

TRAINING TODAY'S NEW TEACHERS: GLOBAL BOOKS ENHANCING PREPARATION FOR INTERACTIVE READ-ALLOUD



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GLOBAL AND INTERNATIONAL literature for young people provides great benefits to children in expanding viewpoints, gaining understanding of sociopolitical issues, increasing perspective, encouraging critical thinking, and increasing empathy (e.g., Baldwin, 2018; Corapi & Short, 2005; Lehman et al., 2010; Liang et al., 2013; Short, 2009; Wissman et al., 2017; Yokota & Teale, 2017). Further, global literature can serve as another source for providing U.S. children with the essential “mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors” described by Bishop (1990) and play a key role in both global and culturally relevant education. With the current state of our increasingly globalized world, the important effects of reading global children’s and young adult literature cannot be underestimated. However, like culturally diverse literature in general, it often is not utilized in the classroom (Liang et al., 2024).

This is highly unfortunate. In addition to the already mentioned benefits of using global literature in the classroom, global and international books can be powerful tools in aiding educators to better address significant objectives of literacy education. Using this literature often promotes to students the importance of reading widely. It also emphasizes the development of specific comprehension and vocabulary skills and strategies. Global books frequently demand more emphasis on building students’ background knowledge prior to reading and encourage comparing the treatment of similar themes and topics in literary works from different cultures. They also highlight vocabulary objectives; global books, or those with transcultural settings, frequently include content-rich words, less common words, and even words from other languages. Overall, global books can serve as outstanding materials for fostering the

trajectory of skilled reading from early to advanced stages of literacy development.

Using Global Books in Interactive Read-Aloud

In undergraduate children’s literature courses in education programs, interactive read-aloud assignments are very common. Graff et al. (2022) reported this type of instructional assignment occurring in over 55% of undergraduate degree courses and 77% of dual-degree courses nationwide. This is not surprising as interactive read-aloud is a frequent instructional technique used in literacy instruction. It has long been considered a high-impact instructional tool for multiple areas of elementary literacy, from vocabulary acquisition to building comprehension skills to modeling fluency, while also increasing students’ background and content knowledge, critical thinking, and motivation for reading (Anderson et al., 1985; Beck & McKeown, 2001; DeJulio et al., 2022; Dickinson, 2001; Elley, 1989; Reese & Cox, 1999; Teale, 2003). The manifold impacts of this instructional strategy thus make it frequently one of the first that preservice teachers will learn about and attempt during their early coursework and practica experiences.

Successful interactive read-alouds require the teacher to prepare carefully to engage in the type of dialogic approach that deepens this interactive learning experience for students (Bakhtin, 1981; Boyd & Markarian, 2015; Lennox, 2013). Teachers must learn to match texts to readers’ needs and interests, and then strategically decide when to prompt a discussion, with an eye to knowing when building background or content knowledge is needed, what might be new vocabulary, and how to

scaffold students in making connections between different plot points or understanding a new perspective. This requires both thorough evaluation of the text to plan the place for a prompt, and understanding of the type of initial open-ended questions and follow-up queries that result in an active exchange encouraging meaning-making. For preservice teachers, who are just beginning to learn about selection and evaluation of text and effective question formation, this is a challenging task.

Using global titles may better support preservice teachers' early attempts at creating prompts and successfully conducting interactive read-alouds than using domestic titles. As explained, global books often have higher vocabulary demands, making determination of word understanding queries a bit easier. They also frequently require specific background knowledge related to their pluralistic views of world society, resulting in areas where young readers may obviously need greater support in meaning-making around plot events or nuances they may know little about. This obvious need for background knowledge can make it easier for educators to decide where and what potential scaffolds and prompts to use. Incorporating use of global titles into an interactive read-aloud assignment thus may better allow preservice students to begin planning, writing, and practicing using comprehension and vocabulary instructional prompts.

This exploratory study considered the use of picturebooks from the 2023 and 2024 Notable Books for a Global Society (NBGS) lists in an undergraduate children's literature course's practical assignment for planning and conducting interactive read-alouds. Using these NBGS titles may better support preservice teachers' early attempts at creating prompts and in conducting interactive read-alouds. Incorporating these high-quality and authentic titles into the assignment may allow preservice teachers more initial success in creating and using prompts for interactive read-alouds, and ultimately help them better understand and use this widely used instructional strategy.

Methods

Positionality Statement

The researchers teach literacy courses at the research site, including teaching undergraduate and graduate domestic and international children's literature courses. Both researchers value diverse representation in higher education and in children's literature.

