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THE FIRST YEAR OF AN AGRICULTURE TEACHER:
A CASE STUDY OF THREE BEGINNING TEACHERS

by

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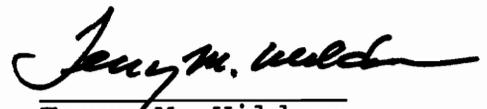
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(ABSTRACT)

Three first-year agriculture teachers were analyzed using the case study approach. The descriptive account presents each teacher's daily events in chronological order. Two traditional teacher education degree teachers and one alternative certified teacher are described. The descriptive account uses data gathered through transcribed daily logs, personal interviews, and participant observations.

Each teacher experienced different daily events, however the data analysis revealed certain themes. Each teacher experienced difficulty in a particular area early in the school year and needed specific assistance. Also, student interactions greatly affected all three teachers. The teachers reported personal stress and frustration from the area of student discipline. As a result of some tragedy, each teacher served as a counselor to their students at some point in the school year. The teachers

received many positive results from their Future Farmers of America local chapters.

Another theme was observed in the area of instructional management. The teachers experienced varying degrees of difficulty in curriculum development, lesson planning, and teaching techniques. The area of time management caused problems for these teachers throughout the school year. Administrators also influenced the daily lives of these three beginning agriculture teachers. The area of health concerns was the final theme observed. All three teachers experienced illness during the school year. In addition, all three commented on the frequency that their students were ill.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The first year in a teacher's career may very well be the most important. During the first year, the new teacher may be exposed to the full spectrum of events that can occur in teaching. The first year is also when the newcomer begins to form attitudes and opinions that will influence future decisions about a career. Unfortunately, many beginning teachers do not receive the guidance and assistance they need to make their first year a success.

Background of the Study

Typically the beginning teacher is given a classroom, a class roll, and a short orientation to school policies and procedures, then is expected to perform as if he or she is a seasoned veteran (Wildman & Niles, 1987). The new teacher may be excited to be finally in control of a classroom, but is probably confused and frightened by the lack of guidance that is given. Many newcomers never recover from this initial experience. In fact, over 50 percent of beginning teachers leave the profession within five years (Olson and Rodman, 1988).

There are many factors which influence whether a beginning teacher will choose to remain in teaching. One of the first factors is what kind of experience the intern had in college and especially in student teaching (Cruickshank & Armaline, 1986). It is probable that the higher the quality

of the internship experience, the more satisfactory the induction experience. Another factor is the type of school in which the newcomer begins his or her career. Huling-Austin, Putman, and Galvez-Hjornevik (1985) found that beginning teachers who were placed in schools that matched their qualities performed better and adjusted easier than teachers who were mismatched. A final factor is the quality of assistance and in-service that is provided during those first years (Pratzner, 1988a). A beginner who is left to "sink or swim" may very well end up not surviving past the first year.

There are, of course, many other factors which influence the willingness of a person to pursue a teaching career. The person who does make teaching a career goes through several stages during his or her career. There is no definite beginning or end to any of the stages, rather the career of a teacher can be described as phases on a continuum. The phases, as described by Camp (1988), are pre-service, induction, and continuing development.

The first phase, pre-service, includes all of the activities performed to prepare the prospective teacher. These activities include college courses, internships, and other field experiences. The next phase, induction, can be thought of as all of the experiences that serve to socialize the newcomer into the teaching profession. The induction phase begins when the teaching contract is signed and ends

sometime in the future when the beginner is comfortable with being a professional teacher. Camp next described the continuing development phase which occurs throughout the teacher's career. All of the activities that assist the teacher in improving student learning are encompassed in this stage.

Of the three phases, the induction phase was the focus of this case study. Research on the induction process for beginning teachers has appeared periodically over the past thirty years. Conant (1963) looked at the education of teachers for America's schools. Although his primary concern was the preparation of teachers, he also addressed the professional development of teachers once they entered the classroom. Conant's work is frequently cited as a starting point for induction research.

Another frequently cited work is that of Frances Fuller. Fuller (1969) worked with pre-service and beginning teachers in Texas. She found that beginners exhibit specific behaviors in a recognizable order during the induction period.

Ryan (1986) expanded on Fuller's work to describe four stages in a teacher's career: fantasy, survival, mastery, and impact. Teachers in the induction phase experience the first three stages: fantasy, survival, and mastery. Teachers who reach the fourth stage, impact, are not considered to be beginners.

Ryan described the fantasy stage as beginning before student teaching and ending within a few weeks or months after the person becomes a full-time teacher. During the fantasy stage, the prospective teacher dreams about what being a teacher is like. The new teacher fantasizes about how well the year is going to go and how much the students are going to learn.

The survival stage interrupts the fantasies with reality. During the survival stage the new teacher is involved in a fight for personal and professional identity. Ryan stated that the survival stage has lasting effects on the teacher.

The final stage that a beginner goes through is mastery. Ryan described the mastery stage as the systematic process of learning how to teach. At this point the teacher is becoming secure with his or her role of being a teacher. Classroom management and teaching techniques are most important in the mastery stage.

Research on beginning teachers frequently focuses on the problems they experience. Veenman (1984) conducted an extensive literature review to compile a list of perceived problems of beginning teachers. Heath, Camp, and Barber (1988) reported on the problems identified by beginning vocational teachers who were certified through traditional teacher education programs. Camp, Heath, Barber, and Talbert (1989) reported the problems identified by beginning

vocational teachers who were certified through alternative and vocational routes, as well as through traditional teacher education programs.

Other studies have been conducted to identify the effectiveness of particular assistance programs. These programs seem to focus on elementary or mathematics and English secondary teachers (Huling-Austin, 1988; Wildman, Niles, Magliaro, & McLaughlin, 1989; Driscoll & Kuhlmann, 1989; Miller, Thomson, & Roush, 1989). Consequently, very little has been written specifically about beginning vocational teachers.

Findings from studies that were conducted using only non-vocational teachers may not be transferable to beginning agriculture teachers. Camp, Heath, Barber, and Talbert (1989) found that of the problems that beginning vocational teachers experience, approximately 25 percent were specific to vocational education. They also found that many positive experiences were unique to vocational education teachers. Their findings would imply that beginning agriculture teachers have assistance needs that are not met by school or district-wide programs.

Teaching is not the only responsibility of beginning agriculture teachers. Some of their other duties are bookkeeper, custodian, hall monitor, secretary, and counselor. The teacher may not be prepared to perform these additional duties and may not know who to go to for help.

The beginning agriculture teacher must also spend time learning school policies and procedures, while at the same time attempting to manage a full teaching load. The teacher may begin to feel time pressures and may sacrifice teaching quality to get everything done.

Purpose of the Study

The data used in this study were qualitative in nature. Therefore, the case study method was appropriate in analyzing and reporting on the data. Since one purpose of qualitative research is hypothesis-generation, there were no pre-existing hypotheses to guide the analysis. There were, however, guiding questions asked that provided a framework for the study. The basic questions asked by this research were: "What events occur in the daily lives of beginning agriculture teachers and what effect do those have on the teachers?"

In a case study, themes develop as a result of the data analysis. The researcher must read the data specifically looking for patterns and repeated occurrences. The researcher then reports the findings as a descriptive account using the themes as a guide (Yin, 1989).

The overall purpose of this study was to develop three descriptive accounts of the first year of three beginning agriculture teachers.

Justification

Several groups of people may benefit from this case study. One of the first groups is school administrators. They need to know what events occur during the first year of a beginning teacher's career so that they can know what kind of help to provide to first-year teachers and when to provide it. They also need to know what signs to look for in a beginning teacher who is having problems.

Policy-makers are a second group that could obtain valuable information from this study. They need research-based knowledge in order to make better informed decisions. Reforms enacted without such knowledge have the potential to adversely affect beginning teachers for many years. On the other hand, reforms that are based on empirical knowledge have a greater chance of affecting the beginning teacher in a positive way.

Another important group that could benefit from this research is other beginning agriculture teachers. They could be better prepared for their first year by reading the accounts presented in this study. They should have more realistic expectations about the first year after reading what another beginner had experienced.

State department of education and department of agricultural education personnel could be assisted by this study. Many decisions that come from state departments have a major impact upon beginning teachers. If these decisions

are based on research such as this, then the impact is more likely to be positive.

Finally, teacher educators in agricultural education may benefit from having available case studies on beginning agriculture teachers. This case study could be used in teacher preparation courses to alert the students of what the first year of teaching is like. In this way, prospective teachers may be better prepared upon entering the classroom.

Definition of Terms

The terms used in this study are defined as follows:

Agriculture teacher--A teacher who teaches agricultural education in secondary schools. This includes instruction in exploratory, general, and vocational agriculture.

Alternative certification--Systems that permit persons other than those graduating from teacher preparation programs to enter the teaching profession through substitute routes (Finch and O'Reilly, 1988).

Beginning (or first-year) teacher--A teacher who is entering the classroom for the first time as a paid professional.

Fifth-year program--Programs conducted by colleges or universities that go beyond the traditional four year undergraduate degree are defined as fifth-year programs in this paper. These extended programs can be in the form of extended undergraduate degrees, master's degree programs, or

educational course work for liberal arts majors. Fifth-year programs are offered as both pre-service and induction year programs.

Induction--The process by which a beginning teacher becomes established into the profession (Waters, 1985).

Induction phase--The time period during which induction takes place. There is no definite time-line, but induction is generally believed to begin before the teacher enters the classroom for the first time and ends when the teacher becomes relatively comfortable in the role of a professional faculty member (Camp, 1988).

Mentor--An experienced teacher who helps a less experienced teacher to grow professionally through teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counseling, and befriending (Anderson and Shannon, 1988).

Non-teacher education degree certified--Teacher certification based on occupational experience, a baccalaureate degree other than in education, or some other criteria rather than a degree in teacher education.

Teacher education degree certified--Teacher certification based on a baccalaureate or higher degree in education. The program includes student teaching.

Summary

The induction of a first-year teacher into the teaching profession is a long and sometimes complicated process. The beginning teacher may feel confident in his or her knowledge

of the subject matter, but may not be prepared to handle all of the extra duties that are a part of being a teacher. In addition, the beginner may feel left alone with nowhere to turn for assistance.

There is a growing research base that deals specifically with the issues of first-year teachers. One of the most widely explored issues is the problems that occur during the induction phase. There have also been strides made to provide assistance programs for the beginning teacher, however many of these programs have not been fully evaluated.

Also, many current assistance programs are based on research using elementary or mathematics and English secondary teachers (Huling-Austin, 1988; Wildman, Niles, Magliaro, & McLaughlin, 1989; Driscoll & Kuhlmann, 1989; Miller, Thomson, & Roush, 1989). If the first year in an agriculture teacher's career is significantly different from that of an elementary teacher, then the assistance program may not adequately meet the needs of the agriculture teacher (Camp, Heath, Barber, & Talbert, 1989). Therefore, a study such as this one is needed to determine what events occur during the first year of an agriculture teacher.

This study could be important to school administrators, policy makers, teacher educators, and others who have an impact on the beginning agriculture teacher. They may be

able to use the data provided in this study to make decisions concerning future agriculture teachers.

