We, the authors of this guide, wanted to provide ways that you, the reader, can experience the second edition of *Experiencing Dewey* more deeply. This supplement to the book includes questions for discussion or written reflection as well as activities that can be completed individually or in small groups. In addition, we offer links to additional resources from the book’s contributing authors. We anticipate that reading the book will inspire you to seek out additional books from Dewey. With that in mind, we also offer you tips on how to read his work as well as a suggested reading list. We hope that these support materials enlarge your experience with the book.

### Questions for Discussion

The discussion questions are organized in the same way as the book, by part and then by chapter as well as by topic or theme. Individuals, instructors, or group facilitators can use the questions as prompts for discussion or written reflection.

#### Part I: Accountability

**Accountability and Prescription**

Consider the situation Maggie Allison describes in Chapter 1, “A Call for Creativity and Freedom in the Midst of Accountability: A Teachable Moment.”

- How much of your daily work (or the daily work of a teacher you observe) is prescribed?
- How often do you feel as if you are controlled by the kinds of lessons you teach and the kinds of questions you ask?
Experiences to Support *Experiencing Dewey*

- How much discretionary space do you have in your own teaching—space where you can use your professional judgment to shape the learning experience for your students?
- To what degree might your students feel that their responses to your questions or assignments are prescriptive (one right answer)?

Examine some of your teaching materials (or those of a teacher you observe) and analyze the degree to which those materials prescribe your behaviors and those of your students.

- If the materials are prescriptive, how could you make them less so?
- What could you do to increase the discretionary space for you and your students?

**Can Testing Ever Coexist with Deweyan Ideals?**

Sebastián Díaz poses challenges to the average Dewey fan in Chapter 4, “An Alternative Image of Data: Not *What* but *Where.*”

- How does Díaz characterize evaluation in his entry?
- Are there ways to maintain some level of testing while trying to maintain the ideals you are reading about Dewey? After all, it’s not likely that we will be rid of testing any time soon.
- In addition, Díaz challenges conventional notions of teaching. How do you feel Dewey might respond to online learning if he were living today?

**Part II: Active Learning**

**Work in School**

Consider Donna Adair Breault’s thoughts in Chapter 17, “Work in School.” Describe a lesson you have taught (or observed) that you feel went well. Share it with a partner. Work together to determine who is doing the work in the lesson. How does this relate to what Dewey says about work in school?

**Teaching as a Profession**

Consider what Robert V. Bullough Jr. has to say about teaching as a profession in Chapter 20, “Becoming a Student of Teaching.”

- To what degree was or is your own preparation program designed to promote professionalism?
- How do teacher educators reconcile promoting professionalism with program prescriptions?
Your Reflective Nature as a Teacher
Consider what William H. Schubert has to say about reflection in Chapter 18, “Active Learning as Reflective Experience.”

- How reflective are you?
- How do you reflect?
- What is the nature of that reflection?
- To what degree is it a habit?
- Does your reflection culminate into something that impacts your practice in meaningful ways?

Part III: Critical Thinking

Critical Thinking in the Classroom
Based on what you read in Part III: Critical Thinking, brainstorm an image of professional development that would help teachers promote more critical thinking in their classrooms. Work with a partner or in a small group and then share your proposed professional development with the class.

Reflective Inquiries and Deliberative Conversations
James G. Henderson, in Chapter 25, “Educators’ Professional Freedom for Students’ Democratic Liberation,” briefly introduces ways in which he and his collaborator, Kathleen Kesson, have applied Dewey’s notions of reflection, good judgment, and love of wisdom in a conceptual model that includes three forms of reflective inquiry, three levels of understanding, and then four ways to engage in deliberative conversations.

First, Henderson argues that teachers should reflect about educational aims, curriculum designs, and teacher–student transactions in order to ensure that experiences in the classroom are more democratic. For this to happen, teachers need to understand subject, self, and society. Second, teachers need to ensure that their students have a deeper understanding of subject, self, and society. Finally, all stakeholders in the educative process need to work together to build a strong learning community.

- What obstacles might be in the way for this to happen in your school?
- What capacities might you need to build to achieve this level of reflection and deliberation that Henderson describes?

Educational a Priori and the Deep Structures of Schooling
Barbara Benham Tye (1998) has written about the “deep structures” of school—our deeply held assumptions about the purpose and function of schooling. These deep structures, in the list that follows, often keep us from achieving our goals.
Experiences to Support Experiencing Dewey

- Educational bureaucracy;
- Corporations that have a vested interest in the way things are currently done in schools (e.g., textbook companies, companies developing standardized tests);
- Funding issues and policies restricting the distribution and use of funds;
- Parent and community expectations; and
- The manner in which teachers are prepared and then work together.

