Classroom Observation: Dr. Mary Beth Allen
Observer: Dr. Maureen McLaughlin
Course: REED 580: Research Problems in Reading
Date: October 1, 2012

Class Procedure:

The topic for today's class was "How to Write a Literature Review." The goal was for students to begin to think about the outline and flow of the literature review section of their research paper that they write during this course.

Dr. Allen used the online classroom to present the information about literature reviews. First, she used a PowerPoint presentation and discussion questions to share the information and get the students to engage in making connections to the information. Next, she explained the goal of the literature review and the process for beginning one. Then she modeled the process by showing how to use key articles to identify the major subtopics within the review. Finally, she demonstrated how to take notes related to those key points and craft the notes into a paragraph. Each of these demonstrations included thinking aloud about the decisions writers make and visual examples on the PowerPoint.

After the information was presented, explained, and demonstrated, the students had opportunities to ask questions for clarification. Next, Dr. Allen invited the students to work in small groups to begin identifying key subtopics within each of their literature reviews. Then the students began working on their next assignment, which was to complete an outline of the structure and flow of their literature review.

Evaluation:

Throughout this class, Dr. Allen exhibited thorough knowledge of the topic and great enthusiasm for teaching reading research. She explicitly taught her students the essentials of creating a review of literature. Her students were well-motivated and thoroughly engaged in learning. They generated numerous questions, and Dr. Allen provided an in-depth response to each query. The students appeared to have a very comfortable teacher/learner relationship with Dr. Allen. It was clear that the goals for this class were met and exceeded.

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