**Interview One**

Researcher

Okay, so our first positionality question is gender. Female. Okay, ethnicity.

Unknown Speaker

Why white? Caucasian?

Researcher

Religion?

Unknown Speaker

Christian

Researcher

language?

Unknown Speaker

English only?

Researcher

Class?

Unknown Speaker

Definitely middle class. Although my parents didn't have a lot of money, so like came from lower class, but middle class cuz I'm a teacher now so

Researcher

years teaching

Unknown Speaker

Oh, okay do you? So like I taught a year in China? But also so like, do you want me to count that?

Researcher

I mean, yeah, all teaching experience counts towards the overall right.

Unknown Speaker

Okay, I've I think it's eight or eight. I think it's eight. Yeah.

Researcher

And then content area you teach currently

Unknown Speaker

social studies. I teach eight. But I've taught seventh and eighth.

Researcher

Okay. degree in concentrations.

Unknown Speaker

Okay, so, I have a bachelor's in education. Okay, so I have a double major Bachelor's in education with a focus on literature. And I have a Bachelor of Science in Bible and theology. And then I have a master's degree in holistic education, with a focus on technology and brain based learning.

Researcher

Okey doke. We're gonna roll into the social studies, content specific questions. Next, there are eight of these. And this is where I want you to be just very honest and transparent with how you feel you were prepared to become a social studies teacher. So the first one, do you feel your pre service training adequately prepared you to teach social studies? In the social studies classroom? Explain why or why not?

Unknown Speaker

Um, could you clarify what you mean by like, do you mean like practicums and observations and like internships, student teaching?

Researcher

Yeah. Anything any pre service training before you became an actual teacher in the classroom?

Unknown Speaker

So that So you mean education as well? Yes. Okay. So I went to, I went to a Christian school, it's accredited and everything. But like, so like my history, like, is very obviously focused on like, biblical history and all that around that, like, mostly I was thinking I was going to teach literature, I'm going to be honest, I'm certified in middle school to teach any subject. But as I would go, like, one thing that my school was really good at was putting us in the school immediately. So from freshman year, we have my college was only a for four days a week for classes. Like they only ever scheduled classes four days a week. And then Mondays were reserved for practicums observations and internships for a bunch of different degree programs. So I was in, I was in observing freshman year, and I've been in the classroom every single semester of my education, which that was the most beneficial to me, because like, you don't know you want to be a teacher until you get in the classroom. You don't you have no idea what it's like until you're in there. So that helped me the most but what helped me the most in in figuring out that I wanted to teach social studies in history specifically, was during my master's year. I, my student teaching was supposed to be in an English classroom, and then she wouldn't really, it didn't really work out. She didn't really want a student teacher. And so I got moved to a social studies teacher, because I thought I want to teach English but when I got into that and started working through that year, because it was a year long internship, I really liked it. And it had all the kind of aspects of literature that I liked, like the storytelling and the and, and stuff like that. But it was a little less micromanaged, honestly. So. Okay,

Researcher

So. Okay, question two. What types of classes did you take in your teacher training that supports your social studies teaching specifically?

Unknown Speaker

Um, oh, gosh, that's a long time ago. Uh huh. cuz I graduated in 2010. And so Oh, gosh, okay. My Okay, so my degree program at my school was a new one, it was a middle school specific. So I took like middle school teaching strategies. And as far as like social studies, so like within every single class of mine, you you modified that content to, to be specific as to what you are going to be teaching. And so I focused on what strategies I would teach first, like social studies and literature, whereas other people might have picked based on what subjects they were focusing on. So it makes sense. Yeah, yeah. And so I learned a lot of my content, like content content, like, as, like, as I was teaching. I have a lot of background in theology, Bible and other religions, because we took a lot. So like, I know a lot. But as far as like other historical things, I didn't take as many classes, I took survey courses, basically, to survey like, all of the history. History is easy. The strat like, history is, like, I could learn more his like you always learn more history. But it's the strategies and like how to teach that those skills, historical thinking skills, that I find that my, my teacher prep courses and things like that taught me the most,

Researcher

That is great, because that brings us into my next question. Did you receive training on how to teach skills beyond social studies, content? Examples like critical thinking, historical empathy, cultural understanding?

Unknown Speaker

Um, yes, those were worked in actually, like, you could kind of consider because of the way that my program was specifically, like, I don't have a major in History specifically, like I have a major in, in theology. And obviously, that served me well, because religion, like weaves throughout history. And so you obviously are learning history, but like, most of my courses for my degree for my bachelor's degree, and then for my master's degree, were focused on skills, even in, in socially, so when we would, we would study and do stuff like that. So like, I think I took a whole middle school like geo graphical geography, skills, geographical skills, along with with things like learning how to teach context, learning how to teach, you know, critical things, like the critical thinking stuff, because that's what social studies education is, like, anyone can Google the history, the facts, and I think that's where our school, get schools get it wrong, honestly. But like, anyone can watch a YouTube video, that's how I pass my practice tests is watch a bunch of John Green Crash Course history videos. But it's my my program was actually really focused on Okay, well, how do you teach them to think, like, we did a lot of like, metacognitive stuff and analyzing our own methods of learning, and then, you know, skills is that so we did do a lot of like, the historical thinking, geography, like everything that's inner woven in comparing and contrasting learning those strategies that can apply to and not just history, but can apply to a lot of different subjects as well. So okay,

Researcher

Thank you. Okay, our next question, based on your teacher training, how were you trained to teach social studies content, and this will go into the methods and styles so what types of methods and styles were you told you should do use

Unknown Speaker

And this you want as far as like, including, like my master's degree, does you want. My undergrad all training you've been through?