Although Tye argued that deep structures can change, she nevertheless contended that such change is rare and that it takes a great deal of time for us to overcome the deep structures and bring about positive change in schools. Further, she noted that such changes typically coincide with significant changes in society. Read Tye's (1998) article about the deep structures of schooling and then discuss with a small group possible connections between Tye's forces and deep structures and the a priori beliefs that George W. Noblit notes in Chapter 28, “Unexamined Presumptions.”

Part IV: Democratic Citizenship

Schooling for Democratic Citizenship

After reviewing the entries on democracy and education, imagine what a truly democratic school (in a Deweyan sense) would look like. Consider the expectations of administration, teachers, students, parents, and the community in such a school. Write a speech as if you were going to give it to the school board or in a PTA meeting. Argue for changes that would promote a more democratic form of schooling. Justify your argument with Dewey’s ideas. Consider the following as you develop and then justify your argument:

- Seasoned meliorism (John M. Novak’s Chapter 29, “Teaching Democracy for Life”);
- Contradictions and conflicts in dualistic thinking (Daniel Tanner’s Chapter 31, “John Dewey and the American Creed”);
- Transforming the curriculum into the working power of intelligence (Daniel Tanner’s Chapter 31, “John Dewey and the American Creed”);
- Fostering democratic character (Chara Haeussler Bohan’s Chapter 32, “John Dewey and the Import of a Curriculum Devoted to Student Experience”);
- Broad interest in students’ world (David J. Flinger’s Chapter 33, “The Best and Wisest Parent”);
- Cultural commons (Audrey M. Dentith’s Chapter 35, “A Being Connected With Other Beings”);
- Communication (Barbara J. Thayer-Bacon’s Chapter 36, “The Value of Communication in a Classroom Community”);
- Shared activities (Randy Hewitt’s Chapter 37, “Realizing a Common Good”)
- Education as a social process (Louise M. Berman’s Chapter 38, “Teacher as Shaper of Social Process”);
Experiences to Support Experiencing Dewey

- Living in a democracy (Jesse Goodman’s Chapter 39, “The Societal Purpose of Education”);
- Liberty (David M. Callejo-Pérez’s Chapter 41, “Why We Forget: Liberty, Memories, and Seeking Simple Answers”).

Part V: The Educative Experience

Education as a Reconstruction of Experience

Read Edmund C. Short’s Chapter 47 essay, “The Reconstruction of Experience.” Consider a unit of study you have taught or that you may be asked to teach. Rather than describing it as a series of objectives and assignments, describe that unit of study as a set of experiences. What would you need to do to ensure that those experiences are educative?

Communication and Education I

Consider Gert Biesta’s analysis of Dewey’s notion of communication and its relationship with democratic communities in Chapter 49, “‘Of All Affairs, Communication Is the Most Wonderful.’”

- How might his ideas influence what happens in a classroom where the teacher aspires to be more democratic?
- How might his ideas influence an administrator who wants to support a democratic community in his or her school?

Communication and Education II

As we see from Biesta’s Chapter 49, “‘Of All Affairs, Communication Is the Most Wonderful,’” communication is an essential element of democracy, and as such, it is an essential element of democratic schools. Stakeholders in schools often communicate for three reasons: to inform, to reform, and to transform.

When stakeholders communicate to inform, it is typically a one-way dissemination of information. This is the most common form of communication in schools (as in most organizations). Anyone who sits in a faculty meeting to hear announcements read what could have just as easily been distributed in a memo has experienced this form of communication.

On the other hand, when stakeholders communicate to reform, they know where they want to “go,” and they communicate to find the most effective (and often most efficient) manner to get to where they want to go. For example, when teachers come together and brainstorm ways to increase math fluency scores of students in their grade level, they know what they hope to achieve: increased test scores in math fluency. They are communicating in order to find ways to try to achieve this.
Finally, when stakeholders communicate to **transform**, they do not know the ultimate end to their efforts. Communicating to transform involves asking “What if’s?” and engaging in the stakeholders’ collective imaginations.

For example, when stakeholders involved in a Title I school come together to brainstorm ways to engage parents and community in the life of the school and to make the school a central place for community building, they do not know what the end product will look like. They work together, imagining possibilities, and build the image they will use for their overall aim and operational goals as they work together. Any guesses which form of communication is most consistent with Dewey’s conception of communication? Yes, to communicate in a Deweyan sense, you need be engaged in transformative communication.

