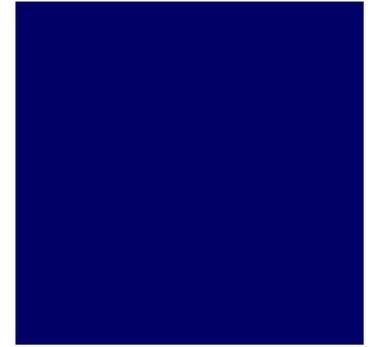


Supporting Dispositional Growth for Math (and Science) Teaching in a Methods Course

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SSMA Annual Conference 2019
Salt Lake City, UT
November 8, 2019

Problem



- National math and science education frameworks represent a “**practice turn**” and emphasize students “**figuring out**” rather than “**learning about**” (e.g. Common Core Math, NGSS)
- Math and science teachers tend to **emphasize facts and procedural knowledge** over problem-solving and critical thinking (Berland et al., 2016; Selling, 2016)
 - This orientation is strongly influenced by their own experience as learners

Problem

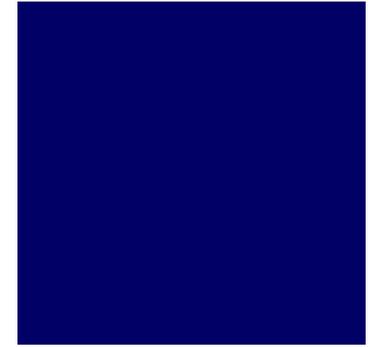


- Supporting pre-service teachers' **dispositions**, or mindsets and beliefs about students, teaching, and learning is one way to foster professional growth in teacher education (Bialka, 2016)
- Little research has examined the development of **content-based dispositions** as a way to support practice-based math and science teaching.

Research Questions

1. *How do pre-service teachers' dispositions towards math teaching change in the context of a math and science methods course?*
 - *What aspects of the methods course supported these dispositional shifts?*
2. *How do these dispositional changes relate to instructional priorities and design choices?*

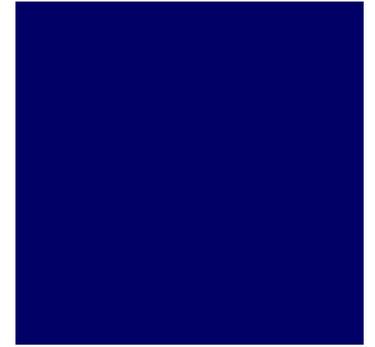
Theoretical Framework: Math Teaching Dispositions



- Adapted from Bialka, 2016 & Gresalfi, 2009

Category	Code	Examples
Dispositions	... toward <i>teaching</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Structures for learning (group, individual)Viewing teaching as a process of building knowledge
	...toward <i>math</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Distribution of authority (who does math?)Mathematics as a social practice vs. "math is math"
	... toward <i>social justice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Respect for students' identitiesDedication to equitySocial and cultural relevance