Researcher

\*Head Nod\*

Unknown Speaker

Okay. So my master's degree, well, and actually the program I went to, because I did the same thing kind of you did, I, I got my master's degree at the same college that I got my undergrad and they had designed the program to flow seamlessly like it like you could choose not to do your masters but it was kind of silly not to because like the way they design their program was that it was cohesive from start to moving into the Masters everything Load together. And I think that the reason I chose my school was because of their philosophy of education as well as like, what types of activities and like the style of teaching. So they're more about active learning strategies like, you know, stimulation, cooperative learning, like group work, doing stations with different types of tasks and variety of tasks, rather than just like the standard lecture off a PowerPoint, sort of a deal. None of my classes ever said, like, ever supported the lecture style of social studies teaching. It's all okay, what is some way we can get the kids to, like, take charge of this and learn and be focused, so it was a lot more student centered, and a lot less teacher centered, like that was like they hammered that home majorly. So.

Researcher

Okay. Um, our next question, Did you receive pre service teacher training that gave you confidence to teach social studies content?

Unknown Speaker

Is that an issue in programs? I don't know. My, my personality wise is is like, I, my courses, were not what gave me the confidence to teach. Because it's all theoretical. When you're in a course when you're in a class, it's all like, yeah, I could picture what that might look like, you have no idea until you get in the classroom. And so one of the things I chose about, you know, with the school that I was chosen, is that they put you into teaching situations immediately. Like, that was how I gained confidence was the they scaffold me just like guys scaffold, my middle schoolers, like they put me in, I think the first practicum thing we did was an after school tutoring program. So I was actually teaching one on one and had to plan lessons for a specific student who was struggling. And then after that, I would go and observe. And a lot of times would have to teach during those observation times, like, I would have to teach a lesson. And then internship, like, when I finally got into a good placement, she just throw me into it, she just, I had a really good mentor. And so it was the practical experience. That gave me the confidence. But I do think that I value the educational courses I took. Because my degree was also focused on educational psychology. And the brain based learning so like, how kids learn, do like the developmental psychology of knowing and understanding where students were at. That gave me an understanding of, of how they were going to be different from maybe the way I learned and stuff. And so that all of that gave me the tools I needed, I guess, to do the practical stuff. That makes sense.

Researcher

Yeah, totally. Okay, next question. What training did you wish you had more of during your pre service teacher training?

Unknown Speaker

The one, okay, so the way my school was, so my school was a is a fast growing Christian school. They have expanded their programs so much. So when I first started there. They only had an elementary program. And then I had taken a break from college for a couple of years. So like, I had gone, but I'm like, I had taken a break. I'm like, I don't think I want to be in elementary school teaching was not hitting like, I was like, this is not where I'm thinking I need to be. And so I had ended up and I wasn't even sure I wanted to be a teacher. But then later, a couple years later, I'm like, Ah, no, actually, I think I do want to be a teacher. And so I went back to my school, because I do love my school. And they had just introduced a middle school program. So I went through I was one of the first to go into this middle school certification. And so obviously, they had a lot to like, it was very element there like some of the classes that I took you could tell there, it was not being taught by people who had experienced middle schoolers. They did make efforts to hire more people more varied experience, like professors and stuff. But some of it, I really had to take initiative to be like and do more research on how it would be done in middle school and what the differences would be. But that was valuable to me too. But I do think, and I think they might have fixed it by now. But I do think majoring in what you're going to teach, like, I think they only offered like minors, for literature and minors for history. And so I think expanding that would be more valuable. I think. So. Okay.

Researcher

Question seven, what professional development training have you had since teaching that specifically helped you with social studies content?

Unknown Speaker

Do a lot of stuff for the district. So CMCS does a lot. And we do a lot of I'm involved in the leadership roles. So I do a lot of like, the professional development of, well, they're introducing this or they're changing the standards, or they're changing all the testing stuff. So I'm involved on the ground level of a lot of that stuff, which is very, very useful for planning. I also, we do like other stuff like, strategy wise. So we've had some active type strategies, like I think they took some escape room, like how to make social studies, escape rooms, mostly focused on active learning strategies. Just like different things that you can do, how to have students keep their own, like, own interactive notebooks, journals, project based learning, like, but I've also taught a lot, I taught how to incorporate simulations, without a lot of extra work, like because, you know, simulations can be really a ton of work. So I usually teach, like, once a year, how to do simulations on the fly, like how to have kids act things out without having to plan a ton. And so I would teach stuff like that. But that was that's what most of it's on. I've been to a few like conferences and things as well and content related things, went to a Tennessee history. Convention once that I felt was really useful. And I got a lot of like, curriculum type stuff and learned a lot about our history, because I'm not from here. So when you go and you teach in a state that you have never lived in, you don't know that state's history at all. So that Tennessee convention was really important. Sim gave me a better understanding of Tennessee history.

Researcher

Okay, good. Our final question, what social studies related issues do you believe to be the most important issues to teach to students?

Unknown Speaker

Honestly, oh, my okay. I think, Okay. I think that it's really, really important to us history, to teach our students how to make a difference in the world, how to impact their environment. I hurt like, I connect history as much as I can to them, and what they go through constantly, they're putting themselves in the shoes of people from history, what would you do in this situation? Because I feel like part of that part of social studies. And I think the reason we call it social studies and not history class, is that part of that is teaching kids how to think critically, so that we can make good citizens. I think that's the purpose. I think a lot of kids will ask me, Why do you study history? What's the point? It's in the past? And I say, Do you know how much you can learn about people? Like learn how people make decisions? What led up to things? How are those decisions that they made, still affecting us today? And so I think it's really important to make those connections and to teach kids how to think for themselves. and how to come up with their own opinions and thoughts so I do a lot of work with that in my classroom