Introduction to the FLiTE resources
On-line Zoom workshop led by
Dr Liz White
University of Hertfordshire, UK
Thursday 9 July 2020
12.00 to 13.00 Warsaw Time

Using stories which focus on our professional practice as teacher educators.
We will cover:
• The research
• The resources
• The hands-on
• The reflection

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Stories as a Tool for Professional Learning of Teacher Educators from Schools and Universities

This workshop:
• The research
• The resources
• The hands-on
• The reflection
Dr Elizabeth White (Liz)  

Dr Miranda Timmermans
Developments in Teacher Education

• Teacher education is rapidly changing

• In many countries teacher education involves institutions and schools cooperating, although in different forms (Czerniawski, 2018)

• There is increasing diversity of partnerships between schools and institutions

• Teacher educators are a diverse occupational group

• There are increasing numbers of school-based teacher educators (SBTEs)
Theoretical background

• It is suggested that SBTEs and institute-based teacher educators (IBTEs) are looking for different things for their professional learning (e.g. Dengerink, Lunenberg, & Kools, 2015)

• Research on teacher educators’ professional learning remains fragmented in focus (Ping et al., 2018)

• A range of professional development issues and activities have been identified by research on the professional development of experienced university-based teacher educators in different countries (e.g. Boei et al., 2015; Van der Klink et al., 2017; Czerniawski et al., 2017)

• Little research has been done into the professional development of teacher educators in the context of school-based teacher education (White et al., 2015)
Theoretical background

• Stories have been used in research to analyse the professional knowledge of teachers and teacher educators for more than two decades (Jarvis 2005; Carter 1993).

• A story is a narrative with a specific shape: a beginning, a plot and an ending; or a before, a transformation and an after (Scholes 1981; Pauw et al. 2017).

• Stories enable the projection of personal values onto the content (Scholes 1981)

• Stories allow the complexity of the phenomena being dealt with, to be captured and for ‘ambiguity and dilemma as central figures or themes’ (Carter 1993, 6).

• A challenge is a ‘task or situation that tests someone's abilities’ and a dilemma is ‘a difficult situation or problem’ (Oxford Dictionary 2018).
Our research

In our project the focus was on challenges (or dilemmas) arising from changes in teacher education in partnerships between schools and universities.

The aim was to

• identify challenges for teacher educators in their professional practice in the context of partnerships between schools and universities.

• produce a research informed tool for the professional development of teacher educators, which could stimulate further discussion and reflection.
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Themes

Guiding and assessing student-teachers (35)
- Assessment (judgments around pass/fail)
- Guiding student-teachers’ teaching
- Providing learning opportunities for student-teachers
- Teaching student-teachers

Professionalism, growth and well-being (14)
- Professionalism of IBTE
- Professionalism of student-teacher
- Personal growth/identity (SBTE)
- Personal growth/identity (student-teacher)
- Student-teacher well-being

Collaborative working (18)
- Communication in partnership
- Working in partnership
- Roles of teacher educators in the partnership
- Working with school leadership

Quality (5)
- Quality Assurance
- SBTE training
- Mentor training

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The focus of the narratives that we have collected is workplace learning.

In this small study (N=35) we have found similar challenges for IBTE and SBTE; and for Primary, Secondary and Vocational.

The challenges have been recognised by teacher educators across international boundaries as well as institutional boundaries.

We have found them particularly effective in mixed groups of SBTEs and IBTEs, helping to see different perspectives, enabling conversations around tricky issues.
The resources
www.go.herts.ac.uk/FLiTE

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Critical incident

A critical incident is one that challenges your own assumptions or makes you think differently.

Meador et al. (2010-107).

Reading the story. This statement was a critical incident identified by the SPiC that was significant to their professional learning. Identify the triggers that caused the statement.

What triggers could have been avoided to overcome the statement?

What other consequences could have arisen from the course of action taken?

Reflect on your learning from this story and on participating in the activity. Share with the group.

Taking it further

Meador et al. (EU 107) provide the following helpful prompts to guide reflection on critical incidents:

- What happened and when and where? Give a brief history of the incident.
- What is it that has made the incident ‘critical’?
- What were your immediate thoughts and responses?
- What are your thoughts now? What has changed as a result of this thinking?
- What have you learned about (your) practice from this?
- How might your practice change and develop as a result of this analysis and learning?
- Using these prompts - do you think that this story is about a critical incident? Why/Why not?
- Consider your own practice: does a critical incident come to mind? Try using these prompts to help you to reflect on the critical incident.

Reference

Example Critical Incident Reflection

ACTIVITY

Read Part 1: The dilemma
Discuss what would your advice be?

Read Part 2: The solution
What are the differences?

What have you learnt from this story?

Taking it further: Thinking about providing activities in school
- available? - appropriate?
And more...

Different ways to use the stories

Writing and using your own stories:

- Writing a story about a challenge in your practice
- Reflecting on your own story
- Reflecting together on your stories of practice

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