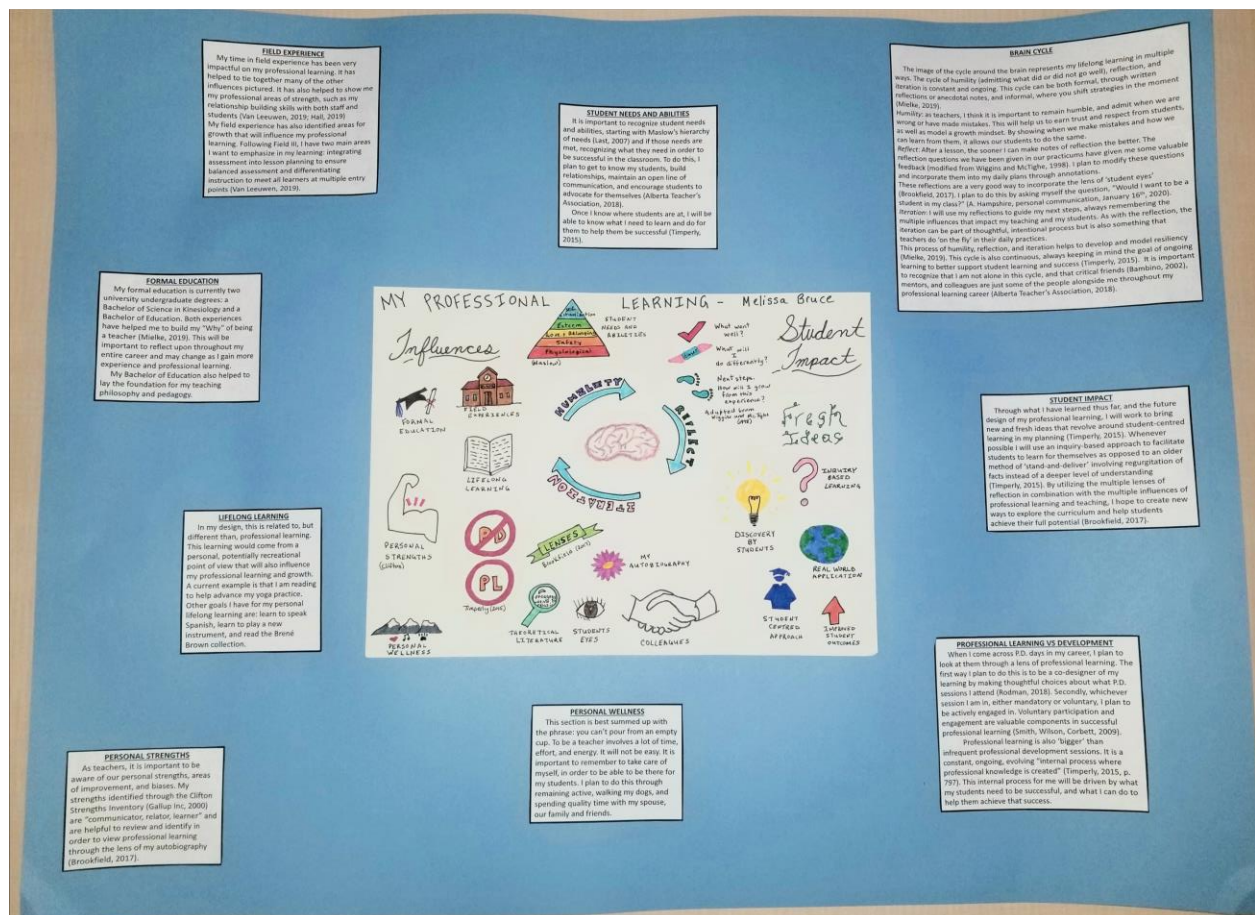


## My Professional Learning Poster Explained – Melissa Bruce



## BRAIN CYCLE

The image of the cycle around the brain represents my lifelong learning in multiple ways. The cycle of humility (admitting what did or did not go well), reflection, and iteration is constant and ongoing. This cycle can be both formal, through written reflections or anecdotal notes, and informal, where you shift strategies in the moment (Mielke, 2019).

*Humility:* as teachers, I think it is important to remain humble, and admit when we are wrong or have made mistakes. This will help us to earn trust and respect from students, as well as model a growth mindset. By showing when we make mistakes and how we can learn from them, it allows our students to do the same.

*Reflect:* After a lesson, the sooner I can make notes of reflection the better. The reflection questions we have been given in our practicums have given me some valuable feedback (modified from Wiggins and McTighe, 1998). I plan to modify these questions and incorporate them into my daily plans through annotations.

These reflections are a very good way to incorporate the lens of ‘student eyes’ (Brookfield, 2017). I plan to do this by asking myself the question, “Would I want to be a student in my class?” (A. Hampshire, personal communication, January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020).

*Iteration:* I will use my reflections to guide my next steps, always remembering the multiple influences that impact my teaching and my students. As with the reflection, the iteration can be part of thoughtful, intentional process but is also something that teachers do ‘on the fly’ in their daily practices.

This process of humility, reflection, and iteration helps to develop and model resiliency (Mielke, 2019). This cycle is also continuous, always keeping in mind the goal of ongoing learning to better support student learning and success (Timperly, 2015). It is important to recognize that I am not alone in this cycle, and that critical friends (Bambino, 2002), mentors, and colleagues are just some of the people alongside me throughout my professional learning career (Alberta Teacher’s Association, 2018).

## **STUDENT NEEDS AND ABILITIES**

It is important to recognize student needs and abilities, starting with Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (Last, 2007) and if those needs are met, recognizing what they need in order to be successful in the classroom. To do this, I plan to get to know my students, build relationships, maintain an open line of communication, and encourage students to advocate for themselves (Alberta Teacher’s Association, 2018).

