Essential Concepts, Tools, and Practices*

Fred Mednick

This work is produced by The Connexions Project and licensed under the
Creative Commons Attribution License †

1 Introduction

Teachers Without Borders welcomes you to our Certificate of Teaching Mastery!

At 59 million, teachers are the largest professional group on the planet. Together, we have the ability to significantly improve the quality of life for our children, our communities, and our earth.

The Certificate of Teaching Mastery is designed to provide hands-on experiences coupled with theory and educational innovations from around the globe. You will travel with a Mentor and colleagues from 21 different countries in what we call "The Learning Village." In the end, you'll create an electronic Teaching Portfolio to showcase your work and develop a culminating Service Project - a professional gift to your community.

Thank you for making the commitment to join us and for connecting with a widening web of global colleagues and kindred spirits. Our grandest wish is that you take what you learn and use it for the greatest common good - apply it with heart, with mind, with hospitality, gratitude, and celebration.

---

2 Overview

The material in this Introductory Seminar is a guide for you to use now, and to refer back to later. Be sure, however, to do the 3 assignments in this seminar before beginning Course 1.

The topics covered in this Introductory Seminar are as follows:

- Outline of Certificate of Teaching Mastery
- Meeting Your Mentor (Assignment 1)
- Meeting Your Learning Circle (Assignment 2)
- Questions to Consider (Assignment 3)
- How do I start working on the courses?
- How do I get the assignments?
- How do I send my assignments to my Mentor?
- How long does it take to complete the CTM?
- How will my work be evaluated?
- Key Concepts
- Tips for Writing

*Version 1.4: Feb 16, 2006 10:59 am -0600

†http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/

- Electronic Teaching Portfolio
- Save and Plan Ahead
- Posting Documents to your E-Portfolio
- Service Project
- How to use WebBoard and Question Wall
- Help (with computer and courses)
- Revisions, Copyrights, and Permissions

3 Outline of Certificate of Teaching Mastery

See below for a short description

4 A Closer Look

Course 1: Education for the New Millennium - Bringing New Thinking in Education into Classroom Practice

In this course, you'll be introduced to educational theories and approaches to learning and how to apply them to your classroom; aspects of effective teaching; and contemporary issues in education. The material reflects a pattern of inclusive, discovery-oriented, culturally-attuned, and globally-aware teaching.

Course 2: Teaching Methods - Looking at Theory, Planning, and Management

In this course, you'll be introduced to thematic learning and cooperative learning and you'll have a chance to develop lesson plans with these ideas in mind. You are given practical tools for classroom management and ways in which you can guide students to think about their own process of learning.

Course 3: Assessment Practices - Improving Student Performance

You'll discover a new way of designing curriculum so that you get the results you want. This course includes an introduction to student portfolios, problem-based learning, and rubrics that assess different aspects of student work such as mastery of the material, or the ability to apply what one has learned to real-life experiences.

Course 4: Culture for Understanding - Understanding Our Students

In this course, you'll explore your own cultural competence in the classroom; apply multiculturalism to problem-solving; receive training on service learning; and discuss how to create and sustain connections with classrooms around the world.

Course 5: Educating for Civil Societies - Teaching as Research and Action

This course is a culminating experience with two outcomes: 1) The creation of an electronic Teaching Portfolio (E-Portfolio) that showcases your work from the Certificate of Teaching Mastery; and 2) A Service Project - a professional gift to your community that applies what you have learned in the previous four courses to address a local, national, or global need in one of the following areas:

- Early Childhood Education
- Literacy and Numeracy for Adult Learners
- Environmental Education
- Education through the Arts
- Girls' Education
- Conflict Mediation
- Special Education
- Community Teaching and Learning Centers

5 Assignment 1: Meeting Your Mentor

Mentors are teachers from around the world chosen by Teachers Without Borders for their expertise and sense of hospitality. They are here to help you - to be your guide and companion on this journey through the Certificate of Teaching Mastery. You share ideas and assignments with your Mentor, and s/he gives you support, feedback, and guidance.

As a way of greeting your Mentor, please answer the following two questions and send your responses to your Mentor:

1. Hospitality - the actions of making others feel welcome - is an important part of almost all cultures. Tell your mentor how it is in your culture that newcomers are made to feel welcome. Describe in as much detail as possible what is said, what actions are taken.
2. Tell your mentor a story about a teacher who inspired you.
3. To do this assignment, click on the Word icon below. When it appears, press "Save" so that you can work on this assignment "off-line." (You can type right on the assignment template. Be sure to save your assignment on a disk or your computer hard drive.)

