at the complete teacher preparation curriculum. Discussion focused on reconceptualizing teacher education programs to more effectively incorporate cultural competence and culturally responsive instruction curriculum.

### **Urban Secondary Science Teacher Career Satisfaction and Retention in an Alternative Certification Program**

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#### ***Abstract***

The purpose of this study was to analyze one cohort of New York City Teaching Fellows in secondary science and their respective organizational support structures and issues affecting career satisfaction. Identification and development of such qualities and structures may lead to improved alternative certification programs and increased science teacher retention in urban schools. The research focused on the self-efficacy and quality of professional life of a select volunteer group of second-year science teachers. The study incorporated a mixed methods approach, utilizing survey data and interviews. Findings suggest that several institutional factors impeded science teachers' sense of effectiveness, leading to high attrition rates.

### **Preservice Teachers' Personal Reading Histories: Implications for Future Instruction**

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***Abstract***

In a time of ever-changing technology, preservice teachers and their personal reading histories have significant implications for future instruction in the classroom. After surveying 28 undergraduate students at a private institution of higher education, supplemented by four follow-up interviews, it was found that preservice teachers' are not spending leisure time reading for pleasure. The question under investigation is what are the reading habits of preservice elementary school teachers? Based on these responses, this article addresses how undergraduate faculty can integrate literacy into their coursework. Results from this research are consistent with data on teenagers' personal reading histories. The study reveals that college students are spending their leisure time on Facebook and surfing the Internet, as opposed to reading for pleasure. The data presented shows that social media has an influence on their reading backgrounds and therefore, potentially for future instruction. This article provides practical suggestions for integrating literature and technology into the undergraduate education curriculum to increase students' interactions with books.