

A Critical Reflection of Student Art Teaching and  
the Implications for Cooperating Teachers

Vila Woo

A Thesis

in

The Department

of

Art Education

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Degree of Master of Arts (Art Education) at  
Concordia University  
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

August 2006

©Vila Woo, 2006



Library and  
Archives Canada

Bibliothèque et  
Archives Canada

Published Heritage  
Branch

Direction du  
Patrimoine de l'édition

395 Wellington Street  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

395, rue Wellington  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

*Your file* *Votre référence*  
*ISBN: 978-0-494-20789-5*  
*Our file* *Notre référence*  
*ISBN: 978-0-494-20789-5*

#### NOTICE:

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

#### AVIS:

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protègent cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

---

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.

  
**Canada**

## ABSTRACT

### A Critical Reflection of Student Art Teaching and the Implications for Cooperating Teachers

Vila Woo

This thesis is a qualitative study which critically examined the experiences encountered by student art teachers in order to discuss the implications of those experiences for secondary school cooperating teachers. The methodology consists of interviewing selected former student art teachers and describing their shared thoughts and feelings. The data is comprised of transcripts of interviews wherein the participants relate experiences that occurred during their internships. The analyses consist of compiling and summarizing all of the responses according to each interview question, comparing those to my experience as a student art teacher and supporting the results with related literature. The conclusion reviews what was learned from the experiences of student teaching and offers suggestions for cooperating teachers.

## **Acknowledgment**

Many thanks to my advisor Professor Lorrie Blair for her support throughout the last year (especially during summer vacation). I would not have completed this thesis without her. Professor Blair is one of the most dedicated teachers I know and I feel fortunate to have had her by my side.

Great appreciation to my committee members: Professor Paul Langdon for his support and encouraging words, and Professor Linda Szabad-Smyth who always demonstrate such patience and care for her students.

## Table of Contents

|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| <b>Introduction</b>       | 1   |
| <b>Literature</b>         | 3   |
| <b>Methodology</b>        | 9   |
| Selection process         | 11  |
| The art education program | 12  |
| Data collection           | 13  |
| Treatment of Data         | 14  |
| <b>Interviews</b>         | 15  |
| Anna                      | 16  |
| Marie-Eve                 | 27  |
| Cara                      | 37  |
| My story                  | 49  |
| <b>Analysis</b>           | 57  |
| <b>Conclusion</b>         | 96  |
| <b>References</b>         | 105 |
| <b>Appendices</b>         |     |
| Consent form              | 107 |
| Summary protocol form     | 108 |

## **Introduction**

I became drawn to the topic of the experiences of student teachers while grading papers (as a teaching assistant) for Professor Lorrie Blair's ARTE 398 course during the winter semester of 2005. I found that some papers I graded were concerned with developing an art lesson plan and writing a reflection of the teaching experience (based on the lesson plan). After reading the assignments, I discovered how the majority of the reflections showed that the student teachers were more concerned about their own performance rather than what their pupils had gained from the lesson. As a result of this discovery, I believe that collecting data from art education student teachers would be advantageous.

I feel that this topic is important to the field of art education because teaching art is different from teaching any other subject. In my experience, the art teacher deals with classroom management, instructional strategies and time management differently, unlike teaching in a classroom with an individual table for each student. The classroom is much larger, is filled with many supplies and contains a sink. The students generally sit in a group and have permission to circulate the classroom to have access to art materials and/or the sink. The teacher multi-tasks and keeps an eye on the class. The art teacher manages an array of art materials as other subjects normally deal with a textbook, pencil and paper. He/she must provide clear instructions on how to manipulate the art materials by demonstrating and showing examples of artwork. Another important factor of being an art specialist entails explaining the safety rules, especially when working with tools. Due to working with various materials in the classroom, a certain amount of time must also be allotted for students to clean-up before the next period.

Based on some of my experiences as a student art teacher, a cooperating teacher as well as a university supervisor, many facets of the experiences of student art teaching can be studied and much information can be gained about the unique qualities in the field of art education.

According to Zimmerman (1994), during the last decade, there has only been a few contemporary studies about art education student teachers. She stated how the arts are epitomized in schools and the field of art education is generally not regarded with high standards. The art classes are not recognized as part of an academic study, but as a leisure activity to relieve some of the academic load during the day.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to gather detailed information about the experiences of student art teachers, many of which were not commonly shared with the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor.

The secondary purpose of this study is to inform cooperating teachers of those experiences, which will hopefully address some of the difficulties encountered by student art teachers and therefore lead to a more effective experience for student teachers like these in the future. Prior to these interviews, as a cooperating teacher, I had relied upon observation alone for my impression of student teaching. The aim of this study is to take the added information gained from the perspective of student teachers, information which may change or add to my perceptual frame of reference.

## Literature

In this section, I will introduce literature related to the topic of student teaching by Fuller (1969), Kowalchuck (1999), Smith (2000), and Woods and Weasmer (2003).

Fuller (1969) conducted two studies to uncover the concerns of student teachers. Her first study entailed a counselling seminar where open discussions occurred between a group of eight student teachers and a counselling psychologist. Each session lasted two hours and took place once per week over the course of the semester. The same procedures were followed for a second group of eight student teachers in the next semester. The discussions were tape recorded and transcribed for analyses. Her second study involved written concern statements by 29 student teachers. Their written responses were followed by another series of meetings with the counselling psychologist (these meetings occurred once every two weeks over the course of the semester). The responses were classified into three broad questions.

(1) Where do I stand? How adequate am I? How do others think I'm doing?

(2) Problem behaviour of pupils. Class control. Why do they do that?

(3) Are pupils learning? How does what I do affect their gain?

The results from both Fuller's studies show that student teachers were concerned with self-adequacy and class control while none of the responses revealed any concerns for their student's learning. The aim of these two studies was to discover the concerns of student teachers and to determine if they could be conceptualized in some practical and useful



way. From these studies, Fuller developed a three-stage development model for student teachers and beginning teachers.

Fuller's (1969) three-stage developmental model describes student and beginning teachers' experiences in sequential order: self-concern, task-concern and impact-concern. In the first stage student teachers are concerned with the intricacies of survival in the classroom, such as controlling the class, having adequate knowledge of subject matter, understanding expectations of supervisors, principal and parents, and the inability of gaining student's emotional support.

Fuller (1969) refers to the second stage as also being self-centred. According to Kowalchuk (1999), the student teacher focuses on his or her actual teaching strategies, attempting to apply what he or she has learned at university. In this stage, the student teachers are open to exploring different teaching strategies and to learning more efficient ways of teaching. For instance, if a student teacher realizes that his or her explanation of a project is not clear, the student teacher will try to implement another approach to ensure that the pupils understand.

Impact-concern occurs when teachers are less concerned with maintaining discipline and receiving criticism from others. Teachers are more concerned with pupil progress and plan objectives according to students' needs.

A study from E.A. Kowalchuk (1999) referred to Fuller's three-stage developmental model to explain the processes of learning to teach. Kowalchuk analyzed student teachers' reflections in order to learn about their concerns. Kowalchuk studied thirty-seven art education students teaching an eight-week practicum at an elementary school, followed by

an equal number of weeks teaching at the secondary level. Each group of students met four times during the first practicum and three times during the second practicum. During each meeting, the student teachers were given fifteen minutes to write about their teaching experiences. They were asked to describe four areas in detail: one challenge faced in the past week; something that went well; something learned about teaching art; and something they need to know about art or teaching that would make them a better teacher. The purpose of the writing task was to help students observe the field of art education from different perspectives as well as to view their own growth in a positive way.

According to Kowalchuk's (1999) analysis of the reflections, five common themes were found: preparing for instruction (such as researching the subject, locating resources and writing all procedures); teaching methods (some student teachers said they needed to be more versatile when encountering a problem and others said they needed to be more flexible when responding to students as well as in developing ideas for lessons); making learning significant (for example, teaching topics of interest to students); managing the classroom and recognizing problems was a consistent challenge for some student teachers throughout the practicum; and becoming more knowledgeable and staying up-to-date (the general comments focused on learning more about subject content, art history and vocabulary). The data collected from Kowalchuk's participants showed that not only was classroom management a consistent challenge throughout their internship, but the student teachers were also still concerned about this issue at the end of their placement.

A qualitative study by Amelia May Woods and Jerie Weasmer (2003) in Great Expectations for Student Teachers: Explicit and Implied, describes the expectations for student teachers during their internship from the cooperating teacher's point of view. Their concerns go

beyond simple classroom practices and are not related to teaching. The study also reviews the expectations of administrators and colleagues of cooperating teachers. The participants consisted of 28 public school teachers who had acted as cooperating teachers during the previous semester. There were ten elementary, seven mid-school and 11 high school teachers from diverse disciplines. The data collection included a demographic survey followed by an interview with each cooperating teacher at the end of the student teaching practice. An interview guide was used for consistency and each interview was tape-recorded and transcribed for analyses.

According to this study, the response from the cooperating teachers offers six ultimate objectives for what they hoped student teachers would gain beyond simple classroom practices. The first was to serve as a role model to pupils by gaining their trust and being moral (e.g., arriving to class on time or knowing not to attend class with a hangover). The veteran teachers said that interns have difficulty understanding their identity as professionals. The second objective was to develop an attitude of understanding and caring about students. One high school business teacher stated that a good teacher is aware of what is going on outside of their pupil's school life, and strives to learn about their home life, their interests and their abilities. Developing a love of teaching was the third response from the cooperating teachers: two high school English teachers spoke highly of how the teaching profession is dynamic, satisfying and stimulating. The fourth was establishing a positive rapport with parents. A middle school science teacher and an elementary educator agreed that building a good relationship with their pupils' parents can make teaching a more positive experience. Demonstrating professionalism was the fifth ideal objective discovered in the data. A high school speech teacher explained that a teacher should be aware of the

responsibilities in the teaching profession. For example, a teacher's priority should be to enable the students to learn and not to become their friend. The final result was to become adaptable. One teacher spoke of how interns need to adapt to unexpected changes during a routine schedule. She goes on to say that student teachers need to plan lessons that allow room for flexibility, such as learning how to modify or start a new lesson after a tragedy. The participants stated that their administration and colleagues expected the student teachers to fulfill the responsibilities of their cooperating teachers; for example, attending faculty gatherings (Individualized Educational Plan conferences or parent teacher meetings) and student functions (field trips).

Smith (2000) conducted theoretical research in Emerging Themes in Problems Experienced By Student Teachers: A Framework For Analysis. Smith's research consisted in analyzing ten published articles and four microfiche documents regarding the problems student teachers encountered during their practicum. Smith's aim was to identify problems and to help eliminate them. The procedures involved establishing recurring themes, synthesizing findings and categorizing these findings according to Fuller's model. A theme was established when a finding appeared two or more times in the articles. As a result, five themes emerged during this study. The first theme was discipline and classroom management; the second theme involved the student teachers' adapting to their new environments within the schools; the third common theme was personal characteristics, defined as traits related to the individual's behaviour and/or personality. (Smith asserted that student teachers were more concerned with pleasing and impressing supervisors and cooperating teachers than on focusing on the tasks at hand). The fourth theme concerned teaching methods (e.g., how to teach content and subject matter); and the fifth theme

concerned the incorporation of special needs' students into regular class work (i.e. student teachers need to be trained to work with diverse classes).

The above literature informs me of the concerns of student teaching by Fuller (1969), Kowalchuk (1999) and Smith (2000). The themes frequently discussed were classroom management/discipline in Fuller and Smith's studies. Kowalchuck learned that instructional strategies were mentioned more than classroom management. She also stated that the student teachers learned less about their students towards the end of the internship, whereas the other two studies did not mention any concerns of the students.

I am interested in learning about some of the topics that were not discussed in the literature. Kowalchuk (1999) asked some general questions to the student teachers that mainly emphasized on the positive experiences rather than digging deeper into the personal experiences of student teaching. Smith did not specify the subjects taught by the student teachers. Woods and Weasmer (2003) provided expectations of student teachers from cooperating teachers, but did not state the student teachers' responses to meeting the expectations or the relationship between the two.

## **Methodology**

According to Seidman (1999), the purpose of in-depth interviewing is not to get answers to questions, but to understand the experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience. I wanted each participant to voice her perspective of student teaching as genuinely as possible. My intention was to capture stories with a beginning, middle and end that deemed significant to them. I addressed the interview questions as a means to guide the participants to reflect upon their events without making them feel they are being judged in any shape or form.

The method of tape-recording an interview is beneficial to both the participants and the interviewer. The participants are assured that there is a record of the interview and therefore their words are treated responsibly. If the interviewer needs to clarify information or is accused of misinterpreting the interview, the interviewer can always refer to the original source to confirm for accuracy. Seidman (1999) suggests note-taking in addition to tape-recording the interview. This prevents the interviewer from interrupting the participant's train of thought and acts as a reminder to follow up on those subjects when the timing is right.

Seidman (1999) describes listening as the most important skill in interviewing. He discusses how an interviewer must listen on three levels. The first is to listen to what the participant is saying. The interviewer must understand what is said and assess if enough details have been given. The second level is to listen for the inner voice instead of the outer. The outer voice, or public voice, is described as a voice that reflects the awareness of the audience (for example, addressing a large group of people). The third level is compared to being a

good teacher in a classroom. The interviewer needs to be conscious of the time, how much has been covered and how much still needs to be covered. He/she must be aware of the participant's energy level as well as any nonverbal cues that may be given. The interviewer has to remain focused to assess for progress and for cues to move the interview forward.

It is important that the interviewer follow up on what the participant is saying (such as asking for clarification or seeking for concrete details). The interviewer should trust his /her own instincts in wanting the participant to discuss the subject further.

Seidman (1999) recommends asking open-ended questions as a way to focus and to understand the participant's subjective experiences. He prefers to address questions in such a way that the interviewer's past experiences are never shared nor does the interviewer empathize with the interviewee in any way that suggests that he/she has had a similar experience. Seidman recommends that the interviewer avoid asking participants to remember something since relying on memory can act as an obstruction. It is better to have the participant reconstruct their experience; for example, ask "What was your student teaching experience like?" instead of "Do you remember what your student teaching experience was like?"

I followed the recommendations by Seidman that proved to be practical during the course of all three interviews. The suggestions allowed me to be conscientious of how to make the participant feel at ease. The notion of casually jotting notes instead of interrupting the interviewee's train of thought is an excellent way to remind me to further enquire about a subject when the timing is correct. I did not want the interviewee to get the impression that I was evaluating her experiences. I used my instincts to gauge the participant's level of

energy by the way she pauses (could indicate a thought, uncertainty or uncomfortable of responding) and the manner the information is delivered (a vague or a short response). I kept in mind to speak as little as possible and to keep a neutral expression that way the participant does not feel that she is telling me what I want to hear. I learned to be a patient listener by allowing each participant to speak her mind.

### Selection process

Initially, I considered the possibility of interviewing current student teachers, but was difficult because some of the student teachers may not have been available due to a busy schedule of teaching and studying full-time. The idea of interviewing the student teachers mid-way through the internship was not feasible as it would not have allowed the student teachers to provide in-depth information about their full internship. Had I interviewed them during the end of their internship, they may have been overwhelmed and concerned with seeking employment.

I selected three former student teachers as participants for the interview for the following reasons: (1) I was acquainted professionally with two of the participants, which therefore made the selection process more convenient. Cara was a former student teacher that observed my art class when she was a first year art education student at Concordia University. I vividly recall her taking student teaching seriously as she cleaned the paintbrushes and organized the sink area. Marie-Eve was a fourth year student when I supervised her student teaching at a secondary school. She had a difficult experience that caused her much stress. Anna was recommended to me as the third participant interviewee for this research by Professor Lorrie Blair because Anna was still taking classes and was



frequently at Concordia University. (2) All three participants were willing volunteers. (3) The three participants offered a wide scope of contrasting experiences that range from poor, fair to good. (4) All former student teachers had completed their entire internship at a public school the previous year and therefore they were able to reflect on their experiences.

### The art education program

The four-year Art Education Program at Concordia University requires students to complete a 70 hour internship at an primary school during the first year; 40 hours at a community setting during the second year; 140 hours at a primary school and 5 hours at a preschool during the third year; and 490 hours of internship at a secondary school during the final year. The fourth year students observe at their participating school twice a week for ten weeks in the fall semester. Then they teach five days a week for ten weeks in the winter semester. The art education students also take courses during the evening (such as Art history, New Technology and Quebec Education). In addition to that, many students hold a part-time job outside of the internship.

During the winter semester, the cooperating teacher is to provide the intern with a weekly informal evaluation of their student teaching performance with the aid of a checklist. In addition to that, a one-page letter indicating the progress (strengths and areas to be further developed) of the student teacher is to be completed during mid-term and towards the end of the internship.