With this in mind, audit the kinds of communication found most often in your school (see Table 1). Although communication to inform is unavoidable, you can reduce the degree to which it consumes your face-to-face time together. Further, communication to reform is important, but it is critical to ensure that it is not the only kind of communication you engage in when discussing how to improve practice. Every school that aspires to be a democratic community in a Deweyan sense needs to engage in communication to transform. If, after your audit, you find no evidence of this kind of communication, then make recommendations for your school to move toward transformative communication. Keep in mind that you would have to start out slowly and work your way into making transformative communication a vital part of your professional community.

- What are the primary forms of communication in your school?
- What recommendations can you make to shift communication from informing toward transforming?

**TABLE 1** Audit Communication in Your School.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forms of Communication</th>
<th>Examples of Communication in Your School</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To inform</td>
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<td>To reform</td>
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<td>To transform</td>
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Part VI: Inquiry and Education

Dogma and Education
Consider the manner in which William G. Wraga discusses dogma in Chapter 51, “Dogma, Democracy, and Education.” Then examine assessments within a unit of study. To what degree do they promote a dogma of information as Wraga describes?

Vocation, Imagination, and the Ideal
Consider the depth to which both Jim Garrison and Craig A. Cunningham talk about teaching, the ideal, and the imaginative spirit in Chapters 50, “The Power of an Ideal” and 53, “Imagination of Ideal Ends.” With the word box in Figure 1, brainstorm a school mission statement or series of belief statements that honor the kinds of depth they discuss. To the degree that you can do so effectively, use as many of the words in the word box as possible.

Now reconcile what you have written with what Robert Boostrom writes regarding Dewey’s “fear of imagination” in Chapter 22, “The Dangers of Imagination.” What tensions may exist between the mission statement or beliefs statements you wrote and the warnings Boostrom proposes?

Intelligence, Art, and Education
Consider Elliot W. Eisner’s characterization of how Dewey views intelligence in Chapter 52, “The Role of Intelligence in the Creation of Art.” How might we re-think “gifted” programs in school based on Dewey’s image of intelligence? Work in small groups to develop a proposal for a new set of criteria for identifying gifted children and a new programmatic approach to working with gifted children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word Box</th>
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<tr>
<td>vocation</td>
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<td>spirituality</td>
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<td>possibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>passion</td>
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<td>pertinent</td>
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FIGURE 1 Word Box.
Small Group Activities

Part II: Active Learning

John Dewey the Supervisor

Consider each of the following classroom scenarios. Given what you have read about active learning, how do you think Dewey would respond if he were the supervisor observing each lesson? For each scenario, try to think of “grow statements”—how to make the lesson even more educative.

Kindergarten in the Garden. Miss Emmett brought her kindergarten students to the garden with digital cameras. As the children wandered through the garden, they were able to take pictures of nature. Children worked in pairs, and each child could take five pictures. Some children took pictures of the blooms on the flowers while others snapped shots of tree bark, insects, twigs, and dirt. The scene was energetic and a bit chaotic as they walked around the garden snapping photos. After they returned to class, Miss Emmett asked them to share about the pictures they took. When the children left the classroom to attend their art class, she uploaded the pictures onto computers. When the children returned, Miss Emmett and her aide worked with the pairs and asked them to talk about their pictures. They typed a sentence for each picture as the children spoke. The pictures were then printed and assembled into class books to go in the reading center.

Second-Grade Math Lesson. Miss Shoran wanted her second graders to increase their math fluency in addition. She decided to have a math fact race. She put the girls in one line and the boys in another. She stood near the first two students at the front of the lines with large flash cards. The first student to call out the answer got to keep the card and go to the end of the line. The student who didn’t answer first went to the end of the line without a card. The first line where all students held cards won.

Fourth-Grade Social Studies. Mr. Chesney needed to teach his fourth graders how to locate items on a map. He reviewed the map skills with the students from their social studies texts. He then questioned them—both students who raised their hands to volunteer and those who did not—about the compass rose and about map coordinates. He then distributed sample maps that came from the textbook company. He had the students work in small groups to locate different items on the map. Once each small group had located all of the items on the map, he reviewed the answers with the class to make sure they had the right answers. He asked the students whether they had any questions, and no one raised their hand.

