Introducing the Quest

"We teach to change the world."

—STEPHEN D. BROOKFIELD (1995, p.1)

Congratulations, and welcome to the professional rank of being an educator! This is the beginning of your own professional development quest. Until now, most of your preparation as an educator fit within someone else's framework of what you needed to know to be a practitioner. By this point, you may feel as if you are on your own. What now? The purpose of this book is to help you meander through the daily experiences of teaching; to help you think about what happens in your day, your weeks, and the semester; and to help you set a course of action to improve your effectiveness as an educator. *A New Teacher's Guide to Best Practices* is designed to be a self-reflection manual that will help you navigate your beginning years of teaching and serve as a guide on your personal quest toward best practice.

Book Overview

This book is divided into 10 sections, called challenges, that represent 10 months of the academic calendar. The challenges deal with planning and preparation, curriculum, classroom climate, classroom management, instruction, professional roles, collegiality, assessment, professional development, and administrators, parents, and the community. Each challenge provides you with an opportunity to write about what you presently observe or think about the topic and poses questions intended to stretch your thinking so that you may consider new ideas about the topic. Quotes from a variety of sources present you with even more thoughts to ponder. Questions that are often raised by beginning teachers are highlighted with several possible solutions. You will also encounter numerous new and innovative ideas for managing the classroom, which can be altered to fit your particular needs. After exploring a topic from various angles, you are encouraged to revisit your original ideas at the end of the year so that you may reflect on what you have learned about the topic. Ultimately, the content of this book will assist you in establishing a professional development plan to guide your own growth as a teacher. It will help you to identify successes that you could include in your teaching portfolio.

Even though the book is systematically organized, you need not read the challenges in a particular order. Each challenge is self-contained so that you may tackle each at your own pace, deciding which one to focus on depending on your own professional development needs. Each challenge is interrelated and integrated so that you may select among them according to your needs.

A master teacher or mentor within your school system can also use the book to guide you or a group of teachers. The book can be used as a springboard for discussion with a group of peers who are working through it together. If this book is used as part of a mentoring relationship, there are a few strategies for implementing a successful mentoring relationship a professional development coordinator can consider. These strategies are outlined below:

- **Before school begins, introduce the mentor and mentee so that a relationship can be established. Plan a schedule for meetings and time for working on the challengeS.**

- **Identify additional resources/teachers/mentors who might be helpful to the development of the new or beginning teacher.**

- **Establish a professional development plan that spans a three-year period. Identify those activities that could be beneficial for the beginning teacher's development.**

- **Structure study groups of new teachers and mentors.**

- **Establish periodic meetings with the principal and administrator for the mentor and mentee to share the success of the new teacher.**

- **Create a structure for peer evaluation of teaching. New teachers should observe master teachers and master teachers should observe beginning teachers.**

- **Set up a buddy plan for attending and debriefing inservice training.**

- **Establish a recording method for beginning teachers to document success.**

- **Create an evaluation at periodic times throughout the first few years with constructive feedback.**

A professional development coordinator may choose to consider the guidelines for mentors and mentees shown in Figure 1.1. This information can also be used as a framework for a course or series of workshops with a group of beginning teachers. See Figure 1.2 for professional development plans that a group of beginning teachers might use in conjunction with this book.

The Journey Begins

As an educator, you provide a tremendous service to society. The future of any civilization relies on the knowledge, skills, and application of that knowledge and those skills to improving the human condition. Education is central to life and to our survival as a civilization.

Wisdom and knowledge have been passed on through the generations by various methods. In some cultures, teaching was and still is accomplished through storytelling. In others, master craftsmen taught children by passing along skills and knowledge through practical experience. And in yet other cultures, people were taught to read and were educated through the written word. Regardless of the method by which one is educated, few would argue that most every encounter, experience, and waking moment reveals opportunities for learning. Consequently, all of life is about learning.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE MENTEE AND THE MENTOR

The following list provides ideas and examples of what a mentee should bring to the interaction with a mentor and the responsibility the mentor has to the mentee. The use of these strategies should help to ensure successful implementation of the activities in this book in a mentor/mentee relationship.

