

## ACTIVITY 2.5: DEVELOPING EQUITY-RELATED INQUIRY WONDERINGS

Many practicing teacher communities and teacher preparation programs across the nation have integrated teacher candidate inquiry into field experiences, with a particular focus on equity. For example, Tom Malarkey (2006) has written eloquently about the work of the Teacher Research Collaborative (Friedrich & McKinney, 2010). He notes,

In the Teacher Research Collaborative (TRC), we have focused on learning how to foster more-effective teaching and more-equitable results for students. As educators who are concerned about the inequities in our schools, we see inquiry—defined loosely as a process through which teachers study their own practice in order to change and strengthen their teaching—as a valuable tool that can support teachers in becoming more equitable educators and thus can contribute to more equitable achievement for students. (p. 11)

Review and analyze examples of emerging equity-related inquiry questions drawn from the Teacher Research Collaborative (TRC) as well as two of our colleagues' work with teacher candidates at the University of South Carolina (Shelly Curcio and Beth White) in the table below. Use these examples of emerging equity-related questions, as well as the equity-related wonderings illustrated throughout Chapter 2 of *The Reflective Educator's Guide to Classroom Research*, Fourth Edition, to inspire the development of your own equity-focused inquiry question.

### SAMPLE INQUIRY QUESTIONS WITH AN EMERGING EQUITY-FOCUS

- Which students in my class are struggling to read well? Which students do I find to be more challenging for me to motivate to read? Why does reading matter—or not matter—to these students in particular? How will this inquiry question help me become better in addressing the needs of my lower-achieving students?
- How might the use of self-reflection create a positive learning environment that enhances the participation of female fifth-grade students?
- What is the educator's role in promoting family literacy?
- For students who have one-on-one specifications on their IEP (individualized education plan), does this extra attention cause positive effects to their overall class performance and participation? Will students feel singled out? Will students improve or decline from individual attention? How often is one-on-one teaching helpful, and when does one-on-one teaching become a hindrance to the student and other peers?
- How might different groupings of students influence engagement in literacy centers for English language learner students?
- How does sociocultural theory affect student engagement in mathematics as compared to direct individual instruction?
- To what degree can implementing positive behavior supports, within an isolated small kindergarten group, increase desired behaviors?
- What are the emotional and academic impacts on a student with attention deficit disorder (ADD) when a specific strategy is implemented?