Math and Science Methods



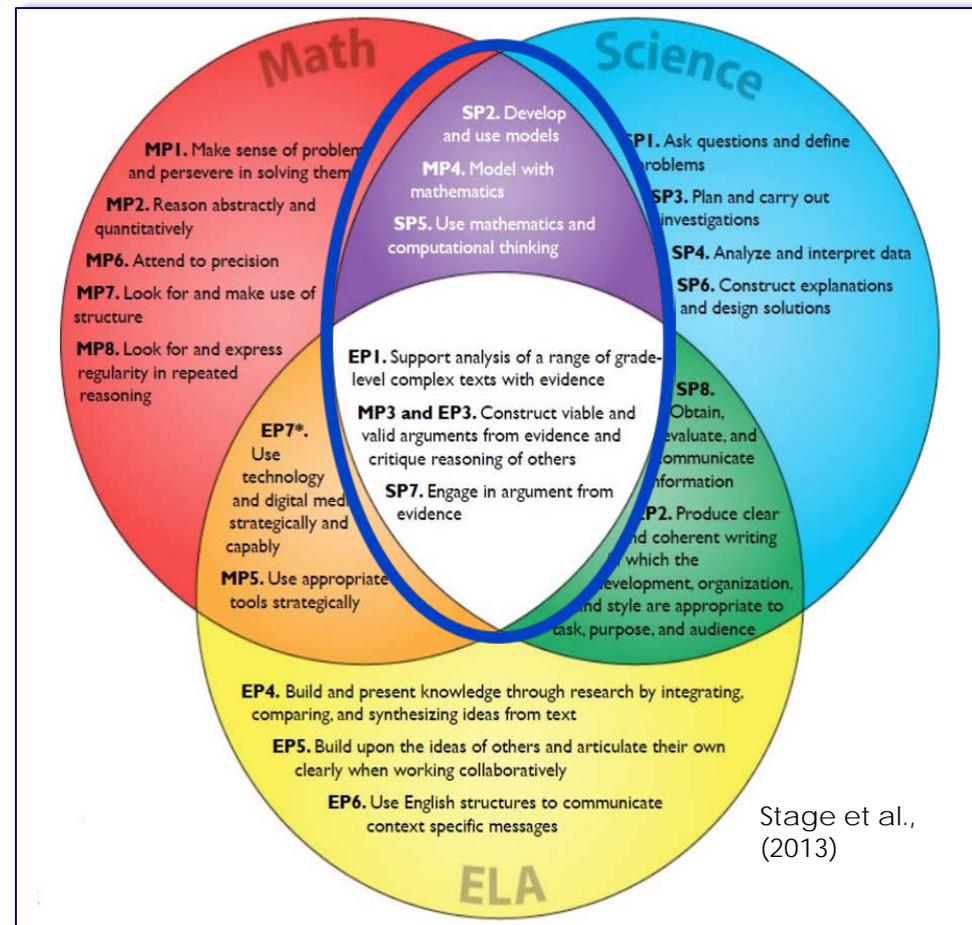
Course Characteristics

- **Emphasized relevance.** Why do students need to learn this?
- Emphasized **practice-based** teaching and building student **conceptual understanding.**
- **Student and teacher “hats”** (shifting perspectives for learning and reflection)
 - student activities, classroom video, student work
- Lesson and unit planning

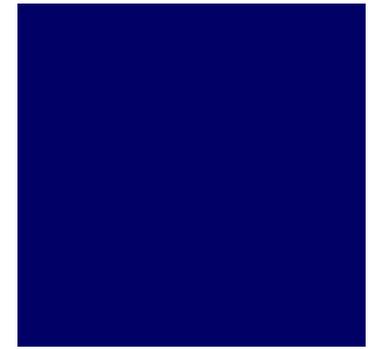
Math and Science Methods

Overlapping Practices

1. Use mathematics/computational thinking
2. Develop and use models/model with mathematics
3. Explanation and reasoning
4. Engage in argument from evidence
5. Engineering



Math and Science Methods



Activity 1: Modeling



Scientific modeling

The Task:

- Create a model

Why?

<https://www.ck12.org/...>



Activity 1: Modeling

- Independent (5 min)
- Partner (5-10 min)
- Class gallery walk and consensus model discussion

Discussion Questions:

- Do these models show how or why the object imploded? (Can they be used to predict future events?)
- What makes the best model?
- What questions do we have? (What more do we need to learn to improve our models?)



Reflection

1. What is the difference between a model and a drawing?
2. What are other types of models?
3. How did you engage in discourse in this activity? How could this type of activity benefit ELLs?
4. How could this serve as a formative assessment for a teacher?
5. When and how could you engage students in modeling in your unit?



Math and Science Methods

Modeling (math)

Activity: Modeling Motion



The Task:

- We are going to engage in an abbreviated form of a 9th grade math lesson about

Warm Up



Make a prediction: Which cup (or can) will roll in the largest circle? Why?

Constructing explanations and engaging in argument from evidence

Mystery Fossil Card Sort



The Task:

- Work in pairs or small groups to categorize evidence cards as supporting either:
 1. The fossil tooth came from a prehistoric mountain lion



2.