Population

The study was conducted in five semester-length course sections of an undergraduate children's and young adult litera-

ture course at the same university, taught by three instructors over one year. The course meets core requirements for elementary education licensure in the state. All members of the course sections were invited to participate in the study; the final participants were 62 undergraduate students, the great majority of whom were elementary education majors.

Materials and Procedures

Undergraduate students completed two interactive read-aloud assignments in their course, one with a picturebook from a selected list of 2023 and 2024 NBGS titles and one domestic picturebook of their choice. The students arranged to do the read-alouds with the same child, ages 4 to 14, and most selected a student with whom they worked in a school setting or a friend's or relative's child. Students were directed to do the read-alouds in two separate sessions (one book in each) and were given free choice on which read-aloud to do first (see Figure 1). After the semester was over, each participant's assignment had the name removed and was collected for data analysis. Questions at the end of the assignment asked the students to reflect and compare their experiences with the two read-alouds. These open-ended questions inquired about differences they noticed in creating prompts (both for meaning-making and for vocabulary) for each read-aloud and in conducting the interactive read-aloud, including stating for which book the creation of prompts and leading discussions was "easier" and why. They also asked students about their perceived differences between the two experiences in terms of the children's engagement with the books and discussions, again using the "easier" label and asking for reasons why.

Data Analysis

The students' answers to these open-ended questions were coded and examined using a content analysis approach to condense information into categories. Researchers first looked to see if students offered classifications regarding "easier" ratings and created a descriptive chart for those that specifically stated one was easier. They then began examining the explanations for these ratings (the "whys") if ratings were given, as well as all responses even if a particular "easier"/"harder" rating was not explicitly stated, through initial open coding sessions to look for prominent themes throughout the answers. They also closely examined all responses to the open-ended question prompts and identified common categories of an-

Figure 1 INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUD ASSIGNMENT

Interactive Read-Aloud Assignment

Interactive and purposeful read-aloud is an evidence-based, developmentally appropriate instructional strategy that provides a meaningful oral language and literacy experience for children. Read-alouds promote oral language development and listening comprehension and analysis of literary and factual texts.

For this assignment you will arrange to read-aloud and discuss a picturebook with a “student” (a child or teen, age 4-14) two times. One time you will use a NGBS 2023 or 2024 global picturebook, and one time you will use a US domestic picturebook. Follow best practices for interactive read-aloud as you learned in class.

Directions:

- (1) Before each of your read-alouds, complete the “Before” section below.
- (2) Following each of the read-alouds, complete the “After” section, explaining the details of your experience and reflecting on the experience in terms of understanding the student’s meaning-making and considering your own teaching.
- (3) After the second read-aloud, complete the “Final” section.

Before:

- (1) Write an annotation for the picturebook.
 - a. First, list complete bibliographic information including author, title, illustrator, publisher, copyright date, country of origin, and genre.
 - b. Then write a two-paragraph annotation. The first paragraph should present a summary of the picturebook and may use a centering hook. The second paragraph should address the four areas covered in class that help you critique the picturebook: (1) literary merit, (2) artistic merit, (3) genre specific criteria of excellence, and (4) considerations of cultural authenticity and thoughts about representation.
- (2) Write a brief narrative description of the student. Remember to use a pseudonym for the student and have permission from their family for the student to participate in this activity. Any information about the student that is shared in the assignment is only used for your learning in this class and the student should never be identified.
 - a. State the student’s age and grade level.
 - b. Describe what you know about the student’s prior literacy experiences and other factors that can affect development of their language and literacy skills. Factors to consider include the following: prior exposure to language-rich, concept-rich environments; presence of disabilities, talents, and/or giftedness; presence of physical and/or medical conditions; bilingualism or multilingualism; level[s] of English language and/or home language proficiency; limited or interrupted formal education.
- (3) Create 8 or 9 open-ended prompts to use during the read-aloud for encouraging, supporting/scaffolding, and illuminating students’ meaning-making at various points in the book. Make a list. Include in your list the pages where you will use the specific prompts. In creating these prompts, refer to your annotation and consider the literary and artistic style and excellence of the picturebook to help determine some of the prompts and places to plan to use them. These prompts can be repeated. Use prompts that will encourage the student to:
 - a. ...comment on what they notice about how the illustrations add to the meaning of the story, moving beyond what the text says alone. *Or*;
 - b. ...think about other books they have read or heard that have similar themes/topics and how that helps them to make meaning of this text. *Or*;
 - c. ...recognize how words and phrases, including figurative language, contribute to a text’s rhythm or meaning, and to think about the way the story is told (style of narration.)
- (4) Select 4 or 5 key vocabulary words in the book. Then create prompts to use during the read-aloud that will help start and guide discussions related to these vocabulary words. Make a list. Include in your list the page where

