

For the 2006 - 2007 school year, Donna Owen, TIR 2005, was maintained by the CoEHP full time in primarily mentoring roles. She continued to mentor the 10 teachers who she had worked with most closely the previous year as preservice teachers, and closely mentored 12 new preservice teachers during their internship. They met weekly as a group to applaud successes and discuss academic or school-related issues. The weekly meetings also promoted their knowledge of science concepts and pedagogy. Questions activated schema, thereby encouraging multiple interpretations in a nonthreatening environment. This was followed by journal writing/drawing, which encouraged predictions and connections to their world. The experiments provided evidence and discussion. Journaling promoted self-evaluation, connection, and perhaps change. "I didn't know that was going to happen! When you think about it, it makes sense. That is what really happens in our everyday life. We just never stop to think about it." Excitement and curiosity are the most important tools for preservice teachers to promote inquiry in their own classroom. With the heavy emphasis on testing, this approach has allowed the preservice teachers to focus on their own knowledge and pedagogy.

For six hours each week during the fall and spring semester, Donna mentored in a different setting, by teaching in the fifth year program where the preservice teachers conducted lengthy action research projects, literacy case studies, integrated and differentiated curriculum units, five solo weeks, and performed numerous duties required of a regular classroom teacher within their four-day workweek at a local partnership school. The 45 interns were very appreciative of her 27 years of teaching experience, the materials/resources that she provided, and the actual student work she had collected over the years. While she did not enjoy the same close mentoring relationship with these students, by reassuring the preservice teachers' capabilities, she helped strengthen and encourage their sometimes faltering resolve to become what students need and deserve - an accomplished, highly qualified teacher.