Finally, this study may be important in adding to the knowledge base for all beginning teachers. Even though agriculture teachers experience many events that are different from other beginning teachers, they still experience some common events. Therefore, any information that is learned about agriculture teachers can be applied in part to all beginning teachers.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature

Beginning teachers are usually expected to assume all of the responsibilities of teaching just like a veteran teacher. These responsibilities range from daily lesson planning to managerial and accounting duties. In addition, the beginning teacher is experiencing personal changes, such as moving to a new community and starting a new lifestyle (Levy, 1987). All of these changes added together can make the first year stressful for a new teacher. How the teacher adapts to the stresses of teaching may determine whether the first year is successful.

The literature that was reviewed for this study was most concerned with developing ways to assist the beginning teacher during the first year. This chapter is divided into the following sections: (1) the induction process, (2) induction models, and (3) case studies on first-year teachers.

The Induction Process

The broad process by which novices become professionals is called induction (Camp, 1988). The induction process for beginning teachers includes all of the steps taken to socialize the teacher into the teaching profession. The process begins when the teacher signs the work contract and ends sometime in the future when the teacher becomes established in the profession. The time of induction is a

transitional period when the beginning teacher moves from being a student or worker to being a teacher (Camp & Heath, 1988).

"The transition from student to first-year teacher is traumatic for many and has been labeled 'reality shock' in the educational literature" (Marso & Pigge, 1987, p. 53). New beginning teachers are often placed in classrooms with little preparation and no specific support structure. It is no wonder then that ". . . beginning teachers frequently report stress, anxiety, and feelings of inadequacy" (Joyce & Clift, 1984, p. 6). Even beginning teachers who participated in student teaching find that they need a support system. Meister (1987) stated in a study of Maryland school systems that there was an assumption that new teachers are adequately prepared before they begin teaching. However, he stated that this assumption is not true because beginning teachers need continuing help.

The induction process can be both difficult and lengthy, and it has been long recognized that beginning teachers need support and assistance to help them through the first year (Wildman, Niles, Magliaro, McLaughlin, & Drill, 1987). However, Pratzner (1988a) found that ". . . assistance programs for teachers were still things of the future in secondary level vocational education" (p. 28). In addition, there is currently a debate about what is the best

way to train and induct new teachers into the profession (Wildman & Niles, 1987).

Odell (1986) stated that first-year and new-to-the-system teachers needed assistance in (a) obtaining information about the school district and (b) obtaining resources and materials for the curriculum that is taught. Beginning teachers may not understand or know about policies concerning purchasing supplies and equipment, as an example. This need for assistance should be met in a systematic, efficient manner. Pratzner (1988b) concluded that there must be an "emphasis on the teacher career development continuum . . . new induction year programs for beginning vocational teachers" (p. 50).

Induction Models

The literature on teacher induction contains references to several induction models designed to assist the beginning teacher during the first year(s). In particular there are four specific models that appear to be cited most often: (1) Mentoring, (2) Fifth-Year Programs, (3) Alternative Certification Programs, and (4) Professional Development Models. The following sections will give definitions, examples, and positive and negative aspects of each of the four induction models.

Mentoring

Characteristics. A mentor is generally considered to be an older, experienced teacher who assists the novice teacher in becoming a professional. Anderson and Shannon (1988) identified five functions of the mentor as teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counseling, and befriending. They also identified demonstrating lessons, observing and giving feedback, and holding support meetings as three possible mentoring activities. The mentor-protégé relationship may be structured or informal, however some guidelines help the relationship to work better. Johnson (1988) recommended that the mentor be in close proximity to the beginning teacher to facilitate communication, observation, and dialogue. In addition, beginning teachers have suggested that the mentor be in the same subject matter area and that there be daily contact between the mentor and the protégé (Huling-Austin, 1988).

The mentor-protégé relationship works best when the mentor receives both training and compensation (Huling-Austin, 1988). The relationship thus begins as a defined, professional one. As trust and confidence develop, this relationship will change over time, therefore the system must provide flexibility to allow these changes to occur (Johnson, 1988).

Models. A mentoring program can be structured or informal, can include evaluation or not, and can be implemented on a school-wide, district-wide, or even state-wide basis. Arizona State University cooperated with the Arizona Department of Education to provide 75 beginning teachers with mentors in a recent pilot study. In this program, the mentors observed, coached, and conferred with the beginning teacher (Holmes Group, 1988a). Virginia Tech has started an Early Career Support Program to train mentors for first-year teachers, to provide follow-up support to the first-year teachers, and to provide a toll-free telephone line to help both the mentors and the first-year teachers. The Early Career Support Program grew out of the Colleague Teacher Project that was developed in conjunction with Virginia's Beginning Teacher Assistance Program. The Colleague Teacher Project collected data on 20 beginner/mentor pairs in its first two years of existence. The project researchers found that colleague teachers give first-year teachers both cognitive and affective support (Holmes Group, 1988d; Wildman, Niles, Magliaro, McLaughlin, & Drill, 1987).

Zimpher (1988) reported that in 1987, 16 states mandated entry year programs that contained mentoring components, and 16 additional states had legislation in progress. He also described the mentoring program developed

by The Ohio State University and the Franklin County (Ohio) school districts. The initial mentors in this program are now training other veteran teachers to perform mentoring duties.

Tennessee, North Carolina, and New York have state-mandated mentoring programs for all beginning teachers. The programs have evaluation components in which the beginning teachers are evaluated by both administrators and peers (State Research Associates, 1988). Johnson (1988) highlighted the vocational education aspect of the Vermont Mentor Program. Prospective vocational teachers were trained in either two-year postsecondary institutions or in secondary schools. Johnson noted that the prospective teacher may not receive enough pedagogical support from the postsecondary mentor or enough work-experience support from the secondary school mentor. Zimpher (1988) found that of the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement's 29 projects to improve teacher education, 11 of them focus on the induction year or mentoring.

Negative aspects. Not all aspects of mentoring are positive, however. By pairing a beginning teacher with an experienced teacher we risk perpetuating the status quo. If the status quo needs changing then the mentoring concept will fail (Goodlad, 1988). Johnson (1988) cited Merriam in detailing additional problems. The protege could be paired

with a mentor who is manipulative, jealous, egocentric, stifling, or over-protective. Johnson was also concerned that in small school districts with only one-teacher departments the beginning vocational teacher will not be served by an appropriate mentor. Care must be taken to reduce as many of the potential problems as possible.

Potential problems are a detriment to the mentor protege relationship. Huling-Austin (1988) reported on a synthesis of 17 studies on teacher induction. She found that the relationship between the mentor and the beginning teacher was important to the professional development of the beginner. To make the relationship work, a compatible mentor who will give time, patience, and understanding to the beginner must be selected.

Fifth-Year Programs

Definition. Shulman (1987) observed that teachers must know both the subject matter that they are to teach and also how to explain that information to someone else. Fifth-year programs are one system for preparing prospective teachers for this dual role.

Programs conducted by colleges or universities that go beyond the traditional four year undergraduate degree are defined as fifth-year programs in this paper. These extended programs can be in the form of extended undergraduate degrees, master's degree programs, or educational course work for liberal arts majors. Fifth-year

programs are offered as both pre-service and induction year programs. Even though the references cited described many different types of fifth-year programs, they did not evaluate the programs or give results. In general the programs described have been enacted only recently and have not been evaluated, or are merely proposals.

Related literature. Willett (1988) in the Virginia Teacher Education Study found that 73% of the state's teachers opposed extending the current four-year undergraduate program. Only four percent of the teachers favored a paid fifth-year internship. Despite such findings, many programs are being developed to extend teacher preparation beyond four years. Catholic University of America is part of a consortium of Washington, D.C. universities that cooperate with D.C. school districts in a mentoring program for all beginning teachers. The university has developed a proposal to conduct a five-year program in which the fifth year is a paid induction year where the student is supervised by an experienced mentor teacher (Holmes Group, 1988b). Wise (1986) advocated a six-year program. He proposed that the prospective teacher receive a four-year liberal arts degree, then a one-year graduate degree in education followed by a paid one-year internship.

In 1988, The Chronicle of Higher Education summarized actions by the 50 states to reform the education of

teachers. Nineteen colleges and universities in Alabama have established graduate programs for prospective teachers who hold bachelor's degrees in fields other than education. In Tennessee, persons who have not had student teaching are allowed to work for one year as paid interns. This internship is counted as a fifth year of study for the teachers. The University of Nevada-Reno has in place an assistance program for elementary and special education graduates that allows the teacher to earn a master's degree (Holmes Group, 1989). Oklahoma State, the University of Oklahoma, and Northeastern State University (Oklahoma) have developed a recommendation to require five years of academic teacher preparation with supervision during the first year of teaching (Holmes Group, 1988c).

McNelis and Etheridge (1987) proposed three models for induction internships. Two of these models are for fifth-year programs. The first is a 15-month graduate internship to include three experiences of teaching junior or senior high school classes over a year period. The second model is a total-immersion experience for students completing a 12-month graduate level certification program. In this model, the student is completely involved in the full range of classroom activities.

There is at least one negative aspect of fifth-year programs. Bass de Martinez (1988) argued that five-year programs will not attract enough minority students to

replace current minority teachers nor meet future demand. As a consequence, the increasing percentage of minorities in the total population could expect to be represented by a decreasing percentage of minorities in the teaching force.

Fifth-year programs appeal to those who believe that prospective teachers need additional training beyond the traditional four-year bachelor's degree. Before these programs are implemented, however, more research should be conducted to determine the effectiveness of fifth-year programs.

Alternative Certification

Definition. According to Olson and Rodman (1988) as much as fifty percent of new teachers leave the profession within five years. A result of this high turnover is that many school systems begin the school year with a shortage of certified teachers. This shortage is predicted to grow worse during the 1990's (Waters, 1988). One method for meeting this demand for new teachers is through alternative certification. Alternative certification is defined as systems that permit persons other than those graduating from teacher preparation programs to enter the teaching profession through substitute routes (Finch and O'Reilly, 1988). One example of a substitute route is the trade and industrial model. Prospective teachers are given credit for occupational experience in the subject field in lieu of a

teacher education degree. Uhler (1987) described the New Jersey model as a second example of an alternative certification model. Teachers in this model must have a bachelor's degree, pass a basic skills test, and complete a one-year internship before they become certified teachers.

Based on New Jersey's experience, Uhler (1987) gave several advantages and disadvantages to alternative certification. He stated that alternative certification was one method of finding ". . . new ways of having candidates to enter the teaching profession" (p. 4). Also people who were not able to engage in formal college training can still enter the teaching profession. Another advantage is that these programs will eliminate emergency certificates which have been viewed as allowing unqualified teachers in the classroom. However, he stated that alternative certification will still allow ill-prepared candidates to become teachers at the entry level. Uhler concluded that alternative certification is a simplistic solution to the teacher shortage problem that could potentially undermine pedagogical standards.

Related literature. Graham (1989) found that in 1986 twenty-three states had programs for alternative certification. However, the alternative certification requirements vary from state to state. Leatherman (1988) reported that some states had developed alternative

certification programs that included requiring the non-teacher education degree teacher to complete the same professional education courses and the same skills tests as teacher education degree teachers.