Middle School Science. Mr. Mulchahey needed to teach his seventh graders how to classify invertebrate phyla into their five groups. He spent the week before reviewing the five groups of invertebrate animals, and then he had the students complete a chart that summarized the characteristics of each. Next, he broke them into small groups and distributed cards with images of the invertebrate animals. Each small group wrote a sentence for the card that indicated the phylum and provided justification for the classification. After all groups had completed their cards, they joined another small group and checked one another’s work. He then reviewed the images and answers with the whole group.
High School Basic Math. Ms. Schuster, a student teacher, wanted to teach her students how to budget to live on their own. As part of that lesson, she planned an in-class activity in which each student was given a food budget of $70 per week for one person. The money was for food only. They also were encouraged to come in under that budget. No other considerations, limitations, or directions were provided. They were then given a stack of sale papers from local grocery stores to help with current prices. They had approximately 30 minutes for the activity and could discuss their ideas with other students.

Work in School
What is the nature of your work as a teacher (or a teacher you observe as an intern or student teacher)? In Table 2, jot down the things you (or the teacher you observe) do/does in a typical day of a typical week.

TABLE 2 Nature of Your Work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Work</th>
<th>To what degree does it increase the students’ capacities to engage with one another and with the subject matter?</th>
<th>To what degree does it drain you and encourage your students to be passive receivers of information or entertainment?</th>
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10 Experiences to Support Experiencing Dewey

Gentle Whisper

Hollow Excitement

FIGURE 2 Things Going On in Class.

Teaching and the Gentle Whisper
Review a video of a classroom lesson. Identify things going on in class and list them below the graphic in Figure 2 according to the nature of each. To what degree could elements within the classroom bring students to higher planes of consciousness? Review Rick Breault’s Chapter 16, “Listening for the Gentle Whisper,” before you complete the exercise.

Making Informed Judgments
Think about five times in your professional life that you made judgments (see Table 3). Include both the really important judgments as well as the mundane. Based on Dan Marshall’s Chapter 13, “Making Informed Judgments,” to what degree were these judgments misinformed judgments? Prejudgments? Informed judgments? Suspended judgments? What was the consequence of each? How might the consequence be related to the kind of judgment you made?

TABLE 3 Judgments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Judgment</th>
<th>Nature of judgment (misinformed, prejudgment, informed, or suspended)</th>
<th>Consequence of judgment</th>
<th>Relationship between the nature of the judgment and the consequence</th>
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Part III: Critical Thinking

A Continuum of Reflection

Many educators talk about reflection and argue that it is important for teachers to reflect. Yet, reflection does not mean the same thing to all people. Consider the continuum of reflection shown in Figure 3.

Reflection is not the same for all needs and at all times. Our model examines four levels of reflection for teachers. Each level indicates some greater flexibility in thinking that the previous.

Prescriptive Problem Solving. With the accountability movement and the call for scientifically proven practices, we see more and more prescriptive problem solving. A number of the recent whole-school reform models would fall under the category of prescriptive problem solving because they provide little, if any, discretionary space for teachers to make choices in their instruction. Prescriptive problem solving is also evident in the very specific and often punitive walkthrough protocols used in conjunction with the highly prescribed reform models.

Leaders tend to use prescriptive problem solving when they believe teachers lack the necessary skills to complete a task or when a school or district has an immediate need for compliance. As an instructional coach, you may find that you need to use prescriptive problem solving if the system does not support the necessary time and resources for teachers to work together. Prescriptive problem solving can be very frustrating for the highly skilled and thoughtful teacher. Therefore, it is important that you use it as a strategy only if you feel it is absolute necessary. When you must use more prescribed ways to solve problems, it is essential that you explain to teachers why.

Controlled Problem Solving. Controlled problem solving provides a limited degree of discretionary space for teachers while offering a safe space where they can try something new. It is often used when the outcome for the problem is known but teachers need to engage in a reflective process to become more proficient in the
desired outcome. Therefore, controlled problem solving is a valuable form of reflection when teachers need to master new instructional strategies. With controlled problem solving, teachers can try out a new strategy in a demonstration lesson.

You and peers can observe the lesson and listen to the teacher respond to the experience. Then you and the teacher’s peers can help the teacher analyze the outcomes of the lesson. Typically this form of reflection focuses on instructional strategies, but additional tasks could fall under this category. For example, teachers can practice leading parent conferences, try out new assessment programs, or attempt other discrete tasks and use your feedback and possibly the feedback of peers to better understand the results. It is important to recognize the limitations of controlled problem solving. This type of reflection does not address content, context, or goals. Therefore, you need to make sure teachers do not overgeneralize the results from one experience. In addition, you should limit the use of controlled problem solving to specific tasks that need to be mastered. If you attempt to use controlled problem solving with more complex tasks, you may very well offend thoughtful teachers who recognize that the problem is being controlled to get a specific outcome.