Activity Debrief



After sorting all the cards, including those from Group #2:

- What did you talk about when you were discussing the evidence?
- How were your discussions similar/different to your first sort?
- How did you and your group make connections between the evidence and the claim when discussing evidence in the card sorts?

Math and Science Methods

Mathematical and computational thinking

Engineering design

Activity: Walking Sticks

Results
30 seconds to eat insects

Activity: Graphing

The Task:

- Graph the changing populations of all three colors of walking sticks
- Graph the data in the way that makes most sense to you
- Make sure to only graph the initial population for rounds 1-5, ignoring the first "16" in each of those columns
- After completing the activity, rate on the continuum and the "process space"

Which round of the game?

starting population	brown			green/yellow			grey		
	initial	eaten	survived	initial	eaten	survived	initial	eaten	survived
16	16	15	1	16	5	11	16	8	8
2	3	2	1	26	16	10	19	9	10
3	2	1	1	23	7	16	23	15	8
4	3	3	0	30	13	17	15	6	9
5	0	0	0	31	12	19	17	12	5

Initial number each round

How many were "eaten" each round

How many survived each round

Puff Cars: The Task

Problem: Design a "car" powered only by a "puff" of air

Con the



Puff Cars: Mid-Reflection

Criti
strai

Ref
hats
Eng
doe
lear

The Task:

- As a group, rate your engagement in math/science practices (student)

Discussion Questions:

- What are the strengths of this activity?
- How could it be improved?
- How could you use this project (or one like it) in your class? In your unit?

Mathematics Practices	Engaging in the Mathematical Practices (ask both)	
	Students	Teachers
1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them	12. Understand the meaning of the problem and look for entry points to solve it.	12. In a lesson, is the problem based on real-world phenomena or is it abstract? If abstract, is it grounded in a real-world context?
2. Reason abstractly	13. Deconstruct a problem into simpler parts. Recognize an installment of a problem as a simpler one already solved.	13. Do you have a strategy for breaking down a problem into simpler parts? Do you use that strategy? How do you know when to stop breaking it down?
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others	14. Look for and make use of structure.	14. Do you have a strategy for recognizing and using structure? How do you know when to stop recognizing and using structure?
4. Model with mathematics	15. Use appropriate units, labels, and scales to represent quantities in a problem. Choose units and labels that are most appropriate for the problem.	15. Do you have a strategy for choosing units and labels? How do you know when to stop choosing units and labels?
5. Use appropriate tools strategically	16. Attend to precision.	16. Do you have a strategy for attending to precision? How do you know when to stop attending to precision?
6. Attend to precision	17. Look for and make use of regularity in repeated reasoning.	17. Do you have a strategy for looking for and making use of regularity? How do you know when to stop looking for and making use of regularity?
7. Reason with numbers and quantitative relationships	18. Look for and make use of structure.	18. Do you have a strategy for recognizing and using structure? How do you know when to stop recognizing and using structure?
8. Look for and make use of structure	19. Look for and make use of structure.	19. Do you have a strategy for recognizing and using structure? How do you know when to stop recognizing and using structure?
9. Look for and make use of structure	20. Look for and make use of structure.	20. Do you have a strategy for recognizing and using structure? How do you know when to stop recognizing and using structure?
10. Look for and make use of structure	21. Look for and make use of structure.	21. Do you have a strategy for recognizing and using structure? How do you know when to stop recognizing and using structure?
11. Look for and make use of structure	22. Look for and make use of structure.	22. Do you have a strategy for recognizing and using structure? How do you know when to stop recognizing and using structure?

