

Over the course of my experience working in schools, I have had the opportunity to observe student learning as a 4th grade Student Success Coach with City Year, as well as middle school Paraprofessional for students in grades 6 through 8. During this time, I have found that one of the biggest barriers in learning across all subjects is a student's ability to read, write, and comprehend written text. Modern society heavily relies on written communication in education, but also throughout society, including platforms such as online interaction, geographical navigation, governmental systems, and various other media that have become ingrained in daily life. The written word is a vital tool of modern society; however, it can easily be used as a tool for oppression and exclusion. Thus, I believe that English Language Arts is one of the most critical foundational subjects for students to learn in public education. As such, it is the subject I am most eager to pursue as a teacher.

In addition to my strong desire to equip students with an empowering tool to navigate daily life, I am also well-prepared to teach ELA. My degree in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies has exposed me to a rich and diverse range of literary works, allowing me to create inclusive content for students. From courses like "Literature of Rome and Empire" to "Disability, Diversity, & Media," the studies I completed at Western Washington University have provided me with the ability to analyze complex epics like *The Aeneid* by Virgil and to interpret insightful works like *A Room of One's Own* by Virginia Woolf—skills I am eager to pass on to my future students.

Although I did not have formal courses specifically focused on poetry or nonfiction, I believe that my coursework has provided me with ample exposure to these genres. *Literature of Rome and Empire* delved deeply into ancient epics and poetry, offering valuable studies on prose, structure, and the artistry of the written word. Additionally, feminist theory was a foundational aspect of my education, meaning that I have consistently consumed, analyzed, and produced nonfiction works throughout my studies. This coursework has given me the necessary tools to introduce nonfiction works to young minds, fostering both analytical thinking and personal reflection.

Beyond my formal education, my experience facilitating reading intervention groups as a Student Success Coach with City Year in Philadelphia has further prepared me to teach ELA. In this role, I reviewed materials from the Levelled Literacy Intervention (LLI) curriculum and worked closely with a group of five 4th grade students, helping them improve their reading and writing comprehension. This hands-on experience has honed my ability to provide targeted, effective instruction, reinforcing my commitment to supporting students in their academic growth. In my current role as paraprofessional in the Recovery Room, I continue to provide academic support for students in 6th-8th grade with an emphasis on reading comprehension and writing proficiency.

With the combination of my professional background and coursework, I believe I am well prepared for an endorsement in ELA. As an educator, I want to empower my students in facing real-world challenges and systems with confidence through reading and writing.