During the fourth year internship, the supervisor visits the student teacher two to three times during the semester (depending on the student teacher's performance). The supervisor evaluates the student teacher by completing a checklist, providing a one-page

progress report for each visit as well as informing the student teacher of his or her progress.

### Data Collection

Prior to the interview, the participants received a handout describing the purpose of the research, the responsibilities of the researcher, the rights of the participants and a list of questions to be asked during the interview. The research is considered a partnership research; therefore the participants were given partial control over the decision-making process. The participants had control over choosing the time and setting for the interview, pressing the pause button on the tape recorder at any point, refusing to answer any questions, withdrawing from the interview and forbidding the researcher to use any recorded data. The questions on the handout allowed the participants to reflect on their student teaching experiences before the interview. The participants were asked the following questions and were guided to include as much detail as possible.

- What grades were you teaching?
- Have you had prior experience teaching at a secondary school?
- What were your expectations and attitude towards student teaching before commencing the internship?
- What was your experience like during the first week of student teaching?
- How would you describe your most significant events in student teaching?
- What did not go so well in student teaching?

- What did you not expect to occur or to deal with during your experience in student teaching?
- How would you describe your experience with the cooperating teacher?
- Did you experience any pressure as a student teacher?
- What did you like the most and the least about student teaching?

### Treatment of Data

The following transcripts are summarized and written in narrative form for more coherent reading. The main interview questions are in bold and the participants' quotes are in a different font (comic sans ms) compared to the rest of the text (garamond). This helps to distinguish the two sources (summary and personal quotes) and makes it more practical in locating information.

## **Interviews**

Before presenting each summary of the transcripts is a description of the interview process with Anna, Marie-Eve and Cara. The participants are three former art education students enrolled at Concordia University. They had been placed in a public urban secondary school setting during their final year of studies. All participants are given a pseudonym to protect their identity and reputation.

## **Anna**

I first corresponded with Anna through e-mail before we spoke on the phone. During the telephone conversation, Anna expressed her interest in participating in the research. We agreed to meet for the interview during mid-afternoon at the resource room located at the University (a familiar setting for her). I arrived early to set up for the interview. When Anna arrived, we greeted each other with a smile and a handshake. In order to get to know each other we chatted about how her day went. Anna said that she was comfortable with the process of doing an interview. She was accommodating to the needs of the interview situation: the arrangement of the seats and the microphone.

Anna chose her own site at the secondary school. During Anna's internship, the principal informed her of the art teacher's leave of absence as she (art teacher) would be replaced by a substitute teacher. Anna was then given a choice to work with three different cooperating teachers, none who had any art teaching experience. Anna thought it would be beneficial to work with three cooperating teachers everyday to observe various teaching styles. The first cooperating teacher was a substitute teacher with little teaching experience who had replaced the original art teacher. The other two cooperating teachers had one year and 20 years of teaching experience. During the course of Anna's internship, she kept in contact with the art teacher.

## **Anna's reflection**

**I first asked Anna some general questions, such as what grades she had taught and if she had prior experience teaching at a secondary school.** Anna replied that she taught grades seven to eleven and never had any experience teaching at a secondary school prior to the internship.

**When I asked Anna to describe her expectations and attitude towards student teaching before commencing the internship,** she stated that she expected the students to be young adults and not older primary school children and was shocked to find out that they were only kids. Due to this expectation, Anna thought that she could joke around with them in a sarcastic manner. She gave an example of how one student presented a drawing of scribbles to her. Anna responded to the student by asking if she thought she had worked hard enough on the drawing. Anna later learned that the student had done the best that she could. Anna also assumed that the grade 11 students who had four previous years of art experience throughout high school possessed some artistic skills. Anna ended the discussion by stating that she wished that she had been informed of the special needs students.

*I guess I wasn't sensitive enough that their art could be that simplistic because they haven't been taught anything yet. I wish I had taken more time to figure out the special needs students.*

**I asked Anna to describe her initial attitude towards student teaching.** Anna said that she had been quite "naïve" and since she only had experience teaching at a primary school level, she thought that the students at the secondary school level would not accept her immediately.

Anna then described her visit to the school the day before the internship. When Anna was introduced to the students as a student teacher, the students responded, "Oh poor you." Her eyes opened wide as she described her first impression of student teaching: this was not going to be an easy task. At this point Anna decided to present herself with a tough attitude and took the role of a disciplinarian on the first day of her internship.

*Given heads up by a couple of the students saying, "Ha ha ha, you're the next teacher coming in; well guess what, we're going to put you through the ringer, too." I thought I better come off strict, better off than being happy or better off than being a pushover. So I took the hard line when I first came in, perhaps too hard of a line. I came in quite strict, quite a disciplinarian kind of an approach.*

I then asked Anna to tell me what her experience was like during the first week of student teaching. On the first day of the internship, Anna said the principal asked her if she wanted to work with three different teachers and attend all three different art classrooms daily. On that same day, Anna witnessed an event that occurred during first period. She excitedly recounted how she had entered a classroom and saw some students pushing, kicking and running out of the classroom. Other students knocked over the garbage can, one threw a chair in air and some were fighting outside of the class. Anna pointed out that the substitute teacher was so engrossed in one of the student's artwork that she did not notice what was happening in the classroom. Anna looked serious as she continued to describe what she encountered next.

*I look in the corner as I come in and someone has a huge saw about 2½-3 ft long. Not the little tiny one. About half a foot thick, sawing the desk and I went in and I just said, "Wow this is going to be an experience of a lifetime." So that was my first experience in the first class.*

Anna went on to say that her initial response was to gain some control by removing the tool from this student who was fervently cutting the desk. She approached the student and

politely asked for the saw. The student gave the saw to Anna, who put it in a supply room filled with an array of tools. That student then approached the cooperating teacher to inform her that his saw was taken away by Anna and claimed that he needed it to work on an art piece. Apparently the cooperating teacher returned the saw to the student.

I asked Anna how she felt about the student's behaviour. She answered that it had been disconcerting as an observer to watch this. Anna described the students as very large as well as aggressive. They yelled out racial slurs and were very confrontational with some of the teachers. Anna said that these students took advantage of the weaknesses of each teacher.

*I went, "Wow! Do I really want to do this?" It was quite right into the fire immediately.*

**I asked Anna how she would describe her most significant experiences in student teaching.** Anna specified that she learned what could go wrong after observing three different teaching methods from three different cooperating teachers. Anna illustrated with an example of how one cooperating teacher pretended not to know that the students were out of control. One student was stabbed with a pencil and another cut himself with scissors. The teenagers sat in a large group as they poked each other with an x-acto knife while another student flickered the lights on and off. Some students were also found play fighting on the floor, which entailed pushing, kicking and punching.

Anna proceeded to comment on the cooperating teacher's method of handling discipline. She also expressed how she understood that one cooperating teacher did not have enough experience to maintain discipline in the classroom.



*They (the cooperating teachers) were missing the teaching component of management, of time management, student management, classroom preparation and management of the materials were lacking and it did make quite a big difference.*

I then enquired about what she thought had not gone so well during her student teaching internship. Anna told me that she observed a class during the entire first semester in which the cooperating teacher permitted the students to do as they pleased (such as arriving to class late, leaving class early, eating and drinking in class, as well as playing cards in class). Anna articulated that she wanted to intervene with managing the classroom, but did not know where her boundaries were with each cooperating teacher. She was aware that the cooperating teachers were the ones to evaluate her performance. Due to this, Anna said that she had felt powerless.

*I had allowed the other teacher to lose the authority and I would just watch. I felt it was very difficult to gain that back. Also just because the amount of time I had with them was not as great as it was. They knew that in ten weeks, I was going to be gone.*

Anna then spoke of taking responsibility for the course load the following semester. She anticipated an extremely difficult experience in suddenly having the students conform to her set of rules. Anna asserted that she did not accept the students running wild and free. She then informed me of how she sat on a table to address the rules and the expectations to the students. Anna's rules were to tell the truth and to not lie. She expected the students to remain seated, to put away materials at the end of class as well as to bring their own materials to class.

*That was it. Those were my two rules and I didn't really smile. I did not try to smile. I didn't try to make friends. It was difficult for the students because they had been allowed to go wild. It wasn't even just a little wild, it was chaos, it was pure chaos. They could do anything. It did not matter what they were doing.*

I asked Anna to give some examples of how she tried to maintain control of the classroom. She explained how she wanted to introduce “fun” projects by incorporating interesting materials but was concerned with the students breaking or stealing the art supplies. Anna only used minimal art materials to introduce simple projects (such as drawing) because it was less demanding for her. Anna said that she was worried about how to motivate the students to work for an hour and fifteen minutes. Anna ended up giving tests and handouts to the students once they were finished with their studio projects. She hoped that the students would take the work seriously when she emphasised that everything was graded. She also gave free marks to students who brought in their art materials

*I gave them marks. I know that's politically incorrect but this was survival at this stage. I just thought of ways that I could just maintain control for the first week. It wasn't a lot of fun to teach. And for myself and for the students, that was hard.*

Anna provided another example of a classroom management technique that was utilized during her student teaching at a primary school. She warned a student three times for disrupting the class then asked him/her to stand up in front of his/her chair for the remainder of the period.

I asked Anna if her rules were effective. She replied that the students had rebelled against the rules harshly during the first few days as they continued to misbehave. The students did not react favorably towards Anna's rules and did not care if they failed or received an A in art class. Anna said that she constantly had to repeat herself and raise her voice. She told the students to remain in their seats, to not speak when she was speaking and to lower the noise level.

*If they (the students) weren't used to me, they would stroll in at any point and stage and leave at any point and stage or time with whatever friends they wanted to. It was just the basics. I haven't even taught them any art.*

Anna claimed that she had not wanted to be that strict. She had not wanted to be hard on students every time they did something small (for example, students speaking out loud or talking to their friends). Anna explained that it was exhausting to maintain a level of discipline five classes a day. She found it to be very taxing.

**My next interview question posed to Anna was, had there been anything that she did not expect to occur or to deal with during her experience in student teaching?**

Anna stated that she had not expected the students in the classroom to think that she was also a student. She described how one student had offered her marijuana. Anna had agreed to buy it because she thought that the student was kidding. She exclaimed that she should never take anything at face value because it could be dangerous.

*I thought I was going to call them on their bluff so I said, "Yeah sure." I'm thinking I put them in their place. Then I hear his friend say, "Hey man don't give up your weed, keep it for yourself, she might tell someone." I'm thinking, "Oh my gosh." he really does have weed. He really is dealing this and I really did say yes.*

Anna later reported that she heard a couple of students calling her some bad names in the hallway. I asked her how she felt about the situation. Anna sadly expressed that it was tough to hear the students speak badly of her even though they did not say it directly to her face. Anna took the name calling personally and she admitted that she does not know if she will ever get over it. She also wondered if teachers, after many years of experience, grew indifferent to name calling from students.

This led her to talk about the concern of her own safety and how she had felt a lack of security being in an aggressive class.

*There's not a panic button in the classroom. You're very aware that you are alone and there's more of them than you. So it can be scary. I guess if you're with a really aggressive difficult classroom, you have to really take note of how the classroom is going and where everything's happening.*

I asked her for some examples of what she found dangerous in the classroom. Anna illustrated an incident wherein she had to keep track of the number of x-acto knives circulating in the classroom, counting them at the beginning and at the end of class.

*I would be like, "1, 2, 3, 4...okay we're missing four today." Four x-acto knives floating around the school and they're just missing. That was a little bit frightening.*

I asked Anna if there was anything else she had not expected to occur or to deal with during her student teaching. She replied that applying techniques learned in her education classes proved to be useful.

*If they had a problem or if I had to really seriously speak to someone, I took them out of the classroom, which is a tool that I have been taught which was really beneficial. You don't think that these things are really beneficial when you're learning.*

Next I asked Anna to describe her experience with the cooperating teachers. Anna reiterated that she had three classes a day with three different cooperating teachers. She described her experience with the substitute teacher to be horrific, the cooperating teacher with one-year teaching experience to be okay, and the one with the most teaching experience to be most enjoyable.

Anna expressed that she had not enjoyed working with the substitute teacher because there was no sense of collaboration or any warmth between them. Anna claimed that she had not been asked to do anything in the classroom, so she voluntarily cleaned up at the end of the period, which pleased the substitute teacher.

Anna admitted that she resented the fact that she possessed much more teaching experience than the substitute teacher, especially when the substitute teacher did not acknowledge some of her suggestions on how to manage a class. Anna felt that she had not been given a significant role in that class because the students approached their teacher instead of her. Anna continued to tell me how the substitute teacher had undermined her authority in front of the class (for example, Anna had not allowed students to sit with their friends, but the substitute teacher told the students otherwise) and left her to justify the situation in front of the students to save face. This situation was a point of contention between the two.

*Now they're allowed to either sit with their friend or take an extra pencil or draw on the desk or something else. That was one of the events that made me feel quite powerless to do much about especially if they're (the cooperating teacher) going to grade you afterwards. I wasn't just going to be ignored or the classroom was going to be allowed to go wild and I was just left stranded. It was different in all three cases.*

I asked Anna how long this situation with the substitute teacher had lasted. Anna told me that it had continued for about three weeks before the substitute teacher left for another teaching position. Subsequently, Anna had to work with another substitute teacher. She stated that the new substitute was a male and that had made a difference to some of the students in terms of discipline. She was pleased to inform me that he was more strict and worked collaboratively with her.

*They (the students) came to me and I was able to help lead and we taught together as a team. It wasn't just this is a teacher; this is a student teacher. I'm underneath, no real power. Just there to give tips but don't actually have any power. Instead we came in as equals. We're both going to teach. We're both going to speak. We're both going to help out. There was a lot of give and take, which was nice.*

Anna then mentioned how the first year teacher had tried to become friends with the students. She observed that the cooperating teacher had some classroom management skills

but the class was still very loud and the art room was very messy (for example, there was paint all over the floor and furniture).

I asked Anna if she had a better experience with the teacher who had taught for 20 years. She immediately said yes and pointed out that they had worked collaboratively. Anna defined working collaboratively as exchanging ideas. She elaborated on how the cooperating teacher thanked her for teaching the class and learned about teaching art from Anna. Anna said that this cooperating teacher was very helpful by giving tips on how to become a better teacher. Anna also appreciated her for never leaving her side and never undermining her authority.

*She (the cooperating teacher) would say, "She (the student teacher) is teaching, you listen to her." She was great. She would say, "That's what she (the student teacher) said so that's what's going to happen." That was good because it gave me the authority to say it. I found that was really helpful. Whereas the other teachers didn't have the experience to do that. The substitute teacher was too busy just trying to survive the day I think.*

**My next question was whether Anna had experienced any pressure as a student teacher.** Anna described that teaching full-time for ten weeks, grading all of the cooperating teacher's classes, and preparing three different lessons for three different teachers everyday for very large groups had been a stressful situation. Anna explained that she felt much pressure to develop lessons based on the cooperating teacher's lessons. In addition to this, in the case of the classes with the substitute teacher, she was asked to carry out the initial art teacher's requests. She expressed that it was difficult to manage the day without being overstressed. She tried to find ways to relieve some pressure by telling one cooperating teacher that she could not possibly grade all of her students.

*It wasn't just four classes for the different levels. It ended up being three hundred students sometimes that I was grading. It was too much. There's just no way that I could possibly manage that along with everything else that was on my plate. I would come home some days and I would just be very very tired and very very weak.*

She went on to say that she had been concerned about the substitute teacher grading her since she lacked teaching experience. Anna believed that it was only fair to be evaluated by the cooperating teacher with 20 years of experience instead.

*I would see the real art teacher (the substitute replaced her) to discuss the art component and I would be graded then by a teacher that had experience teaching and could look at classroom management and other things that I need to learn are like skills, so they could grade me accordingly.*

**I addressed the last question to Anna which was, what had she liked the most and what had she liked the least about student teaching?** Anna gladly replied that it had been most rewarding to reach those students who were really difficult in the beginning of the semester. She explained that those were the students who did not like art. Anna then stated that the hardest part was seeing students with a lot of potential that she could not reach in time to help.

*I think that after my first few weeks of teaching I did really reach some of the students that were very hardcore (out-of-control).*

At the end of the interview, I thanked Anna for her collaboration. She kindly offered to provide further information, if necessary, through e-mail or telephone.

## **Marie-Eve**

I first contacted Marie-Eve through e-mail. Although she lives and works forty minutes away from Montreal, she willingly agreed to share her student teaching experiences with me. She suggested meeting at a coffee shop for dinner after work. Since a public setting was not conducive for an interview, I offered to make her dinner at my place before the interview. After she arrived, we spent some time talking in the kitchen as I prepared dinner. Marie-Eve spoke happily about her new position as a secondary school art teacher. During the interview, Marie-Eve answered the interview questions with ease. She was open to sharing as much information possible about her student teaching experiences. She referred to some notes, which she had prepared prior to the interview. Marie-Eve is a francophone and the interview was conducted in English.

