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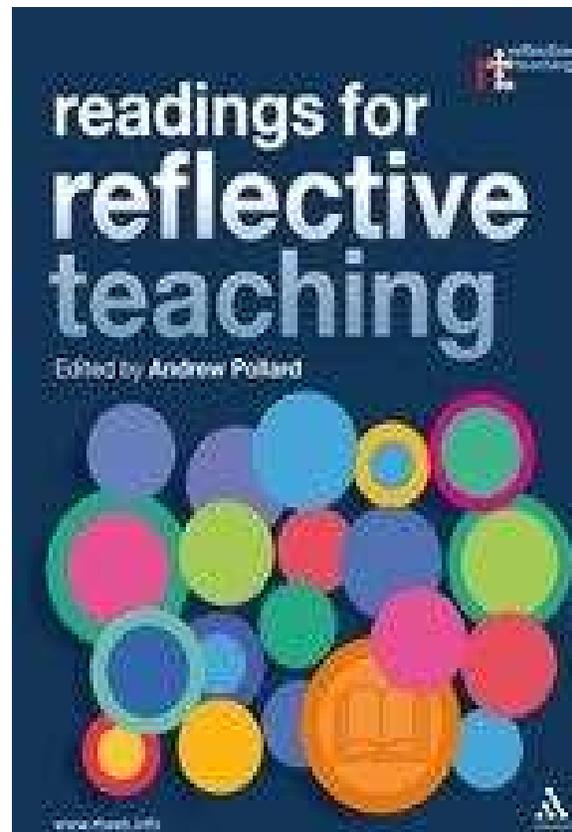
Colwell, J., & Pollard, A. (Eds). (2015). *Readings for reflective teaching in early education*. London, UK: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Pp. 397

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For the last generation of teachers, their first year of teaching was defined by *The First Days of School* by Wong and Wong (1998), a text that set the stage for future teachers by establishing expectations and approaches in the classroom. This seminal book has been replaced by a new generation of books, including the *First Six Weeks of School* by Kriete, Denton, and Anderson (2015) and *Teacher Like a Champion* by Doug Lemov (2010). Missing from this new generation of books are opportunities for focused reflection that capitalize on the role of teacher as professional educator. As a resource for preservice and beginning career teachers, *Readings for Reflective Teaching in Early Education* is part of a series of books that fills this gap. Similar to Wong and Wong's (1998) book for new teachers, *Readings for Reflective Teaching* is designed to direct teachers during their first year or in the early years of their teaching career. In contrast, however, *Readings for Reflective Teaching* is not limited to the start of



the academic year and allows for growth beyond the first few days or weeks of school. Editors Jennifer Colwell and Andrew Pollard (2015) have brought together works the major voices of education (Dewey, Piaget, Skinner, Vygotsky) and more recent writers who have posed questions to current issues in education. The strength of this text is the dedication of the editors in selecting works that speak to the entire spectrum of educator topics, from professionalism to the process of teaching and conditions for learning to teaching for learning.

In past texts for neophyte educators, the focus has been limited to application in the classroom, particularly specific classroom management strategies. This text draws the reader in with writings that consider the role of educator as reflective in practice. The content of the text is balanced between the required theoretical readings for preservice teachers and the current state of teaching. Topics on how to help novice teachers are addressed through short summaries or directives, along with guiding questions at the start of each reading. The authors encourage readers to focus on reading through the lens of an educator. For example, in the chapter focusing on the writing of B. F. Skinner (1954) the reader is directed to consider the “the implications of behavioralism for the role of the teacher” (Colwell & Pollard, 2015, p. 24).

In part two of the first section, new teachers are encouraged to step outside themselves and read the works of leaders in the field of education (Vygotsky, Piaget, Skinner) as an exercise in understanding learner development. This is tied into the prior section (part one, section one) that encourages a review of professionalism, beyond the action and character of a teacher but included the concepts of accountability and quality. Throughout the text, Colwell and Pollard (2015) validate that the act of teaching is not just setting the stage for learning but demonstrate how teaching is designed to support learning. Section three considers the balance between the curriculum, planning,

pedagogy and assessment. A considerable strength of this text is the inclusion of a section on assessment that recognizes the importance of the action and implications for future lessons. The use of assessments is multifaceted, including assessment for learning, for feedback to learners, and for progress, and Colwell and Pollard’s selection of readings for this section encompasses all of those views.