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP FOR SCIENCE PRACTICES AND SCIENCE PRACTICES CONTINUUM - Student Performance				
This continuum is intended for teachers and administrators to use in gauging and evaluating student performance in the science practices. The levels reflect knowledge, skill, and performance requirements in the practices and are a grade-level specific, teacher and manager in the practice to develop personally appropriate ways at any of these levels. Appendix F in the NRC provides significantly more detail for each practice than should be integrated in each student and teacher development process (many with each practice). The practices are grouped into the "Investigating," "Reasoning," and "Using" practices.				
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Asking questions	Students do not ask questions.	Students ask questions, but only in response to a question.	Students ask questions, but only in response to a question.	Students ask questions, but only in response to a question.
Planning and carrying out investigations	Students do not design or conduct investigations.	Students design or conduct investigations, but only in response to a question.	Students design or conduct investigations, but only in response to a question.	Students design or conduct investigations, but only in response to a question.
Using mathematics and computational thinking	Students do not use mathematics or computational thinking.	Students use mathematics or computational thinking, but only in response to a question.	Students use mathematics or computational thinking, but only in response to a question.	Students use mathematics or computational thinking, but only in response to a question.

Methods: Participants

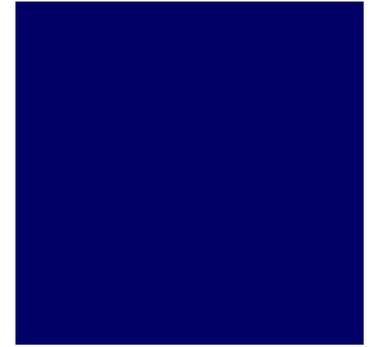
The Class

- 7 students
 - 3 graduate students (2 math, 1 science)
 - 4 undergraduate students (seniors; all math)

Teacher*	Gender	Race/ Ethnicity	Undergraduate Majors	Student Teaching School Type	Student Teaching Courses Taught
Amy	Female	White	Education Mathematics	Catholic HS	Algebra 2 Algebra 3
Denise	Female	White	Education Mathematics	Public HS Low performing	Honors Geometry Computer Science
Grace	Female	White	Education Mathematics	Public HS High performing	Algebra 2 Honors and College Prep
Sabrina	Female	White	Education Mathematics	Public HS High performing	AP Statistics, AP Computer Science Algebra 2

* All names are pseudonyms

Methods



Teacher Action Research Project

- Retrospective

Data Sources

1. Individual Interview (end of program)

2. Math and Science Methods

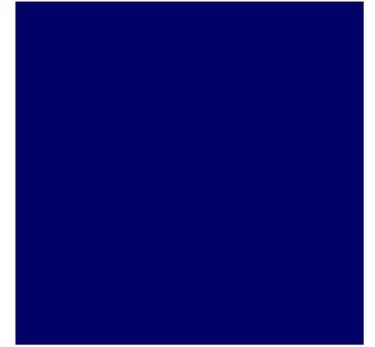
- Assignments (reflections, lesson plans, unit plan)

3. Student teaching

- Observations
- Lesson plans and teaching artifacts
- Reflections

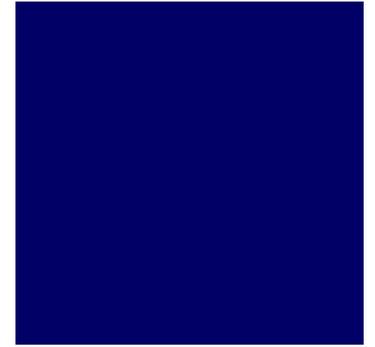
4. Teaching dispositions survey (pre, post)

Methods: Analysis



- Coding guided by dispositions (Bialka, 2016; Gresalfi, 2009) and open codes
- Attention to linking beliefs to observable actions (Bialka, 2016)

Findings



1. Dispositions toward math teaching shifted away from didactic methods to a variety of approaches to meet student needs.
 - The methods course precipitated this dispositional shift in two ways:
 - a. Providing another model of math teaching than they experienced
 - b. Engaging them in practice-based math learning as students
2. Instructional plans and reflections emphasized student problem-solving, sense-making, and real-world relevance.

