

**Andee Nelson**

**Masters in Teaching**

**Prompt Responses**

**Prompt A:**

In my pursuit of a career in elementary education, I have undertaken a diverse array of coursework that has significantly contributed to my readiness to become an educator. This coursework spans a wide spectrum, encompassing subjects such as psychology, public health, childhood development, and various educational foundations. The multifaceted nature of my academic background has equipped me with a comprehensive and holistic understanding of the domains of education and child development.

Prior to my enrollment at The Evergreen State College, I completed my Associates of Arts degree at Centralia College. Among the pivotal courses I undertook there were Public Speaking, Intro to Education with Field Experience, and Exceptional Child. The public speaking course played a pivotal role in honing my communication skills and fostering a sense of ease when speaking before an audience. In my educational courses, I delved deeper into curriculum design, gained a more profound comprehension of classroom dynamics and management, and had the invaluable opportunity to acquire hands-on experience in a second-grade classroom.

My academic journey at The Evergreen State College has not only enhanced my knowledge but has also contributed significantly to my personal growth, which I believe will be invaluable as I embark on my career as an educator. Specifically, the course "Teaching English Language Learners: Culture, Theory, and Methods" has bestowed upon me a deeper understanding of the responsibilities and strategies associated with the role of an educator,

especially in ensuring equal opportunities for all students to learn. This knowledge provides me with a distinct advantage in grasping the unique challenge. I now can employ effective strategies for teaching students who are acquiring English as a second language, a crucial skill in the context of a diverse elementary classroom.

Moreover, my coursework in psychology has enriched my understanding of the facets of aging and child development. "Aging Today" and "Children, Curriculum, and the Clinical View: Childhood Development and Psychopathology in the Education System" have provided me with fresh insights into the spectrum of age-related experiences. My capacity to comprehend the intricacies of the aging process and child development is instrumental in adapting my teaching approach to cater to the specific needs and stages of development of younger children.

As I look ahead to my future, I am committed to becoming a certified substitute teacher once I conclude my volleyball season. This step will provide me with further exposure to classroom environments, deepening my comprehension of classroom dynamics, and refining my preferences in terms of the specific educational settings where I aspire to make a meaningful impact. This practical experience, combined with my solid academic foundation, will undoubtedly contribute to my success as a dedicated and effective elementary educator. I will foster an inclusive and engaging learning environment for all students.

### **Prompt B:**

Throughout my life, I've been fortunate to accumulate various experiences, each contributing a unique quality that has shaped me into the person I am today. These varied paths have collectively crafted a solid foundation of skills and perspectives crucial for excelling in the role of an elementary school educator.

Growing up in a family deeply involved in the world of education has profoundly shaped my perspective. It was a constant reality that gave me an in-depth understanding of the state of schooling. Our family's conversations and experiences were closely linked with the devotion and difficulties experienced by educators. Witnessing my mother in education instilled in me a profound appreciation for the teaching profession and a keen awareness of the importance of fostering a positive learning environment.

My family has been an indispensable cornerstone of my journey, amplifying the significance of education and hard work in my life. As both an older and younger sister, I had the privilege of being immersed in a diverse range of sibling dynamics. This experience has helped me develop empathy, patience, and adaptability. Understanding and responding to the distinct needs and personalities of my siblings laid the groundwork for recognizing and embracing the individual differences among young learners, an indispensable skill set crucial for effective engagement in the realm of elementary education.

In addition to my educational experiences, my active involvement in sports like volleyball, basketball, and track and field imparted dedication, discipline, and teamwork. These qualities are inherently transferable to a classroom, where fostering a sense of unity and cooperation is vital. As well as volunteering as a youth volleyball coach, I delved into the vital elements of effective communication, leadership, and teamwork. Teaching demands these very skills: the ability to convey ideas clearly, manage a group, and encourage collaboration. Coaching also improved my capacity to motivate and guide individuals, a vital asset when teaching young minds in an elementary school setting.

In summary, my journey as a volunteer volleyball coach, my family's deep-rooted connection with education, my role as a sister, and my active engagement in sports have created

a diverse skill set. My passion for sports and the values instilled in me by my family make me a valuable asset in imparting knowledge, fostering growth, and nurturing the next generation of learners. These different roles in my life have equipped me to engage, inspire, and educate young minds effectively in an elementary school setting.