Assignment 1: Meeting Your Mentor[1]

6 Personal File Storage

7 How to Use Your Personal File Storage

To **add** your completed "Assignment 1" file to your Personal File Storage area, follow the directions in the document below. After you have added the file to Your Personal File Storage, follow the instructions on how to "Submit a File for Your Mentor to Review" contained in the same document. (You'll notice that this document tells you how to add, delete, replace, submit files and how to read your Mentor's feedback and respond.) To access this document, click on the Word icon below:

Personal File Storage Instructions[2]

Save the above document to your personal disk or hard drive. You may also wish to print out a copy of this document, as you will need to refer to it anytime you are using your Personal File Storage. If you do not have access to a printer, you can always click on the Word icon above and when the document comes up, minimize it on your screen, and "toggle" or go between the document and the Personal File Storage area.

To Access your Personal File Storage

1. You'll have access to your Personal File Storage anytime you log on and you are on the "Class List" screen. (The "Class List" screen is the first page you see after you log on.)
2. When the "Class List" page comes up, look ABOVE the orange bar and all the way to the right. You'll see the words in blue that say "Personal File Storage."
3. Click on the blue words that say "Personal File Storage."

   NOTE: To get to the "Class List" screen right now, click on the "Exit" button at the bottom of this page all the way to your right.

8 Feedback on Assignments

The Personal File Storage document on the previous page tells you how to retrieve your file so that you can read your Mentor's feedback. (Usually it will take a few days to receive feedback on submitted assignments.) What follows on the next few pages is a description of how your Mentor will offer feedback. These pages are excerpts from our "Mentor Guidebook" that describe to Mentors how to offer feedback to you (the Learner) when they receive your completed assignments.

[1] http://cnx.org/content/m13280/latest/file:IntroA1f.doc
[2] http://cnx.org/content/m13280/latest/file:posting.doc

We are providing this information to you now for the following two reasons:

1. So that you'll understand the format in which you'll receive feedback from your Mentor.
2. You may wish to try this model of giving feedback in working with your own students. We have outlined **4 Elements of Effective Feedback** in our Mentor Guidebook that you may wish to use in your own classroom. Please know that you are not required to use this form of feedback for your own students while taking the Certificate of Teaching Mastery. It is simply a tool being made available to you, if you find it useful in your classroom.

Here begins the several-page excerpt from our Mentor Guidebook:

Our Role as Mentors

As Mentors, we have a choice about how to offer feedback to our Learners. We can take the route of "the doubting game" the predominant western model that includes "argument, debate, criticism, and extrication of the self" as a way of knowing, or we can take the route of the "believing game," which challenges us "to listen, affirm, enter in, try to put ourselves into the skin of people with other perceptions and asks us to share our experience with others." In **Writing Without Teachers** Peter Elbow discusses these two games - the need for both, and the realms in which each game works best.

Most likely you will need to utilize a bit of both "games " in your role as Mentor. For giving feedback on assignments, however, we emphasize the "believing game."

We ask our Mentors to develop and use their "believing muscle" - that is "to understand ideas from the inside." As Peter Elbow writes, "The believing game is constant practice in getting the mind to see or think what is new, different...[the believing game] emphasizes a model of knowing as an act of constructing, an act of investment, an act of involvement..." (p. 173,)

9 The Believing Game

What does it mean to "listen, affirm, enter in" when we speak of giving feedback to Learners?

For starters, the important thing is to **read your Learner's assignment thoroughly** - perhaps two or three times to allow the words to sink in and make an impression upon you.

Then, **tell what you experienced as a reader** when you read your Learner's words.

10 4 Elements of Effective Feedback

In this spirit of engagement, we have identified **4 Elements of Effective Feedback** that we would like you to use when giving your Learner feedback on assignments. The first two elements are inspired from Peter Elbow's work and are a part of exercising your "believing muscle." The other two are developed from "what works" in coaching. They are as follows:

1. Pointing
2. Summarizing
3. Posing 1 question for your Learner to consider
4. Offering 1 or 2 things for improvement

11 Elements 1 and 2

As you read your Learner's completed assignment, here are the first two elements to consider:

1. Pointing
2. Summarizing

Each are described fully by Peter Elbow in his book called **Writing Without Teachers**, a book we highly recommend. The excerpts provided here are a useful starting point, especially the section called "Giving Movies of Your Mind," which includes Pointing and Sumarizing.

Element #1 of Effective Feedback

Pointing

Elbow writes:

Start by simply pointing to the words and phrases which most succcessfully penetrated your skull...somehow they rang true; or they carried special conviction. Any kind of getting through...Also point to any words or phrases which strike you as particularly weak or empty. Somehow they ring false, hollow, plastic. They bounce ineffectually off your skull. (p. 85)

As a reader giving your reactions, keep in mind that you are not answering a timeless, theorectical question about the objective qualities of those words on that page. You are answering a time-bound, subjective but **factual** question: what happened to **you** when you read the words **this time**. (p.85)

Element #2 of Effective Feedback

Summarizing - Tell your Learner "very quickly what you found to be the main points, main feelings, or centers of gravity [in their writing]...Summarize into a single sentence; then choose one word...Do this informally. Don't plan or think too much about it. The point is to show the writer what things he made stand out most in your head." (p. 86)

12 Examples

How not to give feedback:

In your feedback , do not use words like "good", "great", "nice" or "bad." They are words that do not help a person improve. For example, let's say you wrote a short story and then you gave your short story to a friend or a colleague to read. If that person said, "Hey, that story you gave to me to read was really good," you might perk up and feel happy about the compliment, but it does not help you improve as a writer.