MENTOR	MENTEE
1. Communicate his or her expectations and objectives for the relationship.	1. Understand that the relationship is designed to support the mentee.
2. Encourage the mentee to develop his or her own teaching style; invite the mentee to observe his or her teaching.	2. Be willing to experiment with new ideas and suggestions and observe mentor's professional practice. Develop new lesson plans that reflect varying formats.
3. Provide new ideas, research, and resources as they become available	3. Identify new ideas to try.
4 Arrange for introduction to other staff members, administrators, and school personnel. Share information regarding extracurricular opportunities.	4. Assume responsibility for getting to know the facilities, personnel, environment, and political structure of the school.
5. Share classroom management plans, a variety of assessment strategies, curriculum guides, etc.	5. Develop a classroom management plan and a variety of assessment strategies.
6. Identify his or her own learning style and discuss with the mentee how this sytle impacts his or her teaching.	6. Identify personal learning style and explore how that style impacts teaching.
7. Encourage and arrange observations in other classes, levels of ability, and grade levels.	7. Observe other teachers from a variety of subject areas.
8. Communicate with the mentee daily.	8. Communicate with the mentor teacher daily.
9. Model teaching strategies, language, interactions, and curriculum decisions that reflect the multicultural identities of students.	9. Address the various learning styles and multicultural identities of students.
10. Serve as an advocate when issues become problematic and as a promoter when mentee accomplishes goals.	10. Share problematic situations and triumphs with the mentor.
11. Share curriculum materials.	11. Ask for help and materials.
12. Observe the mentee and offer noncritical suggestions in the areas of curriculum design, assessment, classroom management, etc.	12. Allow the mentor to observe teaching on a regular basis.
13. Maintain confidentiality and discuss career paths, goals for the future, legal issues, state requirements, etc.	13. Trust the mentor with confidences.

Figure 1.1

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS

One-Year Professional Development Plan
This plan is based on a rigorous yearlong program in which you would read the introduction before school begins and then spend a month on each challenge. You can select any challenge for the month because they are self-contained modules.

Introducing the Quest
- Planning and Preparation
- Determining the Curriculum
- Classroom Space and Establishing the Climate
- Classroom Management and Organizational Strategies
- Instruction
- Professional Roles and Responsibilities
- Collegiality
- Assessment, Evaluation, and Grades
- Professional Development
- Administrators, Parents, and the Community

Two-Year Professional Development Plan
This plan is based on dividing your professional development into a two-year program in which you would focus on the issues inside the classroom in your first year and those outside the classroom in your second. Each challenge is self-contained so you can select them in the order that they are most appropriate and timely for your individual needs.

Inside
Introducing the Quest
- Classroom Space and Establishing the Climate
- Classroom Management and Organizational Strategies
- Instruction
- Assessment, Evaluation, and Grades

Outside
Planning and Preparation
- Determining the Curriculum
- Professional Roles and Responsibilities
- Collegiality
- Professional Development
- Administrators, Parents, and the Community

Three-Year Professional Development Plan
This plan outlines in sequential order what most beginning teachers claim to be the most pertinent areas of need when they enter the classroom. It assumes you will take a longer period of time to focus on each of the areas outlined in the challenges. It is a good model to use for a self-directed program. You can record what you learn in your professional portfolio.

Year 1
Introducing the Quest
- Planning and Preparation
- Classroom Space and Establishing the Climate
- Classroom Management and Organizational Strategies

Year 2
Determining the Curriculum
- Instruction
- Assessment, Evaluation, and Grades

Figure 1.2

Figure 1.2 continued

Your caregivers had a tremendous impact on you as an infant. As you grew, you learned through the influence of those around you. What you learned was manifested in your creativity, your actions, and your behaviors. Before long, you could see that what you knew, coupled with what you could learn, had the potential to create new ideas and actions.

Education, therefore, is the cornerstone of our existence. Becoming an educator is an exciting challenge and one worthy of serious respect. A teacher has a remarkable ability to shape the future. Your college degree is a testament to the knowledge and skills necessary to enter the professional ranks of education. No doubt you have brought along a wealth of experiences that make your teaching style unique. Your university degree program established a certain set of requirements for you to become a teacher. However, no one would expect any other professional to rely solely on what he or she had learned in college as sufficient for professional practice. The choices you make today as an individual will determine how effective you will be as an educator. Now you have the potential and responsibility of determining those activities and experiences necessary for your own growth as an educator.

You will find that your college preparation, in some cases, equipped you for what you will experience in the classroom. In other situations, you might find you need additional skills and knowledge to meet the challenges you will face. Whatever the case, it now becomes your role to build a repertoire of creative ideas, skills, and abilities for your success.