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*"I cannot speak for anyone else, but I know that at least I would not have known so much about student-centered learning and inquiry-based instruction had it not been for your class... You definitely impacted my student teaching experience in such a positive way and **showed me so many different teaching strategies and methods that I do not think I would have known about or would have been too scared to try if it had not been for your class.**"*

(Denise, end of year interview)

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“So methods was a really big transformative [course]. So I didn't think about student engagement as much. I didn't think of getting them to do an engagement lesson to get them involved because in high school I didn't do that. It was lecture and take notes and do your homework and come in the next day and do it again. It worked for me so I didn't second guess it until I got into the methods class and saw all of these other options than just doing a lecture every day.”

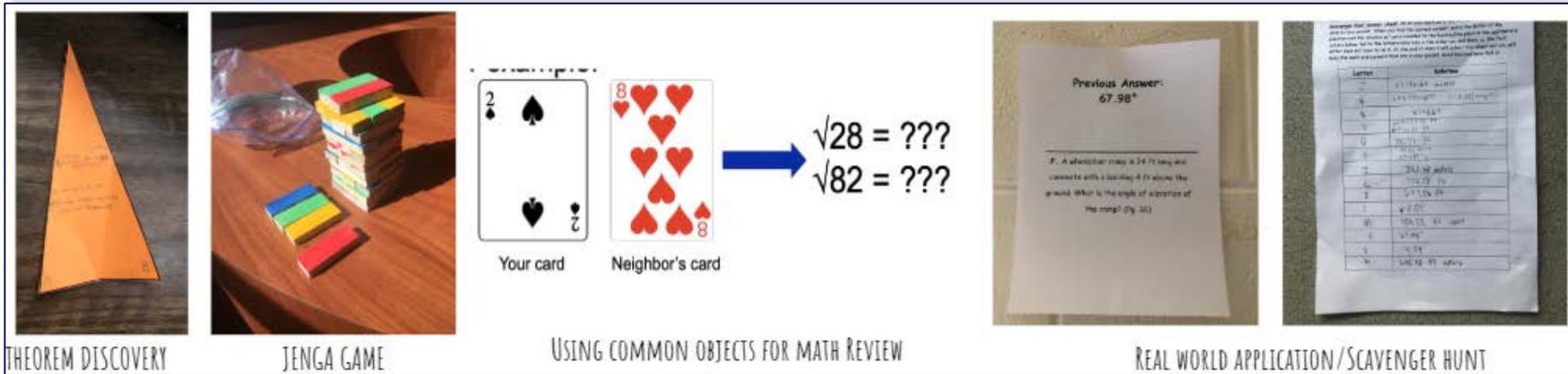
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*“So we did the mobius strip one and we actually did the activity, and the puff cars. Those were really good for dispositional growth and rethinking what we would do in the classroom and **putting us in the position of the students** to see what we would do in the lesson.”*

(Sabrina, end of year interview)

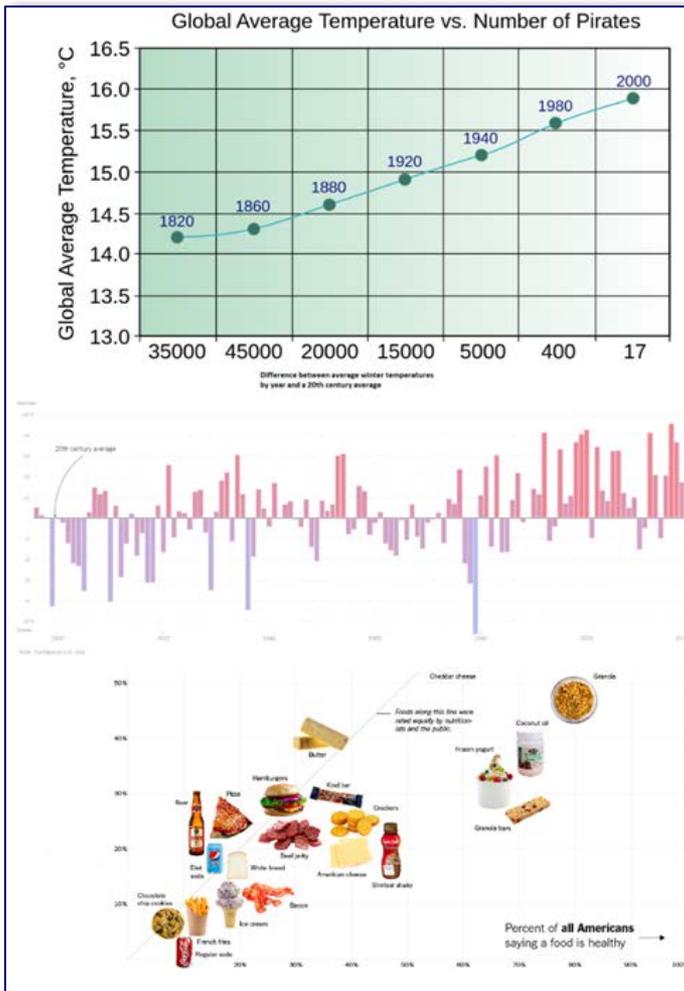
2. Instructional plans and reflections emphasized student problem-solving, sense-making, and real-world relevance.