As the profession has changed to include more opportunities for reflection in terms of individual teacher goals as well as in the use of pre and post meetings for teacher evaluation, this text allows new teachers to develop their career with a sense of connection to theory and with some reflection on practice. The expectations of the new generation of teachers requires short bursts of information that spur thought and reflection; this text capitalizes on short focused readings that allow for deep thinking and engaging directives.

Although the text covers a range of topics from professional to teaching and planning to instructing, there are a few topics that appear to be absent. Writings reflective to the needs of diverse learners or sections devoted to helping new teachers explore their views on differentiation in both teaching and assessment are missing. Perhaps this is intentional on the part of the authors, as these may be better covered in texts designed for teachers beyond the first year. However, as the diversity of classrooms change, the diversity of learners must be explored. The use of standardized teacher performance assessments (i.e. edTPA) that require preservice teacher candidates to differentiate instruction suggest that resources for beginning year teachers should also include this concept.

Colwell and Pollard’s text is well designed for those new to the profession, but considering the text’s scope, it should be used with caution with preservice or teachers in training. The focus of *Readings for Reflective Teaching in Early Education* is based on deep thinking behind the practice and philosophy of

teaching. Absent from the text are quick suggestions or strategies from experienced teachers. As the readings and guiding questions require the reader to develop a sense of opinion, based on their experiences current practicing teachers would bring the most to the table and discussion. For new teachers who are struggling with the daily interactions and structure in the classroom, supplementing the *Reading for Reflective Teaching* is suggested

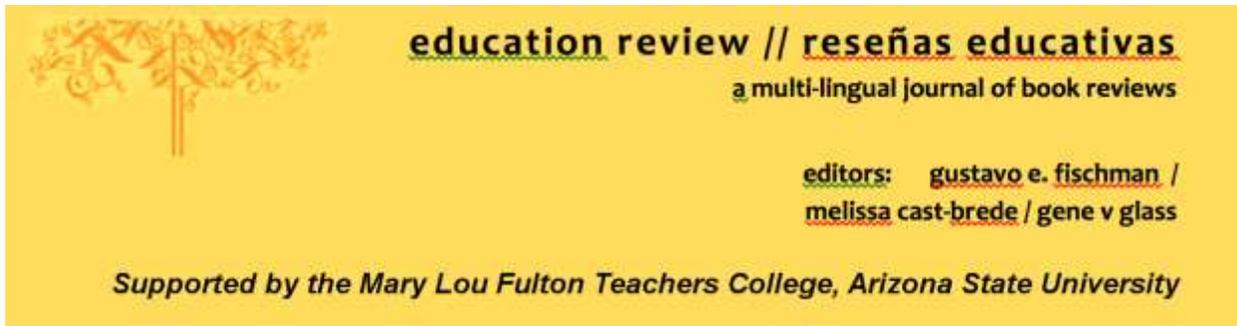
with more hands on approach books (Kriete, et al., 2015; Lemov, 2010; Wong & Wong, 1998). As a text in the Reflective Teaching Series, Colwell and Pollard (2015) have successfully captured voices from the profession that allow newer teachers the opportunity to develop philosophy, which will help them to develop practice.

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About the Reviewer

Lesley Anne Evans, PhD, is the Teacher-in-Residence at the University of Dayton. She serves as full time faculty in Early Childhood Education. Currently she teaches undergraduate course in Early Childhood Education focusing on Math Methods and student teaching. At the graduate level, she teaches courses on Educational Research. Her research topics include teacher selection, differentiation, and teacher preparation. Prior to teaching at the University of Dayton, she taught in grades K-5 serving as a classroom teacher and gifted intervention specialist.



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