A Chronicle of Higher Education (1988, April 20) survey of reforms of the 50 states and D.C. found that in Arizona, individuals who hold a bachelor's degree other than in teacher education must pass a basic skills test to teach. Also included in the article were details of reforms in California and Connecticut. In California a prospective teacher must pass a basic skills and a subject area test to be allowed to teach. The new teacher must also work under the supervision of another teacher for two years before becoming certified. Connecticut is scheduled to start a three-month summer program to provide professional training for alternative certification teachers.

Prospective teachers in Arkansas are required to hold an academic degree in the subject area in which they plan to teach. Prospective teachers must major in the liberal arts or an interdisciplinary field in Massachusetts. The teacher then has five years to earn a master's degree and receive full certification. In Mississippi, alternative certification teachers have three years to complete 12 semester hours of teacher education courses to become fully certified (Chronicle of Higher Education, 1988, April 20).

In North Carolina, prospective teachers must have a bachelor's degree, pass a certification test, complete an internship, and demonstrate competency in their fields. Upon completion of the above requirements the teacher receives full certification. West Virginia and Georgia allow alternative certification only for critical areas (State Research Associates, 1988).

The South Carolina program for alternative certification requires beginning teachers to hold a baccalaureate degree usually in the content area in which they will teach. Before the beginning of the school year, the teacher receives limited pedagogical training. Throughout the first year the teacher is assigned a mentor, receives visits and observations from field coordinators from the state Department of Education or college professors, and participates in monthly seminars. During the second and third years of the program the teacher receives additional summer training and also must take three specified graduate courses. Upon the successful completion of the courses and three years of teaching experience, the teacher receives full certification (Graham, 1989).

Professional Development Models

Several professional development models were identified in the literature review. Howey (1988) advocated the use of a three rung career ladder. The first rung is for those teachers still completing their initial education. These

teachers would be considered to be in the induction phase. Teachers at the middle rung are fully licensed professionals. Middle rung teachers would assume full teaching responsibilities which would include serving as mentors for the teachers on the first rung. Teachers on the third rung assume leadership roles including the induction of beginning teachers. They would also train middle rung teachers to be mentors.

Professional development centers are identified as being important in the induction of beginning teachers. Monaghan (1989) described the study by the Center for Educational Renewal on how teachers are trained in the U.S. The Center proposed setting up "key schools" (professional development schools) to serve as testing laboratories for teacher training programs. Rodman (1988) detailed a program conducted by the three Indiana school districts of Hammond, Gary, and East Chicago with Indiana University-Northwest to train future urban teachers. As part of their undergraduate training, prospective teachers were sent to a "professional development center" to receive experience in teaching urban youth. Beginning teachers would receive two years of on-the-job training before becoming fully licensed. Rodman (1987) also advocated that school districts create induction schools "modeled after teaching hospitals, where seasoned veterans can help induct novices into the profession" (p. 4).

Case Studies on First-Year Teachers

For many beginning teachers, teaching will be their first full-time "real" job. They enter this job with numerous expectations, many of which are unrealistic at best. Several studies have been conducted to determine what kind of experiences occur during the first year in a teacher's professional life.

Collay (1989) studied five beginning teachers using interviews, observations, journals, audio and video tapes, and collegial weekly meetings. One of the findings was that personal beliefs and life history influence a teacher's classroom teaching. What is taught and how it is taught are determined somewhat by the teacher's past experiences. Another finding was that many teachers enter teaching because of an influential role model. Both of these findings have importance for present high school and college teachers because they serve as role models for future teachers.

Bullough (1989) conducted a case study of a New York first-year teacher named Kerrie. Bullough observed that the new teacher not only entered a school building, but also entered an already established hierarchy of teachers. Kerrie received the less desirable assignments and the more difficult students. She also received peer pressure to conduct "quiet" activities so others would not be disturbed. Kerrie's assigned mentor was her team leader, but since

there were no required responsibilities the mentor offered Kerrie little help. She also experienced disappointment that no other teacher offered to help her or to give constructive criticism. Kerrie engaged in typical behavior for beginning teachers who are in the survival stage (Ryan, 1986). During this stage teachers develop certain coping strategies such as ignoring problems, withdrawing from other teachers, conducting highly structured lessons, and imposing more restrictions upon students. The study followed Kerrie into her second year when she showed more consistency, flexibility, and emotional warmth.

Wildman, Niles, Magliaro, and McLaughlin (1989) presented case studies on three elementary teachers and one secondary teacher covering their first 2 1/2 years of teaching. They found that each teacher encountered unique induction experiences. They also noted that teaching situations change from one year to the next so that the induction phase can last up to three years. They also observed that the induction experience is influenced by the expectations and beliefs that the beginner brings into the situation. The researchers proposed that beginning teachers have two roles to learn. The first is teaching the students effectively. The second is actually learning how to teach. They argued that only the first role is given official recognition and that the beginner is left on his or her own to fulfill the second role. They concluded that induction

takes time, planning, and understanding by both the beginner and school officials.

Summary

Beginning teachers enter the profession after observing examples of teaching for approximately seventeen years. They have formed opinions about what teaching is and how it should be performed (Shulman, 1987). Unfortunately the beginning teacher is faced with a much more complicated task than he or she ever imagined. According to Waters (1988), even though pre-service education provides a good foundation, the beginning teacher needs additional assistance to survive the induction process.

Research on the effectiveness of teacher induction programs is limited, especially in the area of vocational education. Numerous induction phase programs and models were found, however many are just proposals and most are designed for elementary or mathematics and English secondary teachers. Although a state or school system mandated program will include beginning vocational teachers in its scope, no program was found that was specifically designed to accommodate the unique needs of vocational teachers.

Many schools are currently faced with teacher shortages and many more will face shortages in the 1990s. This shortage will be met by an influx of new teachers, many with limited pedagogical knowledge. Therefore, induction programs must be in place to insure that these teachers not

only survive their first few years of teaching, but that they become effective teachers. Without continued research on teacher induction, beginning teachers will continue to find that "learning to teach is so difficult" (Shulman, 1987, p. 5).

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Yin (1989) divided the purposes of research into three areas: exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory. Of these three purposes, this study is best described as exploratory research. Exploratory research was defined by Yin as a study which is used to develop propositions for further examination. Yin also stated that the case study approach is appropriate for conducting exploratory research.

For this case study, data from three beginning agriculture teachers were examined. The agriculture teachers were part of a larger study on the induction process of vocational teachers. Further information is available from the Virginia Tech office of the National Center for Research in Vocational Education (NCRVE), University of California, Berkeley, Professional Development of Vocational Teachers Project, Dr. William G. Camp and Dr. Betty Heath-Camp principal investigators.

Data Collection

Selection of Participants

The selection of the three agriculture teachers for this study was based on their participation in the larger National Center for Research in Vocational Education study. For the purposes of this study, the three teachers are referred to as Tom, Susan, and Mary. The participants for the NCRVE study were not chosen by random, rather they were

chosen to meet certain criteria. The beginning teachers were chosen to represent the seven traditional vocational areas and both traditional and alternative teacher certification. The seven traditional vocational areas were identified as agriculture, business, health occupations, home economics, marketing, technology education, and trade and industrial education. The two types of certification were defined as teacher education degree and non-teacher education. Of the three agriculture teachers who participated, two are teacher education degree certified and one is certified as a result of vocational experience. They reside and teach in three different South-Eastern states.

The agriculture teachers were recruited for participation in the larger study by contacting service area directors and supervisors in the state department of education for each state and by contacting teacher educators in university teacher education departments from each state. Next, the superintendent of the school district and the principal of the school were contacted asking permission to use the teachers in the study. After obtaining permission, the teachers received a letter detailing the study and asking them to participate. All of the initial conversations were by telephone with follow-up letters mailed later.

Data Collection Techniques

Several questionnaires were administered to the participants. The first questionnaire was a Background Survey (Appendix 1). This instrument was used to obtain general demographic information on the teacher such as name, address, school, marital status, age, and occupational experience. Another instrument administered was an Informational Questionnaire (Appendix 2). Data from this instrument included orientation activities, class schedule, non-teaching activities, and length of the workday. Personal interviews were also conducted near the beginning and end of the school year to obtain more in-depth knowledge about the teacher. The beginning interview guide is included as Appendix 3. The interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed.

Additional individual participant research procedures consisted of field visits and daily logs. Three field visits were made to each teacher. During the field visit, project researchers obtained information by several procedures. The teachers were observed informally in classroom situations. The researchers also interviewed the teacher, the principal, a peer/mentor/buddy teacher, the vocational director if available, and one or more students from each of the teachers' classes. The project researchers also obtained demographic information about the school and its surrounding community.

Throughout their first year of teaching each teacher recorded a daily log using a tape recorder and a set of researcher-supplied questions (Appendix 4). The teachers mailed the recorded tapes back to the researchers where the tapes were transcribed. Each agriculture teacher should have 36 weeks of transcriptions to correspond with the length of the school year. Unfortunately, the teachers were not faithful in completing a tape each week. The daily logs for Tom are 50% complete, for Susan 47%, and for Mary 92%.

An additional personal interview was conducted during the 1989-1990 school year with the teachers to obtain data on their present situations. The interviews followed a similar format to the field visits conducted during the teachers' first year. The teacher and his or her supervisor or principal were contacted by telephone for permission to visit, then a follow-up letter was mailed. During the visit, at least one of the teacher's classes was observed informally. For the purposes of this study an informal observation was one that was non-evaluative. The researcher constructed field notes from the observations, then tape recorded the notes which were transcribed at a later date. Structured, tape recorded interviews were conducted with the teacher, the teacher's supervisor or principal, and the teacher's mentor/buddy if available.

Data Analysis

According to Ball (1984) the analysis of case study data is concerned with the logical depiction of the subject of the study. There are several stages of interpretation that must occur before the final production of a case study account. Ball stated that throughout these stages validation and revision must occur. The validation must come from the participants, as well as the researcher's peers. The case study account is revised using suggestions from the academic community and/or publishers to make it readable and understandable.

One of the first stages of interpretation is the development of categories to build a theory (Strauss, 1987). The transcripts of the data for the three agriculture teachers were analyzed for events that occurred during the school year. The identified events were placed into categories that logically developed. From these categories, main themes were developed that defined the events as a whole.

A descriptive account of the teaching experiences of the agriculture teachers was developed using the above procedure. That account was a narrative depicting the daily life of the three teachers using examples, instances, and quotes from the teachers to provide authenticity to the statements. Demographic information on the teachers, their

programs, and their schools was provided to give a background to the account.

Limitations of the Study

There were only three beginning agriculture teachers analyzed in this study. They were not selected on a random basis and the analysis was of a subjective nature. Although I took measures to insure the validity and reliability of the results, their interpretation may be influenced by my personal biases.

Summary

The data for this study were analyzed using the case study approach. The data were analyzed to develop themes so that a descriptive account could be written detailing the daily events of the three beginning agriculture teachers. The descriptive account was written by placing each teacher's daily events in chronological order.

The validity of qualitative research is enhanced by the use of triangulation, the process of gathering data using more than one technique. By examining a subject from more than one point of view the researcher is better able to describe that subject. The data analyzed for the study were collected using several qualitative methods including observations, recorded daily logs, questionnaires, and interviews.

Qualitative research does have some limitations, however. Foremost of these is the inability to generalize

the findings to other populations or situations. This study is no exception to that rule. The findings from this study cannot be generalized to other beginning vocational teachers or to beginning teachers as a whole.