Feedback that would be more helpful is as follows:

1. "Hey, I read the short story you sent to me. The part where you talked about training your dog made me laugh out loud: 'When I commanded Spike to give me his paw, he just rolled over, yawned, and gave me his belly to rub.'" (Pointing/Movie of the Mind)
2. Another example of effective feedback is: "My mind started to wander when you started talking about the cows. I tuned out for a while and then I was listening again when you talked about crossing the river. At the description 'tree branches and rocks swirled past me like a hurricane; the sky darkened to a coal-gray' I could feel my heart starting to pound in my chest." (Pointing/Movie of the Mind)
3. An example of "summarizing" might be: "Home. The comfort of home - its foods, smells, the conversations. Home is like an anchor for your character; it keeps her from drifting off. That's what stays with me after reading your piece."

Responses 1, 2, and 3 from above are more valuable to you as a Learner than the "good", "nice" or "bad" comments of ineffective feedback because you are receiving **specific** information about content - how something in your story affected that particular reader at that particular time (Note: not all readers for all eternity, simply that reader at that time). As the writer, you can then choose to re-write or keep those sections the reader pointed to. That's up to you as the writer (the Learner). You listen to the feedback and then you have control over what you change or don't change.

13 Elements 3 and 4

A natural extension of Elbow's "Giving Movies of the Mind" - Pointing and Summarizing - are the third and fourth **Elements of Effective Feedback:**

Element #3 of Effective Feedback

Posing 1 question for your Learner to consider

Tell your Learner what philosophical question his/her writing generates for you. What does their completed assignment make you wonder about on a larger level? (Here, we are not looking for rhetorical questions, rather questions that spark your curiosity about teaching and learning.) You might even start your question with the words "I wonder..."

An example might be: "I wonder... How do children know when they are learning?" or "I wonder...What is the balance between guiding a student and letting him/her figure it out on their own?"

Element #4 of Effective Feedback

Offering 1 or 2 things for improvement

The reason we say to give your Learner one (maybe two) things is this: If you highlight one thing for improvement, then, the Learner can take that one thing, remember it, and incorporate it for the future. In our experience, highlighting 3, 4, or more things to improve upon can get overwhelming.

If there are more than 1 or 2 things that you think need improvement in content, keep a written record for yourself of those things that need work and as future assignments come in, check to see if those issues come up again. Chances are that the issue will come up again and you'll have an opportunity to address it at that time. Also, hopefully, you'll see that the 1 or 2 issues you highlighted for improvement have been taken care of. Highlighting 1 or 2 issues keeps things manageable for the Learner.

For example, if your Learner stays general in his/her descriptions when answering a question, your "1 idea for improvement" might be:

"When you talk about your classroom, give me a specific example to support your idea - to make your thought come alive for me," or you might point to a specific part of the writing and say "You wrote in your assignment, 'The children seemed curious.' What did that look like, feel like, sound like, taste like, smell like? Filter your description through the five senses."

Pointing to things that are effective in your Learner's completed assignment is another way to guide him or her to give you more of that kind of writing where it is lacking. For example, you could say: "When you wrote that 'Najib's hands were shaking and his voice cracked when he read his paper to the class,' I felt like I was right there with you. Do this same kind of descriptive writing - filtering through the senses - when you simply wrote, 'the children seemed curious.'"

14 Form for Effective Feedback

To make things easier for you, we have provided a feedback form for you to use when giving your Learner the **4 Elements of Effective Feedback** for each of their assignments. Click on the Word icon below to access the form:

Mentor Feedback Form[3]

If you choose **not** to use the form, you may write your feedback for your Learner's completed assignments in 2-3 paragraphs, however, be sure to include in your response the **4 Elements of Effective Feedback:**

1. Pointing
2. Summarizing
3. Posing 1 question for your Learner to consider
4. Offering 1 or 2 things for improvement

This ends the excerpt from our Mentor Guidebook regarding giving feedback to Learners.

This Introductory Seminar continues with the next assignment for you to complete - "Assignment 2a: Meeting Your Learning Circle." This time, you will complete your assignment and send it to your colleagues in your Learning Circle by posting it to the WebBoard. You will also be instructed to post it on The Learning Village section of the WebBoard in part 2b of the same assignment.

> NOTE: On this assignment, you will not receive feedback from your Mentor. Later in the Introductory Seminar, you will have one more assignment to complete - "Assignment 3: Questions to

[3] http://cnx.org/content/m13280/latest/file:MentorForm.doc

Consider." For that assignment you will once again add it to your Personal File Storage and submit it to your Mentor for feedback.

