# Overview: Reflection on Inclusive Instruction by a Teacher Candidate

icon of pen in ink jar to represent author **CONTRIBUTOR**

Teacher preparation program at a mid-size private college.

Icon of a document with lines of text and a folded corner**WHAT is this resource?**

This is an example of a reflection, focused on inclusive instruction that was submitted by a Teacher Candidate submitted as one of the Candidate Artifacts in the CAP.

Icon of a calendar with multiple blocks to represent time **WHEN could this resource be used?**

This reflection occurred during the practicum semester.

Icon with a group of five people standing together  **WHO could use this resource?**

The faculty member responsible for preparing Teacher Candidates for the practicum, as well as the **Teacher Candidate** could use this resource.

**icon with a checkmark in a circle HOW could this resource best be used?**

This resource could be used to show Teacher Candidates an example of how to connect the experiences in the practicum with the topics that are addressed in seminars, lectures and/or readings during coursework.

***Note:*** *This resource was submitted for inclusion in the Candidate Assessment of Performance (CAP) Resource Hub. It is intended to serve as a reference and source of guidance for others engaged in the CAP process. While it reflects one approach, users should adapt its content to fit the specific context and needs of their own evaluations.*

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**Reflection on Inclusive Instruction by a Teacher Candidate**

Reflection IV-1-A Inclusive Instruction

During my practicum experience, I find myself reflecting both positively and negatively to the way I taught a lesson, handled a situation, and in general how I handle the classroom. I ask myself what I could have done differently or what worked well for that particular situation. This year in my class, we have a student who is selectively mute and extremely anxious. Not only is this my first time with a student who is selectively mute, but it is also my Supervising practioner’s first time having a student such as them. For this particular situation, I find myself evaluating various strategies we can use and ways to adjust our practices in order to make this student feel safe, welcome, and heard within the classroom.

During the first few weeks of school, this student was incredibly shy and timid. We communicated with the student by using hand gestures such as thumbs-up, thumbs-down, and pointing. Similarly, we gave this student a whiteboard to write their answers down. To this day, we still communicate with this student in this way.

When I first heard that we had a student who was selectively mute, I was nervous. I asked myself, how is this student going to be able to participate or become engaged in class or small group discussions. During the first few weeks of school, I was afraid that this student would never participate and we would never truly get to know them because they were incredibly shy. My Supervising Practitioner and I were worried what other students would respond or how the relationships between this student and their classmates would be. However, thankfully this was not the case for many of the instances. The other students understand this student’s difference and offer assistance or alternate ways to communicate, with assistance from my Supervising Practitioner and I. For example, when working in a small group, one member may give two ideas then turn to this student and ask them to show their answers by displaying different finger choices (1 finger for one choice and 2 fingers for the other choice).

Although this student is still rather shy, we feel that they have become more comfortable with their surroundings. We know this because their personality is truly showing and they are communicating to us by using sounds. If this student wants to gain our immediate attention and we are not looking in their direction, they make a screech sound. Similarly, the student has distinct facial expressions that tell exactly how they are feeling. For example, if they are shocked, they let out a gasp and open their mouth in surprise. If they are excited they pump their firsts in the air and show a great smile. These are just a few examples! This student is making incredible progress in just the first month and a half of school. During lessons that specifically use the Smartboard to write, they raise their hand to participate because, instead of saying their answers allowed, they can write them on the board.

When viewing the article *Liberatory Education,* there are numerous principles we can follow to help tackle learning inequalities. For example, the article states, “We must prioritize helping students continue to grow as learners before focusing on covering particular grade level content” (Hammond, 6). This may be viewed as a cycle of some sort, students need to learn how to learn in order for learning to be effective. If students become excited and eager to learn, the information may stay in their minds better. The article states, “We need to welcome this new “off topic” knowledge back into the classroom as an asset” (Hammond, 6). This statement ties into the first principle because students may become more eager to learn about a random topic that is not necessarily content related, however they are practicing this learning process. This process can then be applied to the learning of true content. The article also talked about allowing students to be “leaders of their own learning” (Hammond, 5). When students are “leaders of their own learning” (Hammond, 5), they feel empowered. Similarly, this may assist with the learning process because they are learning in a way that makes sense to them.