*"Throughout student teaching I have developed many hands-on, engaging lessons and review activities to compliment the packets... I have seen that during these activities, **students are more engaged and excited to learn** as they change up our normal routine of lecturing and independent/group practice."*

(Denise, end of student-teaching reflection)

- Instructional plans and reflections emphasized student problem-solving, sense-making, and real-world relevance.



“The main goal of Graph of the Day was to emphasize the importance of statistics in the world around us and to find a fun and relevant way to get students thinking more critically when encountering graphs in their every day lives.”

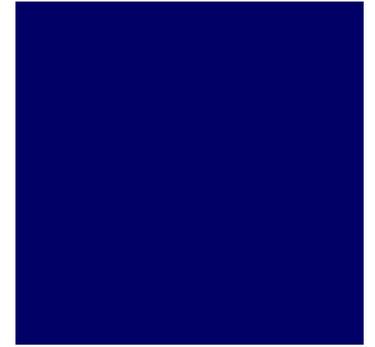
(Sabrina, end of student teaching reflection)

Conclusion



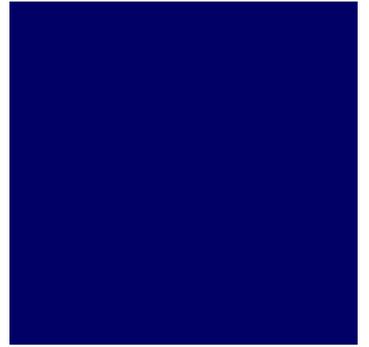
- Pre-service teachers' dispositions toward mathematics influenced their initial teaching priorities
- Methods courses can disrupt these content-based pre-dispositions by:
 - engaging in a wide variety of learning experiences as a student;
 - “forcing” teachers to test out a wide variety of activities;
 - encouraging teacher reflection and introspection (Marco-Bujosa et al., 2017), specifically about the nature of math (Gutierrez, 2012; Sellars, 2016)
- These content-based dispositional shifts allowed them to sustain their pedagogical priorities as student teachers.

Implications



- Pre-service teachers need more opportunities to confront their beliefs about the nature of math/science.
- Pre-service teachers need to experience the disciplinary practices in order to understand how and why they are different from traditional approaches of math teaching.
- More integration of social justice, particularly for math and science education majors (e.g. Gutierrez, 2012)

Questions...?



Discussion Questions



1. What other strategies and activities have you used to encourage pre-service teachers to reflect on their dispositions toward math or science (or beliefs and values related to these disciplines?)
2. In our program, teachers take their content coursework separately from education, meaning they are “socialized” into mathematics while we are trying to socialize them into education. How do we balance and leverage these experiences to better prepare math teachers?
3. How do you integrate social justice strategies into math and science methods courses and teacher education programs?

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Thank You!

Special thanks to Allison Kramer and Lauren Baker, Villanova University for their assistance with analysis, and for the four teachers for their participation.

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