15 Assignment 2a: Meeting Your Learning Circle

What is a Learning Circle? (For those with Internet access)

While you are working on these courses, many other teachers from around the world are also taking this Certificate of Teaching Mastery. The entire group of Learners is called "The Learning Village" - 21 different countries are represented in our Learning Village. You'll get to know a few of the Learners in this village in a smaller working group called a "Learning Circle."

When we use the words "Learning Circle," we are speaking of a group of 10-12 people who will be learning together - sharing thoughts, responses to assignments, talking on the computer together at a special message/dialogue area called the "WebBoard."

As a way of getting to know each person in your Learning Circle, we ask that you complete the following assignment and post it on the WebBoard:

1. Write your name and where you live (including the country).
2. To give other members of your Learning Circle a sense of "place," please describe in one or two paragraphs what you see now as you look outside your window.

To do this assignment, click on the Word icon below. When it appears, press "Save" so that you can work on this assignment "off-line." (You can type right on the assignment form. Be sure to save your assignment on a disk or on your computer hard drive.)

Assignment 2a[4]

(A description of WebBoard and instructions on how to post your assignment on WebBoard are contained on the next page. Please note: For **this** assignmet, you are not sending your response to your Mentor. You are sharing this assignment with the other Learners in your Learning Circle.)

16 What is WebBoard?

WebBoard is the place where you share your work with your Learning Circle. When you post work for your Learning Circle to see, it's private. Only your Learning Circle and affiliated Mentors will see your work. You may use WebBoard when you are required to do so and anytime you want feedback from your Learning Circle.

When you post your work for The Learning Village to view, your words are seen by the entire community of Learners in the Certificate of Teaching Mastery and it becomes available for the public to view as well.

We have automatically signed you up for WebBoard. The same Username and Password you use for the Certificate of Teaching Mastery will work.

To view WebBoard, click here[5] .

17 How to Post Your Work on WebBoard

Once you have completed "Assignment 2a: Meeting Your Learning Circle" and you are ready to post your assignment on WebBoard, click on the Word icon below to access the instructions on how to post your work on WebBoard. "Save" the instructions on your disk or computer hard drive so that you can keep these instructions for future use.)

Posting Your Work on WebBoard[6]

[4] http://cnx.org/content/m13280/latest/file:IntroA2af.doc
[5] http://206.40.48.186/∼twb
[6] http://cnx.org/content/m13280/latest/file:thewebbore.doc

1. Go to WebBoard by clicking here[7] .

   NOTE: You can also access the WebBoard from the Certificate of Teaching Mastery page on the TWB website at: teacherswithoutborders.org

2. Now, you will be at the WebBoard Login screen.
3. Where it says "Name" at the top of the Login screen, type in the Username you use for the Certificate of Teaching Mastery.
4. Where it says "Password," type in the Password you use for the Certificate of Teaching Mastery.
5. Click the button underneath that says, "Login."
6. Take a moment to familiarize yourself with your "homepage" screen. The left side has a yellow background and the right side has a white background. On the left side at the top is the name of your Learning Circle in bold letters, and there are other names listed underneath. On the right side of the screen is a welcome note at the top with your name, and underneath, it will tell you that you have new messages.
7. Click on the highlighted words underneath the welcome message that say, "You have # message(s)." (Notice that after you click, the left side of the page turns from a yellow background to a white background.)
8. Look at the list of topics (on the left side) and click on the name of your Learning Circle.
9. Topics will appear just underneath your Learning Circle's name. Click on the first topic that says, "Meeting Your Learning Circle (Assignment 2a)."
10. Read what is written.
11. Now, look on the right side of the page underneath the line and you'll see two options: "Post New Topic," and "Reply to..."
12. Click on "Reply toâ€¦"
13. You'll see a screen come up that has a big box in the middle.
14. Type your completed "Assignment 2a: Meeting Your Learning Circle" into the big box **or** "Cut" and "Paste" your words (from the assignment form you saved) into the box so that you don't have to type your response out again. (See "Word Processing Tips" later in the Introductory Seminar to review how to "cut" and "paste.")
15. When you are done typing into this big box, click on the word "Post" that is AT THE BOTTOM.
16. An orange box on the right will come up that asks you to read your message and if you need to make changes you are instructed to go "Back" and make changes. If you are happy with your message and you are ready to "Post" your words so that your Learning Circle can read them, click on the button that says, "Post."
17. Your message will now appear as it will be seen by your Learning Circle. Take a moment to look at it.
18. When you log out and come back on WebBoard on another day, you'll see that more people from your Learning Circle will have posted their response to Assignment 2a and you'll get to read what **they** wrote!
19. To "Logoff" of WebBoard, look at the black bar at the top that runs horizontally across the entire length of the screen. Click on the white words that say "Logoff."

18 Posting a New Topic on WebBoard

Often, as part of your assignment you'll be asked to "share feedback from your Learning Circle." This means that you will send your completed assignment to your Learning Circle posting it as a New Topic and you'll receive feedback from your Learning Circle, so that you can develop your ideas further.

