

Susan Hoch Interview:

How would you describe your area of study to a novice?

My area of study is literacy education, which incorporates learning about all areas of reading and how to assess and diagnose reading problems, as well as plan instructionally sound lessons and interventions for literacy education.

What is your primary motivation for persevering through graduate school?

Reading has always been my favorite hobby, and has become my favorite area of teaching. I see so many struggling readers, and I want to be able to help them overcome their struggles!

Do you think there is any value in social networking with other graduate students in non-related fields?

There is a ton of value in social networking with other graduate students in non-related fields. As a teacher, I have worked hard to plan cross-curricular lessons, and social networking would just enhance the ability to understand the other fields and hear their expertise on struggles that we are seeing as teachers. We may not all be experts in other areas, but it is important to be informed and to be as up to date as possible across all areas of study.

What is your favorite stress-reduction technique?

My favorite stress-reduction technique is finding a quiet place and enjoying a good book, or just being outside and enjoying a long walk.

What is the last book you read strictly for pleasure and how long ago was it?

The last book that I read for pleasure was *Loving* by Karen Kingsbury, and I read it at the end of January 2012. I have not been reading anything but school related books for the past couple of months, as I prepare for the RVE test in April.

Please describe your most meaningful academic relationship.

I do not know that I can narrow it down to one. I have been inspired by so many teachers. My third grade teacher set the stage for me becoming a teacher, and inspired me to be a third grade teacher as well. In graduate college, all of my teachers have been awesome, and I highly respect all of them, but Dr. Jennifer Jones has challenged me to new limits in reading. I feel that I am the teacher that I am today because of her teaching, knowledge, care & concern for me.

What surprised you the most about graduate school?

I have been surprised at how much I have learned, and how much it has affected my teaching. It has been an absolutely amazing journey, and I know that I am better equipped as a teacher now.

If travel to Mars happens in your lifetime, would you want to be one of the scientists on board? If yes, what would you contribute to the mission?

Being totally honest, I would not want to be one of the first scientists to travel to Mars. I so explicitly remember the Challenger crash and the first teacher Christa McAuliffe going to space, and it would terrify me to be on a spaceship. If I could overcome my fears, I would love have a virtual classroom from space and allow my students to enjoy the experience with me.

What is your favorite comfort food and why? How often do you consume it?

I would have to admit that my favorite comfort food is dark chocolate. I actually do not consume it very often, but occasionally I will purchase a bag of Dove's dark chocolate and indulge in it.

If you hadn't been admitted to graduate school, what do you think you would be doing right now?

I would be continuing to teach, and enjoying every minute of it!

When do you expect to complete your degree?

I plan to graduate in May 2012, and then complete my practicum this summer.