CHAPTER 4

Results of the Study

This chapter is divided into three sections: the teachers' settings, first year observations, and second year observations. The teacher settings section describes each of the three teachers, their teaching situation, and their schools. The daily events section is a chronological narrative of the first year for each teacher as told through tape recorded daily logs. The external observations section contains comments and observations from both the first and second year of teaching from principal, mentor/buddy/peer, and teacher interviews, as well as from participant observations. Naturally teacher and school names have been changed to provide anonymity.

The Teachers' Settings

Tom

Tom is a single, white, male in his early twenties. He is a personable young man, easy-going and friendly. Tom graduated from a major southern university with a bachelor of science in Agricultural Education. Tom rents a cottage on a farm located about 10 minutes from where he teaches at Thomas Jefferson High School (H.S.). His hometown is about a two hour drive from the Thomas Jefferson community.

Tom teaches agricultural machinery service at Thomas Jefferson H.S.. His teaching load includes two introductory agriculture classes, two agricultural machinery classes, one

planning period, and one two-hour block advanced agricultural machinery class. Tom teaches in a three teacher department with classes offered in agricultural machinery, agricultural production, and horticulture. He was not given specific Future Farmers of America (FFA) duties during his first year, however he was assigned several judging teams to coach as well as other FFA duties for the second year. Tom's teaching contract is for 12 months.

Thomas Jefferson H.S. is the only high school in a small rural county. The school consists of three buildings. The main building is about fifty years old, the vocational building is approximately twenty-five years old, and a third building containing Tom's laboratory is the same age as the main building.

Susan

Susan is a white female in her late twenties. She is married and has no children. Her home is approximately 12 minutes from the two schools in which she taught in 1988-89 and about five minutes from her current job.

Susan taught agriculture for one year after receiving a bachelor of science in Agricultural Education from a major southern university. She taught one agriculture class and two technology education classes at Red Bridge Junior High School. She then traveled 10 miles to Freemont Junior High School to teach the same schedule. Susan was the only

agriculture teacher in either school. Susan did not return for a second year to teach in that school system. She is working at a federal correctional institution as a basic education teacher for the 1989-90 school year.

Both Red Bridge and Freemont Junior High Schools are located in Freemont County. Each of the two schools is a former high school, however their appearances are different. Freemont is located in the county seat and its students come from middle to upper-middle class families. Red Bridge is located in a small town, but most of its students are from rural areas of the county. Red Bridge also has a greenhouse that is available for Susan's use in her agriculture classes.

Mary

Mary is a white female in her late twenties. She is married and has no children. Mary is very friendly and speaks with a strong southern accent. Mary entered the teaching profession through the alternative certification route. She holds a bachelor of science degree in Agriculture with an emphasis on animal sciences. For the 1988-89 school year her home was approximately a 25 minute drive from Anchor City H.S. In October of the 1989-90 school year, she moved closer to the high school.

Mary teaches in a three teacher department with classes offered in agricultural machinery, agricultural production, and horticulture. For 1988-89, she taught five agricultural

production and introductory agriculture classes and had one period for planning. During the 1989-90 school year she is teaching four agricultural production classes, and she has one planning period and one period for coordination of her cooperative education students.

Anchor City H.S. is a little over ten years old. The school was designed using the pod concept in which each instructional area is in a separate building. The vocational department is in a pod in the rear of the school building. Mary has her own classroom which also serves as her office. The agriculture department has a school farm that consists mainly of hay fields. For the 1988-89 school year the department had a barn and an equipment storage shed, however both were torn down in 1990 to make room for a new football field and parking lot.

First Year Observations

Tom

September. For Tom the first few weeks of school were a busy time. He spent a part of each class period collecting required county fees and felt that this was an unnecessary intrusion upon class time. He also began issuing demerits very early in the school year to students for talking and acting up in class. "It's been a lot of disruptions as far as like actually getting to teach . . . they were just wild today--just constant--we didn't get anything done in there today."

He also had the experience of ordering classroom supplies for the first time. Since Tom is an agricultural mechanics teacher, he is responsible for guiding his students through the repair of multi-cylinder engines. "[Mr. Smith] helped me in-as-far as I go about ordering those parts for the tractor."

Tom's main interactions at school were with his students and his fellow agriculture teachers. The presence or absence of one or two students influenced the success or failure of a class. "Sixth period, most of my trouble students weren't in there today and that period went really good. We got a lot done in there today. . . . All of my problem students were back in there today and it was--it was all over. . . . I give out demerits to them, [but] that seems to be having no affect on them."

Tom met with Mr. Smith, his department chairman, almost every day to discuss the day's events. Tom's other co-worker, Mrs. Fernandez, also offered assistance to him on a frequent basis. "We always try to get together at the end of the day just [to] see how the day went with each other." Mr. Smith has lived in this community for many years, so he was able to offer Tom help on where to purchase supplies and who to contact in the community for assistance with various activities.

October. By the second week of October, Tom felt good about his performance as a teacher. "The easiest part is

the actual teaching [of] the class. The hardest part is just preparing to teach each day. I spend twice as much time preparing than I do actual teaching." By this time Tom had also learned about other people in the school who could give him assistance. "[Mr. French, area agriculture supervisor] made some very helpful suggestions--just some things that hadn't occurred to me. . . . Those people down at the bus shop did [give me assistance]. They, you know, were just great. Their help is [great]."

Tom also learned in October that his lessons had to be adjusted to meet all of the different needs of the students. "You've got so many students that are on different levels. . . . Trying to keep them all together is really tough especially with twenty-three students in the class."

Tom did not speak much about curriculum decisions, but when he did, it was more as an afterthought than as a well planned strategy. "They got started today on working with their small engines. They'll be on that now for about two six weeks probably. It's a very long unit. . . . The power unit we've been working on . . . the radiator was busted . . . that sort of put me at a standstill." For one class Tom's lesson plans went from making welding stools to a unit on hydraulics to discussing the FFA chapter's fruit sales; all for the same day's work. Tom said that he learned from this event to always have something prepared as a backup in case your initial plans don't work out.

The end of the first six weeks grading period was a rough time for Tom. He had to grade the students' notebooks and record books as well as give six weeks tests. "Boy was that a madhouse. I won't do that again. . . . [I learned] don't put everything off until the last day of the six weeks." Tom allowed his students to make up missed assignments during the first week of the next grading period which meant that he was averaging final grades until time for report cards to be sent home. Report card day did not go smoothly for Tom. The principal had said at a faculty meeting that morning that the process of giving the students their grades should take ten minutes. Tom, however, used the entire 50 minutes each class to write down students' grades. He also did not realize until the last class of the day that it was important to have alternative activities for the students while he was completing the report cards. "[Seventh period] . . . sitting there at the desk was a stack of FFA handbooks so I just picked them up and distributed them out and made them go through the opening and closing ceremony."

Tom experienced his first parent-teacher conference day in late October. He had seven parents show up, but they weren't the ones that he thought needed to be there. However, he did enjoy meeting with the parents and stated that they really boosted his morale. He felt so good about

the visits that he said, " . . . it would be nice if we could have them more often."

November. Tom was concerned with keeping the students busy at this time. " . . . being well prepared helps a great deal as far as the problems you will have with discipline." Tom has had several observations from the principal, the area agriculture supervisor, and the county vocational director, but he did not seem concerned about them observing him. "It doesn't make me uptight or anything."

Tom also commented that being an agriculture teacher was different from other teachers. He stated that an agriculture teacher's job goes beyond three-thirty when the other teachers are getting off of work. An agriculture teacher has supplies to pick up and FFA activities to supervise. Tom also felt that he had to do an extraordinary amount of preparation for his classes. By November he did feel better about his time spent on planning. "I still work at it from like five o'clock until about eleven but I'm being prepared for more classes instead of just being well prepared for three of them. I'm being prepared for all of them."

Thanksgiving holiday provided Tom with some interesting insights. Monday of that week was the first day of deer hunting season in Tom's county, so a lot of his students were not in class that day. The principal had announced

that any student with an unexcused absence for that day would receive a zero for a daily grade in each of his classes. Tom only had four students in his two-hour block class, so he was unable to have any meaningful instruction. The next day when the students returned, they almost all had excused absences. Their parents had "lied for them" in Tom's words. On the Wednesday before Thanksgiving the students were only in school for a half-day and Tom enjoyed the extra time in the afternoon to clean up the laboratory.

December. During the first week of December, Tom missed a meeting with his principal and had to go to him and explain why he did not attend. Tom's explanation was that the FFA citrus fruit sales were ending and he was working with a student on fruit orders. The principal explained to Tom, ". . . no matter what, [my] meetings come first and to make sure that [you] are at the next one." Tom learned from this to keep an up-to-date personal calendar and to check it frequently.

For over a month and a half, Tom had been trying to purchase a tractor from state surplus for his agricultural machinery class to rebuild. A large portion of Tom's daily logs for that time period were devoted to the details of purchasing the tractor. Many of his answers to the question "Did anyone provide assistance to you today?" were devoted to the person who had helped him that day in regards to the tractor purchase. This topic also dominated his answer to

the question "What was the best thing that happened today?" He commented, "The best thing that happened today was getting the tractor purchase order [or] getting the process going anyway."

The FFA citrus fruit fund-raiser is a big event in the life of an agriculture teacher. The week that the fruit was delivered, Tom devoted all of his class periods to unloading, sorting, and settling accounts on the fruit. Unfortunately for Tom, it snowed that week and school was cancelled for one day. This meant that the agriculture teachers had to do most of the work that would have been done by students. Tom stayed at school until eight-thirty most nights that week. "[I learned] that there are many different aspects to teaching other than just standing in the classroom and presenting information to students."

Tom felt good about teaching at this time. He said, "I enjoy it. Some days, you know, you come home a little frustrated, but overall . . . I enjoy doing it." He felt that he would remain in teaching as long as he was offered a twelve month contract.

January. Tom submitted daily log tapes for only one week in January. His concern that week was mid-term exams. He did not begin to make out his exams until the week before they were to be given. Because of his procrastination, Tom spent many late nights designing and typing his exams. "I guess that you really need to look ahead as far as exam time

comes up because I'm realizing now I have these exams that I have to make up and not only that but it's the end of the six weeks so we have all the grades . . . and all the tests. . . . So, it's going to be a busy week for sure." Tom ended up spending seventeen hours at school on the Wednesday before exam week. He had classes all day as usual, then stayed at school until one o'clock a.m. typing his exams. The following day he was so tired that he gave the students a "free day" without any work required.

Tom had to give five separate exams, whereas he found out that another first-year teacher in chemistry had to make out only two different exams. He observed, "A [first-year vocational teacher] has a more difficult job than a regular first-year classroom teacher."

March. Tom had to take his first sick day of the year during the first week of March because he had the flu. The next day school was cancelled due to icy road conditions, so Tom had another day to recuperate. The following day both Tom and the students were back in school. This was report card day and Tom was just as disorganized as for the first six weeks grades. He had to spend most of each class period averaging grades and recording them on the report cards. Tom stated, "[If I could have started the day all over again], I would like to have had all my grades averaged up."

Tom learned about his county's Reduction in Force (RIF) policy at this time. Two teachers at Thomas Jefferson H.S.

received RIF letters that week. Tom was not affected because the agriculture program was so strong. He did, however, observe, ". . . you're really never secure in your job." Tom also experienced several full days of activities during this week. He spent two thirteen-hour workdays because of FFA contests, adult night classes, and parent visitation day. "These thirteen-hour days just, you know, it's just too much. . . . It gets very tiring."