Marie-Eve had a good student teaching experience with the cooperating teacher during the fall semester. She said that the cooperating teacher was very pleased with her performance. During the beginning of the winter semester, Marie-Eve had felt that the relationship with the cooperating teacher did not go so well. She stated that the cooperating teacher personally criticized her instead of providing her with constructive criticism. By the middle of the internship, Marie-Eve was so discouraged that she asked to be placed in another school. Her second placement was more successful.



## **Marie-Eve's reflection**

**I first asked Marie-Eve some general questions, such as what grades she had taught and if she had prior experience teaching at a secondary school.** Marie-Eve replied that she taught grades seven and eight at the first school and then taught grades nine, ten and eleven at the second school. She had some experience teaching at a secondary school from working as a substitute teacher.

**When I asked Marie-Eve to describe her expectations and attitude towards student teaching before commencing the internship,** she stated that she expected to work hard. At first, she thought that writing a lesson plan was much more time consuming than preparing visuals for an art lesson (such as setting up art materials and making samples of artwork). Marie-Eve expressed that she had a positive attitude in the beginning of the semester and had intentions of doing something great with the students.

**I then asked Marie-Eve to tell me what her experience was like during the first week of student teaching.** Marie-Eve first responded with a laugh, "Disaster." She described the first week as being extremely hard. Marie-Eve mentioned that observing the cooperating teacher teaching a classroom was very different than teaching on her own. Once she had the opportunity to conduct a class during the second semester, Marie-Eve discovered that teaching was complicated.

I asked Marie-Eve to describe the complications that she had encountered. She discussed how she had not provided good instructions to the class. Except for a written lesson plan, she had not prepared any visuals (for example, arranging the art materials, finding

appropriate posters or books to present to students and making samples of artwork). She stressed that the hardest part of teaching was preparing the visuals.

*That was hard trying to explain something. Especially because it was so clear in my head. For me it's easy. It's evident that you press hard on the oil pastel. All those little details were very evident for me. I didn't think to explain it. I didn't think to explain that you have to take the oil pastel and press hard. You have to cover everything. You put oil pastel then you put black paste. Without this little specification, made a whole difference. This is an example of why I had difficulty trying to explain and making students understand.*

I then asked Marie-Eve to give further examples of why she thought that the first week had been a disaster. She said that she written a lesson in French for an English class, which made it difficult to translate. It had also been very hard to prepare a different project for every class. She found the transition to be difficult when she taught a different project to two different groups of the same grade, back to back. Marie-Eve believed that she would learn more about teaching if she had the opportunity to re-teach the same project to all of the same grades (for example, an ink drawing with the three different groups of grade sevens and a painting project with all of the grade eight classes).

**I asked Marie-Eve how she would describe her most significant experiences in student teaching.** She responded that changing schools half way through the internship was the best thing that could ever have happened based on the situation with the first cooperating teacher.

**I then enquired about what she thought had not gone so well during her student teaching internship.** Without any hesitation, she talked about her difficult relationship with the first cooperating teacher. Marie-Eve said that this cooperating teacher had compared her unfavourably to her former student teachers (for example she said that the

others worked full-time and still managed to complete their student teaching successfully). In addition to that, Marie-Eve had been shocked to learn that the cooperating teacher considered her to be a poor student teacher. She exclaimed that the cooperating teacher could have provided useful feedback instead of making comments that affected her personally.

*Because of that, the whole experience has been very painful. When I left the school, she was telling me, "You're the worst student teacher I ever had."*

After discussing her painful experience at the first school, I asked how the experience had affected her personally. She replied without hesitation that the experience with the first cooperating teacher had affected her mental and physical health. Marie-Eve expressed the concern of being so stressed that she was unable to sleep. She stated that this internship had also disrupted her personal and social life. Marie-Eve had constantly spoken about her situation involving the first cooperating teacher with her clients at work (outside of school) as well as with her friends.

**I asked Marie-Eve if there was anything else she had not expected to occur or to deal with during her student teaching.** She said that the entire student teaching experience had been unexpectedly difficult from the beginning to the end. She had not expected to have a negative experience and to almost reach the point of depression.

I asked her for some examples of the negative experiences. She said that the cooperating teacher had not wanted her to make mistakes. I asked Marie-Eve to elaborate on the meaning of mistake. She spoke seriously about how she sometimes had difficulty searching for a word in English while trying to give proper instructions to the class. As a result, the cooperating teacher took the liberty of completing her sentence or sometimes taking over

the lesson. I inquired further by asking Marie-Eve how she had felt when the cooperating teacher took over her lesson. Marie-Eve said that she felt humiliated and that every time she made an effort to teach, it only got worse. She claimed that the cooperating teacher thought that she was actually helping. Instead Marie-Eve strongly believed that she did not learn how to deliver proper instructions to the class due to this situation.

*When I was making a mistake, it was as if her students were the victims. She was thinking that they would all be famous artists and because of me, I screwed it up. That was the impression she was giving to me. My self-esteem and self-confidence was lower than it could ever be.*

Marie-Eve continued to share another unexpected event from her internship. She had expected to teach alone, but instead the cooperating teacher was always in the class. Marie-Eve expressed how the presence of the cooperating teacher caused her to second-guess her teaching capabilities. She felt like she was constantly being watched, as if she was physically attached to the cooperating teacher.

*I wasn't expecting that because all the things that you learn about internships, you're teaching by yourself and the teacher leaves. I didn't feel like a teacher in the class in the school. I was like the little dog of the first co-operating teacher.*

I recalled how Marie-Eve had mentioned the word “management” earlier. I asked if she had been referring to managing the materials or managing the class. Marie-Eve satisfied my curiosity by responding that she never had to deal with discipline with the first cooperating teacher. The cooperating teacher had told Marie-Eve that she was lucky that she did not have to deal with discipline and that she was only expected to teach. The cooperating teacher took care of the students who misbehaved.

Marie-Eve continued addressing the topic of discipline. At the second school, she happily told me, she had not only been left alone to teach but had also managed all of the

behavioural problems in class. I asked Marie-Eve if she had a good relationship with the students. She claimed that the students had disrespected her in the beginning of the teaching internship. Marie-Eve described how the grade ten and eleven students had complained and talked whenever she spoke, and stared at her to get on her nerves. They would also sing, speak loudly, and did not remain in their seats, disturbing their classmates who were engaged in art projects.

I asked her how she had dealt with these students. Marie-Eve was proud to inform me of her approach in dealing with discipline in the classroom. She told the principal and the cooperating teacher about the student's behavioural problems she was experiencing in class. She presented the principal with a three-step plan which entailed communicating to the parents through the student agenda (each student possessed a school agenda where a section is reserved for teachers and parents to exchange notes with each other), writing a disciplinary report, and if all else failed, removing the student from class. The principal supported Marie-Eve's plan immediately by signing her method of intervention.

*When I came back from the principal's office, I had weapons to fight... not fight but to say that I'm the boss and that's how it's going to work. You (the students) won't come over my head even if I am very small.*

I asked Marie-Eve if her method of discipline was effective. She replied that some of the students still attempted to test her. One student said that he did not care about the consequences and he referred to the student teacher as a mean person. Other students continued to be unproductive in class, while others worked without applying any effort. Marie-Eve also added that some students were not interested in befriending her.

**Next I asked Marie-Eve to describe her experience with the cooperating teachers.**

She responded that her experience with each of the two cooperating teachers had been completely different. Marie-Eve stated that the first cooperating teacher had not respected her very much. She claimed that it had been hard to accept the first cooperating teacher telling her that she did poorly during the second semester, when she was only given positive feedback during the first semester. She was confused by this contradiction: Why had the cooperating teacher provided her with negative feedback when she was performing the exact same tasks during both semesters? She also wondered why the cooperating teacher had not wanted her involved in school events during the second semester, such as parent teacher interviews, when she had been asked to attend them during the first semester.

*I was just in class. She didn't want me to get involved. It was not a good relation at all.*

Marie-Eve told me that her experience with the second cooperating teacher had been the total opposite. However, she reverted to speaking about the first cooperating teacher again.

**My next question was whether Marie-Eve had experienced any pressure as a student teacher.** Marie-Eve said that not knowing if the first cooperating teacher would speak with her at the end of the day had been stressful. She did not know what sort of comments she might receive from her.

Marie-Eve then talked about the negative evaluation she had received from the first cooperating teacher. She was shocked to learn that the cooperating teacher had written that Marie-Eve did not want to learn and did not take any advice from the cooperating teacher.

Marie-Eve stated sadly that she had not known that the evaluation would be sent to her professor.

*The fact that my word was against hers, that was so stressful. I didn't know that she had the power to fail me. She had the power to do whatever she wanted over me.*

I asked Marie-Eve if she had received any positive feedback from the cooperating teachers. She pointed out again that the first cooperating teacher had continually said that everything she tried never worked. Marie-Eve then raised the fact that the cooperating teacher had provided her with tips on how to prepare materials before class started (such as pre-cutting paper for the students). Marie-Eve admitted that she needed to improve on that task. She said that the first cooperating teacher helped her with the teaching part, which she found useful and was able to put into practice at the second school.

I proceeded in asking what she thought about the supervisor making visits to the school. Marie-Eve discussed how she had been more stressed about teaching a class than being evaluated by the supervisor due to the situation with the negative evaluation. She told me that it was her word against that of the first cooperating teacher's. Marie-Eve claimed that no one was present to witness the discussions that occurred during the course of the internship. She did not know whether or not people would believe her. She only hoped that the supervisor would assess the situation, witness that she was not a poor student teacher and speak on her behalf.

Marie-Eve then described her experience at the second school. She mentioned that it had been stressful to be evaluated by the supervisor however she had not felt any stress while teaching.

*When I was at the second school, I think it's the first time I wasn't so stressed about being supervised.*

I addressed the last question to Marie-Eve which was, what had she liked the most and what had she liked the least about student teaching? She said that she liked the relationship she shared with the students and especially with the cooperating teacher at the second school. Marie-Eve smiled as she spoke highly of this cooperating teacher taking interest in Marie-Eve's previous student teaching experience at the first school. With honesty, Marie-Eve told her that at the beginning of the semester she had not been readily prepared to teach, due to an overload of projects she was expected to accomplish.

Happily, she described the support she received from the second cooperating teacher. This cooperating teacher had encouraged her to explore various teaching techniques and never second-guessed Marie-Eve in front of the students.

*That was the big difference when I came to the second school. She (the second cooperating teacher) allowed me to make mistakes and she allowed me to try things. I learned something. We still see each other sometimes and stay in contact with e-mail. She's so nice. She's funny.*

I asked her if there was anything else she would like to add about what had gone well during her internship. Marie-Eve confidently replied that the second cooperating teacher had involved her in school events. This cooperating teacher had taken her to meetings, taken her shopping for art supplies and had explained briefly how to manage a budget.

*It's good because it also gives you the opportunity to meet the principals and other staff members. Not just going into the staff room to eat and when somebody says hi to me, I say hi. You're really involved in the system and you have to be there. She brought me everywhere.*



Marie-Eve then continued to discuss what she liked the least. She reiterated how she had taken the negative comments personally, which caused her to lose self-esteem.

*Talk to me about me about what I should change, about what I should do. Don't talk to me about what others (former student teachers) did three-four years before and how good they were compared to me. This I didn't really appreciate.*

At the end of the interview, I thanked Marie-Eve for her collaboration. We then discussed our past summer and winter holidays over tea and dessert.

## **Cara**

The same day I sent Cara an e-mail, she called to confirm her interest in being a participant in the research. We immediately made arrangements to meet that day so that Cara could receive the questions I would be asking. During the meeting, we shared some small talk about her job as a bartender and a course she still had to complete. We reviewed the outline before setting a time and place for the interview. Cara was open to meeting anywhere that was convenient, so we decided that if the resource room was not available then we would meet at my apartment during early afternoon. Before we said goodbye, Cara was relieved to learn that the interview would be tape-recorded and not videotaped.

Cara arrived at my apartment with a cup of coffee in one hand and greeted me with a cheerful smile. She first took a peek at the kitchen before wandering around the rest of the apartment. We discussed the paintings on the walls as well as living spaces in general in the downtown area. Just before the interviewing session, Cara expressed that she was nervous. She brought a copy of the interview questions and checked off each question that was asked. She presented photographs of her students artworks as she explained one of the lessons.

## **Cara's reflection**

**I first asked Cara some general questions, such as what grades she had taught and if she had prior experience teaching at a secondary school.** Cara responded that she taught grades seven to eleven. She also said that she never taught at a secondary school before the practicum.

**When I asked Cara to describe her expectations and attitude towards student teaching before commencing the internship,** she explained how excited she had been during her own secondary school art experience. She assumed that her students would be just as enthusiastic about art class as she had been as a student. She also figured that if she entered the classroom with excitement over a great idea, the students would respond in the same manner.

*A lot of them in the class were not enthusiastic, not plussed (excited) about being there at all and I expected them to be. I had been at the primary school level before and the children there are very enthusiastic and it's much harder to get secondary school students motivated.*

**I asked Cara to describe what her attitude had been towards student teaching prior to her internship.** Cara happily replied that she had been very excited about student teaching. She had planned and prepared her art lessons over the holidays. She had great expectations on developing ambitious lessons (such as setting up a dark room, teaching photography, tattoo art and graffiti art). But she quickly found that the allotted time for art did not permit large projects.

*At the secondary school level, you have them for such a short amount of time each day or even the week. If you're lucky, you'll see the same group two to three times a week.*

Cara had also assumed that she would be teaching more during the first semester and instead it was a slow process towards taking over the course load. In addition to that, Cara mentioned how she had to create art lessons based on the cooperating teacher's previous art lessons.

*I think she didn't want to give up the power in the classroom so readily.*

**I then asked Cara to tell me what her experience was like during the first week of student teaching.** Cara responded that she had felt nervous in the beginning. I asked her to give an example of how she was nervous. Cara described how she had known any of the teachers and was not familiar with the school. She had not felt very comfortable standing in front of the classroom nor had she known where to stand and which students to watch.

She said that she had no idea of how to get the students' attention, especially when the students began to chat as she presented a lesson. She stated that she had not learned any strategies (such as "developing a teacher voice and a teacher eye") for classroom management.

*They're all kind of chit-chatting and talking amongst themselves. I'm losing them. How do I get them back?*

**I asked Cara how she would describe her most significant experiences in student teaching.** She wondered if the word significant referred to positive or memorable experiences. I responded that it depended on how she wished to interpret it. Cara decided to share a positive experience about a grade nine class that had not been enthusiastic at all to begin with. Excitedly, she described her observation of this class in the first semester. This group of students did everything possible to avoid getting involved in the art projects.

As a result, the students did not produce anything by the end of the first semester. Cara developed two successful projects during the second semester that got the students engaged in art making.

*I really wanted something where I could guide them step-by-step through the project.*

**I then enquired about what she thought had not gone so well during her student teaching internship.** Cara first talked about two grade nine students who had a problem with the cooperating teacher and how she (Cara) had tried to calm the kids down as the mediator. Cara explained that, due to the situation, the students were sent to another room. She had the idea that giving one of the talented students an art project was an incentive to keep him in school, but he dropped out. She expressed her sadness and her thoughts on how draining it had been to not reach those students who were not enthusiastic about school.

*It's heartbreaking, but you can't reach every student.*

There was a pause at this point. I waited for Cara to speak because it appeared that she had something on her mind. She kindly made a recommendation about placing student teachers closer to their site. Cara pointed out that she had to travel quite far which became tiring and expensive. In addition to that, she was also working outside of her internship.

*When you're doing full-time you're not really being expected to be able work during that time. So paying for that could be hard. I asked to be reimbursed (transportation cost). I was turned down.*

**I asked Cara if there was anything else she had not expected to occur or to deal with during her student teaching.** Cara admitted that she had not realized how student

teaching at a secondary school five days a week would be so exhausting in comparison to her student teaching experience at a primary school only two days a week. She discovered that teachers do a lot of work other than teaching. She provided examples of teachers spending time after school handling paper work and having to deal with the same issues five days a week. She claimed that her appreciation for teachers had grown with this experience.

*It's constantly filling out forms and doing paper work and calculating hours. That can be tiring.*

I asked Cara if she found the teaching part or the paper work of the experience to be the more exhausting. She responded that both were as equally tiring. She said that the teaching part is hard on the voice. Cara then gave an example of how being disorganized could lead to feeling physically tired due to the repeated explanation of instructions.