What makes a good teacher? Researchers claim it's a variety of abilities. But abilities without the wisdom to know when, where, and how to enact those abilities can lead to frustration. Wisdom in teaching comes through experience and reflection—it requires commitment, practice, and a plan. Familiarity and practice will assist you as you embark on this exciting journey.

One of the most difficult tasks of being a teacher is realizing that the sincerest desire will not assure perfect practice. The complexity of teaching and learning complicated by human relationships challenges teachers to continually reflect on their practice. As is true with people in all walks of life, teachers are sometimes unaware of why they respond the way they do in a given situation. Students, colleagues, mentors, administrators, and the public you serve will no doubt occasionally have different interpretations of your responses, your intents, and your behaviors. It is important not to blame yourself for how others perceive your actions. Developing an ability to *critically reflect* on your practice, to understand and interpret its meaning for you and your learners, will help you define your purpose and clarify your role as an educator.

Many questions set the stage for using this book—for beginning your quest toward best practice. What assumptions do you have about teaching and learning? What assumptions do you presently have about your role as an educator? Do you see yourself as a person willing to reflect on your actions and to modify them appropriately to enhance student learning? Without the ability to reflect on your practice, you run the risk of repeating questionable judgments.

Prescribing a set of rules, standards, guidelines, or activities in some ways contradicts the notion of being a reflective practitioner. To do so suggests that if you follow those rules or guidelines, you will be effective. This, however, is not the case. What you think is good for your learners may result in a negative outcome. For example, if you place the names of students on the desks so that when they arrive to your class the first day they will know where to sit, some students may perceive this as being controlling and manipulative. They may be turned off immediately because they were not given the opportunity to choose where to sit. Others may like that the seating decision was made for them and desire to get on with the work in the class. Either way, you may have intended only to save the time it would take to verbally assign seats. Assuming a student who did not like your decision to assign seats makes his or her opinion known to you, you cannot then presume all students feel the same way and judge yourself negatively for your decision to assign seats. As you reflect on your action, you may find out more about yourself as an educator. What assumptions did you make regarding the amount of time it would take to make the name cards versus the amount of time it would have taken to say each student's name to verbally assign seats or have them sit wherever they desired? Or were you trying to establish a climate of being organized? Whatever your motivation, as you reflect, you will want to challenge the assumptions you have that drive your decisions and actions as a teacher.

Critical Reflection

Becoming a reflective practitioner demands more than simple thinking about practice. Smyth (1992), Zeichner (1994), and Brookfield (1995) point out that the reflection becomes insignificant if teachers use it *only to justify the practice that they prefer*. Zeichner (1994) claims, "It has come to the point now where the whole range of beliefs about teaching, learning, schooling, and the social order have become incorporated into the discourse about reflective practice. Everyone, no matter what his or her ideological orientation, has jumped on the bandwagon at this point, and has committed his or her energies to furthering some version of reflective teaching practice" (p. 9). Brookfield (1995) clarifies the difference between reflection and critical reflection. He claims that just because a teacher reflects on his or her practice, the process of reflection may not be critical. All reflection is important to growth and (ultimately) change, but critical reflection is central to revealing that which is necessary for substantive change. Brookfield delineated between reflection and critical reflection when he suggested that "reflection becomes critical when it has two distinctive purposes. The first is to understand how considerations of power undergird, frame, and distort educational processes and interactions. The second is to question assumptions and practices that seem to make our teaching easier but actually work against our own best long-term interests" (p. 8).

Being a critically reflective practitioner suggests that you cannot expect to find all the answers to your questions about being an educator neatly packaged in a book, on the Web, or in a workshop. These resources will certainly provide knowledge for your reflection but alone will prove insufficient for true transformation. This type of thinking suggests that someone or something "out there" will provide the answers needed to solve problems. Brookfield (1995) contends that the difficult problems faced by educators do not have standardized solutions. Instead, he suggests that the educator recognize that resources must be integrated with knowledge of local conditions and adapted to personal circumstances. This requires active participation in the process of questioning the values inherent in our practice as educators.