Figure 1 cont.
INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUD ASSIGNMENT

you will be using the prompts. These prompts can be repeated. Select words and prompts that will encourage the student to:

- a. ...notice interesting words or word choices and discuss why the author might have used that word. *Or,*
- b. ...practice using context clues (apposition, definition/explanation, restatement/synonym, contrast/antonym, syntax, punctuation, etc.), or practice using morphology and etymology clues (applying knowledge of common Latin and Greek roots and affixes and their meanings), and/or practice using other skills and strategies to help decode the meaning. (Note: Be ready to gently remind students of skills they might use and scaffold this strategy practice without spending excessive time on this word work.)

During:

- (1) *When you begin the read-aloud, start with a simple reinforcement of concepts of print for the student while also beginning the process of making text-based predictions. Point to the title and to the author's name when you are looking together at the front cover. Explore together the jacket cover and undercover, the side flaps, and the inner pages. Discuss together if the student is seeing any possible clues to the story's mood or possible topic.*

(With younger students, age 4-6, you might ask the student to show you where to start reading the book by pointing to the beginning text.)

- (2) *During the read-aloud, make sure that you are modeling fluency with respect to prosody at all times that you are actively reading aloud the text. Remember that you should also be pausing for time for the student to examine the illustrations as appropriate to the pacing of your discussions.*

After:

- (1) Write a reflection on your experience:
 - a. First, write a brief general account of your overall experience. How did you and the student respond overall to the experience? (@1/2 to 1 page)
 - b. Then, explain how you understand the vocabulary work the student did. (@1 page)
 - i. What prompts do you think effectively helped scaffold their practice of vocabulary strategies? What prompts helped reveal to you the extent of the vocabulary work the student was doing? Include student responses for examples, as well as any spontaneous vocabulary comments or discussion.
 - ii. What do you think about the student's use of vocabulary strategies and/or vocabulary development overall considering their age/grade level?
 - iii. How effective did you feel your prompts were in fostering the student's vocabulary work overall?
 - c. Then, explain how you understand the meaning-making the student did. (@1 page)
 - i. What prompts do you think helped scaffold this meaning-making? What prompts helped reveal to you the extent of the meaning-making the student was doing? Include student responses for examples, as well as any spontaneous meaning-making comments or discussion.
 - ii. What do you think about the student's comprehension of this picturebook overall considering their age/grade level?
 - iii. How effective did you feel your prompts were in fostering the student's meaning-making overall?

After conducting both read-alouds, complete this final piece...

Final Reflection

Answer the two reflection questions about meaning-making work (@ 1-2 paragraphs each)

- (1) What differences, if any, did you notice between the two read-aloud experiences (NGBS book or US domestic book) in selecting places and prompts for meaning-making? Was it easier or harder to select prompts for one of the read-alouds? Why?
- (2) What differences did you notice between two read-aloud experiences (NGBS book or US domestic book) in leading discussions around meaning-making? Was it easier or harder to lead the meaning-making discussions for one of the read-alouds? Why?

Answer the two reflection questions about vocabulary work (@ 1-2 paragraphs each)

Figure 1 cont.

INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUD ASSIGNMENT

- (1) What differences, if any, did you notice between the two read-aloud experiences (NGBS book or US domestic book) in selecting words and prompts for vocabulary work? Was it easier or harder to select words and prompts for one of the experiences? Why?
- (2) What differences did you notice between the two read-aloud experiences (NGBS book or US domestic book) in leading discussions around vocabulary work? Was it easier or harder to lead the vocabulary discussions for one of the read-alouds? Why?

Answer the three overall reflection questions (@ 1-2 paragraphs each)

- (1) What else did you notice, if anything, that was different between the two read-aloud experiences (NGBS book or US domestic book)?
- (2) As you think about these two experiences conducting interactive read-alouds, what are three “takeaways” you have learned overall about doing interactive read-alouds?
- (3) How do you feel you have grown as an educator in the instruction of comprehension and vocabulary from these two experiences?

swers individually. The researchers then analyzed the common categories that emerged from this initial open coding stage to extract and label similar details from within the categories. Subcategories were added as needed to better identify the similarities and differences within each category. During the axial coding stage, researchers identified and labeled the emerging subcategories once the basic framework of categories was understood and agreed upon, and then returned to the responses from the initial categories and reread as needed to identify and accurately label subcategories. From this analysis, key exemplar quotes were identified to better contextualize the overall results regarding students' self-reflected comparisons of the two types of interactive read-aloud experiences (with NBGS books or with domestic books).