Other times, you may be thinking about something as it relates to the ideas in the courses and you may wish to "Post" a new topic for discussion so that you can get ideas from the people in your Learning Circle.

Here is how you post a new topic on WebBoard:

[7] http://206.40.48.186/∼twb

(To access the instructions document, click on the Word icon below. When it appears, press "Save" to your disk or computer hard drive so that you can keep these instructions for future use.)

Posting a New Topic[8]

1. Go to WebBoard by clicking here[9] .

   NOTE: You can also access the WebBoard from the Certificate of Teaching Mastery page on the TWB website at: teacherswithoutborders.org

2. Now, you will be at the WebBoard Login screen.
3. Where it says "Name" at the top of the Login screen, type in the Username you use for the Certificate of Teaching Mastery.
4. Where it says "Password," type in the Password you use for the Certificate of Teaching Mastery.
5. Click the button underneath that says, "Login."
6. Take a moment to familiarize yourself with your "homepage" screen. The left side has a yellow background and the right side has a white background. On the left side at the top is the name of your Learning Circle in bold letters, and there are other names listed underneath. On the right side of the screen is a welcome note at the top with your name, and underneath, it will tell you that you have new messages.
7. Click on the highlighted words underneath the welcome message that say, "You have # message(s)." (Notice that after you click, the left side of the page turns from a yellow background to a white background.)
8. Look at the list of topics (on the left side) and click on the name of your Learning Circle.
9. Topics will appear just underneath your Learning Circle's name. Click on the first topic that says, "Meeting Your Learning Circle (Assignment 2a)."
10. Now, "scroll down" the right side of the page by clicking on the vertical green bar (located on the far right) and sliding it down.
11. Underneath the line, you'll see two options: "Post New Topic," and "Reply to..."
12. Click on "Post New Topic."
13. You'll see a screen come up that has a thin box on top and a bigger box on the bottom.
14. In the thin box, write the title of the topic you wish to discuss. For example you might write the topic "Creating an Inviting Classroom," if that's what you wish to discuss OR if you are asked in an assignment to "share feedback from your Learning Circle," then be sure to post a new topic that says "Course #, Assignment #: Feedback for Gita," as an example. The reason you would write the course number, assignment number and your name as the title of your new topic is so that the other people in your Learning Circle can respond to your work on that assignment. Each person in your Learning Circle will also post a new topic for that same assignment but with their name in the title so that the others will give them feedback.
15. Once you have typed the title of the new topic in the thin box at the top, you are ready to continue.
16. Underneath that thin box is a bigger box at the bottom. Put your assignment into that box if you are seeking feedback from your Learning Circle OR if it is a topic for discussion (not connected to an assignment) write in that box whatever it is you wish your Learning Circle to read.
17. When you're done, click on the word "Post" that is **AT THE BOTTOM** of the right-hand side of the page.
18. An orange box on the right will come up that asks you to read your message and if you need to make changes you are instructed to go "Back" and make changes. If you are happy with your message and you are ready to "Post" your new topic and message so that your Learning Circle can read your words, click on the button that says, "Post."
19. Your message will now appear as it will be seen by your Learning Circle. Take a moment to look at it.
20. When you log out and come back on WebBoard on another day, you'll see that people from your Learning Circle will have posted responses to your topic for discussion or feedback on your assignment.

[8] http://cnx.org/content/m13280/latest/file:thewebbore.doc
[9] http://206.40.48.186/∼twb

21. To "Logoff" of WebBoard, look at the black bar at the top that runs across the entire length of the screen. Click on the white words that say "Logoff."

19 What is the Question Wall?

The Question Wall is a place where questions can be posted by Learning Village members **without any responses.** "Try to love the questions **themselves**," says the poet, Rilke. This is the spirit in which the Question Wall is created.

Sometimes, you'll be instructed as part of an assignment to post questions that have arisen for you as you interact with the course material. In Course 5, as you are assembling your E-Portfolio, you'll be asked to type some questions from the Question Wall as part of your E-Portfolio. Most times, however, you must self-initiate posting questions and you'll do that simply because you've been thinking about something as it relates to the ideas in the course and you want to make your questions visible. Others may have similar questions, and it is fine to repeat questions by placing them on the Question Wall even if they seem similar.

"Graffiti walls" and posters exist all over the world as public forums for self-expression and inquiry. Here is our constructive way of expressing our intellectual journey in an electronic and visual form. Our hope is that our Learning Village's Question Wall becomes a fertile place of questions about practices and ideas in education - a source of inspiration for all of us. The Question Wall will become a learning log - a visual representation of your thinking and our entire Learning Village's line of questioning as we all proceed through the Certificate of Teaching Mastery.