*Some of the days were really really long. If you didn't organize yourself so that if everyone was starting a project on that day, you would be in trouble.*

I asked Cara to describe what organization means to her. Cara answered, without hesitation, that a teacher must have everything prepared before coming into the classroom. She listed some examples that included having materials set up, planning a motivation activity, and knowing what to expect from the students.

*If you're using another space, you have to make reservations to use the computer room. Which means if you come in you need to leave right away to be ready. To have them (the students) line up. Even the things that you use in elementary schools sometimes still apply at the secondary level.*

**Next I asked Cara to describe her experience with the cooperating teacher.** Cara's first response was that her philosophy was very different from that of the cooperating teacher. Cara articulated that the cooperating teacher was very disciplined. The

cooperating teacher did not believe in a reward system, which Cara interpreted as the cooperating teacher's way of saying that she was the boss.

She continued to talk about how the students who were interested in art had been pushed. I asked Cara to elaborate on the word "push." She simply told me that the cooperating teacher would not accept an art project that was completed in a short period of time. The cooperating teacher had emphasized teaching technical skills to the class (such as drawing, proportion, colour and horizons). The cooperating teacher also had the students work on those projects for an extended period of time. Cara also stated that sixty percent of the students did not take any interest in the art projects. Due to this, she felt that the cooperating teacher needed a break from teaching.

*Before some of the projects she was doing were a little bit out-dated for them. She had them doing pen and ink drawings of castles and dragons.*

Cara then affirmed her own style of teaching as being more constructive. She preferred to introduce "exciting" projects that allowed all students to succeed. She also found that the cooperating teacher did not introduce much art history to the class, so Cara made sure to use that as one of her motivation exercises.

*I wanted them to experience what it was like as an artist to go from the beginning of a painting to the end and what process does an artist have to go through.*

I recalled that Cara had mentioned earlier that the cooperating teacher was authoritative. I then asked her to describe the way the cooperating teacher had been authoritative and how the students had respected those rules. Cara immediately answered that the cooperating teacher was very strict. She pointed out that the cooperating teacher spent an entire period

in the beginning of term explaining the rules to her students. Cara also said that the cooperating teacher was consistent with her rules.

*It was a very authoritative setting where most of them did behave.*

Cara described how the students who did poorly were evaluated on a daily basis. If those students received a low evaluation, they were suspended. Cara stated that she did not agree with suspending students for misbehaving or for not doing any work in class. If they were sent home, she did not believe they would do any work there either.

*It was a repeated cycle and I found this student not being in school and missing so much school wasn't being beneficial to that student. It wasn't proving anything. There must have been a different way of going about it to make that student be more motivated or to work in the school.*

I asked Cara to give some examples of her rules in the classroom during her practicum. Cara asserted that she insisted that all students must look at her when she spoke and must always keep the sink clean. She reported that, for the most part, she found that the students could only focus on her speaking for a maximum of ten minutes. Cara claimed that some students began to fidget after a few minutes. She also had a rule for the younger grades, which was to greet the grades seven's and eight's by saying, "Good morning." She then had expected them to reciprocate. Cara had also attempted to greet the grade nine students but she had not received any acknowledgment.

Cara discussed her own method of dealing with unruly students. She focused on having discussions with the junior grades about things that did not go right and what they could do to make changes for the better. She would suggest that the students set up their own rules at the beginning, as a way of learning about how they perceive rules.



*If it was my class, my rules would be a little bit different than hers.*

She mentioned that she did not have to deal with many discipline problems because the cooperating teacher had instilled strict rules with some of the students. She added that the students had liked her because she had been more of a friend than a teacher.

*The students like you and because you're not the teacher, they feel like you're more their friend. So that's one you have to watch out for. But also it's a nice part of teaching.*

At the same time, Cara had been uncertain if the students behaved properly in class because they respected her or because the cooperating teacher was present in the classroom. I wondered if Cara had experienced any challenges when the cooperating teacher was not in the classroom. Cara said that at the beginning, the students tested her a lot more because she was not their regular teacher. I asked Cara how the students had “tested” her in class. She responded that some of the students had tried to get away with not cleaning up. She also added that the noise-level had increased when the cooperating teacher was not in the classroom. I then asked her how she had dealt with this in particular. Cara revealed that she used an approach that entailed turning the lights off and raising her hand to get the younger student’s attention. With the grade nine class, she had raised her voice and demanded silence. If a student did not comply with Cara’s instructions, she had sometimes removed him or her from the classroom.

Cara then spoke about how she had sent students to administration unless it was necessary. She said that when a student was sent to the office sometimes he/she was returned to the classroom. She felt that without the support of administration, she was

responsible for disciplining the students. However, on a few occasions, Cara had arranged for someone from the office to remove a student from the classroom.

*You don't want to be sending them to the office all the time either. You want to try to deal with those issues yourself.*

I asked Cara if the cooperating teacher had always been in class during her student teaching. Cara pointed out that she had been left alone to teach mid-way through her internship. I then asked how she felt when she taught with the cooperating teacher in the classroom. Cara claimed that she had not minded but she admitted that it was difficult to work in someone else's space.

*At the beginning she was in class. Then slowly she wasn't there. I think she might have been leaving school early or off doing other things.*

She also indicated that the cooperating teacher had taken her time before allowing Cara to take over all of the responsibilities as a student teacher. Cara then described how, when she called in sick near the end of her internship, her cooperating teacher had admitted to beginning to miss teaching.

*But when I called and told her that I was sick, she was like, "Yes, not that I don't love having you here, but I'm starting to go crazy with nothing to do." She was like, "This is the perfect time because I'm starting to feel really down not being able to teach the class." She said, "Take your time in getting better."*

I asked Cara if she would have liked to share any further experiences with her cooperating teacher. Cara spoke of how the cooperating teacher had been protective of the talented grade 11 students because she taught them over the last four years. Cara felt that this made it difficult for her to talk to those students in order to learn about their interests in art.

My next question was whether Cara had experienced any pressure as a student teacher. Cara replied that the most pressure she had experienced had been on the day she was being evaluated by her supervisor with her cooperating teacher and his graduate student also in attendance.

*I think as a student teacher, you are probably under most pressure because not only are you trying to assert yourself as a student but trying to gain respect of your cooperating teacher and also your supervising teacher and the administration. So you kind of feel at all times everyone is kind of checking you out.*

I then asked Cara if she had felt stressed or under pressure in other situations as a student teacher. She responded that at the beginning, she thought that the students were not going to listen to her and this was stressful. By the end of the internship, Cara had come to respect and like the students a lot more. She reiterated how she had come to feel more comfortable in front of a class: by this time she knew the students, knew how to keep an eye on them and knew where to stand in the classroom.

I asked Cara to give another example of how she had become more comfortable. She explained how in the beginning she expended much energy in preparing lessons. She was concerned about obtaining specific visuals and making sure they were laminated.

*Before, on my way to school, I would be thinking over and over, what am I going to say? What am I going to do? You're still conscious as to how your lesson is going to go. I'm not going to stress about it too much. I'm not going to stay up the night before making sure everything is perfect and exact. It's impossible to do that when you're in a school five days a week.*

She went on to say that if a teacher is not confident, he or she will feel stressed and will not be able to sleep. I asked if her level of confidence had been lower during the beginning of her internship. Cara responded in the affirmative and added that she had been stressed over everything.

*You have to have some confidence.*

I addressed the last question to Cara which was, **what had she liked the most and what had she liked the least about student teaching?** Cara provided an example of how she had had difficulty dealing with students who were defiant. Some of the students in the classroom had not only text-messaged on their cell phones but had also talked on their cell phones. Cara stated that she had requested that all the students hand over their cell phones, but the students had refused to comply. In this situation, Cara had had to call for assistance to intervene, which made her feel incapable of handling her own problems.

*When you ask them to give it, they say, "Miss you can't have it, no." Just outright defiance sometimes. That's something that is hard to deal with when it's just defiance. You have to get somebody else in there to intervene and then you feel like I can't deal with my own problems.*

I asked if Cara could give another example of students being defiant and to describe how she had handled the situation. Cara indicated that the cooperating teacher had dealt with the defiant students who also happened to be a lot bigger than Cara. She claimed that students often would approach the cooperating teacher face to face with an attitude. Cara pointed out that she tried to avoid these confrontations as much as possible. When she had to deal with confrontations, she spoke to the students individually, outside of the class, or at the end of the period. If the students did not stay after class, then Cara would look for them in the hallway. I asked Cara how the students had responded to her. Cara said that the students responded well to her on an individual basis; however this did not mean that they would return to class with a changed attitude. Some of the students were fine during the first two classes after her talk with them but they quickly reverted back to their initial behaviour.

Cara then proceeded to convey information on what she had liked the most about student teaching. She explained how she had used interesting art projects as a reward if the students listened in class. I asked Cara how the cooperating teacher had felt about her using the reward system since she did not believe in it herself. Cara told me that the cooperating teacher had responded with scepticism and uncertainty towards the effectiveness of the art project, but not only were the students immersed into the projects, the final outcome of the art projects was very successful.

At the end of the interview, I thanked Cara for her collaboration. Again, she stated that she had been nervous.

## **My story**

After I interviewed Anna, Marie-Eve and Cara, I started to reflect upon my own student teaching experiences at a secondary school. This led me to answer the exact set of interview questions I had asked the participants.

Since I graduated seven years ago from the art education program from Concordia University and worked as a cooperating teacher for four years, the variables are different compared to that of the interviewed participants. I had completed a three-year program (BFA specializing in Art Education), then enrolled in a one-year teaching program in art education. During the third year of my BFA, the students completed an internship at a community setting as well as a lunch or after school program. The one year teaching program had offered an internship that comprised student teaching at a primary school for seven weeks during the fall semester, following five days a week for seven weeks at a secondary school during the winter semester.

## **Self-reflection**

### **What grades were you teaching?**

I taught grades seven, eight, ten and eleven.

### **Have you had prior experience teaching at a secondary school?**

No.

### **What were your expectations and attitude towards student teaching before commencing the internship?**

I was anxious to immerse myself into the internship to gain as much teaching experience as possible. As a result, I expected to find a teaching position upon graduation. I expected to encounter problems with discipline although I did not know how I would be handling the situation.

I had a positive attitude towards student teaching before starting the internship. I was excited to learn new information concerning education and teaching.

### **What was your experience like during the first week of student teaching?**

Some of my eventful experiences during the first week of student teaching consisted of feeling uncomfortable with the students and lacking confidence as a teacher. The following are examples of those experiences encountered during my student teaching.

On the first day of student teaching, I felt anxious when I was being introduced to a classroom full of strangers, and especially of having to take over my cooperating teacher's classes. I felt much more comfortable doing my student teaching at a primary school because the school was smaller and the staff seemed to be more supportive. Some of the primary teachers were interested in who I was and what I was doing. As for student teaching at a large public secondary school, nobody was concerned. I only communicated with my cooperating teacher during lunch and spares (referred to not having a class to teach). As the internship progressed, I adapted to the environment of the school and focused on what I had to do.

I was cautious when approaching the students because I did not want to make any enemies. I did not want the students to feel uncomfortable as I circulated around the desks. I did not want the students to think that I was trying too hard to befriend them. I felt out of place when some of the students looked at me as if I was invading their space. I did compliment a student on his art project, but he did not respond. As a result, I felt even more uncomfortable.

I remember an event that describes my lack of confidence as a student teacher. One morning, I gave a lunch detention to a grade seven student for misusing art materials. As I waited for the student to arrive, I ran a script through my head as to how to reprimand him. In all honesty, I was not sure if he would show up and if he would even take me seriously. I did not have much experience as a role of a disciplinarian. I struggled between letting the students know that I meant business and not knowing how to present myself as a strict teacher. I felt nervous addressing the rules to the student when he arrived for detention. I



did not want to create any tension between the two of us or in other classes to come. I suddenly felt insecure and out of place as the student was cleaning tables. This led me to question the following: How and where should I be standing in class? Should I be watching him like a hawk? And what if I am making him uncomfortable? The silence made me feel uneasy. I also felt guilty for giving the student detention.

I recall another experience of feeling uncomfortable. I gave a slide presentation of an artist to one of my groups. I felt uncomfortable because of the silence in class. I was shocked to find that there was no disruption coming from the students. I interpreted the silence as the students not taking interest to the topic. Based on those assumptions, I ended up speaking faster and changing the tone of my voice. For example I would say, "I will skip one slide since this is similar to the others" or "You get the idea so I will move on to the next slide." I wanted the students to understand that I knew how they were feeling because I wanted to connect with them. This was also a way for me to avoid the uncomfortable situation as soon as possible.

**What were some of your most significant events in student teaching?**

One student approached me looking very frightened as she showed me her arm, which appeared to be bleeding from the wrist. I have to admit that my heart skipped a beat because the red ink made to simulate blood looked realistic. I made sure to show that I was not worried, otherwise the joke would have been on me. I calmly told the student to rinse her arm in the sink. After this incident I wondered how much longer the students were going to test my patience.

I recall another vivid event that was significant. My cooperating teacher told me that he would never intervene with my teaching unless the students crossed the line. One day, I was incapable of managing a group of unruly students even after trying various strategies. The cooperating teacher walked into the classroom. He asked me to take a break as he reprimanded the students. At this point, I felt a sense of relief that he came into the classroom at the right time when I needed the support.

### **What did not go so well in student teaching?**

I struggled with a class of 29 grade eight students who preferred to socialize during a lesson. I tried every strategy possible to gain the pupils attention but was not successful. I yelled angrily, ignored the pupils who were chatting, but continued to teach. Other times I stopped teaching and hoped that the chatty pupils would eventually listen (wishful thinking). I gave detentions and even pushed a chair against a table to show the pupils my frustration. At this point I felt inadequate because I did not know how to control the classroom. I would not look forward to teaching this group the day before this class and would feel anxious as I thought about different ways to handle unruly students. My biggest fear was applying strategies that were not effective. I dreaded the thought of feeling vulnerable once again. I was worried that the cooperating teacher would think that I was not competent with disciplining the students. I wanted to impress the cooperating teacher with my performance in the classroom. I felt that it was important to receive his approval.

**What did you not expect to occur or to deal with during your experience in student teaching?**

During one of my evaluations with a supervisor, I presented slides to a grade ten class. In the middle of the presentation, a student (whom I did not know) walked into the classroom and asked if she could speak to her friend (one of my students). I could not believe that this student not only interrupted the presentation but this was happening during my first evaluation. I told the student calmly that I was in a middle of class and that she must leave. The student got upset and stated that she desperately needed to speak with her friend in private. I responded by questioning why she was not in class. She ignored what I said and persisted that her friend be dismissed. At that point, I wanted to give in just to avoid the confrontation. I felt like the bad guy as I was placed on the spot in front of my students as well as the supervisor.

**How would you describe your experience with the cooperating teacher?**

I had an excellent experience with my cooperating teacher who was supportive. He made the transition easy for me with his warm personality. He also possessed a positive attitude towards taking me under his wing. The cooperating teacher provided me the authority to run the classroom as I wished.

Fortunately, I agreed with his philosophy of mentoring student teachers, otherwise I would have felt incompetent to meet his expectations. He did not request that I hand in lesson plans. My cooperating teacher did not believe in student teachers observing the class in the beginning of the term. He wanted the students to perceive me as a teacher and not as a student. He encouraged me to become immersed into the classroom and to get to know the

students. During the second day of the internship, I was given the authority to take over all of his classes.

My cooperating teacher stated that he informed the students that a teacher from Concordia University would take over his classes for seven weeks and that the teacher would be responsible for grading all of the students' projects. Judging from what I learned about him during the first day of internship, I knew that he would be a great mentor. Throughout the seven weeks, he provided practical feedback on my teaching and managing a classroom.

**Did you experience any pressure as a student teacher?**

Yes. The combined workload from both the university and the internship at the secondary school was heavy. I juggled many tasks simultaneously (such as, developing various projects for different grades, learning the student's names, rushing to tidy up at the end of each period to prepare for the next class, keeping track of time and frequently referring to the class schedule).

My goal was to receive an excellent grade when the supervisor and cooperating teacher evaluated my performance in the classroom. I invested much time in preparing a cohesive lesson (such as making and presenting visuals, as well as organizing the room). I wanted to prove to the supervisor and cooperating teacher that I was on top of things. I focused on delivering a sequential order in my lesson which was emphasized in the education classes (such as taking attendance, presenting theory, demonstrating the art project, allotting studio time for students, having everyone clean up and most of all keeping track of time). I also implicated some of their suggestions for my final evaluation.

**What did you like the most and the least about student teaching?**

I liked that the students were immersed into the lessons, which I developed. They were not only interested in the art production but also the theoretical part of the lesson. I was pleased to see the students learn a new perspective in art (conceptual art) other than gaining technical skills.