**Prompt C:**

In our culture, education performs a contradictory function by both upholding structural inequities and expressing a strong social benefit. Since it equips people with the information, skills, and critical thinking abilities that drive societal improvement and economic prosperity, education is revered as the foundation of progress. Underneath this is a system that discriminates on the basis of socioeconomic class, race, ethnicity, location, and gender. This glaring discrepancy is a critical issue that needs comprehensive solutions.

Without a question, education is a priceless social asset that gives people the knowledge they need to make wise decisions and positively impact their communities. The development of science, technology, the arts, and humanities depends heavily on an educated population. But the systemic inequality that permeates education is all too evident. Resources and chances for education are not distributed in a fair manner. Inequalities in socioeconomic status, racial discrimination, regional limitations, and gender-based prejudice all contribute to uneven access to high-quality education. Marginalized populations usually struggle with a lack of financing for schools, unqualified teachers, poor learning materials, and limited resources. Due to these discrepancies in educational access, impediments to upward social mobility are more entrenched and the gap between the rich and the disadvantaged is widened. Compounding these issues, the escalating costs of education, the burden of student loan debt, and the barriers to higher

education further deepen the rift, making it increasingly difficult for individuals from low-income backgrounds to reap the benefits of higher education.

We need to start to work a difficult path to guarantee equitable access to education regardless of a person's background. This entails boosting outreach initiatives, enhancing early childhood education, and actively reducing regions with a lack of educational resources. Additionally, it is crucial to develop an inclusive and varied curriculum that reflects the variety of our society by embracing other cultures, viewpoints, and histories. In order to develop a more diverse and inclusive educational experience, it is crucial to actively encourage the inclusion of marginalized voices in textbooks and instructional materials.

In addition, helping educators is crucial in resolving systemic inequities in education. Comprehensive teacher training programs that acknowledge biases and work to correct them can help to foster an inclusive classroom climate. A more equal educational experience for all children is ensured by providing chances for educators to engage in ongoing professional development, which keeps them informed of changing pedagogical techniques and best practices.

By addressing these critical dimensions and advocating for a more equitable educational system, we can take significant strides toward reconciling the contradiction between education as a social good and the structural injustices that persist within the educational landscape. This change is necessary to guarantee that everyone can benefit from education, regardless of socioeconomic status or other factors that have previously created hurdles to equal opportunity. Making an educational system that really embraces the principles of justice and inclusion is a shared duty.

**Prompt D:**

My decision to pursue a career in teaching has been greatly inspired by my experiences working with children in a variety of ways, including as a youth volleyball coach, a teaching assistant in first and second grade classes, and having exposure to primary physical education settings. These experiences have given me priceless insights into mentoring, the value of education, and the significance of creating a welcoming and supportive learning environment.

I gained knowledge in inspiring and motivating young players while coaching youth volleyball. It taught me the importance of encouragement and expectation, and the effect it can have on a child's growth. It has been tremendously rewarding to see these young volleyball players develop not only their volleyball abilities but also character traits like resilience, teamwork, and sportsmanship. My enthusiasm for educating and assisting young people in their growth and achievement was sparked by this encounter.

I got the chance to experience the wonder of early childhood education while working as a teaching assistant in first and second grade classes. I was able to help, direct, and encourage them as they developed academically and socially. These experiences made me realize the value of a safe environment and how it fosters expression and exploration of ideas in the classroom. It also showed how meaningful a positive role model is in some children's lives. My ambition to work as an educator was further strengthened by the thrill of seeing a child's "aha" moment and their passion to learn. I was able to understand the importance of teachers in guiding learners towards complete growth by seeing first-grade classrooms and primary physical education sessions. I saw firsthand how important it is to include creativity, interesting activities, and flexibility to accommodate the various requirements of students. It reinforced my beliefs that a

well-rounded education is essential, emphasizing not only academic development but also collaboration, and social skills.

In conclusion, my work as a volleyball coach, a teaching assistant, and an educational observer has fueled my enthusiasm for both coaching and teaching. These positions have given me crucial abilities, viewpoints, and a solid awareness of the important impact that a teacher can have on a child's life. In order to foster kids' love of learning and help them on the path to a successful future, I am dedicated to establishing an atmosphere in which students may flourish intellectually, emotionally, and socially.