Limited Problem Solving. Limited problem solving is effective when teachers have a problem to solve and do not know the answer or outcome. These problems are more complex than mastering a specific strategy, but they are not so complex that teachers cannot rely largely on their past experience to address them. In other words, teachers do not need to engage in research procedures or extensive reviews of research in order to address the problem. The knowledge that they have accumulated over time as teachers should be sufficient.

This form of reflection is consistent with Donald Schön’s (1983) reflection-in-action. It involves identifying a shared need and considering the actions and general practices of the teachers addressing the need. Teachers reflect on their past responses to the problem in order to determine the desired course at this point and time. After responding to the problem, the teachers consider the results of their actions. Teachers share what they learn in order to broaden the perspective of others involved.

As you work toward supporting a transformative learning community in your school, you should find many opportunities to use limited problem solving. It is important to establish enabling protocols for teachers to use in many different circumstances. To the degree that you can make this form of reflection a natural part of their work, teachers will hopefully rely upon this form of reflection in their daily practices. If this happens, then reflection becomes an important habit that will influence the daily work of teachers.

Open/Guided Problem Solving. Open problem solving is highly effective for questions or problems that require more extensive research. You would encourage open problem solving in circumstances where teachers are highly committed to a problem and have time to consider it deeply. Often, these questions can be developed into action research projects or major themes for professional
Learning communities. Open problem solving is most suited to complex problems or needs because it involves systematic inquiry.

This form of reflection requires time to develop a plan, gather and analyze data, and then find meaning in the data. It also requires effective collaboration among stakeholders. Therefore, if you are in a school where the culture is one of mistrust, then you may have difficulty promoting this level of reflection. This form of reflection is a valuable practice to promote a greater sense of community among your stakeholders, and it is an essential process for authentic continuous school improvement.

- What would each level look like in the classroom?
- Which level of reflection seems to be most consistent with Dewey’s work?
- What could you do to ensure that reflection is an important part of your work as a teacher?

**Part IV: Democratic Citizenship**

**Rethinking Occupations**

In Chapter 34, “Building a Community of Inquirers,” Sam F. Stack Jr. introduces a very different image of occupations than you may have otherwise imagined. Given the focus on “college and career ready” of our Common Core Standards, it is important to recognize that Dewey’s notion of occupations is much larger than merely preparing one for the world of work. It connects students to society in meaningful ways. If you review books about the Dewey lab school in Chicago (DePencier, 1967; Mayhew & Edwards, 1936; Tanner, 1997), you will see examples of how teachers engaged in teaching through occupations. Much of this work involved agriculture, industry, and transportation. Find an example of teaching through occupations and share with one another. In addition, consider the following example and decide whether it is consistent with the forms of occupations Dewey notes, as seen in his work in the lab school.

In the introduction to Part V, which also appeared in the first edition of the book, Donna Adair Breault mentions a lesson she did with students: creating a city with her second-grade students during the last days school. Although it kept them busy and was mildly educative, it would not reach the level of “occupation” that Dewey wanted. Now she has a chance to make it better. She hosts “Camp Breault” in the summer for our children and some of their friends. They come to the house every Thursday afternoon for learning experiences, fun, and games. In the past, she based each Thursday on a fairly superficial theme (e.g., lemonade stand, nocturnal animals), and it would involve an activity such as reading a book, doing some art, or engaging in theme-related math. It looked a lot like her “Fun Fridays” looked when she taught elementary school. This year she is trying to think more in terms of occupations, and she is returning to this city activity.

Before the “big paper” comes out, she is asking the students to imagine their cities and think about how those cities would be described (their nature, purpose, etc.). To
help them, they will look at several kinds of cities on the Internet and in books. She will then have them begin to brainstorm what they might find in that city given how they have described it. They will classify these “things” as residential, commercial, municipal, and civic. They will determine the percentage of the city that should be devoted to each of those categories and then brainstorm the buildings they will have in relation to those percentages. They will discuss the need for city services as they brainstorm the municipal buildings that will need to be present. They will discuss industry—where do all the people work?—as they discuss commercial buildings. The planning will take at least two Thursdays—brainstorming and making decisions about what should be in their city.