What I like liked least about student teaching was travelling to the site that was located outside of the island. I found the commuting to be tiring.

## **Analysis**

The tape-recorded interviews yielded three hours of tape for analyses. All responses were transcribed onto the computer for clarity and bias analyses of associating the voice to the participant. I reviewed and edited each transcript before sending a copy to the participant. Each participant read the transcript prior to providing me the confirmation to use the data.

The process of analyses comprised summarizing the transcripts for a more coherent reading. During the first reading, all significant responses were highlighted. The second reading required compiling all highlighted data according to each interview question. The final process was developing categories for all of the responses and determining its frequency and the most frequently discussed categories were summarized.

The following responses of Anna, Marie-Eve and Cara are reviewed through each interview question and are then compared to my experiences as a student teacher. These results uncover whether the information is consistent to the literature from Fuller (1969), Kowalchuk (1999), Smith (2000), and Weasmer and Woods (2003) as well as other related literature to support the analyses.

### **Grades taught at the secondary school**

The participants taught grades seven to eleven and I taught all grades except for grade nine.

### **Prior experience teaching at a secondary school**

Cara and Anna had no previous experience with secondary school students. Marie-Eve was the only one that worked as a substitute teacher for a secondary school.

### **Expectations of student teaching before commencing the internship**

When the participants were asked to describe their expectations of student teaching before beginning their internship, the responses emphasized planning lessons, teaching and assumptions made towards the students.

Marie-Eve had thought that much energy would be expended in writing lesson plans, instead she learned that preparing for a lesson (setting up the art materials and making samples of artwork) before class was more practical. She expected to work hard and assumed that teaching would be natural for her, especially after observing the cooperating teacher teach with ease. Marie-Eve never imagined that teaching would be so complicated.

Both Cara and Marie-Eve had intentions of teaching ambitious projects to their classes. Cara had mentioned that she wanted to set up a dark room, introduce photography, tattoo and graffiti art, but was unable to fulfill those tasks due to not having enough art classes with each grade. Marie-Eve did not specify the types of projects she initially had in mind. Cara had expected to teach more during the second semester and to take over the course load at an earlier stage of the internship, but according to Marie-Eve, her cooperating teacher had

slowly allowed her to take over the responsibilities as the semester progressed. Anna had a preconceived idea that the secondary students were young adults. She also thought that the senior students possessed artistic skills because some of them took art during the last four years.

My expectations did not parallel to any of the responses from the participants. I expected to deal with discipline during my student teaching experiences, but was not sure how I would handle the situations. I also anticipated that I would find employment as an art teacher right after graduation.

#### Literature: Preconceived ideas of teaching

According to Fuller (1969), the majority of the responses reflect the self-concern stage (the first stage of Fuller's teaching developing model). She found that the concerns of the pre-teaching phase (education students without any contact with teaching) were not concerned about teaching because they did not know what to be concerned about. However they related teaching to their own experiences as being students' themselves.

All participants including myself were focused on our own needs. Fuller (1969), Kowalchuk (1999) and Smith (2000) indicated that the concerns of student teaching were classroom management and discipline.

Studies by Fairbanks, Freedman, & Kahn (2000) showed that student teachers come into their internship with preconceived ideas based on their own understandings and experiences of the school, the classroom and rituals, and information of pop culture. These notions were



discordant with what exists in schools therefore student teachers must work out their contradictions in order to build their own identity as a teacher. “The tensions and contradictions within the conceptions of teaching are not surprising. Teaching is a rich and complicated undertaking; even experienced teachers find contradiction, tension and inconsistency to be an inescapable facet of their work”(Goldstein & Lake, 2000, p.866). Goldstein & Lake also supports Marie-Eve’s expectation of teaching to be natural. They stated an example of a student teacher who thought she had a natural talent for teaching. Just like Marie-Eve, the student teacher assumed teaching should be easy. This intern learned that she had to refine the talent in order to teach the students.

#### **Attitude towards student teaching before commencing the internship.**

The others as well as myself all shared a positive attitude about student teaching before beginning the internship. I looked forward to my first experience working with secondary students.

Anna described herself as being “naïve” because she only had primary teaching experience. Due to this matter, she had decided to visit the secondary school the day before internship began. After her visit, Anna was determined to take on the role of a disciplinarian, which included having no intentions of being friends with the students, let alone smile.

Woods and Weasmer (2003) stated that cooperating teachers hope student teachers learn to demonstrate professionalism by not becoming good friends with their students. Anna accomplished this expectation of cooperating teachers by determining that she had no intentions of befriending any of the students in beginning of the semester. However Cara

enjoyed being friends with the students since they all shared a common bond of being students. Darden, Scott, Darden, & Westfall's (2001) study contradicts Anna's way of thinking and supports Cara's attitude of wanting to be friends with the class. The major mistake performed by student teachers is not knowing how to distance themselves from becoming too friendly with the students. This generally leads to a lack of communication, respect or discipline between the student and student teacher.

### **Experience during the first week of student teaching**

The themes derived from the responses to the experiences of student teaching during the first week are teaching, disciplining and feeling powerless (dealing with cooperating teacher and principal).

#### Teaching

Marie-Eve described teaching to be difficult because she attended class unprepared. She did not bring any art materials, provide any demonstration of art techniques or present any samples of artwork. Due to this, Marie-Eve said that she had a difficult time explaining the project to the class.

#### Discipline

Anna and Cara had dealt with discipline problems during the first week of student teaching. Anna entered a classroom of misbehaved students playing with tools (a saw and x-acto knives). She had made the effort to remove the tool from the student, but the cooperating teacher returned it to the student. Cara said that she was uncomfortable with disciplining the students due to a lack of self-confidence and a lack of classroom management techniques.

She was not familiar with the school nor was she acquainted with any of the teachers. Cara did not know where to physically stand in the classroom, which students to watch for, or how to gain control of the class once the students began to talk to each other.

My experience of feeling uncomfortable in the classroom is similar to that of Cara's, except that I did not know how to carry with poise as I gave detention to a student. I felt guilty for giving a student lunch detention by making him clean the tables. I was self-conscious watching the student perform this task because I did not want him to feel uncomfortable. This led me to question where and how I should situate myself in the classroom. In addition, I was uncertain of how to deal with the silence during detention so I debated on making conversation with the student.

### Powerless

The insecurities expressed were feeling powerless. When Anna was undermined by one of her cooperating teachers, she felt powerless because the cooperating teacher was the one to grade her. Not only that, Anna did not know where the boundaries were between the two due from a lack of communication.

I felt like a stranger in the classroom during the first week of internship because I did not know any of the students. Due to this, I believed that the students had an advantage over me. At this point, I wanted to connect with the students in hopes that the feeling like an outsider would subside.

### Literature: Surviving in the classroom

These themes correspond to the concerns stated by Fuller (1969), Kowalchuk (1999) and Smith (2000), which Fuller referred to as student teachers focusing on how to survive in the classroom. Anna used grades as a way to control the class to survive during the first week of student teaching. Fairbanks, Freedman, & Kahn (2000) mentioned that the role of the cooperating teacher is to assist the student teacher in surviving daily demands. Student teachers need a substantial amount of guidance and support to think critically about their experiences in schools (Whipp, 2003). In this case, Anna did not receive either from the cooperating teacher who went against her authority.

The student teachers discussed three themes about their experiences during the first week of student teaching. The first was teaching (preparing for instruction), which was a difficult task for Marie-Eve. The second was discipline (classroom management and recognizing problems). Anna attempted to discipline a student when she realized that the class might not be a safe environment. The third was feeling powerless as Anna was unaware of her boundaries in class. Turley & Nakai (2000) provided examples of student teachers not feeling mentally prepared to take over the entire classroom. Darden, Scott, Darden, & Westfall (2001) stated that student teachers should feel comfortable asking their cooperating teachers questions that are related to their teaching experience. When the students are familiar with the rules and routines in the class, it reduces anxiety to perform. In this case, Anna did not feel welcomed to ask the cooperating teacher any questions. Another example of feeling powerless was Cara trying to connect with students who did not show much interest in school.

The abovementioned themes are consistent with all of the examples provided in Fuller's (1969) self-concern stage. The examples included having adequate knowledge of subject matter, controlling the class, understanding expectations of supervisors and principal, and the inability of gaining student's emotional support.

Smith (2000) mentioned two forms of adjustments: instructional and personal. Cara and myself experienced feeling uncomfortable in an unfamiliar setting which relates to instructional adjustments as student teachers adapting to their new environments within the schools. Since I did not know any of the students or teachers in the school, I felt like I was out of place. Smith's other emerging theme was discipline in classroom management. She defined discipline as handling the problems by knowing what to do when it occurs and classroom management as preventing the problem from occurring. Cara was uncertain of how to get the students to stop talking as well as how to prevent it from happening.

According to Woods & Weasmer (2003), the cooperating teachers' objectives for their student teachers were to become adaptable in an unexpected situation, to serve as a role model to their students and to demonstrate professionalism in the school setting. These objectives appear to contradict some of the student teacher's experiences. Anna, for example, was asked to work with three cooperating teachers everyday and was not informed of what was expected of her. Two of the cooperating teachers failed to act as mentors to help Anna ease the transition from attending one art classroom to another. Anna was undermined by her own cooperating teacher in the classroom, which made it difficult for her

to look up to as a role model. The student teachers did not know what to do, yet they were expected to meet their responsibilities inside and outside of the classroom.

Fairbanks, Freedman, & Kahn (2000) stated that it is common for student teachers to encounter specific events when making a transition to professional teaching. The student teachers are concerned with management issues, experience anxiety about curricular and look to their mentor to help ease the transition. Anna dealt with large classes of aggressive students which led her to question how to manage the class. She felt reluctant to teach any art projects using various materials due to safety reasons. Therefore she did not enjoy teaching art using only pencil and paper. Anna stated that she was unable to look for assistance because two of her cooperating teachers were focused on their own teaching.

### **Most significant experience as a student teacher**

The themes revolved around the relationship with cooperating teachers, motivating students and experiencing stress.

### **Cooperating teachers**

Anna had observed her three cooperating teachers' methods of teaching as well as managing a classroom. She had learned which methods were not effective (such as ignoring the unruly students and hoping that they would behave). Based on Anna's observation, she thought the first cooperating teacher with little teaching experience did not have any interest in managing the classroom because the students appeared to do anything they desired in class. The second cooperating teacher had possessed some management skills by raising her voice. She was also occupied with befriending the students instead of disciplining the class. The third cooperating teacher with most experience in teaching had no art teaching background,

therefore she had some difficulty dealing with art materials as well as managing a less structured classroom (unlike a regular classroom with individual desks).

### Motivating students

Cara described her most significant experience as motivating the toughest group to work. The grade nine class was not productive and did not take much interest in any of the cooperating teacher's projects. Cara developed a painting project on self-portraiture by introducing step-by-step grid method. She then had the students create a background for their portrait.

### Stress

Marie-Eve had changed schools in the middle of the internship, which had been the turning point in her student teaching experience. She was overwhelmed with developing different lessons for each class in the first school. Marie-Eve was personally affected by the comments made by the first cooperating teacher as she was referred to being the worse student teacher. When Marie-Eve continued her internship at the second school, she felt a lot more comfortable.

My responses did not correlate with the participants except that I did speak of my cooperating teacher who provided me a positive experience. My cooperating teacher was a good mentor when I was a student teacher and a great role model when I became a cooperating teacher. He allowed me to take over all responsibilities early in the semester in order for me to experience what it was like to be a full-time art teacher. The cooperating

teacher welcomed any questions and was more than happy to provide feedback on my teaching.

Another significant event for me was when one of the students pretended her arm was bleeding. I refer this event to be a positive one because I did not react in a way the student and her classmates had anticipated, although I was fooled at the initial moment. I have to admit that the students did a great job imitating a bleeding arm using red ink. Until today, this incident still puts a smile on my face.

#### Literature: Cooperating teacher as a role model

These responses focus on Fuller's (1969) task-concern stage as student teachers are opened to learning and exploring teaching methods. Anna learned about various discipline methods by observing her cooperating teachers. Ross (2002) suggested that student teachers should be given the flexibility to try various styles of teaching. This exemplifies my cooperating teacher's method as a mentor. Marie-Eve gained some tips on how to prepare for a class from the first cooperating teacher in the first school and then applied what she had learned in the second school. Marie-Eve strived for constructive feedback that could assist her in teaching. Student teachers look to their cooperating teacher to gain tips for their own lesson (Meijer, Zanting, & Verloop, 2000), to get advice, to express concerns and to guide them towards professional development (Fairbanks, Freedman, & Kahn, 2000). Fuller's self-concern stage was demonstrated in Marie-Eve feeling emotional when she received negative feedback from the cooperating teacher. According to Smith (2000), Marie-Eve met the category of personal adjustment.



Cara found an efficient way to motivate the students to be productive in art making by selecting a topic in which students deemed meaningful. The latter example is also consistent with one of Kowalchuck's (1999) common themes found in student teaching in making learning significant. I observed how my cooperating teacher related to the students in a calm and light-hearted manner. I chose not to react to the students who played a joke on me to prevent any future events like this. Fairbanks, Freedman, & Kahn (2000) supported the idea that student teachers learn how to interact with students by observing their cooperating teachers.

Woods & Weasmer (2003) hoped that student teachers would become a role model to their pupils by coming to class on time and being aware of their identity as a teacher. Another point raised was demonstrating professionalism by being aware of the responsibilities of a teacher. My cooperating teacher gave me a tip on how I should present myself as a teacher in the classroom and not as a student teacher. He preferred that I not observe the class during the first week of the internship. Meijer, Zanting, & Verloop's (2002) study supports my cooperating teacher's philosophy of not relying on observation. Fairbanks, Freedman, & Kahn (2000) also stated that copying the cooperating teacher's behaviour prevents the student teachers from seeking other forms of behaviour besides their own cooperating teacher.

I had always arrived promptly to class and was always prepared to teach. I learned this in the practicum course at the university. The cooperating teacher suggested that I emit my presence as a teacher by sitting on the drafting table to take attendance. He had stated that the physical height of the table help differentiate the status from student and teacher. My

cooperating teacher had informed me of my responsibilities as a teacher in the beginning of the semester (such as grading, taking over all of the classes and finding my own way of dealing with discipline) that made me conscientious of my role of a teacher when dealing with students. He wanted me to experience what it was like to be a full-time art teacher. Woods & Weasmer (2003) agree that a student teacher's priority is to gain a complete experience in student teaching.

### **What did not go so well in student teaching?**

When the participants were asked to describe what did not go so well in student teaching, the following themes were discussed: cooperating teachers, disciplining students, motivating students, teaching, and feeling stressed.

#### Cooperating teachers

Two of the student teachers referred to the cooperating teachers as a partial cause of what had gone wrong in student teaching. Anna had criticized the first cooperating teacher for allowing the students to do whatever they wanted in class (such as eating, drinking and playing cards). She did not know her boundaries with the cooperating teacher, therefore felt uncertain whether she should intervene with disciplining the class. Marie-Eve experienced a difficult relationship with her first cooperating teacher who provided negative comments that personally affected her. Some of the negative comments compared her unfavourably to the former student teachers as well as reiterating that her efforts in teaching were not effective. Although Marie-Eve preferred to be given suggestions on improving her teaching abilities, the cooperating teacher spent time giving negative criticism.

### Disciplining students

One of Anna's discipline problems consisted of gaining control of the class. She criticized some of the cooperating teachers for not disciplining the students from the beginning of the school year. Although Anna had once attempted to take some form of control, she was soon undermined by the cooperating teacher. Due to this event, Anna felt powerless because she was not encouraged to get involved as a student teacher. However she still partially blamed herself for allowing such unruly behaviour to persist. When she had introduced her rules to the class, the students rebelled against conforming to the guidelines (such as remaining seated and bringing in their art supplies). Another difficulty was being strict at all times. She had found this to be tiring as she reprimanded the students for every little action (such as chatting with friends). She had given away marks as a way to survive in a chaotic classroom.

### Motivating students

Motivating students was a challenge. Anna had to find a way to keep the students motivated to work for 75 minutes as a means for them to remain seated. One of Anna's techniques was to constantly give handouts and tests to occupy the students. She also tried giving marks to students for bringing in their own art supplies

### Teaching

Anna did not find teaching art to be enjoyable because she introduced simple projects using minimal art materials. She made this choice to prevent the students from misusing and stealing the art supplies in class (such as poking each other with x-acto knives and throwing chairs).

## Stress

Cara had made an effort to keep a problem student focused on an art project as an incentive for him to stay in school. She would bring an art project to that student who was placed in another room for not doing much work in any of his classes. She felt the student dropping out of school affected her student teaching experience because she was unable to maintain his interest in school.