One of the students at Thomas Jefferson H.S. committed suicide during the second week of March. Tom was surprised at how much the suicide affected his students especially since most of them did not know the student personally. The way he handled the students' emotions was to let them talk things out during his class periods that day. He commented, "You never know what you would do in a situation like this. I think I did the right thing."

During the third week in March, the students at Thomas Jefferson H.S. had to take standardized tests. This shortened and eliminated certain classes for that week. The extra time allowed Tom to think back over the school year and realize how much time is lost to interruptions. Tom also had to face the fact that he overslept one morning and missed a faculty meeting. He was not reprimanded, but it did cause him to reflect on professionalism. "A day like starting off this morning makes you wonder a little, it's not like the days back in college when you [said] well I'm

late for class. . . . This is your job and your profession and when you're late, it isn't really so much that you're going to get chewed out or whatever, but the feeling that I should have done better than that."

April. The week after spring break, one of Tom's students, Joe, injured himself. Joe and another student were using a truck to haul the laboratory trash cans to empty in a dumpster. On the way back to the laboratory Joe fell out of the bed of the truck and hurt his back. Joe did not tell Tom about the accident and Tom did not learn about it until the end of the day. What did he learn from this incident? "I guess it becomes more aware to you of the possibilities of being sued . . . for something that can happen to a student like that."

Also during that week Tom met with the parent of one of Tom's "trouble-making" students. The student's father did not believe it at first when Tom told him the kinds of misbehavior that his son had done during the year. Finally the father asked what he could do, and the principal explained that the student needed to act correctly for the remainder of the school year. The next day in class the student apologized for his behavior and promised to behave from that point on. "I think these students realize that and appreciate when you set limits on them and set goals for them."

When asked how he felt about his ability as a teacher at the end of week 27, Tom said, "I still have a lot to learn . . . to get more comfortable with my role as far as dealing with parents." He responded to the question "How do you feel about teaching?" with the following reply. "It is very difficult at times but it is very much worthwhile especially with a student like this when you see such a drastic change in him."

May. "I learned that the kids get really excited about contests and they're really enjoying it." Tom was the coach for the FFA tractor trouble-shooting team and said this the day before the area contest. Tom enjoyed taking the students to the contest because that gave him a chance to meet with other agricultural machinery teachers and to discuss their programs. His team placed third out of three teams, but he was pleased with the students' efforts.

During the third week in May, one of Tom's students, Mike, hurt himself in the laboratory. The class was working on a hay rake and one of the tines went through Mike's foot. Tom handled the situation very well. He did not get hysterical, but calmly got a clean rag and applied pressure to the wound to stop the bleeding. He then took Mike to the main office and called Mike's mom. Mike went to the doctor, stayed home from school one day, and then returned to school. What did Tom learn about teaching? "That you have to be a little bit of everything and you have to not only

just [be] a teacher but also you've got to be able to handle a situation such as this and the main thing is to keep calm and if you've got somebody else around, get some help too."

Not every day had that much excitement in it. "[This] is one of those days that you like to see happen and that you'd like to see a little more of. It was a day of no interruptions--nothing out of the ordinary. The kids were all well-behaved today and didn't have any problems. . . . I feel like I have improved a great deal since the beginning of the year and I feel like I keep improving every day . . . the students and the discipline . . . the course work, getting prepared for class and actually teaching itself."

The end of the school year brings a lot of distractions to the classroom. Tom spent two or three days with his classes getting the classrooms and laboratories cleaned and ready for an area agriculture teachers' meeting. He also found that he needed to spend time collecting money that students owed on projects and scheduling times for them to take the projects home. "You just can't plan anything because you never know what's going to happen [at the end of the year]."

The last week before exams the FFA chapter held its annual picnic after school. Tom commented that the students really enjoyed themselves. He also noted that the school system superintendent came to the picnic and was impressed with the agriculture program at Thomas Jefferson H.S.

Tom did not do much better on planning for final exams than he did on midterms. He did not start working on them until the Monday of the week that they were due. He was able to use three of the same exams that he used at midterms for different classes. He had saved these on computer, so it was easy to update and print them. He was also able to use the time during an awards assembly to complete his exams, so he did not have to stay late at night like he did for the midterms.

June. The last week of school was exam week at Thomas Jefferson H.S. Tom administered six exams in three days, but did not have any exams on the last day of school. For his advanced agricultural machinery class, Tom gave a practical exam which is not the usual format. Tom's comment was, "Look for different ways of doing things . . ." Tom's other classes went just as smoothly and he had learned by this time to do his grading as quickly as possible.

Tom summed up his first year of teaching in this way. "I feel very good about myself and my ability as a teacher. I see [my students] working as hard as they do for you and you can get them to do so much, when other teachers just can't get them to do anything and it makes you feel very well. . . . The year has went by fast but I mean, it has been a great deal of learning involved for me. So, I enjoyed it."

Susan

September. Susan's first few weeks of school were not that good. She had discipline problems in several of her classes. She also had to miss a day of school for an unspecified illness. When she returned from the illness, her principal at Freemont Junior High School told her that the substitute did not have any problems with the classes that Susan had problems with every day. "[That comment made me feel] . . . a little inferior because I'm really trying hard to handle these classes."

Susan gave her classes their first test the last week in September and the students did not do well at all. She stated, "[I had reviewed the test with them and felt that I had covered the material adequately, so] . . . number one, they were not paying attention in class at all, or secondly, . . . I did make the test too difficult." She also had her first real discipline problem. One of her students had come to class the first few days of school and then not returned. The other students in that class told her that the student had quit school and she believed them. The student then came back to her class with no excuse for the absences. She checked on the matter and found out that he had been at school all along and had been skipping her class. She felt bad about being ignorant about the procedures for checking on absent students. Susan made one positive comment this

week which was about her students preparing for a judging contest.

Susan was assigned to teach two agriculture classes and four technology education classes which she did not think was fair. She did not feel competent teaching the technology education classes because she was not trained in that field. "It's very difficult to watch twenty students without anyone to help you. . . . It's too much for a beginning teacher to handle." She stated that she enjoyed the agriculture classes, but was experiencing some of the bad moments of teaching because of the technology education classes. "I feel, right now, rather still disappointed with the teaching position. . . . I feel like I've just been given a little bit more than I can handle."

October. Susan and three of her students went to the state university for an FFA judging contest during the first week of October. Four students had tried out for the event and she had to choose one of the students to cut from the team. It was a tough decision for her. "I learned that teaching requires you to think on your feet a lot. . . . [Teaching] requires a lot of thought and effort and I'm amazed at how draining some of the things you have to decide can be." Susan had other teachers cover her classes while she was gone rather than getting a substitute. Her principal at Freemont made her feel guilty about having other people cover her classes. "I didn't like that because

it was my job that I had to go as advisor and chaperone and it's not my fault that the county wouldn't hire a substitute." This lack of support and classroom discipline problems caused Susan to make the following comments. "I don't know if I'm cut out for it or not. . . . I . . . reached such a point of frustration in last period class that it was just all I could do to stay in there. . . . I'm really getting soured on teaching."

Susan and the agriculture teachers at the other schools in her county shared the responsibility of transporting students to the state judging contest. Some seniors from the high school rode with Susan to the contest. They started teasing her by calling her "mom", which she liked very much. She also liked the fact that the other advisors recognized her as a colleague. " . . . recognized by other advisors . . . as an advisor and realize that, you know, I'm where I worked hard to be as far as being an advisor is concerned."

On the second day of the trip Susan got angry at the other advisors from her county because they left her with the responsibility of transporting the students to the different contests. She did enjoy that night because all of the teams got together at the university student union to bowl and have fun. Her judging teams did not place very well in the state, but rather than discouraging her, Susan

commented that she would be better prepared at next year's contests.

At the end of this week Susan's comments on teaching were not positive. "I still am not satisfied that this is exactly what I should be doing. . . . I'm not looking forward to going back to the classroom on Monday. . . . I feel like [teaching] is a very challenging job that requires a lot of flexibility and I'm not sure that it's what I should be doing."

Susan had a reoccurring problem with the art teacher who shared the laboratory with her. The art students had stolen some safety goggles and also left the laboratory in a mess. Susan's principal gave her assistance in talking to the art teacher about the problem. Unfortunately the situation did not get any better, so finally Susan had to lock the art teacher out of the laboratory.

Susan had two very significant events happen to her the second week in October. One of her students at Red Bridge gave her a piece of wood with FFA Advisor and Susan's name on it. When the student said she was his favorite teacher, it really made her day. "It made me feel so good and I guess I realize that I had an impact on at least one student that was making a difference." Susan also received a visit from a teacher educator from the state university. "It was a very productive day and this gentleman helped me out very much and I wish he had come the first week of school. I

might be a lot better off right now. . . . He provided more assistance to me than anyone has since I started teaching. . . . I feel like I'm not the only one that has ever had these types of problems before, maybe it will work out."

During the third week of October, Susan took several of her classes on a day-long field trip. The students were well-behaved and she commented that they seemed to learn a lot. "I believe field trips are [a] very effective method of teaching students things." The next day Susan had her students discuss the field trip and they complained loudly about the bus driver. This made Susan angry. "I just leveled with the students and I told them that I had come into this class expecting a lot more than was happening and I realized that I had a lot of things to overcome by being a beginning teacher but that I was trying and that they needed to learn to grow up and respect people."

Susan held FFA meetings for the first time in October. The students planned social and fund-raising activities and Susan felt that they were very constructive meetings. "The cooperation and excitement and enthusiasm and interest that the students showed was a big shot in the arm for me today. . . . I feel like I'm doing a lot better. I'm getting, gradually getting more control and respect from the students. I found out that I am competent in the shop. . . . I feel like I'm doing a lot better than I have."

The last week in October was a short week for Susan because she was sick on Monday. On Tuesday night, Susan's county held greenhand initiation, the first degree of membership for the FFA. Her students did very well and she met with many of their parents. Her comment was that this was the highlight of her day. The next night her FFA chapter had a skating party, which she said went well also. Susan also went to her county vocational director this week and asked about putting in a horticulture program at both Red Bridge and Freemont. He was very supportive as was the principal at Red Bridge. This made her day because she really wanted to work with the greenhouse that was already at Red Bridge and wanted to construct one at Freemont. "I'm starting to feel more comfortable with the position and with the students and with my responsibilities and I'm learning to handle them. And, I feel like I'm making progress so I feel more hopeful that I'll stay in the teaching profession now."

November. Susan completed a daily log for only the first week of November. However that week had many significant events. On Monday she did not have heat in her classes at Red Bridge so she took the students into the gym and let them play basketball. Her afternoon classes were supposed to work on woodworking projects, but the wood was extremely disorganized and the students were very playful. The classes spent the entire period trying to organize the

wood. The next day the wood still was not organized so Susan took just a few students and straightened up the laboratory. "I learned that sometimes you just have to stop what you're doing as far as the trying to keep on a schedule or so forth, and you just have to make sure you've got everything organized and I've learned . . . the next time I get ready to make the shop projects it will be done differently. . . . I just learned some valuable lessons about organizing the shop type projects today."

