

Preface

*R*eflective Practice in Action is designed to serve teachers interested in improving their professional development. It can be used as a textbook for inservice teacher development courses as well as for teacher preparation courses. The book can also be used as a source book for school principals and administrators who want to encourage their teachers to think reflectively about their work.

I strongly believe that teachers should reflect on their work, and this book exists to help them do just that. As reflective practitioners, they can draw meaning from the study of their behaviors and methods inside of the classroom, with the intent to change for the better. The real value of reflection is in separating thought and emotion from the teaching event. Teachers can use this book as a mirror to help them see how their backgrounds have influenced them, who they are now, and where they intend to go in their practice. Reflective teachers have choices, and reflection is only half of the equation; the other half is action. Once teachers come to understand the how and why of what they do and have done, they can then take steps that will carry them along the path to better teaching.

Each chapter in the book attempts to help teachers uncover aspects of their work that may otherwise remain at the tacit level. To save time, teachers may choose to start reflecting at any point in the book and within any chapter. If teachers want to get a good grounding in reflective practice, they can read the first four chapters, which outline the origins and ideas behind reflective practice. Those who want to get down to reflecting immediately may want to begin with Chapter 5, which outlines the model of reflective practice on which many of the Reflection Breaks are based.

Reflective Practice in Action offers busy and dedicated teachers practical suggestions to tackle their professional development needs.

xii Reflective Practice in Action

These Reflection Breaks will, I hope, enable teachers to use the insights generated by these activities to create and implement new methods that will make them more effective teachers in their classrooms.