They will first develop a small scale of their city as well—to identify appropriate roads and other forms of transportation and to determine where industry and retail will be located in relation to residential. Only after they have planned, discussed, and revised their plans will they tackle the large paper, markers, and home magazine cutouts. From there they will hopefully discuss potential problems such as traffic congestion and future growth. As “city managers” or mayors, they will have to determine how they would handle those problems. They will also determine the tax base for their city—with different rates for residential and commercial. Ultimately, they will develop brochures and other ways to advertise their city with reasons why people should live there. She may even have each of them develop one of those trifold display posters for each city to have a more concrete outcome from the project.

So, is this consistent with Dewey’s notion of occupations as Sam F. Stack Jr. describes?

• What could Donna do to make it more educative?

Your turn: Now, create your own. Work individually or in groups to imagine an experience that could be developed for a group of students that would qualify as an occupation in a Deweyan sense.

Part V: The Educative Experience

Educative Experience Rubric I
Identify four qualities that you feel are essential to promote educative experiences in a Deweyan sense (see Table 4). Use those qualities in the rubric. Based on each, describe what this would look like in each rubric field. Review Donna Adair Breault’s introduction to Part V, entitled “An Educative Experience? A Lesson in Humility for a Second-Grade Teacher,” for the context of your rubric.

Educative Experience Rubric II
Four elements of an educative experience have been identified. Describe what each means (see Table 5). Based on each, describe what this would look like in each rubric field.
TABLE 4 Essential Qualities for Educatively Experiences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element/Quality</th>
<th>Highly Educative</th>
<th>Moderately Educative</th>
<th>Minimally Educative</th>
<th>Mis-educative</th>
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**TABLE 5** Elements of an Educative Experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element/Quality</th>
<th>Highly Educative</th>
<th>Moderately Educative</th>
<th>Minimally Educative</th>
<th>Mis-educative</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The lesson is <strong>RELEVANT</strong> for the students.</td>
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<td>The lesson makes students want to <strong>LEARN MORE</strong> about the subject.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The lesson encourages students to <strong>THINK CRITICALLY</strong>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students are <strong>ACTIVELY ENGAGED</strong> in the lesson.</td>
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</table>
**Part VI: Inquiry and Education**

**Education as Growth**
Think of a moment in your life when you have experienced growth (see Figure 4) as Paul Shaker describes it in his entry, “Growth: The Consummate Open-Ended Aspiration.” How did you encounter CHANGE and CHANCE? How did the encounter promote your growth?

**Why Inquire?**
According to Donna Adair Breault’s introduction to Part VI, “Inquiry and Education: A Way of Seeing the World,” teachers should inquire for the three reasons listed in Table 6. In a small group, discuss these reasons, provide descriptions of what she meant by those reasons, and then brainstorm examples for each.

**Helpful YouTube Clips about Dewey**
We realize that these clips may not remain posted on YouTube, but if you can review them, we think you will find additional insights about Dewey’s work. There are many clips on YouTube about Dewey, but we have highlighted those involving contributors to this book.

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![Figure 4](image_url)

**FIGURE 4** Promoting Growth.
TABLE 6  Three Reasons to Inquire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why inquire?</th>
<th>What does this mean?</th>
<th>What are examples?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You are empowered.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You empower others (in particular, your students).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You support meaningful reform.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here are segments from a talk Deron Boyles, author of the book’s Foreword and Chapter 12, gave parents and teachers about Dewey’s theory of inquiry. It is well worth the time to review all the segments.

Part 1
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V_fzsNnA57I

Part 2
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jMarTIhzd5E&feature=related

Part 3
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EXXOzxJhpDM&feature=related

Part 4
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KgHhI7g8gwo&feature=related

Part 5
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AAjiSx7YoVI

Part 6
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CJEAAPjWQAoQ
Deron Boyles also offers a response to the accountability movement, inspired by Dewey:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NCsu9xwAZJo

Chapter 2 author, A. G. Rud, offers a brief explanation of how Dewey’s work is still very relevant:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zGyX1xe5qpg

Gert Biesta, author of Chapter 49, lectures on education in an era of accountability. Can you find ways in which Dewey informs his perspective?