Unfortunately for Susan the week did not get any better on Wednesday. She had an aide at Freemont who helped her in the laboratory. One of her afternoon classes took some tools that the aide was using and hid them. The aide exploded and started yelling at the students before Susan could determine what was going on. After the students had left for their next class, Susan had to explain to the aide that she was the one who was responsible for disciplining the students. That afternoon Susan had to attend a faculty meeting at Freemont. Susan did not think that the meeting was a good use of her time, but she did have a chance to think about her situation. "[The principal at Freemont] does not take the time that I feel he ought to to [help a struggling teacher]. I'm the only beginning teacher he's got, who desperately needs help and has tried many things and has asked for his help and is not getting it. And, I

feel like that I've just been kind of thrown out to sink or swim and I'm really getting frustrated with the situation."

Susan did not complete daily logs for the remainder of November except for the last three days of the month which were included with the first week of December. From reading the personal interviews I believe that Susan was out of school due to an illness during much of November.

December. Susan had almost all good things to report for the first week of December. One of the most helpful was a conference that she attended for first-year agriculture teachers in her state. It was a two day conference where she got to meet other first-year teachers and discuss common experiences. She received one bit of bad news when she returned to school in that she might lose her job for the 1989-90 school year because of low enrollments in another county school. "The low man on the totem pole [is cut] before anyone else and this was very disturbing to me."

Up to this point, Susan's principal at Freemont had not given her much assistance at all. Susan finally had a meeting with him and he promised that he would help her more in the future than he had in the past. This made Susan feel much better about her teaching job. Unfortunately, nothing seemed to happen as a result of the meeting because Susan commented throughout the remainder of the school year that this principal gave her no assistance.

Later in this week, one of Susan's students, Billy, lost control in class and start hitting a girl. Susan, with the help of another student, stopped the fight and sent Billy to the office. The next morning both student's mothers had a conference with Susan and the principal. Billy's mom defended him and tried to put the blame for his behavior on the school. Needless to say, Susan was frustrated by the meeting.

Susan went on her first supervised occupational experience (SOE) program home visits during December. She took two students home, looked at their farms, talked with their parents, and discussed the SOE program with them. She commented that she enjoyed this part of the agriculture program.

The third week in December was very hectic for Susan. First the citrus fruit for the FFA fund-raiser was delivered during this week. All of the agriculture programs in the county purchased their fruit together, but the work load was not evenly distributed among the agriculture teachers. Susan worked late every night with the fruit while the other teachers rotated nights. She also delivered some of the fruit for her students and had to take several students home who had helped with the fruit.

On a good note, her students at Red Bridge started growing house plants to take home. This turned out to be a good motivational tool for that class. Also her students at

Freemont gave her a card for her birthday. "It's just those rare moments like that that make this whole thing worthwhile."

January. Susan caught pneumonia after Christmas and missed work for most of the month of January. She commented on a discipline strategy that she had implemented before she got sick and felt that it worked. "I had a full computer typed page of [class] rules and punishments and I enforced them immediately after passing them out and it made a difference in the kids. I had to crank down more . . . but I intend to keep enforcing those rules. . . . I would recommend this at the beginning of the year for every beginning teacher."

February. Susan had a long term substitute in January, but the substitute mainly gave the students questions to answer at the end of chapters in textbooks. Because of the long time that she was out, Susan had to reestablish her rules and authority in the classroom.

She had a student that disrupted her technology education class and she got upset with the student and shook him by the shoulders. Susan commented that this action seemed to help with the student, but she was ashamed of herself because she had touched a student. The next day she had a group of students tardy to class that she disciplined strictly. What had she learned about teaching? "It generally works better to nip things in the bud, as I

learned yesterday and today. You know, you just don't let them get anything on you--just keep a step ahead of them all the time and a lot of discipline problems don't even develop if you do that." Her principal at Freemont ended up taking the trouble makers out of her class.

After coming back from her illness, Susan came close to quitting her job. After a few days though, her outlook improved. "I feel better about teaching. I feel like experience is the key here. They say the first year is the worst. . . . I feel like [now] I know the subject matter."

Susan had mostly positive experiences during the second week of February. First she had a student to tell her that he was going to take her class next year, which really made her feel good. She also was able to take one of her classes into the greenhouse without the class trouble maker, so she felt much more relaxed than usual. Also she learned that she was pregnant and shared the news with her classes. She was pleasantly surprised with their reaction. "[They] kind of [started acting] like little mother hens, not wanting me to do anything and helping me out in the shop." A final positive experience for this week was that her agriculture students at Freemont decided to begin practicing for the parliamentary procedure contest held in March.

When asked how she felt about teaching at this point, Susan had the following reply. "I feel like that I'm probably going to stick with it for awhile. It has got its

ups and downs--there's no doubt about that. . . . I learn something from each group that I can do differently with the next group and so I'm learning that it does get a little easier the more experience you get with something."

The third week in February was not a good one for Susan. It was National FFA Week and both of her chapters were busy preparing for it. Also her students sold carnations for Valentine's Day. She did not take advance orders and was overwhelmed by the demand for flowers. She ended up not teaching her classes and handling the carnation sale for the day instead. Her only regret was that she did not prepare the students ahead of time so they could take more of the responsibility for the sale.

The next day Susan had a miscarriage and missed the rest of the school week. Monday of the next week she came back to school, not because she wanted to, but because she was out of sick leave. Her students at Red Bridge wrote Susan sympathy letters to cheer her up. "I learned today that your students do, a lot of them, really do care about you."

On Tuesday she had a student threaten her. Susan had caught this student trying to steal a cucumber from the greenhouse and sent him to the office. The principal gave the student a paddling for another referral, but the student focused his anger on Susan. "I'm a little apprehensive about what to expect tomorrow." The student did not follow

through with his threat and Susan made no more comments about the situation. Finally on Friday Susan found out that a student had taken small nails from the laboratory and was shooting them through a straw at other students in the cafeteria. This upset Susan that a student would do something like that.

The FFA chapter farmer ceremony was a highlight for Susan for the month of February. She was asked to do the advisor's part which made her very proud. "[This] really was the kind of shot in the arm I needed, I guess you might say, to stand up there as the advisor and to confer this degree on these students and to see all the FFA jackets and so forth."

March. Susan took both of her agriculture classes on a field trip to the nearby high school to observe an FFA meeting where proper parliamentary procedure was used. Her students wore their FFA jackets and behaved superbly. "I learned about teaching that you may not always see right off the bat your progress, but eventually it will show up and when it does, the reward is there. It's very worthwhile to see the behavior that you've been striving for all along."

Susan also made comments about the type and amount of assistance that she had received during the school year from each of her principals. "The one at [Red Bridge]-- excellent--just an excellent support person for me with any kind of problem I have and the one at [Freemont] if you

really nail him down and say you need this or you need that, he'll get it done. Really he . . . isn't a lot of support like the other principal."

Susan had two significant events happen to her during the second week of March. The first involved a student and the second her principal at Red Bridge. One of Susan's students wrote her a note saying that he wanted Susan and her husband to be his parents. The student had shown the note to his parents and they were understandably upset. Susan had several discussions with the student to convince him to work out his problems with his parents. What did she learn? "I feel like teaching requires somebody who is flexible and able to go with the flow as the flow definitely changes each day." Susan's principal at Red Bridge evaluated her one day this week. His evaluation boosted her spirits considerably. "He warmly praised my work and my knowledge of the subject matter and the progress I have made since I have been there."

Susan had some problems with tools missing from the laboratory in Freemont for several months, but could never find out who was taking them. The culprits were finally caught and this had a big impact on Susan. The students had been throwing tools out of the laboratory window when no one was looking, then after school coming back and picking them up. The students had been telling their parents that the school was selling tools real cheap (Susan estimated that

the total value of the stolen tools was \$2000 - 3000). Susan commented that these students were ones that she trusted and never would have suspected of stealing. Her faith in students slipped a little because of this incident.

Susan's principal at Freemont made his first evaluation visit on March 14th. "Now, this is March and he has yet to ever step foot in my classroom to do any kind of evaluation. He has just done evaluations off the top of his head. . . . I was very pleased with the results of that evaluation. I just wish he could have come sooner and maybe helped me out when I was having a lot of problems and so forth."

This week was also a big event for Susan's FFA chapters. The county held its annual Ham, Bacon, and Egg Show to showcase the FFA and 4-H students' swine and poultry projects. The projects are judged and then auctioned off and one of Susan's students had the grand champion ham which made Susan very proud. Her students helped out during the show and this made Susan feel good about all of the work that she had put in as a teacher during the year.

Also in March, Susan's parliamentary procedure team won the local contest and even beat a high school team. "I was so proud. I felt so good to know that they had done this well. . . . I feel that every now and then there are rewards [to teaching]. . . . You see the impact and the difference it has made with the students and you feel like you're in

the greatest profession because you taught those kids something that they'll always remember."

The Bad News. Susan found out on April 4th that she would not be asked back for the 1989-90 school year. From that point until the end of the school year she did not record daily logs. She also did not participate in the end-of-year interviews conducted in June. She did agree to be interviewed in February of 1990 and what follows is a summary of her recollection of the events of her being RIFed (Reduction in Force) on April 4, 1989.

When the school budget for the county was adopted 40 teaching positions had to be cut. There were six agriculture teachers in the county and Susan was the only one without tenure, so she was not asked back for the next school year. The agriculture teachers in the county asked for a public hearing before the school board to try and save Susan's position. There were parents, students, and community agriculture leaders at the meeting to support Susan, but the school board did not reinstate her.

From that point on Susan felt like no matter what she did it did not make any difference, so her attitude was not good for the last two months of school. " . . . I was so really hurt over that whole situation because I felt like I had done a good job for them."

Susan did continue to have the students work in the greenhouse and also to participate in FFA activities. She

also went to the FFA state convention that summer and enjoyed the rapport with the students. "The more I got involved with them the more I enjoyed working with them."

Mary

September. Mary's two major activities for the last week in September were giving students a six weeks test and preparing a float for the homecoming parade. Mary gave a test to all of her classes but one, and commented that she didn't actively teach that day. She did allow her advanced students to work with their show calves during class time to prepare for the parade. She was impressed by the maturity and responsibility that those students displayed.

Mary seemed already to be finding her groove in teaching by this time. "I'm finding out more and more each day how to better manage my time, how to prepare my lesson plans to be more appropriate for this age student and to prepare a lesson that is approximately the right length."

October. The first week in October was an uneventful week for Mary. She did not have any major discipline problems other than a student trying to get out of going to detention. The principal supported her in disciplining the student, and that made a good impression on Mary. Mary did learn several pointers on teaching to help her manage her classes better and to enhance student learning.

She attended an Effective Teacher Training seminar and learned that the lecturing method has the lowest rate of

student memory retention. She commented that she had been using lecturing a lot and needed to change her delivery method. She also found out that an overhead projector helps in cutting down on student misbehavior because the teacher is facing the class most of the time. In conjunction with that, the school librarian showed Mary how to use the thermal copying machine to make transparencies.

At this point Mary was very positive about teaching. "I feel like I'm doing better. I'm getting more control . . . and I'm learning more. . . . I still feel very positive. I think that teaching for me has an excellent future."

