

September 10, 2010

Dear Dr. Coseo and TEPS Committee Members,

I would like to express my sincere thanks for the opportunity to attend the 8th Annual Summer Institute on the Teaching of Reading at Teachers College, Columbia University. From Lucy Calkins' opening keynote address through the final assembly, I found my week in New York to be a rich and rewarding educational experience. I certainly added to my depth of knowledge about reader's workshop and its place in a balanced literacy curriculum, and I picked up many practical workshop management tips as well.

Each day began with a keynote address from a respected leader in the reading education field. This was followed by a large group session for K-2 teachers, led by primary-level literacy specialist Kathy Collins, lunchtime workshops, a small group session by grade-level, and a menu of closing workshop electives to choose from. The keynote set the tone for each day; the large group leader provided our direct instruction, and our small group leader provided opportunity to practice new skills and delve deeper into the information presented in large group. My days were absolutely packed with new learning!

In addition to all of the planned speakers, classes, and workshops, I had the wonderful experience of sharing and learning with a community of teachers who were there for a common purpose. The professional camaraderie was energizing, and I hope that this 'extra' excitement for teaching my first graders will carry me forward to a new level of accomplishment in my literacy instruction.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Brennan