The common themes found between myself and the participants on what had not gone so well in student teaching were dealing with discipline and discussing the cooperating teacher. Similar to Anna's experience, I had introduced my rules to the class in the beginning of the semester, however the students did not comply to the rules during my next class. Unfortunately, the students did not respond the way I had hoped. At that point, I felt powerless because the students seemed to have had control over the class. I had also begun to wonder what the cooperating teacher thought of me. I did not want him to think that I was incompetent of managing a classroom.

## Literature: Communication

The previous events depict Fuller's self and task concern stages. The examples that demonstrate the self-concern stage are how to discipline students, how to motivate students to work and what the cooperating teacher think of me? The task-concern stage is exemplified by student teachers trying various motivational and discipline strategies.

Both Kowalchuk (1999) and Smith's (2000) common concerns and emerging themes were discipline and classroom management, which are reflected in the participants' experiences

and in my response to what had not gone so well in student teaching. Smith's emerging theme on how to teach content and subject matter is contrary to Anna's situation. Anna did not teach much art content because she had to focus on managing the classroom. Smith's other theme was pleasing supervisors and cooperating teachers instead of the task at hand. I had expressed such concern of how the cooperating would evaluate me when I felt incapable of handling a misbehaved class. Anna's reason for not developing "fun" art projects using different art materials was a way to control the class. According to Darden, Scott, Darden, & Westfall (2001), student teachers' concern about disciplining prevents them from focusing on providing proper teaching instructions. If student teachers are not aware of the rules and routine of the school, they may feel anxious about how they perform in class. The various concerns may obstruct one's learning and progress (Smith & Sanche, 1992). Moore's (2003) study showed that some of the greatest teaching challenges were developing fun activities, keeping the students occupied, maintaining control and pleasing the cooperating teacher.

Some cooperating teachers did not fully understand the responsibilities of a student teacher therefore some interns did not know how to demonstrate their competency (Stephens, 2005). Other cooperating teachers found it difficult to communicate their expertise in the field because they usually demonstrate those through their actions (Fairbanks, Freedman, & Kahn).

Fuller (1969) revealed some of the student teachers covert concerns during the early stage of the internship related to the self as not knowing where their role in the classroom. This example fits Anna's experience with one of her cooperating teachers. The student teacher expressed that she did not know if she was supposed to take over the entire class on her

own, if the cooperating teachers were supposed to tell her what to do, and if she was permitted to try things on their own (for example, if a student misbehaves in the hallway, the student teacher is uncertain if he/she have the right to handle the situation). Darden, Scott, Darden, & Westfall (2001) suggested that keeping an open line of communication helps reduce the anxiety concerning the student teacher's responsibilities. These results were rarely discussed in any of the written statements or the interviews, unless the participants were asked to specify the subject matter. In my study, the student teachers spoke freely of their concerns of not being familiar with their responsibilities without asking them to specify.

Woods and Weasmer (2003) stated that the cooperating teachers' expectations for student teachers were demonstrating professionalism and becoming a good role model. Anna said she was not informed of the responsibilities of a student teacher therefore she was uncertain of her role in the classroom (for example, she did not know how far she could go with disciplining the students). Anna demonstrated professionalism by not showing any interests of gaining a friendship with the students. She made this choice without any influence from the cooperating teachers. Woods & Weasmer explained that the student teacher spends more time with the cooperating teacher rather than the supervisor results in the cooperating teacher having a greater influence towards the intern. Turley & Nakai (2000, p.128) stated that the "lack of close mentoring" is a disadvantage for student teachers (such as not having someone by your side, not receiving suggestions to improve lessons and not giving advice). In this case, Anna's situation with the first two cooperating teachers is not consistent with Wood's and Weasmer. However, the latter statement echoes the experiences of Anna, Marie-Eve and Cara.

## **Unexpected events that occurred during student teaching**

The unexpected events discussed were the student teachers' feeling powerless, their cooperating teachers, experience with discipline, teaching, and feeling exhausted.

### **Powerless**

The insecurities appeared to be caused by some of the students. When Anna first started her internship at the secondary school, the students thought that she was a student herself. Anna thought that the students had to eventually come to a realization that she was the student teacher. Anna said she had a difficult time hearing a student indirectly calling her bad names. She took the comments personally and was uncertain if she would ever get over it. Anna tried not to be affected by thinking that the students referred the name calling to her as the role of a teacher instead of herself.

Anna, Marie-Eve and Cara all mentioned the students were large and they were small in comparison. Although Anna had a martial arts background, she felt alone in a "scary" classroom with a group of aggressive students. She kept the door unlocked and situated herself in the classroom where she could locate the exit. She did not know how to gauge if things were to get out of hand, if she needed assistance, and how close to permit the aggressive students to invade her space. Marie-Eve felt she had little control of discipline due to her small stature. Cara first thought that the students were going to push her over.

### Cooperating teachers

Two student teachers shared a similar experience of being undermined by their cooperating teachers. Anna felt undermined when one of her cooperating teachers returned a dangerous tool to a student. Marie-Eve felt humiliated when her first cooperating teacher took over her class when she struggled to give instructions. Both cooperating teachers appeared to run the class themselves using their own methods.

### Discipline

Both Marie-Eve and Anna dealt with discipline by trying various classroom management techniques. Marie-Eve was responsible for managing the students with behavioural problems at the second school, so she thought of a plan that involved informing the principal and the cooperating teacher. She presented a plan to be approved by the principal and hoped that she could gain some power to deal with the unruly students. The three-step plan consisted of communicating with the parents through the student agenda, writing a disciplinary report and removing the student from class. Once approved, Marie-Eve felt like the boss knowing that she had the support of the principal and cooperating teacher. She was no longer intimidated by the large size of the students.

Anna tried a method of discipline that was discussed in her practicum course. She handled the unruly students individually by speaking to them outside of the classroom or away from the class. To much to her surprise, the technique was effective. She never thought that she could apply what she had learned in theory and apply it in practice.



### Teaching

One of Anna's unexpected events that occurred during teaching was learning that there were special needs students in class. She only discovered this unknowingly when she made a joke about one of the special needs student's drawings. Anna said that if she had she been informed earlier, she would have been more sensitive towards them.

### Exhaustion

Cara never realized that teaching five days a week could be so exhausting, especially when dealing with the same issues everyday. She soon learned that many teachers remained after school filling out forms and calculating working hours. Cara expressed her appreciation for teachers after this experience.

My unexpected event is consistent with the theme of discipline. I had to deal with a defiant student (not my art student) who wandered into my classroom. She persisted on taking her friend out of my class to speak with her in the hallway. I tried different ways of communicating with this student. I first reprimanded her for not being in class and for entering my classroom without knocking. She continued to look displeased as I told her that she must leave the class. I thought that the best approach was not to give the student a choice to argue.

### Literature: Learning and exploring teaching methods

The given examples of insecurities correspond to Fuller's (1969) first stage of self-concern as Anna questioned how she was going to handle the aggressive students. The student teachers tried various classroom management techniques that reflect the second stage of task-concern

as Anna, Marie-Eve (at the second school), and myself all dealt with discipline differently and shared successes with the outcome. “The individual teacher should mold his teaching style to fit his own skills and values to fit the reality of the students” (Mann, 1970, p.343). Marie-Eve did not have the opportunity to reach the task-concern stage because her cooperating teacher would generally take over her lesson whenever she experienced some problems giving instructions. Goldstein & Lake (2000) claimed that a classroom environment should allow students to take risks and to develop self-esteem. Anna and Marie-Eve’s cooperating teachers did not create such an environment for them to deal with personal concerns of feeling affected by students and feeling comfortable in trying different instructional strategies. Smith & Sanche’s (1993) research stated that the student teachers were asked to list their personal concerns but not many expressed any. However in my study, all student teachers indicated personal concerns without any guidance.

Discipline, classroom management and special needs students reflect Smith’s common emerging themes of student teaching. Smith (2000) said that although student teachers are required to take a course focusing on the special needs population, they need to know how to apply the learned information during teaching training. Anna, Marie-Eve, Cara and myself all studied two psychology courses that specialized in learning disorders and students with special needs. Anna had no knowledge that the special needs students were in the classroom. She thought that she could treat the students like young adults and be sarcastic with them. Anna encountered a sensitive situation when she realized that she criticized a drawing made by a special needs student.

Moore's (2003) study showed that student teachers were uncertain of what strategies to apply in certain lessons. These interns struggled with students with learning problems and attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD). Some of the difficulties encountered were students falling behind in class while some were finishing in advance. The student teachers also did not want to lower their expectations for the students.

Anna decided to try a discipline technique that required removing a student from class then speaking to him or her. Berliner (2000) claimed that without the methods course, a student teacher would lack teaching skills. It is crucial that a student teacher gains information from researching the teacher's practical knowledge in order to understand the cognitive aspects of teaching (Meijer, Zanting, & Verloop, 2002). One of the concerns of cooperating teachers is student teachers not having knowledge of what the students know and what they do not know. The student teachers do not know how to connect theory and practice (Moore, 2003).

### **Experience with the cooperating teacher**

When Anna, Marie-Eve and Cara were asked to describe their experiences with the cooperating teachers, they shared both positive and negative experiences, and held a different philosophy towards teaching than that of the cooperating teacher.

#### Positive experiences

The positive experiences entailed the support and collaboration from the cooperating teachers. Anna's third cooperating teacher pointed out the special needs students in class and told her to be patient with them. The cooperating teacher also told Anna that she would learn from her art teaching experiences. Anna appreciated all of the support she received

from this teacher, especially when she reinforced Anna's rules in class instead of undermining her like the first cooperating teacher.

Marie-Eve's cooperating teacher from the second school was the opposite of the first cooperating teacher from the first school. The second school provided her a learning experience in and outside of the classroom. Marie-Eve was encouraged to try various teaching strategies to see what was efficient. She would feel comfortable making her own mistakes and then learning from it, rather than feeling incompetent in the first school. Her second cooperating teacher included Marie-Eve in school meetings, parent teacher meetings, learning about the budget, purchasing art supplies and participating in the strike. She was content to be involved in these events, especially getting to know other teachers and administrators.

### Negative experiences

The negative experiences with the cooperating teachers included being undermined, lacking support and collaboration and difficulty working in the teacher's space.

Anna continuously spoke of feeling undermined by the first cooperating teacher who did not support her method of managing the classroom. When Anna did not permit the students to sit with their friends or not to use certain art materials, the cooperating teacher told the students otherwise. Anna felt as though the cooperating did not need her assistance in the classroom. Anna voluntarily tidied the classroom which pleased the cooperating teacher. Other than that, Anna believed that the cooperating teacher preferred to work alone.

Marie-Eve did not feel that the cooperating teacher worked collaboratively with her, nor did she receive much support. Marie-Eve received mixed messages from the cooperating teacher during the second semester. She did not understand why she was criticized for doing similar tasks she was praised for during first semester. She was no longer asked to be involved in parent teacher meetings. She was informed that she was not a good student teacher, and she was never left alone to teach a class. Marie-Eve felt disrespected by her first cooperating teacher and also felt uncomfortable being in her presence. During the first five weeks of internship at the first school, Marie-Eve was exhausted and almost reached the point of depression.

Cara had some difficulty working in the cooperating teacher's space by not feeling that it was her own when it was her turn to teach. Since the cooperating teacher took her time to hand over the classes, she suggested that she was not ready to give up her authority. The cooperating teacher also made a point to say that she missed teaching.

#### Different philosophy

Cara had an entirely different approach to teaching and disciplining compared to her cooperating teacher. Cara believed in teaching art projects that catered to the students' capabilities by introducing step-by-step instructions, to insure all would succeed. She also considered the students' interests as a way to motivate them to become productive. According to Cara, for the cooperating teacher's art projects that entailed using pen and ink to teach technical skills, the students did not respond well to such lessons. The students that excelled in art did well, while the others chose not to participate. Cara also integrated art

history into her lessons, unlike the cooperating teacher. Cara claimed that many of the students have never heard of such artists, but enjoyed learning about them.

Cara had a different view of disciplining students instead of dictating the rules to them in the beginning of the year like the cooperating teacher. Cara chose to communicate with the students by giving them a voice in order to understand their thoughts about rules. She preferred to discuss what kind of rules worked for the students. Cara did not agree with the idea of suspending a student from school due to a lack of productivity in class. She felt that this method was not useful for students to spend time at home. Cara believed that there are other ways to deal with the students. The cooperating teacher was very strict and always followed through with her word.

I had a positive experience with my cooperating teacher throughout my internship. On the first day, he greeted me warmly and then gave me tour of the classroom, cafeteria and the staff room. I was informed of my responsibilities to take over his entire schedule, the grading, developing my own lesson plans and coming to school on time. The cooperating teacher provided me the flexibility to rearrange the classroom as I saw fit. He believed that a student teacher should take advantage of the opportunity to explore various teaching and discipline strategies. The cooperating teacher encouraged me to find my own way of teaching effectively that suited my personality. Whenever I needed to discuss anything or if I wanted some feedback of my lessons, he was more than happy to give me the support. He would know when to step into the classroom if things got out of hand with the students. Most importantly, we maintained a compatible relationship throughout the internship.

Literature: Advantages and disadvantages of a cooperating teacher

The responses to the experiences with the cooperating teachers demonstrate examples of Fuller's (1969) second and third stages of student teacher's concerns. Task-concern is clearly indicated as Anna, Marie-Eve and Cara had their own ideas of teaching and disciplining students. Although Anna and one of her cooperating teacher's did not have a good relationship, and Cara had a different approach to teaching, they made an effort to apply their instructional strategies and classroom management skills to practice. Cara was against suspending students from school. Whipp's (2003) study supports her by stating that the purpose of students attending school is to keep them there. Student teachers who do not agree with the teaching style of their cooperating teachers may be at a disadvantage because they modified their own style in order fulfill the cooperating teachers' expectations. Student teachers are also disadvantaged when they are assigned to a weak cooperating teacher that does not share compatible styles and compete for responsibilities (Turley & Nakai, 2000). Elbow (1986) believed that there are benefits for the two parties to have different philosophies of teaching as they can learn from each other as long as they are both open to it.

Cara illustrates Fuller's (1969) third stage of impact-concern. She took much interest in developing art lessons that interested the students. She wanted to introduce art history that was not taught in class. Zimmerman (1994) claimed that some cooperating teachers discourage student teachers from teaching art history because it does not encourage creativity. In addition, some student teachers only introduce innovative lessons with the permission of the teacher.

Several of Woods & Weasmer's (2003) expectations of student teachers beyond teaching practices support the positive experiences of Marie-Eve's second cooperating teacher. Marie-Eve was encouraged by the second teacher to get involved in the events that were school related. The cooperating teacher included Marie-Eve by taking her to various meetings to get to know the administrators and principals. Both Marie-Eve and I demonstrated professionalism in the school setting because we were informed of our responsibilities in the classroom. Marie-Eve was asked to develop different lesson plans for each grade and was in charge of dealing with students with behavioural problems. My cooperating teacher gave me the flexibility to do as I pleased with lesson planning.

Unlike Marie-Eve's experience at the first school. She believed that her cooperating teacher exhausted her mental, physical and emotional states (Turley & Nakai, 2000). Marie-Eve claimed that the cooperating was the cause for her low self-esteem and low self-confidence for not allowing her to make mistakes and expecting her to be "perfect". Contrary to her experience with the second cooperating teacher, Marie-Eve was invited to make mistakes in class. Eble (1988) reported encouraging making mistakes in a proper environment is a learning experience. He also believed that it is "fun to be wrong as well as right" (p. 38).

### **The pressure of a student teacher**

The different types of pressure the student teachers encountered were handling the workload and being evaluated.



## Workload

The workload comprised preparing a lesson, teaching (instructional), grading the students, fulfilling expectations of the cooperating teacher, studying full-time university courses, and working outside of their internship. Marie-Eve and Cara were first overwhelmed with locating resources and preparing materials before class.

Anna, Marie-Eve and Cara all experienced stress due to studying full-time as well as holding a part-time job. The amount of work expected from the full-time internship did not make things easier. Anna found grading to be most laborious because she was responsible for three of her cooperating teachers' classes. She thought it was impossible for anyone to grade hundreds of students.

Marie-Eve discovered that preparing art materials, making samples of artwork and locating resources took longer than expected. She had a difficulty with time management and with preparing a different project for each group. Marie-Eve also struggled with giving instructions due to a lack of preparation before class. She did not have sufficient visuals to explain the art project concretely to the class and had trouble with delivering a lesson in English because she had written the lesson plan in French. She was mentally prepared as she knew exactly how to execute an art technique. Marie-Eve did not explain nor demonstrate the steps to an art technique because she assumed that the students were familiar with the process.