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCU19OXCehM

Here is an hour “conversation” between William Ayers, author of Chapter 30, and John Dewey (played by another contributor, William H. Schubert, author of Chapter 18):

Part I
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b4wreMEV4uY

Part II
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dI5HdYjFpuQ

Part III
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lgB5iiU3k_M

Part IV
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l0Lk0a5xV14

Part V
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sTaVnHtFBjk

Part VI
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S1xapbfMLUk

Part VII
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WrO7uK6ahyl

Part VIII
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PB6B9EtPs78
Part IX
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIb7RD1aApU

Elliot W. Eisner, author of Chapter 52, gives an insightful lecture on what the arts teach in education. Again, can you see the influence of Dewey’s ideas?
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h12MGuhQH9E

There are also a series of small clips with Jim Garrison, author of Chapter 50, and Larry A. Hickman, author of Chapter 55, regarding Dewey’s work:

Dewey and the Interaction of Ends and Means
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QRswSN16Duc

Valuing Difference in a Democratic Society
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TSw71XcbhUE

Ever-Expanding Democracy
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYf6jd9ZHMK

Fostering Conditions for True Democracy
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1BhrC7nJXI

The Role of Interest in Learning
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tm1_VglthQo

The Means and Ends of Civil Disobedience
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nGccfAJEnuU

Dewey’s Active Peacebuilding
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=us8giNj37tw

Good and Bad American Exceptionalism
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i3umH-Wfigc

Reading Dewey

We hope these reflections on excerpts from Dewey’s writings have piqued your interest in reading more of Dewey’s works in their entirety. Admittedly, this is not an easy task if you pursue it on your own. Dewey is often difficult to read, and the sheer number of his publications makes knowing where to begin no easy task. So what we have done here is offer some tips as you begin a more serious reading of Dewey.

It is important to remember that many of Dewey’s publications were based on his class lectures. Often the model stereotype of the philosopher, Dewey would pursue an idea at length wherever his thought took him, seemingly oblivious to the people in class. His speaking style was somewhat less than dynamic and was marked by long periods of silence. Because those were the days before cell phones...
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and digital recording devices, a student would often be designated to transcribe the lecture based on the class and Dewey’s notes. The transcription would then become the next publication. As a result, in some readings you will be trying to follow an intellectual path that meanders and often diverges into a variety of new directions. Knowing that context, keep the following suggestions in mind as you read the texts.

- Dewey’s earliest writings on education came at the turn of the last century, so some of the references he makes are now dated, and even some words he uses have taken on new meanings today.
- Dewey is remarkably quotable, but you often need to slog through some difficult or confusing material to find the gems. Be patient; it will be worth it. Because of his stream of consciousness–like style and meandering, but relevant, thought patterns, readers may have difficulty discerning what position Dewey is advocating and what he is criticizing. For example, he will often spend a significant amount of time describing what he sees happening in schools without any direct criticism but then will note that those are miseducative experiences and go on to describe his own ideas.
- In spite of, or perhaps because of the difficulties inherent in reading Dewey, his work has often been translated into action in simplistic and inaccurate ways. Unfortunately, much of the criticism of his work is based on how people have interpreted and used his ideas rather than the ideas themselves. Moreover, what is often attributed to Dewey were really the variations and interpretations of his own students and followers such as William Kilpatrick or of simplistic and even misguided offshoots of the Progressive Education movement in the mid-1900s. We have found that even in the case of some Introduction to Education and Foundations of Education classes, Dewey’s ideas are presented in a paragraph or two, sometimes even using the phrase “learning by doing”—language Dewey never used. As a result, you might go into your own reading of Dewey with some misconceptions about his work. We encourage you to read a number of his texts (see the recommended reading list below) before either using or disregarding his ideas.
- It helps to know the historical context of the writing. Dewey had to spend much of his writing time responding to his critics. You may want to refer to a foundations of education textbook to review what was going on before, during, and after Dewey. Because of his controversial beliefs about science, religion, and psychology; his critique of existing schools; and the overly simplistic popular applications of his disciples, Dewey was (and still is) a lightning rod for a wide variety of critics. As a result, he often had to devote much of his writing to first explaining what his ideas were *not* before going on to what his ideas really were.

In conclusion, you should probably expect to read each Dewey book or article at least twice. Approach your reading like you might approach planning a road
trip or preparing to hike an unfamiliar trail. First look at a larger map of your journey to see where you are headed, what basic route to take, and what some of the pitfalls and possibilities are. Then embark on the actual journey and pay close attention to the details that make the trip more fulfilling. When you approach Dewey, you might find it useful to give each chapter a quick reading to get an idea of where his points are headed and to find some of those quotable gems. Then, go back and read more carefully so you can appreciate the way in which his arguments develop and why he writes the way he does so that you have a stronger foundation for continued reading.

A Reading List for the Uninitiated or Simply Curious

This section is for those of you who are or soon will be teachers and are interested in Dewey primarily for those ideas most directly related to the classroom. You will not want to jump into *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* (1938/1986) or even *Democracy and Education* (1916/1980), neither of which you would consider summer beach reading. What we have provided here is a road map of sorts that suggests a few sources as good entry points to Dewey’s works and then moves you toward his more difficult or sophisticated works on education. Our recommendations are based on our own experiences with students who were novice readers of Dewey and on our own preferences. The following should not be considered a definitive list of his writings on education. Your best path is probably to talk with others who have read Dewey or professors you respect and who know your personal interests. That said, here are recommendations in the order we suggest you might read them.

