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Teach, Learn, Repeat
Future Goals Essay

When I first started teaching, I was thrilled to be fulfilling a childhood dream, but couldn't help but feel like something was missing. I realized that I missed the feeling of being a student. Even though working full time and taking graduate classes has been a challenge, it's been the best decision I've ever made. I feel proud to share that, "Miss Wagner has homework tonight, too!" with my students, and go to sleep every night knowing that I'm on my way to becoming the best teacher I can be. After reflecting upon how I want to grow as a teacher during my post-graduate school career, I chose three topics I'd like to focus on. First, I want to continue to learn more about best practices in literacy education. Second, I want to learn more about how to better my classroom management style. Finally, I want to continue creating a classroom environment that makes each and every student excited to come to school.

The first topic I want to study further is best practices in teaching elementary literacy. While I'm already much more familiar with this topic because of my time in this program, I'm always looking for ways to stay up to date with the ever-changing world of teaching literacy. New research is being tested and released all the time, and it's my responsibility as a teacher to stay educated so I'm able to give my students the best literacy instruction possible. I've also realized that no two students are exactly the same when it comes to their literacy needs. Everyone has their own unique strengths and weaknesses- however, the more I know about literacy education, the better I'm able to apply this knowledge to a wide variety of student needs. A resource I plan to use is the webcasts page on the [Reading Rockets](#) website. This page provides up-to-date professional development webcasts in all different areas of literacy.

In addition to furthering my craft as an elementary literacy teacher, I also want to continue to find my groove in classroom management. While I grow more each year, this is still an area I want to keep studying. As a newer teacher, I'm naturally cautious because I don't want those who visit my room to question the leadership I have over my students. I understand that this is an area that typically comes with time and experience, but there's also a sense of urgency in developing classroom management because it makes life in the classroom run so much smoother. I plan to take advantage of two different resources concerning this topic. First, I want to complete the [Vanderbilt IRIS Module](#) on classroom management. I also plan to study the following article about

[PBIS \(Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports\) and the Responsive Classroom Approach](#). Since my current school follows both of these models, this ensures my classroom management plan is consistent with our school.

Finally, I'm looking forward to using my free time after graduate school to truly focus on going the extra mile to make my classroom a fun and engaging place for my students to learn. I want to teach beyond the lesson plan by incorporating things like brag bracelets, positive notes home, and out of the box lesson activities. My goal is for my students to be overjoyed to wake up for school each day. It's easy to become overwhelmed and let these fun and exciting "extras" fall to the backburner, but going forward I want to get better about making this a priority. I feel like everything else can fall into place when a student has a genuine passion for school and a desire to learn. I went to a teaching conference a few years ago called "Get Your Teach On" and I've been inspired ever since. One of the hosts, Hope King, wrote a book about creative breakthroughs and engaging lessons called, [The Wild Card](#). This book is at the top of my list to read to learn more about how to make my classroom the place to be.

In conclusion, my learning after graduate school is far from over. I'm always looking for ways to become the best teacher possible. While I tend to be impatient when it comes to this, I know it's not something that can happen overnight. Looking into the near future, I've chosen the previously discussed three topics which I feel like relate to my most pressing goals. I'm excited to face these goals with a positive attitude, and look forward to creating new goals one day.