How to place questions on the Question Wall

Go to the WebBoard by clicking here[10] (log in), and you'll see an area called "The Learning Village." Click on the name "The Learning Village," and you'll see a sub-topic that says, "Question Wall." To post questions on The Learning Village's Question Wall follow the same instructions you used on "How to Post Your Work to WebBoard" The only difference is that you'll click on the topic "Question Wall" and after you post your question, no one will respond to your question. It will simply be a place where the members of our Learning Village will make their questions visible.

20 Assignment 2b: Meeting The Learning Village

There are two parts to Assignment 2b:

Part One

In Assignment 2a you were asked to "Describe in one or two paragraphs what you see now as you look outside your window." You posted your response on the WebBoard for your Learning Circle to see. Now, post the same response for Assignment 2a on the WebBoard - this time, for "The Learning Village" to see. The Learning Village is the entire group of Learners in the Certificate of Teaching Mastery representing 21 countries, and it is an area on WebBoard that is also available for public viewing.

To post your response, simply follow the directions as described earlier in "How to Post Your Work on WebBoard." The only difference is that instead of clicking on your Learning Circle's name, you'll look for the heading "The Learning Village." Click on the words "The Learning Village," and look for the sub-topic that says "Windows to the World." Click on "Windows to the World," and follow the directions from there. Check back every few days to read new responses posted daily from the larger Learning Village.

Part Two

Within WebBoard, under "The Learning Village" heading, you'll also see the topic listed that says "Question Wall." The Question Wall, you may remember, is the place where questions can be posted by Learning Village members **without any responses.** "Try to love the questions **themselves**," says the poet, Rilke. This is the spirit in which the Question Wall is created.

Think about one question, now, that you have regarding practices and ideas in education. Go to the WebBoard and under The Learning Village, click on the "Question Wall" topic and at the bottom click on

[10] http://206.40.48.186/~twb

"Reply to..." Write your question in the larger box that appears on your screen, and click "Post," at the bottom of the screen.

Come back to this Question Wall from time to time to see what others have written and to post new questions as you journey through the Certificate of Teaching Mastery.

You can access WebBoard now by clicking here.[11]

21 The Courses

How do I start?

By now you have completed the first two assignments in the Introductory Seminar. You have one more assignment to complete and the rest of the Introductory Seminar material to read. Once you complete the three assignments in the Introductory Seminar and you return the Professional Agreement, you'll be given Course 1, and you can move at your own pace. We recommend, however, that you commit to 5 -7 hours per week to the Certificate of Teaching Mastery so that you can complete the courses in 10 months. Please note that the courses must be taken in order - starting with this Introductory Seminar, then Courses 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Your Mentor will let you know if you are "Ready" or "Not Ready" before you can move on to the next course.

Please be aware that new members may be added to your Learning Circle at any time. The Certificate of Teaching Mastery is open to new students throughout the year. If you are working on Course 1, for example, and someone new joins your Learning Circle and that person is working on the Introductory Seminar, you can serve as a gentle guide for them. In this way, we all continue to learn from each other!

How do I get the assignments?

You can look at all of the assignments for each course by clicking on the "Outline" button (on the bottom, right-hand side of the screen once you're in the course). Click on the assignment you want to work on and you're there! All of the assignments are in the course already. We have made it easy for you, too, by giving you a file for each assignment. Just click on the Word icon and it will take you to a document you can fill in and save. If you don't have Word, just copy the assignment you see on your page and paste it into a file.

Once you work on an assignment, be sure to save the assignment on your own storage device (CD, disk, hard-drive) to work on it off-line. When you enter the course again on-line, you can click on "Personal File Storage" and store it. Your Mentor will be able to access it once you submit the completed assignment.

How long will it take to complete the Certificate of Teaching Mastery?

10 months, generally. The courses are active for one year from the moment you begin.

22 Key Concepts

Focused Freewrite

The term "Focused Freewrite" is often used in your assignments. A Focused Freewrite is when you use a phrase or sentence from something you've read as a trigger for free-form writing; that is, you write any thoughts, questions, or stories that come to mind as it relates to the trigger phrase or sentence. Sometimes you'll stick to the trigger topic and sometimes your mind will wander into seemingly unrelated places. Give yourself permission to move between "wandering" and coming back to writing about the topic.

Giving Feedback

As part of your assignments, often you'll be asked to respond to your Learning Circle's work. A response could include: a philosophical question that is triggered by another person's writing; an anecdote or experience that you'd like to share with them; or any other thoughts or questions that come to mind. You might start your response with the words, "I wonder..." or "That reminds me of..." The idea is not to critique their writing for grammar or style of writing, rather, to use the content of their writing as a springboard for dialogue.

Receiving Feedback

[11] http://206.40.48.186/~twb

Sometimes your assignments will tell you to "share feedback from your Learning Circle." This means that you will send your writing to your Learning Circle using WebBoard and receive feedback, so that you can develop your ideas further. When you receive feedback from your Learning Circle, choose 1 or 2 ideas from all of the responses you receive - talk about the ideas that inspired you to think more about what you are doing. Tell specifically what the feedback was and what further thinking or ideas it sparked for you.