Findings

Representation of Explicitly Comparing the Two Experiences

Table 1 condenses the explicit comparative portions of the undergraduate preservice teachers' self-reflections in considering their read-alouds with domestic books versus their read-alouds with the global NBGS books. The reflection questions asked them what differences, if any, they noticed between their two read-aloud experiences (domestic and global) with creating both vocabulary and meaning-making prompts and selecting the places for their use, and then specifically if creating these prompts was easier for the domestic or the global book. A similar question was then asked about differences they noticed about leading the discussions, including, specifically, whether it was easier to lead the discussion around the meaning-making and vocabulary prompts for the domestic or the global book

(e.g., easier to have a more complex discussion, went into more depth in discussion) for the domestic or global read-aloud. In another question about the overall differences between the two experiences, the preservice teachers considered in which interactive read-aloud experience (domestic or global) the children seemed more engaged overall. Table 1 helps illustrate the preservice teachers' comparison of the two experiences when they did explicitly state one or the other was “easier.”

Overall, the comparative numbers of those students who did explicitly answer suggest that using global books is easier for preservice teachers doing their first interactive read-alouds; students reported it being easier to create the prompts and lead the discussions related to both vocabulary and meaning-making. They also reported that using the global picturebook led to more overall engagement from the children with the book during the interactive read-aloud.

What the Comparative Nature of the Assignment Taught the Students about Principles of Successful Interactive Read-Alouds

Analysis of the undergraduate students' reflections and responses to the open-ended questions on their interactive read-aloud assignments generally reinforced what was found in the descriptive numbers in Table 1; for most students, it was “easier” to create prompts and lead discussions with the NBGS picturebooks than with the domestic picturebooks. But the student reflections and explanations suggesting why they felt this way indicated that it may have been the comparative nature of the assignment related to the two types of books (global and domestic) that had the strongest effect in helping develop students' understanding of the important

principles behind a successful interactive read-aloud. Students considering the differences began to understand the important similarities that made an interactive read-aloud work. As they reflected on their experiences, students overwhelmingly spoke to two key themes: the importance of planning and preparation and the importance of the interactive nature of this instructional strategy.

The Importance of Planning and Preparation In the first key theme, the importance of planning and preparation, three categories emerged within the overarching idea: (a) “knowing your reader matters,” (b) “book selection matters,” and (c) “prompts and planning matter.”

Knowing Your Reader Matters. This important idea of “knowing your reader” fell into three subcategories: knowing children’s background knowledge, knowing their interests, and knowing their literacy skills and attention spans. First, many students commented on the importance of working with the individual children’s background knowledge. While the assignment did require students to write a brief description of the child, including age, grade, and known literacy development, the students quickly realized that knowing more specifics about the child’s background knowledge around the topics in the book being read was helpful, and that an important aspect of their role was helping to connect children’s existing knowledge to new concepts in the book. For example, two students observed:

It’s important to get them to think about things to some extent from their own experience, such as

with the prompt [I used] relating birthday candles to *yahrzeit* candles.

I learned that questions involving connections to their own lives are helpful, such as the question I proposed about food their parents cook for them and ways they celebrate.

This awareness also connected to students’ comments around the importance of knowing the children’s interests:

[X] seemed to like both books, but he was more into the [NBGS book]. He got excited while reading both books, but he jumped up and down out of excitement during [the NBGS book] when they won the World Series. It seemed to fit his interests [in sports] more. I found this interesting because I thought [the book] might be slightly above his level and something that he would not enjoy.

Students also recognized that the children’s literacy and listening skill levels mattered and especially noted the importance of attention span (e.g., “Something else I learned was to know how much attention your students can handle”). Many students spoke to the children’s age specifically, commenting on the need to adjust queries for younger children to attend to basic comprehension or definition of a less complex word before going deeper, or likewise moving more quickly to critical thinking questions with older children. As one student explained, “I think an important thing that I’ve learned about comprehension and vocabulary instruction is to meet students where they are at!”