The major event during the second week in October was preparation for a field trip on Friday to the state fair. Mary had many firsts this week such as filling out a substitute request form and having a check issued to purchase the admission tickets. She did not report any problems for this week and did not report any other significant events. She did receive help from the secretary and the bookkeeper in completing the request forms.

Mary had to take the National Teacher's Exam (NTE) on Saturday of the next week and she decided to take off on Friday to prepare for it. Mary would not be fully certified until she took and passed the NTE and only received substitute's pay until her scores were returned. When she asked her principal about taking a personal day on Friday, he told her that she would lose a day's pay and would also

have to pay for the substitute. Mary agreed to this, but did not see the fairness in having to pay twice for the day.

By the middle of October, Mary's students were becoming restless in class, which she attributed to the long time since summer break. She discovered that if she didn't teach the same thing for the whole class, the students responded better to the lesson. Mary also discovered the value of a guest speaker. One of her state's FFA vice presidents came to Anchor City H.S. to speak to the FFA chapter. "It should motivate some of [the students] because really [the state vice president] knows a whole lot more about the different opportunities available to FFA than even I do because I'm still trying to learn about all this FFA business." Mary's FFA chapter, like Tom's and Susan's, also sold citrus fruit as a fund-raiser. Her chapter started taking orders during the third week in October.

Mary lost her voice during the last week in October and did not regain it until the last week in November. She did, however, make written notes on her daily events for November.

November. For three weeks in November Mary had no voice and had to rely on teaching methods other than lecturing. Surprisingly to her, the students responded magnificently. She used filmstrips, movies, readings with worksheets, guest speakers, and classroom discussions during this time. She reported no discipline problems and

continually commented on how involved her students were in the classes. "Students were well-behaved, answering questions with truly thoughtful replies, putting more effort into the class discussion than usual. . . . Some of my silent students participated in discussions." During this time Mary commented on her feelings about teaching. "My opinion has leveled out at this point, neither negative or positive."

On November 21st, Mary's voice returned and she immediately went back to the lecture method of teaching. "So, much to [the students'] dismay, lecturing is once again a classroom method of teaching." During the next week, Mary commented on how well students do when they are doing hands-on activities. " . . . their participation level goes up which is always good . . . "

Mary's mentor, a business teacher at Anchor City H.S., was mentioned for the first time during the last week of November. She explained to Mary the procedure for midterm exams and the timetable for turning them in to the principal. The home economics teacher whose classroom was across the hall from Mary also provided assistance to Mary by showing her how to use an optical scanning machine to machine-score her midterm exams. This saved her an enormous amount of time in grading. By the end of the week, Mary had finished writing her exams and they were ready to give to the principal.

December. Mary had her first formal principal evaluation during the first week of December. She commented that she thought she did well, but she did not record any comments that the principal made. Her mentor again mentioned the procedures for midterm exams as a reminder to Mary. On Wednesday of this week, the school had an assembly with a professional athlete as a speaker and Mary felt that her students got a lot out of the assembly. "It's good for the students to find alternatives to learning outside the classroom."

Mary reported two significant events for the second week of December: a review for exams and her getting ill. Mary's strategy for exam review was to give the student's their old tests and to go over the questions. It ended up that a substitute had to do most of the review because Mary stayed at home sick for three days. She had a very interesting hypothesis about why she had been ill so much during the school year. "I think that the reason that I have this flu . . . is because some of my kids came to school sick and I picked up the germs from them which does not make me happy at all but I suppose that's part of [teaching]."

During the last week before Christmas holiday, Mary had a problem with her paycheck. As mentioned earlier she was being paid the substitute's rate, \$35.00 per day, until she received full certification. When she received her December

check, however, she had been paid \$35.00 for the whole month. Her take home pay was \$13.78! It amazed Mary that no one noticed how small her check was for the month.

"Teachers are severely underpaid and evidently nobody takes notice because they didn't find that problem with my check when they reviewed them." The problems with receiving her certification were starting to wear on Mary. "I find that this issue of not being certified is taking a great toll on me as far as stress and everything. . . . My attitude is taking a turn for the worse because I'm to the point where I just feel like nobody cares and that's bad."

January. The return from Christmas vacation was difficult for both Mary and her students. She tried to make her lessons a little bit more interesting to get the students back into thinking about school. She finally decided that maybe everyone would be mentally back from vacation by the next week.

Mary finally received her certification and back pay in January. She had spoken strongly to several people about her problem before the break and she felt like that speeded up the process. "It felt like the weight of the world had been lifted off my shoulders because I've been waiting for this since August and I was starting to wonder if it was ever going to happen."

Even though Mary did not mention the FFA citrus fruit sale as much as Tom and Susan, it still was a major event

for her. Several students did not bring in the money for their deliveries until January and this caused the chapter account to go into the red for awhile. Mary finally had to contact several parents to make the students bring in the money.

Mary seemed to be understanding the ups and downs of teaching more by this time. "It has been a little bit of a rough week, but I feel like now I'm at the stage where I'm still doing things wrong, but at least now when I do them, I'm to the point where I realize most of the time what I did wrong and I'm trying to keep a little journal of sorts on the side to prevent myself from falling into this rut next year."

Three things stand out in the daily logs for the second week of January: the weather, student illness, and class time interruptions. The first two days of this week Anchor City H.S. went on a two-hour delay schedule because of bad weather. Two classes were cancelled for each day. Mary made good use of the extra time by going to work at the normal time and then catching up on paperwork, lesson plans, and other work. On Wednesday of that week, the school had an assembly which eliminated second period and shortened third period. Also, on Friday of that week and Monday of the next week, the students would not be in school because of a teacher workday and Martin Luther King Day. Finally

Mary commented that the county was considering closing school for several days because of a flu epidemic.

Mary was evaluated by a state evaluator during the third week of January. As before, she said that she thought she did well but she did not record in the daily log what the evaluator said about her performance. She did make the following comments. "I learned that you should always be prepared . . . so that you have a very full and complete lesson plan prepared and you're not just pulling facts out of the air. . . . I did learn that preparation is the key to do a good job teaching class."

This was also the end of the fourth six weeks and Mary had some comments about students and report cards. "I learned that report cards don't mean a whole lot to these kids. . . . I don't know what the attitude of these parents is today about the report card but these kids just don't take it very seriously at all."

The major event for the last week of January was student fights. During the week there were three fights and all of them involved white vocational students fighting black students. "I need to incorporate into my class . . . something that teaches a little bit about toleration of each other, of different races . . . because these kids, when they get out into the world, they're going to have to work with other people."

Mary also was involved in a vocational department planning meeting for student registration for the 1989-90 school year. The county had planned to start bussing students to a new vocational school for certain classes and Mary worried how much that would affect her program. Mary did not seem to be concerned with her enrollments for the next year, but rather the quality of her students. She feared that the students who were trouble makers at the new school would be sent back to Anchor City H. S. and probably placed in her classes.

At the end of the week, Anchor City H.S. had a faculty/student basketball game during the afternoon. Mary did not play, but she did serve as a faculty cheerleader. "[The basketball game] lets our students see us in a different light with our hair hanging down just a little bit."

February. All of the major events for the first week of February were related to student illness. Mary estimated that one-fifth of the students in the school were out due to illness this week. She had to change her lesson plans as a result of so few students in class. She had to make each unit shorter and covered less material so that students who missed one or two days would not be totally left behind. Mary stated that she may start breaking down her normal units into more manageable pieces. Since the fall, Mary had problems with colds and sore throats and she linked these to

the students. "I know these students coming to school sick are not helping me. . . . Teaching is a very hazardous job as far as your health is concerned."

At the beginning of the second week of February, Anchor City H.S. had a tragedy. Over the weekend a drunk driver had hit a mother and her two daughters as they were driving in front of the high school. The mother was killed instantly, one of the daughters was cut badly, and the other daughter was in a coma. The daughter in the coma was engaged to one of Mary's senior agriculture students. This news, of course, affected the whole school and particularly Mary's students. "This is an area that I don't feel really comfortable with, but basically what I have tried to do is if the students wanted to talk about the situation in class, then we would take some time and talk about the seriousness of the situation. . . . I would try to calm the students . . . just be supportive." The daughter who was in the coma died later in the week and Mary had to take care of the cards and flowers that the FFA sent to the family. The school scheduled an assembly by the local Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD) and Students Against Drunk Drivers (SADD) groups which Mary said really helped the students. "I didn't quite realize until the death of this young lady here at school how closely involved in my students' lives I've actually become. . . . I would be deeply affected if something happened to any of my students."

The week of February 13th was National Vocational Education Week and the vocational department at Anchor City H.S. had displays in the lobby for the students to observe. The agriculture department's display was called "Go Whole Hog With Agriculture in '89". The display had two piglets in a cage that had been built by the agricultural machinery class and then the horticulture class landscaped around the display. Mary was in charge of driving to a nearby farm to pick up the piglets, then to get them ready for the display.

Valentine's Day also was during this week. Several clubs in Mary's school sold candy-grams, flower-grams, and singing telegrams to the students. All of these were delivered throughout the day during class time. Needless to say, there were many interruptions during the day. "There have been too many class interruptions. . . . [It's] terrible as far as trying to build continuity in a lesson. . . . If [I] could start the day over again, . . . I think I would nail the door to my classroom shut." Mary still was dependent upon lecturing as a teaching method at this time. "In a couple of classes, rather than lecturing on the material, I went ahead and assigned competence questions to complete in the textbook."

The next week was consumed with preparations for FFA Day on Friday. On FFA Day, the high school FFA chapter set up displays of animals and farm equipment, then took the students from the nearby elementary school on tours and

explained the displays to them. Mary took most of her classes to the school's barn to clean up and prepare for Friday. Her senior students used the tractor to move equipment and trash and Mary was very proud of how hard they worked. She again made the comment that not all learning takes place in the classroom.

Unfortunately, one of the students took the tractor where he wasn't supposed to which resulted in a flat tire on the tractor. This was a very big stressor for Mary because taking the time to get the tire fixed put the preparations for FFA Day behind schedule. Mary wasn't sure if she learned anything by the experience, but she was sure that the student who caused the flat tire did, "Sometimes a hard lesson is the best lesson . . . that student learned a lot from that experience. . . . Today was one of those of days that if I could control what happened, I would stretch it out into about 48 hours instead of 24. Maybe if I had been a little more organized, things would have gone a little more smoothly for me today."

The FFA chapter also had a meeting during the week to discuss plans for FFA Day. Everything went fine except that some agriculture students who were not FFA members attended the meeting without permission. Mary sent a list of the FFA members in attendance to all of the school's teachers. She hoped that by doing this the teachers would discipline the students who were not supposed to be at the meeting.

The weather took a turn for the worse and snowed out the FFA Day which was postponed until the last of April. Because of the snow Anchor City did not have school on Thursday and Friday of that week. Mary did go into school herself to catch up on paperwork. "I am continuing presently with the work I started yesterday--cleaning out my files, updating my files, cleaning up my desk, rearranging my room and things of that nature that I don't have a whole lot of time to do during normal school hours."

March. The next week after the snow was a two-day week for Mary. On Monday she had a teacher workday to average and turn in the student's six-weeks grades. She taught class on Tuesday and Wednesday, but did not report any significant events. She went to a computer workshop on Thursday and Friday and had a substitute teacher for her classes.