Cara's stressful experience was the opposite of Marie-Eve. In the beginning of the semester, Cara spent a lot of her energy preparing for a lesson. She located resources that involved

finding the correct image of an artwork as well as laminating posters. Cara felt the need to be perfect because she had yet gained confidence in teaching in the beginning of the term. She believed that she had to be organized the day before class as a means to prevent chaos in class. She described being organized as having everything ready before class (for example, booking a computer lab required making sure that it is available, getting the students lined up in the beginning and before the end of class). As she travelled to school in the morning, she mentally prepared herself by reviewing what had to be done that day.

### Evaluation

Anna, Marie-Eve and Cara all shared similar feelings of being evaluated by their university supervisor or cooperating teacher. Anna felt it was unfair that the substitute teacher evaluated her performance due to the substitute teacher's minimal teaching experience.

Marie-Eve experienced stress during her evaluation at both schools. At the first school, she was concerned with the poor evaluation given by the cooperating teacher prior to the supervisor's visit. Marie-Eve felt under pressure to teach without making a mistake with the cooperating teacher in class. However, Marie-Eve was relieved when the university supervisor came to assess her performance. She no longer felt worried knowing that the university supervisor would see things differently from the cooperating teacher. Marie-Eve described her evaluation by the university supervisor at the second school to be a "good stress." Marie-Eve made certain that everything was well set up the day the supervisor came to visit. She described being evaluated by the university supervisor as a positive experience and would learn from the feedback to become the best she could be.

Cara felt under pressure to not only assert herself to the students, but to gain respect from the cooperating teacher, the administration and the university supervisor. Cara experienced most stress when she was being observed by her cooperating teacher, university supervisor (her professor) and his graduate student. She made sure that she was well organized that day of the evaluation took place.

I encountered the same kind of pressure as the examples stated above. I definitely found the workload to be demanding, especially planning and preparing for many classes. In addition, taking four university courses with two night classes made it exhausting. During the time of my evaluation from the university supervisor or the cooperating teacher, I needed to prove to the evaluators that I possessed organizational skills which entailed setting up the table with materials and preparing the slides in the carousel for a slide show. I also made sure to provide a structured lesson that met the criteria of a lesson plan (the introduction, motivation, demonstration, art production, closure and clean up). I tried to cover all aspects in order to achieve an excellent assessment.

#### Literature: Concerns of student teachers

The pressure of being evaluated strongly supports Fuller's (1969) self-concern stage where student teachers are concerned about what the cooperating teachers, supervisors and administrators think of them. All of the participants including myself mentioned that the day of evaluation was a cause for stress. Although I had only mentioned feeling pressure of receiving a good evaluation, both Anna and Marie-Eve shared similar thoughts. Anna preferred an experienced teacher to evaluate her instead of a substitute teacher and Marie-Eve disagreed with the first cooperating teacher's poor evaluation of her. Marie-Eve was

stressed out to a point of not being able to sleep. Marie-Eve felt she had no support and did not know how to prove to her cooperating teacher that she was not a weak student teacher.

Marie-Eve, Cara and I did everything possible to prove that we were well prepared before class. According to Kowalchuk's (1999) analyses of student teachers, they stated that being organized was crucial. The above responses correspond to Smith's (2000) emerging themes of impressing supervisors and cooperating teachers. Student teachers practice similar style of teaching as their cooperating teachers because they do not want to take the chance and be disapproved by their cooperating teachers (Moore, 2003). Smith & Sanche's (1992) reported that interns expressed a high concern of receiving positive evaluation during the beginning and mid-way through the internship. As the survival concerns decreased, student teachers become less concerned with self-concerns. During Marie-Eve's evaluation at the second school, she perceived the evaluation process as a method of learning and how to become the best teacher she could be.

### **What student teachers liked most about student teaching**

The two themes that arose about what was most liked about student teaching were the relationship with the cooperating teacher and the relationship with the students.

#### Relationship with the cooperating teacher

Anna and Marie-Eve enjoyed their experience in student teaching due to the support of one of their cooperating teacher's. Anna happily expressed that the cooperating teacher (with most teaching experience) worked collaboratively with her by reciprocating their knowledge of expertise. Anna appreciated how she learned about teaching skills and the cooperating

teacher gained some knowledge of managing art materials. Anna felt welcomed in that class and did not experience any power struggle.

Marie-Eve excitedly mentioned the great relationship she had with the second cooperating teacher. Marie-Eve taught her lessons without the presence of the cooperating teacher and she was given the independence to learn from her own experiences. Marie-Eve also dealt with all of the behaviour problems by developing a plan of action. Marie-Eve said that the cooperating teacher not only discussed school related tasks that involved her responsibilities as a student teacher, but invited her to take part in school events (meetings, participating in strikes and purchasing supplies). Marie-Eve liked her mentor's sense of humour and they still remains in contact with each other today.

#### Relationship with the students

Anna thought it was rewarding to reach those difficult students who did not like art. She believed that she formed a bond with those students. Marie-Eve felt that the students in the second school gained her trust as they started to open up to her. Cara said she liked that fact that she was able to connect with the students by developing an art project that interested them.

I liked that the students were engaged in the art projects and they learned about the process of art making. I felt a sense of accomplishment knowing that the students enjoyed the entire experience of constructing an installation (a form of art that takes up any physical space) project.

Literature: Working collaborately

Kowalchuk (1999) mentioned how student teachers make learning significant by teaching topics of interest to students. This describes the experience of how Cara and I developed projects that students found meaningful. We also wanted the students to understand the process of art making as well as learn about how artists can be used as a source of inspiration. This example also reflects Fuller's (1969) third stage of impact-concern where the teacher is focused on the students and not on themselves.

Woods & Weasmer's (2003) suggestions of how student teachers should learn to serve as a role model to pupils by gaining their trust. Marie-Eve had gained the students trust at the second school by being consistent with her disciplinary rules. She also demonstrated professionalism by fulfilling her responsibilities as a teacher in the class as well as outside of the class. Marie-Eve gladly accompanied her cooperating teacher to all meetings. Marie-Eve was the only one who was asked to be involved in such events. Darden, Scott, Darden, & Westfall (2001) suggested that the cooperating teacher and student teacher attending conferences and participating events together introduces another aspect of networking, communicating and gaining resources to improve teaching. However my cooperating teacher suggested that I should enjoy my work as a teacher and to not get involved with the politics in the school, based on his experience. After teaching for two years, I clearly understood how getting involved with school issues can make teaching less enjoyable. I would have to agree with my cooperating teacher because being a student teacher is tiring enough.

According to Anna (and the experienced teacher) and Marie-Eve, they shared an amicable relationship with their cooperating teachers. Their experiences exemplifies Darden, Scott,

Darden, & Westfall's (2001) on improving the quality of practice by cooperating teachers being opened to exchanging ideas with the student teachers.

### **What student teachers liked least about student teaching**

When the student teachers were asked to discuss what they least liked about student teaching, they brought up dealing with disappointments, with traveling, with discipline and with negative feedback.

#### Disappointments

Some of the stressful issues that caused to be the least liked in student teaching were not reaching students and the location of the site to be too far. Anna and Cara sadly shared that they were unable to connect with some of the students who showed much potential in art but did not demonstrate much interest being in school. Anna believed that there was not enough time to reach those students because she was only teaching the classes for a certain amount of time. Cara found it tiring to deal with the same situation everyday to maintain a talented art student's interest in art in order for him to stay in school. Cara was saddened that he ended up quitting school.

#### Travel

Another stressful situation was traveling to the secondary school. Cara's placement was located outside of Montreal that did not make it easier on her workload as a student teacher, a full-time student at the university and a bartender during the evenings. She suggested that the students be placed at a site that makes it convenient for the student teachers.

### Discipline

The two issues of dealing with discipline that were least liked was dealing with defiant students and being tested by students. Cara confronted students who refused to hand over their cell phones to her because they were talking on the cell phones and text messaging in the classroom. The students responded with a bad attitude which Cara tried to avoid as much as possible. She believed that if she got involved in these situations, she might not be able to resolve the matter. Her students tested Cara when the cooperating teacher was not in class. The students tried to get away with not keeping the sink tidy.

### Negative Feedback

Marie-Eve expressed that she did not like receiving negative feedback from the cooperating teacher. Marie-Eve said that her cooperating teacher from the first school criticized her for not fulfilling the expectations of a student teacher. The cooperating teacher told her that she was not well prepared, did not take advice from her, performed poorly as a student teacher and compared her to former student teachers.

Like Cara, I found travelling every morning to the secondary school was tiring. The school was located off the island of Montreal.

### Literature: Lack of support

According to Fuller's (1969) self-concern stage, all of the student teachers, as well as myself stated examples about ourselves. Our least liked qualities of student teaching were dealing with defiant students, being criticized by the cooperating teacher and travelling to the teaching site. Discipline still remains a common theme which corresponds to Kowalchuk



(1999) and Smith's (2000) concerns of student teaching. Cara did not know how to deal with the defiant students who refused to give her their cell phones. Marie-Eve was very sensitive towards receiving negative feedback from the cooperating teacher. Moore's (2003) research reviewed that the two most frustrating challenges of student teachers were time management (trying to get everything done on time) and planning (undecided about teaching strategies). Anna felt that if she had more time at the internship, she would have been able to get those difficult students to appreciate art. Cara wished that one of her students did not drop out of school. Eventually Cara discovered that expending so much energy everyday to try and save a student is tiring. Goldstein & Lake (2000) reported that some teachers chose this profession to invest their time and energy for caring students. The results may lead to emotional exhaustion if the students do not respond or reciprocate to the student teacher's efforts.

### Summary

The most frequently discussed topic during the interviews was about the cooperating teachers. The second most discussed were teaching, discipline and stress. The least mentioned was about the students. Anna and Marie-Eve's first cooperating teachers and Cara's cooperating teacher were found to be unsupportive and authoritative. They were set in their ways of teaching and were not flexible to give over control of the class so easily. Cara's cooperating teacher took a long time before handing over the full responsibilities. Marie-Eve and Cara's cooperating teachers practiced a traditional method of teaching while expected them to do the same. They were both authoritative by following strict rules and teaching technical skills. Mann (1970) described these teachers practicing "formal authoritative strategies" as conforming the students into a system as a way to maintain

control of the class and to prevent disrupting the teacher. The cooperating teachers' power over the student teachers can be detrimental to their learning process rather than supporting it (Fairbanks, Freedman, & Kahn, 2000).

Anna and Marie-Eve did not receive much support, instead they were humiliated and did not feel welcomed in the classroom. This led them to feel powerless because their cooperating teachers would evaluate Anna and Marie-Eve. Anna struggled with not knowing her role in the classroom because she was not informed of her responsibilities. Marie-Eve experienced much stress and confusion due to the inconsistency of her cooperating teacher's method of evaluation (both written and verbal). Both Marie-Eve and Cara did not have confidence in the beginning of the internship. Marie-Eve's first cooperating teacher did not provide much encouragement. She felt incompetent to teach because the cooperating teacher corrected her mistakes in front of the class. Ironically to the latter example, Smith (2000) claimed that student teachers are "empowered" because they have the support of being placed with the best cooperating teachers. Fairbanks, Freedman, and Khan (2000) indicated that student teachers should feel invited into the school setting and be introduced to the administrators and staff alike.

The four most discussed topics (relationship with the cooperating teachers, teaching and discipline, and feeling stressed) parallel Fuller's three-stage model (self-concern, task-concern and impact-concern). The experiences with the cooperating teachers were continuously discussed throughout the interviews. This reflects the self-concern stage (focusing on themselves) as most concerns are expressed during the early stages of an internship. The issues of exploring teaching strategies and disciplining techniques meet the characteristics of

task concern. The least mentioned were about the students, which illustrates impact concern when expressing interest in students generally comes with experience. According to Smith's (2000) research on problems experienced by student teachers, none of them reached the third stage. However, Anna learned about the students' needs and Cara developed lesson plans that interested the students while less so for Marie-Eve.

The student teachers discussed topics that were unusual compared to the concerns mentioned in the literature by Fuller (1969), Kowalchuk (1999), Smith (2000), and Woods & Weasmer (2003). In the literature, there was no mention of the cooperating teachers or anything personal. However Anna, Marie-Eve and Cara continuously referred to their cooperating teachers throughout the interview. Some of the personal views expressed by the student teachers were feeling a lack of self-confidence and self-esteem. There was also a mention of feeling insecure caused by the large stature of the students as well as not feeling comfortable teaching in the cooperating teacher's space. One student teacher also blamed herself for not being more assertive with the unruly students as she struggled with not knowing her role in the classroom.

Since the greatest number of discussions revolved around cooperating teachers, it is imperative to provide various characteristics that depict the roles of a cooperating teacher. Then compare those to the relationship between Anna, Marie-Eve and Cara to their cooperating teachers. This will help determine the consistencies and inconsistencies of the role of a cooperating teacher.

A cooperating teacher is considered to be the most influential role model (Darden, Scott, Darden, & Westfall, 2001) since student teachers spend most of their time with him/her rather than the university supervisor. Due to this, the quality of mentoring (Fairbanks, Freedman, & Kahn, 2000) provides a “rich opportunity for guided growth” (Woods & Weasmer, 2003, p. 681). This includes encouraging interns to reflect upon their own teaching strategies, to be critical of their practice and to implement what they have gained into their student teaching (Fairbanks, Freedman, & Kahn, 2000; Zimmerman, 1994).

Another role of a cooperating teacher is to communicate effectively to the student teacher (such as stating the classroom responsibilities and the rules) as well as to help develop his/her professional identity. The mentor observes considerately and offers support, especially during times when it is mostly needed. In order to do so, the cooperating teacher must be aware that they have preconceived notions of teaching (Fairbanks, Freedman, & Kahn, 2000), therefore keep in mind that the intern’s “values, beliefs and perspectives” are not stable during this period. The cooperating teacher gives advice, provides resources and listens to the student teacher’s concerns about teaching (Fairbanks, Freedman, & Kahn; Darden, Scott, Darden, & Westfall, p.53). He/ she should be there to help ease the transition (Fairbanks, Freedman, & Kahn) as well as to provide a realistic view of teaching. This includes informing student teachers that there are other responsibilities outside of the classroom.

## **Conclusion**

Student teaching is the “capstone of teacher preparation” for nearly a century (Woods & Weasmer, 2003, p. 681). This experience should be a culminating one that allows student teachers to try different teaching styles and to define their own role of a teacher (Kowalchuk, 1999). During this stage, student teachers will develop their values, beliefs and teaching skills as this experience makes the education courses (such as discussing discipline problems in the university and then encountering the actual situation in the classroom) relevant to the practicum (Darden, Scott, Darden, & Westfall, 2001; Kowalchuk, 1999).

The following are suggestions for cooperating teachers to consider and/or to add to their existing knowledge. The cooperating teacher can easily forget what it is like to be a student teacher once they become a teacher. Therefore, I feel it is crucial to state the relevance of student teaching and how it is not realistic to expect interns to perfect teaching skills (Darden, Scott, Darden, & Westfall, 2001) or to judge them harshly. The most challenging part for me as a student is to offer suggestions to cooperating teachers, especially some of the experienced teachers (who are cooperating teacher’s) without implying that their method of mentoring is not effective. I do not have any intentions of modifying anyone’s approach to mentoring student teachers.

Student teachers see their mentors as a supporter and someone to impart knowledge of teaching (such as lesson planning and dealing with discipline) (Meijer, Zanting, & Verloop, 2002). They look to their cooperating teachers for assistance to help ease the transition into the school therefore interns should feel welcome to ask questions related to their teaching

experience (Darden, Scott, Darden, & Westfall, 2001). Interns benefit from observing strong cooperating teachers (someone that provides student teachers the opportunity to learn on their own along with the necessary guidance) as they enter the internship with preconceived ideas of teaching. Student teachers observe cooperating teachers to help put things into perspective by revising their daily expectations. Through observation, student teachers also learn how to interact with the students who are difficult to handle in class (Fairbanks, Freedman, & Kahn, 2000).

When student teachers enter the professional work field, they will first rely on the student teaching experience since it is the only experience they can relate to. Although student teachers may gain a complete experience by taking over the cooperating teacher's responsibilities (Darden, Scott, Darden, & Westfall, 2001), it is not comparable to teaching for an entire year and to have the "legal, professional and ethical responsibilities as a teacher" (Smith, 2000, p. 633).

Cooperating teachers have their own way of mentoring student teachers, just as student teachers will gradually find their own method of teaching that is compatible with their personalities. Based on the interviews with Anna, Marie-Eve and Cara, I have learned that student teachers value a cooperating teacher who is comfortable to share their power, is adaptable, is helpful with discipline and maintains communication throughout the internship.