Brookfield (1995) also outlines six reasons why assuming a critical reflective stance is pertinent to sound professional practice. First, he claims that it helps teachers to act from an *informed position* rather than an *unexamined perspective.* If someone challenges your action as an educator, it is beneficial to know why you do what you do based on your assumptions about teaching and learning. We expect our learners and colleagues to understand our actions. Being able to rationally critique and justifiably articulate our practice will help to ensure understanding and support among everybody who is involved in the educational practice. The second reason Brookfield supports critical reflection as central to sound professional practice is that it helps the educator to "know why we believe what we believe" (p. 23). It is important for us as professionals to have the *ability to articulate* why we make the choices we do. We often do this through examined critique by wrestling with the ideas that form our beliefs about teaching, discipline, knowledge, and practice. Without this grounding, teachers are subject to political or pedagogical whims. Equally important to this process is Brookfield's third objective for being critically reflective, which is to *avoid blaming self* for students' inability or unwillingness to learn. Sometimes teachers become frustrated and blame themselves for the hostility or anger that their students express. Brookfield suggests that student resistance instead may be socially or politically sculpted. The reflective teacher will find appropriate ways to turn resistance into enthusiasm for learning. Being *emotionally grounded* is Brookfield's fourth purpose for teachers to critically reflect. Without this ability, teachers' morale could easily suffer. For example, success or failure related to teaching has the potential to send a teacher on a roller coaster of emotions. Consequently, actions are subject to the perceived effects of daily experiences. This has the potential to frighten new professionals who do not know how to reflect critically on their practice. Without this ability, they may select to leave the classroom.

Brookfield is the fifth reason to use critical reflection is that it enlivens the classroom. Students watch and observe teachers. If a student sees a teacher who shares his or her passion for critical reflection within the context of the content and the course, that student is more apt to trust the teacher. Teachers who are willing to share their ideas with students invite students to engage in the critical reflective process. This whole practice has the potential to provide an important indicator of teacher effectiveness. Finally, Brookfield recognizes that what teachers do makes a difference in the world. Students learn to trust one another within a democratic society through how they are treated as persons within the learning process. How the teacher responds to any given situation is a learning experience for the student and provides a model for teaching critical reflection.

The ability to critically reflect on practice as an educator is perhaps the most important quality a teacher can develop. This book is designed to assist you in assuming a critical posture in the situations outlined below, to help you focus on certain components of teaching and dig beneath the surface to critically analyze the values and beliefs that manifest themselves in your practice. Consider what it means to be a critical reflective practitioner in these situations:

- Planning and preparing for teaching
- Selecting the curriculum
- Organizing your classroom space and establishing the climate for your learners
- Managing your classroom and carrying out organizational strategies
- Preparing for instruction
- Accomplishing your professional roles and responsibilities
- Developing relationships with colleagues
- Assessing, evaluating, and grading learners
- Determining your personal plan for professional development
- Interacting with administrators, parents, and the community

Darling-Hammond and Sclan (1996) agree with Brookfield (1995) that teachers need to be able to challenge the obstacles they face related to quality teaching and learning. To do so is one way to engage teachers in the process of educational reform. All teachers should be engaged in personal and professional development that involves critical reflection of one's teaching experience, including beliefs and practices. Engaging teachers in assessing, observing, and reflecting can assist them in perceiving themselves as learners and teachers (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). This type of professional development requires reflective practices.

This book is designed to help you, the beginning teacher, to reflect on those things you believe, experience, and practice. By working through a series of self-reflective exercises, you will become more comfortable in the role of reflective practitioner. This book's strategies rely on practice and reflection. Consequently, anyone involved in the process of assisting you will be engaged in the critical process of reflection to improve education. Reflection can be viewed from several different perspectives. Smyth (1989) suggests that it can "vary from a concern with the micro aspects of the teaching/learning process and subject matter knowledge, to macro concerns about political/ethical principles underlying teaching and the relationship of schooling to the wider institutions and hierarchies of society" (p. 4).

Regardless of the angle from which one views reflection, most researchers agree that the process is a complex study. According to Sparks-Langer and Colton (1991), three elements of teacher reflection have been the focus of study: the ability to process information and make decisions; the understanding of what drives thinking, such as the experiences, personal goals, values, and social implications; and teachers' narrative expressions of events that occur within their lives. This book will help you to experience each of these three areas of focus as you think about your practice, draw connections to your reasons for acting based on your values and ways of viewing your practice, and interpret these two components within the context of your life experience as an educator.