This statement was echoed by another student, while also

Table 1
SELF-REFLECTIONS WITH EXPLICIT COMPARISON STATED FOR READ-ALOUDS WITH GLOBAL VERSUS DOMESTIC PICTUREBOOKS

	GLOBAL	DOMESTIC	TOTAL NUMBER EXPLICITLY ANSWERING
Vocabulary			
Easier to create prompts	71% (n = 22)	29% (n = 9)	n = 31
Easier to lead discussion	76% (n = 19)	24% (n = 6)	n = 25
Meaning-making			
Easier to create prompts	56% (n = 20)	44% (n = 16)	n = 36
Easier to lead discussion	57% (n = 21)	43% (n = 16)	n = 37
More overall engagement	65% (n = 17)	35% (n = 9)	n = 26

Note. This chart only includes student responses that explicitly addressed the comparative question (“easier”/“more than”) in their reflections.

incorporating the second subtheme, around the importance of book choice:

I've learned to select texts that not only offer rich content but also resonate with the students' experiences and interests. This has helped me become more attuned to their engagement levels, allowing me to better support comprehension and vocabulary development in a way that feels natural and relevant to them.

Book Selection Matters. Within the importance of planning and preparation, students also spoke frequently to the issue of book selection, or “knowing the book.” Comments in this area emerged about understanding differences driven by genre (e.g., “One is a historical realistic fiction piece, and the other is a mix of fairy tale and folklore”) but focused primarily on the theme and text difficulty of the picturebook and ultimately the effect this had on the prompts they created. Student reflections provided perspective on this aspect:

It was easier for me to select places and prompts for meaning-making for [the NBGS book] rather than [the domestic book] because there was an informational aspect to it and the domestic book was more of a narrative.

Discussion was easier with [the NBGS book] because it was [more difficult]. There was plenty of conversation about the literature, pictures, and cultures in the book. Naturally, questions came up as we read the book and even after. We both got the chance to elaborate on the open-ended questions and make predictions. [The domestic book] was much harder for me to create authentic conversation with. [X] was able to answer my questions quickly. If I had picked a more complex book, we could have done better. I believe it is easier to lead conversation about and make connections to a harder book.

I noticed for [the NBGS book] my prompts were heavily focused on the “why”: Why does she feel this way? Why did she do that? I felt that the story itself was much more direct and sequential, and I was confident that the kids would be able to follow along with the plot. So, my prompts needed to [go beyond and] align with deeper reasoning skills.

[The NBGS book] required more culturally contextualized prompts to scaffold understanding, while the U.S. domestic book had a more direct and familiar context. Both books had a message to them, but [the NBGS book] had a lot more to analyze.

Students also commented on the need as the teacher to really know the book's topic and content well themselves, crossing into the related sub-theme “prompts and planning matter”:

Another takeaway is how important it is that you are prepared and that you have done your fair share of research. This will allow you to have a better understanding and then allow you to give the students a better and more meaningful experience.

Prompts and Planning Matter. Throughout the reflections, the students frequently mentioned the importance of planning and practice for a successful interactive read-aloud. Many commented on a need to “practice more” before they do an interactive read-aloud, and how the preplanned prompts made a difference. For example, students explained:

My first takeaway from this experience is to take the time to prepare discussion questions before the read-aloud begins. I initially found the formatting of this very tedious, but I was glad that I had come up with key points to mention while I was reading. I felt that it inspired the kids to come up with their own questions, as well as gave the reading purpose.

I am more aware of the importance of good questions to scaffold student understanding.

One of my takeaways is that it is good to go into read-alouds with a written-out list of prepared prompts. Prior to this assignment, I would have vague ideas about the book I was using for a read-aloud and what questions I could ask, but I never fully planned out questions. Those read-alouds went okay, but I noticed that the read-alouds I did for this assignment resulted in better conversation and overall went over a lot better. So, in the future I will take the time to plan out questions beforehand for better book conversations.

This is the first time in a read-aloud where I asked questions in between different parts of the book because I was always told to just read and then ask

questions later. I noticed a big difference, and now I know how to make prompts that are related to the book that inspire and guide thinking.

The Importance of Interactivity

In addition to the importance of planning and preparation, students' reflections also circled around another key theme: the central notion of the read-aloud being interactive. Throughout the reflections, students spoke to the realization that planning and preparing was very important, and, at the same time, they also needed to follow the lead of the children on their meaning-making journeys through the picturebooks. Comments indicated how using open-ended queries played a crucial role in the students' growing understanding about the importance of following the children's lead during the discussions:

I noticed that the prompts that elicited a yes/no response seemed to shut down conversation very fast, while open-ended prompts allowed for the kids to fully speak their mind.

