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Teachers, it is thought, benefit from the practice of reflection, the conscious act of thinking deeply about and carefully examining the interactions and events within their own classrooms. Educators T. Wildman and J. Niles (1987) describe a scheme for developing reflective practice in experienced teachers. This was justified by the view that reflective practice could help teachers to feel more intellectually involved in their role and work in teaching and enable them to cope with the paucity of scientific fact and the uncertainty of knowledge in the discipline of teaching. Wildman and Niles were particularly interested in investigating the conditions under which reflection might flourish—a subject on which there is little guidance in the literature. They designed an experimental strategy for a group of teachers in Virginia and worked with 40 practicing teachers over several years. They were concerned that many would be "drawn to these new, refreshing" conceptions of teaching only to find that the void between the abstractions and the realities of teacher reflection is too great to bridge. Reflection on a complex task such as teaching is not easy. The teachers were taken through a program of talking about teaching events, moving on to reflecting about specific issues in a supported, and later an independent, manner. Wildman and Niles observed that systematic reflection on teaching required a sound ability to understand classroom events in an objective manner. They describe the initial understanding in the teachers with whom they were working as being "utilitarian - and not rich or detailed enough to drive systematic reflection." Teachers rarely have the time or opportunities to view their own or the teaching of others in an objective manner. Further observation revealed the tendency of teachers to evaluate events rather than review the contributory factors in a considered manner by, in effect, standing outside the situation. Helping this group of teachers to revise their thinking about classroom events became central. This process took time and patience and effective trainers. The researchers estimate that the initial training of the teachers to view events objectively took between 20 and 30 hours, with the same number of hours again being required to practice the skills of reflection. Wildman and Niles identify three principles that facilitate reflective practice in a teaching situation. The first is support from administrators in an education system, enabling teachers to understand the requirements of reflective practice and how it relates to teaching students. The second is the availability of sufficient time and space. The teachers in the program described how they found it difficult to put aside the immediate demands of others in order to give themselves the time they needed to develop their reflective skills. The third is the development of a collaborative environment with support from other teachers. Support and encouragement were also required to help teachers in the program cope with aspects of their professional life with which they were not comfortable. Wildman and Niles make a summary comment: "Perhaps the most important thing we learned is the idea of the teacher-as-reflective-practitioner will not happen simply because it is a good or even compelling idea." The work of Wildman and Niles suggests the importance of recognizing some of the difficulties of instituting reflective practice. Others have noted this, making a similar point about the teaching profession's cultural inhibitions about reflective practice. Zeichner and Liston (1987) point out the inconsistency between the role of the teacher as a (reflective) professional decision maker and the more usual role of the teacher as a technician, putting into practice the ideas of others. More basic than the cultural issues is the matter of motivation. Becoming a reflective practitioner requires extra work (Jaworski,

1993) and has only vaguely defined goals with, perhaps, little initially perceivable reward and the threat of vulnerability. Few have directly questioned what might lead a teacher to want to become reflective. Apparently, the most obvious reason for teachers to work toward reflective practice is that teacher educators think it is a good thing. There appear to be many unexplored matters about the motivation to reflect – for example, the value of externally motivated reflection as opposed to that of teachers who might reflect by habit.

question 1

According to paragraph 1, it was believed that reflection could help teachers

- A understand intellectual principles of teaching
- B strengthen their intellectual connection to their work
- C use scientific fact to improve discipline and teaching
- D adopt a more disciplined approach to teaching

question 2

All of the following are mentioned about the experimental strategy described in paragraph 2 EXCEPT:

- A It was designed so that teachers would eventually reflect without help from others.
- B It was used by a group of teachers over a period of years.
- C It involved having teachers take part in discussions of classroom events.
- D It involved having teachers record in writing their reflections about teaching.

question 3

According to paragraph 2, Wildman and Niles worried that the teachers they were working with might feel that

- A the number of teachers involved in their program was too large
- B the concepts of teacher reflection were so abstract that they could not be applied
- C the ideas involved in reflection were actually not new and refreshing

D several years would be needed to acquire the habit of reflecting on their teaching

question 4

According to paragraph 3, what did the teachers working with Wildman and Niles often fail to do when they attempted to practice reflection?

A Correctly calculate the amount of time needed for reflection.

B Provide sufficiently detailed descriptions of the methods they used to help them reflect.

C Examine thoughtfully the possible causes of events in their classrooms.

D Establish realistic goals for themselves in practicing reflection.

question 5

How is paragraph 4 related to other aspects of the discussion of reflection in the passage?

A It describes and comments on steps taken to overcome problems identified earlier in the passage.

B It challenges the earlier claim that teachers rarely have the time to think about their own or others' teaching.

C It identifies advantages gained by teachers who followed the training program described earlier in the passage.

D It explains the process used to define the principles discussed later in the passage.

question 6

It can be inferred from paragraph 5 that the teachers working with Wildman and Niles held which of the following beliefs concerning reflection?

