

THE EVOLUTION OF MY IDENTITY AS A LITERACY EDUCATOR THROUGHOUT MY

ELA METHODS COURSE

by

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by

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Approved by:

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Presentation Write-Up:

My project was a self-study research project where I researched how my identity as a literacy educator changed over the course of my English Language Arts methods course during the Fall 2022 semester. I was concerned about how my feelings about literacy education shifted after taking a reading instruction course for the primary grades in Spring 2022. After feeling confused, disappointed, and unsure of how I wanted to proceed with literacy education, the goal of this project was to understand why the READ 3301 course (Reading Instruction in the Primary Grades) was so impactful, to gain a better understanding of what my beliefs were regarding literacy approaches, and to gain more knowledge on them and how to apply those approaches in the classroom. After conducting research, I was able to present my study and findings to two major groups: the ECU Elementary Education Club and ECU's Research and Creative Achievement Week (RCAW). I portrayed to both audiences what I learned about myself, in terms of what I experienced with literacy education and how teaching phonics can be implemented appropriately in the classroom. I also displayed how it can be implicated into the practices of other educators and even other fields' studies.

The first [presentation](#) was completed on March 23, 2023, to the Elementary Education Club. This is a club on campus that not only provides a community for future elementary educators but also serves the community around them. Here, I prepared a presentation with information and graphics that walked through the process of my project. I presented it at one of their monthly meetings to the attending members and their advisor in the Teacher Resource Center in Joyner Library. I was able to talk about my research, what prompted it, how I conducted it, what I learned, and how it can be implemented as an educator. I was then able to prompt questions and answer any remaining inquiries from the audience.

This first presentation was less formal than the latter, so it was a good presentation to start with. It was a comfortable environment as I was among other educators and future educators who understood the jargon I utilized throughout my presentation. I felt that because the audience I was presenting to was able to see a direct application into their life and career, they were attentive to what I was saying. Because of this, I feel as though this presentation went well. I felt prepared going into it and it allowed me to walk away from it and into my next presentation feeling more prepared and able to discuss all that my research encompassed.

My second presentation was at ECU's Research and Creative Achievement Week (RCAW) during the Undergraduate Research Day on April 3, 2023. This event was a public event held at the Main Campus Student Center where undergraduate and graduate students both had the opportunity to present their research on their respective day and time. We were able to choose whether we wanted to give a poster presentation or a podium presentation, and due to the nature of my topic, Dr. Gregory and I decided a [poster presentation](#) would fit best. During the presentation I stood next to my poster; which held an overview of my entire project with the literature review, methodology, data analysis, findings, conclusion, and implications. While I did this, I was able to answer questions to people who walked by and inquired about my research. Whether it be one of the judges or just someone from the public who was curious, I was able to speak on my knowledge and understandings based on my research as well as present my experience.

While the RCAW presentation was the more formal and therefore intimidating of the two presentations, I still feel that it went well. I feel that I was well prepared with a knowledge of my project and the research content as well as the process used for this project. I was able to answer people's questions as they walked by and was able to successfully and concisely give my

“elevator speech” about my research. I think that this experience with RCAW, because of how different it was than any other experience I have had, will help me grow tremendously. It was different and allowed me not only to challenge myself but to learn from other peers and be inspired by their hard work and successes that were evident through their presentations. Overall, I believe that this project and the presentations that I was able to be a part of were fitting for my research and allowed me to successfully present my experiences to others.