I think that questions such as "Why are there three bowls on this page?" might seem simple, but the "why" requires less passivity from the student as they are required to interact with the pictures within the book, connect to prior knowledge of the story, and make an inference for the picture/story's meaning. This makes more discussion.

While open-ended queries had been discussed in class, the student responses showed that students had gained personal experience that convinced them of the central role these prompts played in helping to engage students in meaning-making conversation. They also expressed that having plenty of prepared prompts allowed them to be, ironically, more flexible:

I did not find myself using every prompt the way that I had planned, but they gave me confidence in my knowledge of the story and helped me answer other comprehensive prompts that presented themselves naturally while reading.

My first takeaway is that I think I need to figure out more prompts beforehand, so I have more options of things to ask depending on how the read-aloud is going.

The prompts are a great starting point, and they also encourage more spontaneous responses from students.

Reflecting on the two interactive read-alouds and thinking through how they differed between the global picturebook and the domestic picturebook experiences seemed to naturally lead to deep understanding about how learning happens in an interactive read-aloud. Many of the final "takeaway" comments centered on the idea that if teachers planned and prepared prompts, and were responsive to supporting the interactive nature of the discussions, then deep understanding happened:

My takeaway is that interactive read-alouds are effective because they are both student- and teacher-led. Although the teacher is structuring and facilitating the read-aloud, it is being directed by student response. There is a mutual level of commitment with an interactive read-aloud that leads to deeper analysis and learning.

Another takeaway is that no answers are bad ones, and be prepared to follow what your students are noticing. If they answer something you didn't expect, be appreciative of it and encourage them. Don't feel afraid to springboard off it.

By combining our noticing and our thoughts, we could make even more meaning of the book.

Limitations

This exploratory study was limited by its nature; the study only begins to explore the possible effects of using books from the NBGS lists (and global books in general) for a practical interactive read-aloud assignment on preservice teachers' abilities to create effective prompts and conduct an effective interactive read-aloud. While this experience was compared to interactive read-aloud experiences with domestic literature, the comparison is limited due to individual differences, past experiences of the participants, and the nature of self-reporting. Additionally, the study is limited by the convenience population being used; the participants were all students at one location.

Final Thoughts and Implications

The results of this study suggest that using global picturebooks for preservice teachers' early experiences with interactive read-alouds may help them be more successful in their

first attempts. The nature of this type of literature, with content that may be less well-known and vocabulary words that might be more unusual or difficult, lends itself to helping undergraduate education students more easily create open-ended comprehension queries for specific areas of a text and identify words that might require guided discussion. This in turn may help the preservice teacher lead discussions around these prompts, as they know that the child might lack the necessary background knowledge and will be eager to help provide this and create connections. Ultimately, these conversations can help engage the child more with the book and lead to an overall successful interactive read-aloud experience.

Additionally, asking students to create and compare experiences with two different types of books, using a global book that might be easier to plan and lead and a domestic picturebook that might be sneakily harder than expected to prepare, leads to a deep, experiential-based understanding of the important principles of the interactive read-aloud instructional strategy. The comparative nature of the assignment resulted in students recognizing the importance of text selection, the duality of planning and flexibility, and the use of a dialogic stance. Being asked to determine which book type was “easier” to use obliged the students to think about what made the experience more or less challenging, leading them to consider the nature of the book itself as selected material. Because the global NBGS books often addressed content with which the students themselves were less familiar, they quickly realized the need for planning when to prompt to provide background knowledge support in particular, and how these planned prompts in the read-aloud could lead to spontaneous additional meaning-making conversations as children engaged with more questions or made connections. Finally, simply comparing two experiences helped the students begin to recognize a dialogic-centered interaction versus one that was more closed-ended, and what role their queries played in engaging or shutting down children’s responses.

Using global books for preservice teachers’ early interactive read-aloud experiences, and using comparative reflective assignments to process the experiences, holds promise for starting future teachers as effective users of this high-impact instructional tool. It begins to provide understanding of fundamental structures underlying comprehension instruction and classroom engagement. And, in the end, the sense of achievement around having worked hard to support a child in understanding and engaging with a book creates hope and excitement for their future role as a teacher. As one student noted,

I also feel more excited and hopeful for my teaching career, because I feel more confident in my discussion leading, and the ability to work with students to increase comprehension. •

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