23 Tips for Writing

Below are some guidelines for good writing. Please know, however, that the quality of your thinking - **what** you say - is the most important part of the assignment.

Six Traits of Good Writing:

1. **Ideas** - the message is alive and strong. There is a clear theme.
2. **Organization** - the writing follows an order by engaging the reader and drawing the reader into the story in an understandable way.
3. **Voice** - the flavor of the piece is consistent and connects with the audience.
4. **Word Choice** - the words meet the correct situation.
5. **Sentence flow** - the reader can follow what is going on in each sentence.
6. **Conventions** - the grammar makes it clear.

Be aware that your mentor wants to hear you:

- **Thinking** on paper;
- **Wrestling** and **playing** with the ideas presented in the course;
- **Describing** the ways in which you apply the ideas to your actual classroom practice.

24 Electronic Teaching Portfolio

A portfolio is a powerful assessment tool, and includes evidence from your work on major topics - successes, challenges, and questions. The key word is **evidence** that can show - far more than tests - what you know and what you need to do in order to improve. Portfolios are a professional way of demonstrating your competence and showing employers your achievements.

Traditional portfolios in the form of folders, boxes, or 3-ring binders hold papers, pictures, cassette tapes, and more. With an electronic Teaching Portfolio, known as an "E-Portfolio," information can be stored digitally, taking up little physical space, and is easily accessed from anywhere in the world.

Teachers Without Borders is pioneering E-Portfolios for teachers, and we have provided a way to for you to create one. Your electronic Teaching Portfolio will contain the following elements:

- **Professional Statement** - My view and approach to teaching
- **Questions** - My thinking about theory and practice
- **The Imagined Classroom** - School in 2010 through the eyes of the learner
- **Bringing New Thinking into Classroom Practice** - Evidence of how what's new becomes the standard
- **Highlights from Certificate of Teaching Mastery** - My best, most challenging, and growth-oriented work
- **My Students' Work** - Samples of how planning turns into outcomes
- **What Students Say** - About their work and the process of learning
- **My Service Project** - Learning that serves my community
- **Expertise I Wish to Share** - What I can offer other teachers
- **What I Need** - Skills and resources I seek from others
- **Reflections** - My life as a learner, teacher, and world citizen

- **Picture of My Classroom** - A photo that tells a story
- **Resume / References / Letters of Recommendation** - Support for my future in teaching

You will be able to complete all of the E-Portfolio elements by completing your assignments within each course as you go along.

To view the electronic Teaching Portfolio, click here[12] .

25 Save

Be sure to keep your assignments for all of the courses saved on a disk and have an extra back-up (either another disk or on your computer's hard drive). Several months from now, you'll need to access these same assignments to create your E-Portfolio. During Course 5, you'll have time specifically set aside to revise your work and assemble your E-Portfolio. You can only do that if you have taken great care in saving your assignments and have "backed them up" along the way.

Plan Ahead

Another important note is this: In order to do the "My Student's Work" section of your E-Portfolio you'll need to collect and save samples of your students' work right from the beginning and keep collecting and saving students' work as you go through the Certificate of Teaching Mastery. If you do this along the way, it will be much easier to complete this section of your E-Portfolio several months from now. Plan ahead.

26 Posting Documents to Your E-Portfolio

Mostly, you will post documents to your E-Portfolio as part of your work in Course 5. However, if you wish to post a digital photograph of yourself, now, please follow the directions below. Make sure the photo is saved as a jpeg file and it is 300 pixels in size. Post it in the section called "Photograph of the Teacher." If you do not have access to a digital camera and would like your photograph posted on your E-Portfolio, send a physical photograph to us (black and white **or** color) and we'll post it for you. You can send your photo to:

Teachers Without Borders
2880 74th Avenue, S.E.
Mercer Island, WA 98040 USA

The steps for posting photos or documents to your E-Portfolio are as follows:

1. You are already registered for your E-portfolio. Use the same "username" and "password" that you've used for the Certificate of Teaching Mastery to "log on" to your E-Portfolio.
2. Once you're logged on and you're in the posting area of your E-Portfolio, you will see your "Name," "Country" and "Email" in the top three lines on that page.
3. Then, scroll down to the section in which you wish to post a document (i.e. "Photograph of the Teacher.")
4. Then, in the "Document to Post" section under it, click "Browse " in order to look for the file you want to post. Once you've found the file, click on it. You will know that you have done this correctly if the file name appears in the box to the left of the word "Browse".
5. If you choose the wrong file, simply delete the file name by backspacing over the file name that appears in the box to the left of the word "Browse."
6. When you're ready to post your file, click the "Submit" button. (Important: Wait until you see the words "Successfully Uploaded" appear in red at the top of the page, then proceed with the next step.)
7. If you need to post other files, repeat steps 3-6 from above.
8. Log out by clicking the "Log out" button on upper right hand side of the page.
9. To see the information and files you just posted as it appears to the public, go to the opening page of your E-Portfolio. Instead of logging on as a "User," look at the bottom of the opening page of the

[12] http://64.78.30.9/new/myteaching.php

E-Portfolio under "View Portfolios." Choose your name in the "By Teacher Name" section, and press "Go."