Once I know where students are at, I will be able to know what I need to learn and do for them to help them be successful (Timperly, 2015).

## **FIELD EXPERIENCE**

My time in field experience has been very impactful on my professional learning. It has helped to tie together many of the other influences pictured. It has also helped to show me my professional areas of strength, such as my relationship building skills with both staff and students (Van Leeuwen, 2019; Hall, 2019)

My field experience has also identified areas for growth that will influence my professional learning. Following Field III, I have two main areas I want to emphasize in my learning: integrating assessment into lesson planning to ensure balanced assessment and differentiating instruction to meet all learners at multiple entry points (Van Leeuwen, 2019).

## **FORMAL EDUCATION**

My formal education is currently two university undergraduate degrees: a Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology and a Bachelor of Education. Both experiences have helped me to build my “Why” of being a teacher (Mielke, 2019). This will be important to reflect upon throughout my entire career and may change as I gain more experience and professional learning.

My Bachelor of Education also helped to lay the foundation for my teaching philosophy and pedagogy.

### **LIFELONG LEARNING**

In my design, this is related to, but different than, professional learning. This learning would come from a personal, potentially recreational point of view that will also influence my professional learning and growth. A current example is that I am reading to help advance my yoga practice. Other goals I have for my personal lifelong learning are: learn to speak Spanish, learn to play a new instrument, and read the Brené Brown collection.

### **PERSONAL STRENGTHS**

As teachers, it is important to be aware of our personal strengths, areas of improvement, and biases. My strengths identified through the Clifton Strengths Inventory (Gallup Inc, 2000) are “communicator, relator, learner” and are helpful to review and identify in order to view professional learning through the lens of my autobiography (Brookfield, 2017).

### **PERSONAL WELLNESS**

This section is best summed up with the phrase: you can’t pour from an empty cup. To be a teacher involves a lot of time, effort, and energy. It will not be easy. It is important to remember to take care of myself, in order to be able to be there for my students. I plan to do this through remaining active, walking my dogs, and spending quality time with my spouse, our family and friends.

### **PROFESSIONAL LEARNING VS DEVELOPMENT**

When I come across P.D. days in my career, I plan to look at them through a lens of professional learning. The first way I plan to do this is to be a co-designer of my learning by making thoughtful choices about what P.D. sessions I attend (Rodman, 2018). Secondly, whichever session I am in, either mandatory or voluntary, I plan to be actively engaged in. Voluntary participation and engagement are valuable components in successful professional learning (Smith, Wilson, Corbett, 2009).

Professional learning is also ‘bigger’ than infrequent professional development sessions. It is a constant, ongoing, evolving “internal process where professional knowledge is created” (Timperly, 2015, p. 797). This internal process for me will be driven by what my students need to be successful, and what I can do to help them achieve that success.

## **STUDENT IMPACT**

Through what I have learned thus far, and the future design of my professional learning, I will work to bring new and fresh ideas that revolve around student-centred learning in my planning (Timperly, 2015). Whenever possible I will use an inquiry-based approach to facilitate students to learn for themselves as opposed to an older method of ‘stand-and-deliver’ involving regurgitation of facts instead of a deeper level of understanding (Timperly, 2015). By utilizing the multiple lenses of reflection in combination with the multiple influences of professional learning and teaching, I hope to create new ways to explore the curriculum and help students achieve their full potential (Brookfield, 2017).

## **References**

- Alberta Teachers’ Association. (2018). *“Who will help me to do well?” How to best support the professional growth of Alberta’s newest teachers*. Edmonton, AB. Retrieved from [https://www.teachers.ab.ca/SiteCollection Documents/ATA/Publications/Research/COOR-101- 17% 20How% 20to% 20Support% 20Albert a's% 20Newest% 20Teachers.pdf](https://www.teachers.ab.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/ATA/Publications/Research/COOR-101-17%20How%20to%20Support%20Alberta's%20Newest%20Teachers.pdf)
- Bambino, D. (2002). Critical Friends. *Educational Leadership*, 59(6), 25-27. Retrived from [http://ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/login?url=h ttp://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=6504020&site=e host-live](http://ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=6504020&site=ehost-live)
- Brookfield, S. (2017) *Becoming a critically reflective teacher*. (2nd ed.). Jossey Boss: San Francisco.
- Gallup Inc. (2000). Clifton strengths insight.
- Hall, J. (2019). Field experience instructor narrative assessment. EDUC 465.

- Last, J. (2007). Maslow's hierarchy of needs. (Ed.), *A Dictionary of Public Health*. : Oxford University Press. Retrieved 28 Jan. 2020, from <https://www-oxfordreference-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/view/10.1093/acref/9780195160901.001.0001/acref-9780195160901-e-2714>.
- Mielke, C. (2019). A letter to new teachers. *Educational Leadership*. Retrieved from <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/sept19/vol77/num01/A-Letter-to-New-Teachers.aspx>
- Rodman, A. (2018). Learning together, learning on their own. *Educational Leadership*. Retrieved from <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/nov18/vol76/num03/Learning-Together,-Learning-on-Their-Own.aspx>
- Smith, D., Wilson, B., Corbett, D. (2009). Moving beyond talk. *Educational Leadership*. Retrieved from <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/feb09/vol66/num05/Moving-Beyond-Talk.aspx>
- Timperley, H. (2015). Continuing professional development. In J.D. Wright (Ed.) *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* (2nd ed.). pp. 796-802. doi: 10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.92134-2. Retrieved from <https://www-sciencedirect-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/science/article/pii/B9780080970868921342?via%3Di%3Dhub>
- Van Leeuwen, K. (2019). Field experience instructor narrative assessment. EDUC 540