Dewey (1938) believed that an interactive connection exists between education and personal experience. He suggested that individuals learn by connecting their former experiences with new knowledge. He warned, however, that this practice needs to be guided so as to avoid simply reinforcing an "automatic skill in a particular direction," which could result in perpetuating a rut (p. 26). He also believed that positive learning occurs when individuals engage in guided learning by interacting with others. Using his theory, this text can help you to find meaning in your experience by reflecting on your personal practice. One needs to know, however, that knowledge and self-reflection are socially and culturally constructed. There is no single truth about teaching or education. The learning process is unpredictable.

Being an educator is a rewarding and challenging professional position. Using this book as a guide for your professional development will yield many exciting opportunities for your growth. The strategies outlined in the challenges are designed to encourage mindful thinking and positive change and to support you in your quest toward best practice.

The Challenges

Each challenge contains a mix of tools designed to help you reflect on and explore the topic at hand. These tools are designed to help you develop a plan of action for tackling the challenge. The tools in each challenge are explained in more depth below.

Assessment and Reflections Log

Each challenge begins with an **Assessment and Reflections Log**. Use the log to document your *current beliefs* about the content within the challenge. After you record your present beliefs, outline your aspirations. The log is designed to walk you through the process of documenting your present beliefs, spelling out your goals, and setting a course of action to accomplish your objectives. This cognitive process is important, but it will not result in action unless you put your thoughts to use. The remainder of the challenge, and the activities within each section, are designed to assist you in that process. At the end of each section you should have acquired more experience, entered into dialogue with colleagues, and taken steps to do something designed to encourage growth toward your goals. Each challenge contains quotes sprinkled throughout that relate to the challenge content.

Practical Problem

Also included in each challenge is a question framed as a **Practical Problem**. Practical problems are the situations all teachers encounter daily that require thought and action, such as *what to do about something* they are facing in their roles as educators. Through self-reflection and dialogue with colleagues and mentors, teachers can envision a better way to handle situations, which can, in turn, begin to reshape the way we all look at educational issues. Therefore, practical problems are asked in the form of a question, such as, "What ought to be done about planning and preparation for teaching?" Framing challenge content in this way helps the educator to see the issue from a perspective that requires thoughtful consideration. The questions do not call for a specific answer; rather, they help set the stage for critical reflection and deliberate action.

Valued Ends

Practical problems are followed by **Valued Ends**, which are examples of a possible end result of the original question(s). When determining *what ought to be done* in any given situation, it becomes clear that there are no specific answers. However, if one considers the best possible scenario, a valued end is reached. Valued ends are the ultimate goals or objectives when considering all possibilities of the original question(s) or practical problem(s). Eventually, it would be ideal if all educators could reach the valued end. Teachers are accustomed to working to accomplish goals and objectives; however, a valued end is designed to be a *quality* worth attaining. A valued end is only one example of what could be achieved.

"I am wondering . . .?"

When determining how one might get to the valued ends, teachers ask a lot of questions. Examples of questions teachers have asked in each challenge are listed in the section titled **"I am wondering . . .?"**. Such questions set the stage for beginning teachers to understand the concepts central to problem-based education and practical reasoning. You are encouraged to write your own questions in the space provided in this section.

Focus on the Issue

The challenge issue is explored in the section called **Focus on the Issue**. This section contains an up-to-date overview of relevant scholarship in each challenge. Before long, you will be engaging in active teacher research, and this section will be helpful to you in that process.

Students Speak Out

Students Speak Out comprises a series of responses to open-ended sentence stems related to the challenge topic. Students at the middle, junior, and high school levels throughout the country have responded to the sentence stems. These student voices will assist the beginning teacher to "hear," through the voice of a learner, those things that teachers do—or don't do—that students find helpful or troublesome. Keep in mind that an idea or conclusion does not demand change. It simply encourages thoughtful reflection and consideration.

The Teachers' Lounge

The Teachers' Lounge comes after the student voices. Beginning teachers often feel disconnected or isolated in their new environments as they begin to tackle their roles as educators. Teachers' lounges may suffer from a negative stereotype in some situations, but they also provide a valuable resource opportunity for teachers to share ideas with one another. Teachers who have responded in this section are seasoned and in many cases have served as cooperating or mentor teachers for university programs nationwide.

Teacher Tips

Teacher Tips includes additional tips that may not have been mentioned by a mentor or an experienced teacher in the preceding section.