To Delete a Document or Replace a Document in Your E-Portfolio with a New Version

"Log on" to your E-Portfolio and go to the posting area. Find the section for the document you wish to delete (i.e. "Photograph of the Teacher."). Press the "Delete" button to the right of that section and the file will be deleted. A screen will pop up to indicate that the document has been deleted. If you wish to add a new document, simply follow steps 3-9 from above.

27 Service Project

In Course 5, you will be guided to apply the theory and practice you gain in Courses 1 - 4 to address a local, national, or global need. This is what we call your "Service Project," and it is a requirement along with your electronic Teaching Portfolio for the Certificate of Teaching Mastery.

The design and implementation of your Service Project will be related to one of the topics in Course 5 as follows:

- Early childhood education
- Literacy and numeracy for adult learners
- Environmental education
- Education through the arts
- Girls' education
- Conflict mediation
- Special education
- Community Teaching and Learning Centers

28 Help (with computer and courses)

We expect that you'll have questions along the way about the courses and how to use the computer. Please do not be embarrassed to ask questions. We like it that way; it is the sign of a good student. If you have questions, email your Mentor at: mentor@teacherswithoutborders.org

Another form of help comes with your bonus CD, which will be mailed to you. This CD has useful software on it including the following:

- **Bonus Software**:
  - **ibrarian** - Web capture for off-line browsing and
  - **Grokker** - Information maps for better research
- **Computer Tutorial**: Helpful hints for technology usage
- **Linksfor Teachers**: Sites every teacher could use
- **PDF Files**: To do some assigned readings "off-line."
- **HIV-AIDS Information**: PDF files on prevention

29 Word-Processing Tips

As you work on assignments, you may need to "cut" some text, "paste" it elsewhere, or "copy" text. To do any of these actions, complete the following:

Step One - "Highlight" the text by putting your "cursor" in front of the words you need; click and hold down the left button on your "mouse" and drag the mouse to the right and let go of the left click on the mouse when you have captured all of the text you want. The words you need should now be in a darkened bar.

Step Two - After you have completed the above, proceed as follows:

- To "Cut" text: Press and hold down the control button on your keypad "Ctrl," and then while holding down the "Ctrl" button, press the letter "x".
- To "Paste" the text you just cut, put your cursor wherever you would like to put the text and click the left button of your mouse so that the cursor is blinking. Then, press and hold down the control button on your keypad "Ctrl," and while holding down the "Ctrl" button, press the letter "v".
- To "Copy" text: Be sure to "Highlight" text (Step 1 from above). Press and hold down the control button on your keypad "Ctrl," and then while holding down the "Ctrl" button, press the letter "c". Then, "Paste" the text wherever you want it to go by following the "Paste" instructions above.

30 Assignment 3: Questions to Consider

At this point, you have read most of the Introductory Seminar and completed the first two assignments. You have sent the first assignment to your Mentor and posted your second assignment on the WebBoard. For this third and last assignment in the Introductory Seminar, we ask that you answer the following questions and send your responses to your Mentor. This assignment will help your Mentor to get to know you better, and, hopefully, help you to clarify some of your own goals.

To do this assignment, click on the Word icon below. When it appears, press "Save" so that you can work on this assignment "off-line." You can type right on the assignment template. Be sure to save your assignment on a disk or your computer hard drive. When the assignment is complete, add it to your Personal File Storage and submit it to your Mentor for feedback.

Assignment 3: Questions to Consider[13]

Please answer the following questions (4 - 5 sentences for each):

1. What are your professional goals for the next 3 - 5 years?
2. How does participating in the Certificate of Teaching Mastery bring you closer to fulfilling those professional goals?
3. What do you wish to learn to become a more effective teacher?
4. How will participating in the Certificate of Teaching Mastery assist you in becoming a better teacher?
5. Please describe any special needs or circumstances that might slow down or accelerate the learning process for you as you go through the Certificate of Teaching Mastery.

To Go to the Next Page in the Course

Usually, you just click "Next" to go to the next page. When you finish a section, however, (as you're about to do when you finish reading this paragraph), you need to click on the "Outline" button, which is on the bottom, right-hand side of the page. Look underneath the blue bar and click on the word "Outline."

When you click on "Outline," a screen will "pop up" that will show you the outline for this entire Introductory Seminar. Look for the next section to read and click on the first topic in that next section. For example, when you get to the outline now, look under the next section called "Assessments and Evaluations" and look for the first topic called "Teacher Assessment Overview." Click on "Teacher Assessment Overview."

[13] http://cnx.org/content/m13280/latest/file:IntroA3f.doc