A Reflection is such a good idea that it is likely to gain the support of others.

B Administrators tend to be stronger supporters of reflection than teachers are.

C Teachers will become more comfortable with the process of reflection if they receive help from administrators.

D Teachers can afford to engage in reflection only after other needs have been met.

question 7

According to paragraph 6, teachers may be discouraged from reflecting because

A it is not generally supported by teacher educators

B the benefits of reflection may not be apparent immediately

C it is impossible to teach and reflect on one's teaching at the same time

D they have often failed in their attempts to become reflective practitioners

question 8

Which of the sentences below expresses the essential information in the highlighted sentence in the passage? Incorrect choices change the meaning in important ways or leave out essential information

A The practice of being reflective is no longer simply a habit among teachers but something that is externally motivated.

B Most teachers need to explore ways to form the habit of reflection even when no external motivation exists.

C Many aspects of the motivation to reflect have not been studied, including the comparative benefits of externally motivated and habitual reflection among teachers.

D There has not been enough exploration of why teachers practice reflection as a habit with or without external motivation.

question 9

Look at the four squares [] that indicate where the following sentence could be added to the passage. Where could the sentence best fit?

Teachers, it is thought, benefit from the practice of reflection, the conscious act of thinking deeply about and carefully examining the interactions and events within their own classrooms. Educators T. Wildman and J. Niles (1987) describe a scheme for developing reflective practice in experienced teachers. This was justified by the view that reflective practice could help teachers to feel more intellectually involved in their role and work in teaching and enable them to cope with the paucity of scientific fact and the uncertainty of knowledge in the discipline of teaching. Wildman and Niles were particularly interested in investigating the conditions under which reflection might flourish—a subject on which there is little guidance in the literature. They designed an experimental strategy for a group of teachers in Virginia and worked with 40 practicing teachers over several years. They were concerned that many would be "drawn to these new, refreshing" conceptions of teaching only to find that the void between the abstractions and the realities of teacher reflection is too great to bridge. Reflection on a complex task such as teaching is not easy. The teachers were taken through a program of talking about teaching events, moving on to reflecting about specific issues in a supported, and later an independent, manner. Wildman and Niles observed that systematic reflection on teaching required a sound ability to understand classroom events in an objective manner. They describe the initial understanding in the teachers with whom they were working as being "utilitarian - and not rich or detailed enough to drive systematic reflection." Teachers rarely have the time or opportunities to view their own or the teaching of others in an objective manner. Further observation revealed the tendency of teachers to evaluate events rather than review the contributory factors in a considered manner by, in effect, standing outside the situation. Helping this group of teachers to revise their thinking about classroom events became central. [] This process took time and patience and effective trainers. [] The researchers estimate that the initial training of the teachers to view events objectively took between 20 and 30 hours, with the same number of hours again being required to practice the skills of reflection. [] Wildman and Niles identify three principles that facilitate reflective practice in a teaching situation. [] The first is support from administrators in an education system, enabling teachers to understand the requirements of reflective practice and how it relates to teaching students. The second is the availability of sufficient time and space. The teachers in the program described how they found it difficult to put aside the immediate demands of others in order to give themselves the time they needed to develop their reflective skills. The third is the development of a collaborative environment with support from other teachers. Support and encouragement were also required to help teachers in the program cope with aspects of their professional life with which they were not comfortable. Wildman and Niles make a summary comment: "Perhaps the most important thing we learned is the idea of the teacher-as-reflective-practitioner will not happen simply because it is a good or even compelling idea." The work of Wildman and Niles suggests the importance of recognizing some of the difficulties of instituting reflective practice. Others have noted this, making a similar point about the teaching profession's cultural inhibitions about reflective practice. Zeichner and Liston (1987) point out the inconsistency between the role of the teacher as a (reflective) professional decision maker and the more usual role of the teacher as a technician, putting into practice the ideas of others. More basic than the cultural issues is the matter of motivation. Becoming a reflective practitioner requires extra work (Jaworski,

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question 10

Directions: An introductory sentence for a brief summary of the passage is provided below. Complete the summary by selecting the THREE answer choices that express the most important ideas in the passage. Some answer choices do not belong in the summary because they express ideas that are not presented in the passage or are minor ideas in the passage. This question is worth 2 points.

- A. Through their work with Virginia teachers, Wildman and Niles proved conclusively that reflection, though difficult, benefits both teachers and students.
- B. Wildman and Niles found that considerable training and practice are required to understand classroom events and develop the skills involved in reflection.
- C. Wildman and Niles identified three principles that teachers can use to help themselves cope with problems that may arise as a result of reflection.
- D. Wildman and Niles concluded that teachers need sufficient resources as well as the cooperation and encouragement of others to practice reflection.
- E. There are numerous obstacles to implementing reflection in schools and insufficient understanding of why teachers might want to reflect.
- F. Whether teachers can overcome the difficulties involved in reflection may depend on the nature and intensity of their motivation to reflect.