   These short books are often published in a combined edition but are also available separately. They are among Dewey’s most concise and readable statements of the pedagogical implications of his ideas. Although Dewey never produced anything like a “methods” text, these books do provide a picture of what might occur in a Deweyan school.

   This is probably as close as Dewey comes to a PowerPoint presentation. Dewey divides his creed into five articles or categories of thought on education: What Education Is; What the School Is; The Subject Matter of Education; The Nature of Method; and The School and Social Progress. Under each of those articles, Dewey then includes a number of “I believe” statements. Rick Breault has used this document in both undergraduate and graduate classes as a model for his own students’ “pedagogic creeds.”
   This is not necessarily an easy read, but if you already have read the previous two recommendations, you need to move into this text to start gaining some more theoretical understanding of the curriculum and pedagogy Dewey describes in the other books. This work also offers some important perspectives as you try to develop activities for your own students that engage their thinking processes more meaningfully.

   This is another thin, readable volume that will steer you into a different direction of Dewey’s thought. Our students have found interesting and helpful implications for classroom management, school-based ethical issues, and other more affective aspects of a teacher’s work.

5. *Experience and Education* (1938/1988)
   This work could easily be moved up to an earlier reading, and some might even recommend it as the first thing you should read. Elliot W. Eisner believes that no other book captures the essentials of Dewey’s philosophy better than *Experience and Education*. We agree with Eisner, but we recommend that you read it a little later. We think it helps to have a background in Dewey’s ideas going into it. The content of the book was first delivered as a Kappa Delta Pi lecture in 1938, a time when American educators found themselves increasingly in two camps—the progressive and the traditional. Although Dewey obviously leaned toward the progressive camp, in the lecture he took pains to critique the problems inherent in both approaches to education. Because of his even-handed approach to the two perspectives, we have found that our students sometimes have difficulty determining what it is that Dewey himself believed. That’s why we recommend that some other reading precede *Experience and Education*.

   When you get to this volume, we recommend reading Kappa Delta Pi’s 60th anniversary edition (Dewey, 1998). In addition to Dewey’s lecture itself, the book includes excellent commentaries by Philip Jackson, Maxine Greene, Linda Darling-Hammond, and O. L. Davis Jr.

   This is a dense work with some challenging ideas, but at some point you need to read this book as the best single statement of Dewey’s position on education. It is especially important because Dewey’s classroom ideas should not be taken out of context of his beliefs about democratic society and the school’s role in it.

   At the current time, it is nearly impossible to find this book, and when you do, it can be quite expensive. Still, if you can find a copy, it is well worth
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reading. This, too, was originally a Kappa Delta Pi lecture given in 1928. It is not really any more challenging than the previous readings and could also be placed earlier in our sequence. It is mentioned last, primarily because of how difficult it is to find. This piece is interesting in its commitment to the balance between theory and practice, its rationale for philosophy in education, and what might be considered one of the earliest endorsements of teacher-conducted action research as a legitimate source of educational knowledge.

**Some Helpful Supplements**

*John Dewey on Education; Selected Writings* (Archambault, 1974)

This is a good little anthology that brings together some excellent pieces and covers a wide range of his writing. It is a pocket-size paperback that lends itself to exploring Dewey in readable portions.

*Schools of To-morrow* (Dewey, J., & Dewey, E., 1915/1979)

Written by Dewey with his daughter, Evelyn, in 1915, this is a good source for seeing how the ideas described in his earlier writings might look in practice. The last chapter, titled “Democracy and Education,” also is a sort of preview for the book of the same title that would come out a year later.

If you are interested in a deeper look at the day-to-day operations of the Lab School founded on Dewey’s ideas, there are two particularly good sources you will want to find.

*The Dewey School: The Laboratory School of the University of Chicago 1896–1903* (Mayhew & Edwards, 1936)

Mayhew and Edwards were both teachers at the lab school and, therefore, provide firsthand accounts of its personnel, the day-to-day operation, and how curriculum and instruction were planned. The book also includes some great pictures of the school in action.

*Dewey’s Laboratory School: Lessons for Today* (Tanner, 1997)

This is a concise, readable history of the lab school, including some thoughts on how what was accomplished there might be translated to contemporary school settings.

**References**