A Mentor Moment

Each challenge includes a section for the teacher and his or her mentor called **A Mentor Moment**. You are encouraged to record additional questions you have for your mentor. Recording these questions will help you to see how far you have come when you review this book and your thoughts in your second and third years of teaching.

Shared Strategies

Shared Strategies focuses solely on specific examples of how to use the content related to each challenge.

Each challenge contains **An Amusing Story** written by a teacher or student about the challenge content. These stories are real accounts of situations that beginning teachers have encountered.

Personal Reflection Journal

Each challenge provides ample space for you to keep a **Personal Reflection Journal**. You can document and examine what you are learning about your existing practice and reflect on your personal growth and change.

Standards

Although schools differ in their acceptance of teaching standards, it is generally agreed that educators need to possess a certain level of competence to be successful. Because of their generic nature, the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) standards have been used as a framework for thinking about best practice. Relevant standards for each of the challenges have been identified in the **Standards** section. Beginning teachers are encouraged to think about the merit of each standard in relation to the challenge content and his or her personal goals for success. Additionally, in the appendix, there is ample space to incorporate specific content and national, state, or school standards as well. The INTASC standards are listed in the appendix.

Reflections Log

Each challenge includes a **Reflection Log** that you can use to reflect on your learning.

Congratulations, You Made It!

Each challenge also includes space for documenting personal success, called **Congratulations, You Made It!** These sections can be combined and included in your teaching portfolio.

Wrap-Up

The **Wrap-Up** at the end of the book provides some forms that can be used to document what you accomplish in your beginning years of teaching. The documentation, which provides insight into accomplishments and successes, can be used for teacher evaluations.

The **appendix** contains both the complete INTASC standards to augment the specific INTASC standards represented in each chapter, as well as the National Education Association (NEA) Code of Conduct. This Code of Conduct is a reminder of a teacher's commitment to the teaching profession and all that it entails.

Goals

A New Teacher's Guide to Best Practices is intended to assist you in supporting students in their learning process. At the same time, it provides guidance for you to reflect on your teaching practice and consider alternative strategies for improving your practice. It also affords ample opportunities for you to interact with colleagues, peers, and mentors as you seek to identify and interpret your role as an educator.

The purpose of this book is not to continue the process of teaching you *about* teaching but to assist you in the process of *becoming* a teacher through self-reflection. The book is designed to assist you in reflecting about your practice to produce new insights and actions based on personal professional development. The book provides the "voices" of teachers, mentors, and students for you to consider as you think about and explore the process of teaching.

And now the process begins! Look through the book and decide which challenge you plan to tackle first. Teaching is an incredible career. This is your professional calling. You hold the future in your hands! You owe it to yourself to set the stage for your own professional growth. Set aside time in your daily or weekly schedule to focus on what you need to do to accomplish your goals. This book is designed to be your guide, your mentor, and your quest for success. Good luck, and enjoy the process!

Completing the Quest

Being a teacher is an incredibly exciting role within any society. It is demanding and challenging. Teaching is a position that demands the ability to make decisions constantly. One needs to be continuously prepared, and at the same time constantly evaluate decisions to determine if there is a better way to handle similar situations.

A New Teacher's Guide to Best Practices uses the INTASC standards as an example of criteria for you to aspire to if your school does not have specific standards expected of beginning teachers. You may also ask your supervisor to supply a copy of the form that is used for your evaluation. Look over the instrument and decide in which areas you can realistically document growth in the coming year(s). This is a good starting point for you to establish a professional development plan. Additional forms for documenting evidence of standards are also provided in this Wrap-Up section. As you work through each challenge in this book, keep a record of the goals you can realistically accomplish and what evidence you have to document that growth. You can then assemble these items in an electronic or paper portfolio.

Your teaching portfolio will change each year you are teaching. What you learn your first year will be updated and enhanced with additional experience and knowledge. Do not destroy the examples you provide in your first year(s) of teaching. In fact, save them as reminders of how much you have grown with more experience. Make connections between where you were when you began and where you are at the end of year one, year two, year three, etc. You will appreciate seeing your growth, and your administrators will respect your time and effort toward assuming a self-directed approach to your professional development.

As Brookfield (1995, p. 1) claimed, "We teach to change the world." You are an integral part of a dynamic system established to improve the human condition. Your role is central to the lives of those you touch. Congratulations on selecting a worthy profession and continued best wishes as you move into your teaching career.

> *What sculpture is to the block of marble, education is to the soul.*
> —JOSEPH ADDISON