## **Power sharing**

One of the challenges all student teachers experienced was the cooperating teachers struggling with power sharing. Cooperating teachers set realistic goals and expectations for student teachers, however the level of expectations should meet the interns' capabilities. Mentors should not lower their standards, nevertheless student teachers should enter their practicum with some knowledge of the teaching profession (for example, being punctual, planning lessons and preparing materials).

Anna expressed that her cooperating teacher undermined her as she tried to manage the classroom. The first time, Anna removed a tool (a saw) from a student who was sawing at the table. The second time Anna did not permit the students to sit with their friends and could only have access to one art material (for example a pencil) in the class. The cooperating teacher went against Anna's authority as she returned the tool to the student who was sawing at the desk. She also told the students that they could sit with their friends and select their choice of materials.

Marie-Eve openly described how her cooperating teacher made her feel insecure about her own teaching strategies. When Marie-Eve had difficulty explaining a project, the cooperating teacher was normally in class to correct her. She felt that she did not have the opportunity to learn from own her mistakes. Marie-Eve thought that the mistakes "screwed up" the cooperating teacher's idea of turning students into famous artists.

Cara indicated that her cooperating teacher took time to allow Cara to teach all of the classes. She did not feel comfortable teaching in the cooperating teacher's classroom. When

Cara called in sick, the cooperating teacher told her to take her time to get better. The cooperating teacher said she was happy to teach again because she was bored with not doing anything.

My experience with the cooperating teacher was different compared to Anna, Marie-Eve and Cara's. My cooperating teacher was pleased to give me full authority as a teacher. Before I started my internship at the secondary school, he informed the students that I would be taking over all of the classes as well as the grading. My cooperating teacher mentioned to the students that he would not modify any of the grades they receive. I had full support from my cooperating teacher to explore various teaching strategies and disciplining techniques, and rearranging the classroom as I saw fit.

### **Adaptability**

Cooperating teachers will receive student teachers with different personalities, various skills and their own perception of teaching. Therefore it is important for mentors to have various methods to guide strong or weak student teachers.

It is important that cooperating teachers are open-minded to student teachers practicing various teaching strategies and disciplining techniques in order to develop their own teaching philosophy as well as finding their comfort zone in the classroom. Interns are still vulnerable at this stage therefore verbal permission to learn through trial and error can help ease the uncertainty of student teachers. However cooperating teachers imposing their style of teaching can be detrimental to student teachers finding their own philosophy.



Cooperating teachers that stay current with the art education program as well as with the students' culture is advantageous to both parties. Cooperating teachers that are well informed can help build a common ground with interns. This also demonstrates cooperating teachers showing interests of the student teachers' experiences.

Anna, Marie-Eve and Cara were not encouraged to adopt their own teaching philosophy or to explore various teaching and discipline methods. According to Anna and Marie-Eve, their first cooperating teachers did not seem to accept other ways of teaching or disciplining. Therefore, they both felt deterred from trying other teaching styles, however Anna did make an attempt to try various discipline techniques towards the winter semester. Although Cara's cooperating teacher was adamant about her rules, Cara gradually taught the way she wanted.

My cooperating teacher encouraged me to take advantage of being a student teacher by trying all teaching strategies possible. He said that I needed to find the right teaching philosophy that was compatible with my personality. Cooperating teachers that are aware of student teachers experiencing stress can make them feel understood. This may influence interns to share some of their concerns openly.

Anna, Marie-Eve and Cara all expressed that they were stressed due to a heavy workload from preparing many classes. They did not mention that the cooperating teachers acknowledged the pressure they were experiencing.

My cooperating teacher was aware that student teaching was difficult. He would encourage me to relax during lunch and spares. He also suggested that showing a film to the students occasionally could be a nice break for the teacher.

### **Modelling effective classroom management**

Cooperating teachers that give advice in disciplining students could help student teachers feel they have some form of authority in the classroom. In this case Anna, Marie-Eve and Cara did not have a role model to assist with disciplining.

Anna did not have any discipline techniques to follow that would help her manage the class. Anna admitted the first cooperating teacher had no control over the class and the second cooperating teacher did not use effective strategies (such as yelling at the kids and wanting to be their friends). The third cooperating teacher was an experienced teacher, however, she never taught art therefore managing an art classroom was different.

Marie-Eve did not get the opportunity to practice discipline techniques because her cooperating teacher took care of the unruly students as Marie-Eve was only expected to focus on teaching.

Cara explained that her cooperating was very strict with the rules. The cooperating teacher instilled the rules onto the students in the beginning of the year and always kept her word. The students behaved well with the cooperating teacher present, however would test Cara when she was teaching alone.

I was fortunate to have a cooperating teacher who knew how to gauge my call for help when I needed most. He allowed me try many discipline techniques and only intervened if the students had crossed the line. The cooperating teacher took the time to provide some pointers in disciplining students.

### **Ongoing communication**

Cooperating teachers that continuously develop a positive two-way dialogue with student teachers can provide the support they need. Cooperating teachers that welcome student teachers into the classroom and make clear their responsibilities, helps interns become familiar with their role. Student teachers need to be told that they are invited to ask any questions or to speak of any concerns. Since it is already difficult for interns to enter a new setting, they are not expected to assume their role in the classroom. It is important that interns feel they are working collaboratively with cooperating teachers by exchanging ideas. This helps build trust between the two and alleviates any nervousness or tension from the student teacher during the beginning of the internship.

Some student teachers may be independent while others need more guidance. Cooperating teachers that are sensitive to constructive criticism to the student teachers and can gauge the needs of interns can assist them in the right direction. Cooperating teachers that acknowledge student teachers' successes and concerns (for example, stress) show that they are looking out for the best interest of interns. This also helps student teachers to feel more confident.

In this study, Anna's first two cooperating teachers, Marie-Eve's first cooperating teacher and Cara's cooperating teacher did not maintain consistent communication with them. According to the participants, none of the cooperating teachers acknowledged the stress (caused by the workload) of the student teachers that were caused by a heavy workload.

According to Anna, her first cooperating teacher was "cold" and did not inform her of the classroom responsibilities. This did not only leave her feeling uncertain of the role in the classroom, she partially blamed herself for not taking control of the class. Anna said that she did not receive any support nor was there any collaboration between them. She also felt that it was unfair for that cooperating teacher to evaluate her.

Marie-Eve believed that her first cooperating teacher provided only negative feedback. Marie-Eve was told that she did not take advice from her cooperating teacher, was compared unfavourably to former student teachers and was described as a mean person. According to Marie-Eve the cooperating teacher pointed out Marie-Eve's ineffective teaching methods instead of giving constructive criticism. This form of communication caused Marie-Eve to underestimate her teaching capabilities. She described that she never experienced such low self-esteem and low self-confidence, and almost reached the point of depression.

Cara thought that her cooperating teacher's philosophy to be very different from hers. Due to this, she did not get a chance to express how she would like to teach the students and to manage the class.

During the first day of my internship, my cooperating teacher welcomed me into his classroom with open arms. He provided positive feedback and gave practical suggestion on how I could improve on certain things. He had a good sense of judgement as to when I needed assistance. My cooperating was honest about how he first had reservations with one of my lesson plans that turned out successfully. He also pointed out the reasons why the lesson was successful. The cooperating teacher and I maintained a good relationship throughout the internship with consistent communication (more so on his part). I learned a lot through listening to some of his stories and tips about teaching.

After the process of interviewing the participants and analysing the data, my anticipation of a student teacher experiencing difficulty with classroom management and discipline was confirmed through the interviews with Anna, Marie-Eve and Cara. This appears to be a common challenge indicated in the literature stated in this research paper. I feel this is a stage where student teachers encounter a realistic view of teaching. However, I was surprised to discover all three student teachers discussed their personal thoughts about their cooperating teachers in the beginning of the interview without me asking them the question that was planned towards the end of the interview. I learned that student teachers are in a more a vulnerable position than I could ever imagine. Cooperating teachers have the power to personally affect student teachers positively or negatively. I did not expect that a negative experience could be detrimental to the interns well being (such as physical and mental exhaustion, possibility of depression, suffering from low self-esteem and lacking confidence). The most important aspect I would remember as a cooperating teacher is the expectations that I plan to have for my future student teachers will be reciprocated by myself as a mentor.

## References

- Berliner, C. David. (2000). A personal bash to those who bash teacher education. *Journal of Physical Education Recreation & Dance*, 72(4), 50-53.
- Eble, E. K. (1988). *The craft of teaching: A guide to mastering the professor's art*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Darden, G., Scott, K., Darden, A., & Westfall, S. (2001). The student-teaching experience. *Teaching Education*, 51(5), 258-371.
- Elbow, P. (1986). *Embracing contraries: exploration in learning and teaching*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Fairbanks, M.C., Freedman, D., & Kahn, C. (2000). The role of effective mentors in learning to teach. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 51(2), 102-112.
- Fuller, F.F. (1969). Concerns of teachers: A developmental conceptualization. *American Educational Research Journal*, 6(2), 207-226.
- Goldstein, S.L., & Lake, E. V. (2000). "Love, love, and more love for children": Exploring preservice teachers' understandings of caring. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 16, 861-872.
- Hatton, N., & Smith, D. (1995). Reflection in teacher education: Towards definition and implementation. *Teaching and Teaching Education*, 11(1), 33-49.
- Kowalchuk, E.A. (1999). Perceptions of practice: What art student teachers say they learn and need to know. *Studies in Art Education*, 41(1), 71-90.
- Mann, D. R. (1970). *The college classroom: Conflict, change, and learning*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Meijer, C.P., Zanting, A., & Verloop, N. (2002). How can student teachers elicit experienced teachers' practical knowledge? Tools, suggestions, and significance. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 53(5), 406-419.
- Moore, R. (2003). Reexamining the field experiences of preservice teachers. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 54(1), 21-42.
- Ross, L.D. (2002). Cooperating teachers facilitating reflective practice for student teachers in a professional development school. *Education*, 122(4), 682-687.

- Seidman, I. (1999). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. New York: Columbia University, Teachers College.
- Smith, B.P. (2000). Emerging themes in problems experienced by student teachers: A framework for analysis. *College Student Journal*, 34, 633-640.
- Smith, J. D., & Sanche, P. R. (1992). Saskatchewan interns' concerns at three stages of four-month practicum. *The Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 38(2), 121-132.
- Smith, J. D., & Sanche, P. R. (1993). Intern's personally expressed concerns: A need to extend the fuller model? *Action in Teacher Education*, 25(1), 36-41.
- Stephens, G. P. (2005). *Ten suggested learning objectives for student teaching: A springboard to effective mentoring*. Reston, VA: The National Art Education Association.
- Turley, S., & Nakai, K. (2000). Two routes to certification: What do student teachers think? *Journal of Teacher Education*, 51(2), 122-134.
- Whipp, L.J. (2003). Scaffolding critical reflection in online discussions. Helping prospective teachers think deeply about field experiences in urban schools. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 54(4), 321-333.
- Woods, A. M., & Weasmer, J. (2003). Great expectations for student teachers: Explicit and implied. *Education*, 123(4), 681-688.
- Zimmerman, E. (1994). Current research and practice about pre-service visual art specialist teacher education. *Studies in Art Education*, 35(2), 79-89.

## Appendices

### CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

This is to state that I agree to participate in a program of research being conducted by Vila Woo, a student of Master of Arts (Art Education Program), Concordia University (514.938.2133, [vilawoo@gmail.com](mailto:vilawoo@gmail.com)).

#### A. PURPOSE

I have been informed that the purpose of the research is to collect data of my student teaching experiences based on a personal interview with the researcher. The information recorded will be used in Vila Woo's master's thesis.

#### B. PROCEDURES

The research, consisting of a one-hour interview, will be completed according to the convenience of the participant's schedule. The participant will not be subjected to any risks or discomfort and any special safeguards being taken to protect the confidentiality or well being of the subject.

#### C. CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at anytime without negative consequences.

I understand that my participation in this study is CONFIDENTIAL (i.e., the researcher will know, but will not disclose my identity).

I understand that the data from this study may be published.

I HAVE CAREFULLY STUDIED THE ABOVE AND UNDERSTAND THIS AGREEMENT.  
I FREELY CONSENT AND VOLUNTARILY AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.

NAME (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

If at any time you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact Adela Reid, Research Ethics and Compliance Officer, Concordia University, at 514.848.7481 or by e-mail at [areid@alcor.concordia.ca](mailto:areid@alcor.concordia.ca).





## Summary Protocol Form

---

- **For faculty and staff research:** Submit to the University Human Research Ethics Committee (UHREC), c/o the Office of Research, GM 1000.
- **For graduate or undergraduate research:**
  - For projects covered under a faculty member's previously approved SPF, no new SPF is required.
  - For new projects which are supported by external (e.g. Tri-council) or internal (e.g. CASA or FRDP) funds, the supervising faculty member must submit a new SPF on behalf of the student to the UHREC, c/o the Office of Research, GM 1000.
  - For new projects which are NOT supported by external (e.g. Tri-council) or internal (e.g. CASA or FRDP) funds, the student must submit a new SPF to the relevant departmental or faculty ethics sub-committee.

For more information on the above, see [http://oor.concordia.ca/REC/human\\_research.shtml](http://oor.concordia.ca/REC/human_research.shtml).  
 If using the MS Word form, please tab between fields (do not use the enter key) and click on check boxes.  
 If not using the MS Word form, please TYPE your responses and submit on a separate sheet.  
**Handwritten SPFs will not be accepted.**

Date: November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2005

What type of review do you recommend that this form receive? Expedited  or Full x

**Part One: Basic Information**

1. Names of Researchers:

Principal Investigator: Vila Woo  
 Department/Program: Art Education  
 Office address: Visual Arts Building, VA 209-1 1395 Rene-Levesque  
 Telephone number: 848.2424 (4639) E-mail address:

Names and details for all other researchers involved (e.g., co-investigators, collaborators, research associates, research assistants, supervisors – please specify role):

2. Title of Research Project: A Critical Reflection of Student Teaching and the Implications for Cooperating Teachers
  
3. Granting Agency, Grant Number and Title OR Contract and Contract Title (if applicable.):  
N/A
  
4. Brief Description of Research:  
The purpose of this qualitative research is to gain insight of student teacher's experiences. I will analyze the data (interviews) of student teachers to determine how I could benefit from the results as a cooperating teacher.
  
5. Scholarly Review of Proposed Research:  
N/A

#### **Part Two: Research Participants**

1. Sample of Persons to be Studied:  
  
The participants in this study are enrolled in ARTE 425 (Winter 2006) course, completing their ten-week teaching internship.
  
2. Method of Recruitment of Participants:  
  
Professor L. Blair will personally speak with the 4<sup>th</sup> year art education students and explain the purpose of the research project as well as the responsibilities of the participants. The students are free to voluntarily agree to participate in this study.
  
3. Treatment of Participants in the Course of the Research:  
  
I will verbally explain to the participants of their responsibility as the interviewee. The participants are to respond to specific questions concerning their experiences as a student teacher. Each participant will also be given a handout prior to the interview describing the procedures and questions to be asked.

### **Part Three: Ethical Concerns**

Indicate briefly how research plan deals with the following potential ethical concerns:

1. Informed Consent:

I will hand out a consent form to all participants who intend on taking part of this study. If the students agree to participate in the research, they will complete the form and return it to me.

2. Deception:

Please describe the nature of any deception and provide a rationale regarding why it must be used to address the research question – i.e., is it absolutely necessary for the design? Deception may include the following: deliberate presentation of false information; suppression of material information; selection of information designed to mislead; and selective disclosure.

3. Freedom to Discontinue:

The participants have the right to discontinue from the research project anytime without negative consequences.

4. Assessment of Risks to Subjects' Physical Wellbeing, Psychological Welfare, and/or Reputation:

This includes low-level risk or any form of discomfort resulting from the research procedure and how it will be dealt with. When it is called for, you should indicate arrangements that have been made to ascertain that subjects are in "healthy" enough condition to undergo the intended research procedures. You should be able to indicate clearly the kinds of risks that may be involved and the action to be taken if someone is unexpectedly put at risk as part of the research efforts.

5. Protecting and/or Addressing Participant "At Risk" Situations:

6. Post-Research Explanation and/or Debriefing:

N/A

7. Confidentiality of Results:

The results will be revealed in the research, however the participants identity and the names of the schools will remain anonymous (fake names will be used in the research).

8. Data Handling:

I will be tape recording the interviews, transcribing the interviews, making photocopies and sending a personal copy of the interview to each participant. The data will be transcribed and stored in the computer. I will be the only person to have access to the data and fake names will be used in my research.

9. Other Comments:

N/A

Signature of Principal Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: Nov. 28, 05 \_\_\_\_\_