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Cooper Reflection 1

**Summary**

Before Mrs. Cooper arrived, we discussed implementing technology into the classroom. We didn’t dwell on it much but it is something that is near and dear to my heart. We came to the consensus that implementing technology for technology’s sake is the wrong approach. Mrs. Cooper hit on this somewhat in her discussion with the class about how technology (data in particular) is powerful and has the ability to bring about needed change. She mentioned Alan November whom I’ve read about online. Mrs. Cooper also hit on the notion that educators are in a perpetual state of learning (my words, not her’s). Educators should constantly be reading and scanning the horizon for changes and ways to improve. She also mentioned that very often teachers will say “Whatever it takes” without truly meaning it. She said that teachers should append that to be more truthful. “Whatever it takes, so long as it doesn’t interfere with my plans.”

**Reflection/Reaction**

I thought Mrs. Cooper’s first discussion brought out a lot of good information. I think the most profound thing she said about teaching is “that most people think they can teach because they were taught.” This is so true. I believed it coming into the School of Education. I thought “this will be easy, I already know what to do”. Often times, parents and people in the community may feel the same way. It’s not until you’re faced with the real behind the scenes of teaching do you realize how much dedication *good* teaching takes. This myth has been dismantled in my own life, but in a constructive way. I now feel like I know what it takes to continue on growing, learning and adapting. On the subject of learning: I’ve found my own curiosity in the field of Education to be very helpful in the formation of ideas and understanding. I’ve read several books that deal with the sociology, economics, politics and research in the education field; even more when it comes to articles found online. One of my favorite discoveries of being an educator is that I get to (and am expected to) continue to learn in order to perfect my craft and understanding of my content area. I think this is perhaps, selfishly, one item on the list of most enjoyable things about being a teacher. Teachers should each be a “consumer of information”.

While mentioning technology, Mrs. Cooper mentioned Alan November, whom I mentioned earlier. I believe he wrote an op-ed online or I watched a lecture of his online. I could not tell you what the content was, but his name and demeanor seemed very familiar. Another familiar name, and I could have told you about his work, was that of Robert Marzano. I heard an interview with Marzano on NPR last year. He was discussing his findings in language and vocabulary development and the “word gap” that exists between socioeconomic backgrounds and the effects this has on children throughout their lives.

**Questions**

One thing I would like to know is where Mrs. Cooper’s sources of information are. Where do you find your most interesting books? How do you discover your most interesting speakers?

Mrs. Cooper’s role at LISD is that of Research and Accountability. I would like to know, in her opinion, federal requirements aside, does she feel that high-stakes testing has *improved* the educational output of schools or has it detracted from a more balanced, well-rounded education. Should the NCLB mandate of a test be more like former gubernatorial candidate Carole Keeton Strayhorn proposed and make it a pre-test to evaluate student’s retention from year to year rather than a post-test. This would eliminate teach-to-the-test. Is that a real problem for schools, in her opinion?