Mary had a surprise evaluation from her principal on March 6th. She was not as prepared as she would have liked to have been, but she thought she did fine. Her lesson plan book was not up-to-date and she said that she would get downgraded for that. In the conference with her principal after the evaluation, Mary did not agree with some of the comments her principal made. The principal told her that she should have the students raise their hands to speak and also commented that this would help her with classroom

discipline. These comments made Mary upset. "I still feel like it is up to me to decide how [to] handle each class."

Mary wore a dress to school one day this week and received numerous flattering comments from the students about it. "I know I've heard that you should dress as a professional and I agree with that and you should be very careful in this dress because dressing in a certain manner puts you--does not put you at the same level or the same plane as the students . . . which is supposed to enhance your authority and your ability."

At the end of the week Mary felt very positive about her job as a teacher. "I believe I'm getting better [as a teacher]. . . . I'm learning to gear my lessons to my students' ability levels which I think is very important because at times this year, I have been a little too advanced for them. . . . I find myself looking forward to next year and how I would change what I did today to help me next year or to better help the students next year."

The next week in March brought very warm weather to Anchor City and Mary took her classes outside to work every day that week. The agriculture department at Anchor City has available some land and a barn to use as a school farm, so Mary's students used this week to clean up the fields and to begin plowing. She commented that some of her worst students in the classroom were the most productive outdoors

and that it was a shame that those students couldn't channel their energy in the classroom.

Mary experienced several important events during the week of March 20-24. First, Mary went to the division of motor vehicles office to take written and road tests to obtain her class B license to be able to drive a fifteen-passenger van. She passed both tests and from then on would be able to transport students to contests and conferences much easier.

Second, the weather in Anchor City turned colder this week which caused Mary to make several comments. ". . . it has been a repeating factor throughout the year--the students' attitudes and moods swing dramatically depending upon the weather . . ." She also realized that an agriculture teacher must wear different clothing depending on the activity. After school she went to a dairy lot with her dairy judging team and did not have on the appropriate clothing for walking around in the mud and manure. She also learned from this team that you sometimes have to be willing to take students home after practice if you want them to participate in FFA activities.

Finally, Mary's mentor made her first formal observation on March 21st. The only reason given for doing the observation was that it was required and the deadline was March 31st. Mary did not make any comments about the evaluation other than that the students were well-behaved.

Throughout the year, Mary had made comments such as "All learning does not take place in the classroom" and the last week in March emphasized that point. She had all of her students outside working with the tractor plowing and planting and she was amazed at how her students responded. Some of her quieter students in class did the best work outdoors. She had also been coaching the FFA dairy and livestock judging teams after school and their contests were that Friday. "I certainly know at this point, that all teaching is not done in the classroom in a book. I've been spending every evening, three, four, five hours or more, with my livestock and dairy judging teams out at people's farms practicing."

April. Mary learned in April the results of her year-end evaluation that went into her personnel file. She was marked as below standard on instructional presentation and management of student behavior. She commented that she knew that her management of student behavior needed improvement, but she was surprised at the low mark in instructional presentation. The principal explained to her that she depended too heavily on the lecture method and that she needed to get the students more involved in the classroom. She agreed with this explanation and commented that she had been following the example of her college professors by lecturing.

The month of April consisted mostly of short weeks for the students of Anchor City H.S. The first week in April was only four days in school because of a snow day on Friday. The next week was also only four days long because of a teacher workday on Friday. The third week in April was spring break, so the students didn't attend school any that week. The last week in April was the only five day week for the students.

The Anchor City FFA chapter finally held their FFA Farm Day for the elementary students on April 25th. The chapter had animals and farm equipment exhibits set up for the elementary students to see and touch. Mary had some trouble with a few of her students forging her signature on notes to get out of classes to come to the Farm Day activities. Mary and the other agriculture teachers found these students and sent them to the principal for discipline. He placed them in in-school suspension for three days. Some of the students' parents came to school very angry because their children had told them that they were being punished for something they didn't do. Mary had a very difficult three days explaining to parents the true story of what happened. What did she learn? " . . . never be in too big of a hurry to date and put a time on [notes] . . . [always] put together a memo and send out to all teachers reminding them [of the students] who were to be excused . . . "

May. The first week in May was a significant week for the seniors at Anchor City. First, Mary gave them review sheets for their final exam in two weeks. "They're all concerned [about final exams] although I suppose it would be a horrible thing to get this close to the end and then fail a course because of the final exam." Second, the junior-senior prom was on Friday of this week. Mary learned how important an event this was when on Friday many of her students missed class because they were getting ready for the prom.

The week of May 8th brought a surprise for Mary in the form of the horticulture teacher quitting his job without any warning. The principal told Mary and the agricultural mechanics teacher that the county did not have money enough to hire an interim teacher, so the horticulture students would be divided among the remaining two agriculture teachers. Mary and the agricultural mechanics teacher would also be responsible for maintaining the greenhouses as well. How did Mary respond? "I [now] have no planning period [because of the added students] and I also have the added responsibility of caring for two greenhouses full of plants. . . . I have learned that it seems every single day you get more responsibility piled on to you whether or not you need it."

The week of May 15 was exam week for all seniors. Since Mary had some mixed classes with seniors and freshmen,

she did have some problems. In some classes, she let the seniors go to another teacher's class with all seniors so they could take their exams in quiet. In other classes she had to give the exams with the freshmen in class also, which made it difficult trying to teach the freshmen and stay quiet. She also had to administer the exam for the horticulture seniors, which was difficult because the students had questions that she couldn't answer. The FFA chapter banquet was also this week, but other than talking about the time requirement Mary didn't talk about the banquet. "There are not enough hours in the day. . . . Tomorrow is our end of the year FFA banquet and today, of course, we were crazy trying to get the last few details out of the way."

Mary missed three days of school the next week due to a death in her family. The following week was the last week of school. Mary did have several comments to make about final exam week. "Some of my students who were deeply concerned . . . for midterm exams don't seem to be worried at all about this final exam. . . . My students are not taking these reviews seriously for the final exam. . . . It was my monumental task to get those [exams] graded as quickly as possible and get everybody's averages figured up . . . because they must be turned in before I go home today."

How did Mary feel at the end of the school year?

"Considering that this week was the last official week of school this year and I'm still here, I'm still alive, I'm still surviving, I must admit that I feel pretty darn good about myself. I'm continuing to get better, realize my mistakes and know what areas I need to work on next year."

Second Year Observations

Tom

Several things changed about Tom's teaching situation during his second year. The most significant was that he was assigned a homeroom. Because of this Tom could not use the first 15 minutes of school to take care of last minute class preparations. Tom's school was also involved in a self-study for accreditation, so he had to spend several mornings and afternoons on committee meetings. Also, Tom had a different principal for the second year. Mrs. Moore had been a supervisor at the central office during Tom's first year, so he was already familiar with her.

Tom felt more confident in his classroom teaching during the second year. He stated that he was more comfortable in the subject matter and was more confident in delivering instruction. Tom's department chairman, Mr. Smith, commented that Tom involved the students in the class more during the second year. He relied less on lecturing and more on worksheets and hands-on instruction.

Tom's relationship with his students changed somewhat as well. Both Tom and Mr. Smith commented that during Tom's first year he tried to be friends with the students. During his second year, Tom increased the distance between himself and the students. Tom felt that the one year's experience made him appear older to the students. Tom's principal commented that Tom knew the students better and was therefore able to anticipate problems before they arose.

All three agreed that Tom was better organized during his second year. Mrs. Moore stated that this allowed Tom to control some of the discipline problems that occur to first-year teachers. Mr. Smith commented that Tom would have activities planned for those students who finished their assignments early and that this helped in classroom management. Finally, Tom stated that he now had his lesson plans built up, so he knew what to expect for each class.

When asked whether they felt that Tom was still a beginning teacher each had a different answer. Tom stated that no he wasn't. "The beginning [of the] year I spent a lot of time wondering how am I going to handle this situation or what I'm going to do about this. Now, you don't even ask yourself about it. It just happens and you do it. It's just . . . instinct." Mrs. Moore would still classify Tom as a beginner. "I think really, for any teacher, it takes two or three years to really get a firm footing. Experience is the best teacher." Mr. Smith did

not consider Tom a beginner anymore. "I wouldn't call him a veteran yet, but . . . he hasn't learned . . . all of the tricks . . . for control in classroom management."

Susan

Susan's teaching situation changed drastically for her second year. She was hired as a contract employee to teach adult basic education, English and math, at a women's correctional institution. She worked an eight hour day, five days per week and taught four classes per day.

The biggest difference between Susan's first and second year of teaching was in job stress. In her adult education classes, Susan had no discipline problems. Her only problem was if a student did not show up for class, then Susan would have to contact the main office and report the violation. Also Susan's students were self-motivated and spent the entire class period working. Susan acted more as a learning facilitator than as a dispenser of information.

Susan was fortunate in that she worked regular hours during her second year. She worked eight hours, then went home. She reported that she rarely took work home and never worked on the weekends. One reason that Susan did not have to work at home was her teacher's clerk. The clerk was assigned to Susan to help with paperwork and grading papers. Susan was not assigned any non-teaching jobs, however she was asked to teach some horticulture classes as an elective for the students.

Susan's supervisor had nothing but praise for her teaching ability. He had made plans to ask Susan to teach several horticulture classes beginning sometime in 1991. He was also impressed by how Susan motivated the students. "She sets realistic goals for the students and keeps the students informed of those goals. She is a very good instructor. . . . She believes in the same philosophy that [I] do which is a vocational oriented philosophy that you learn by doing."

Mary

The only two changes in Mary's school situation for her second year were the addition of agricultural cooperative education classes (co-op) to her schedule and the school getting a new principal. In co-op class, the students received job-related instruction, then were released in the afternoon to work in an agricultural job. The students received two credits for the class.

Mary felt that she had improved in her classroom instruction and management. She felt that she had better control of the student's behavior and had more of their respect. She also stated that she had taken two educational courses over the summer that helped her organize her classes better. Finally, Mary thought that even though she was better organized and took less work home with her, she was more involved in the FFA and with the students and still spent a large amount of time at school.

When I observed Mary, I noted that the students in her classes talked constantly even when she was talking. Mary stated several times that she was happy with her classroom management, but that was an area that her principal felt she needed to improve on. He stated that she needed to make the students be quiet when others were talking. Mary's mentor, on the other hand, said that Mary had improved more than any other advisee that she had been assigned.

When asked whether Mary was still a beginning teacher, all three said yes. Mary thought that she would always be learning more about teaching. "If it ever gets to the point where I think I . . . don't need any help as far as learning how to deal with the students and how to better organize, how to plan better and things like that, then . . . I'll consider myself a non-beginner." Mary's mentor called her an improved teacher rather than a beginner. " . . . there's going to be things that's going to occur in her teaching experience that's going to be a beginning situation for her . . . " Mary's principal defined the point when Mary would no longer be a beginner as when she had better control of her classes and her students. " . . . classroom management affects so much. It affects the lesson. It affects the instructional presentation. It affects the time on task. It affects the productivity."

Summary

The induction experiences of Tom, Susan, and Mary varied according to the individual teacher and the teaching situation. Tom seemed to progress rapidly through the induction phase and encountered few major problems. Throughout the school year, Susan expressed major doubts about teaching as an occupation for her. She also had the most difficult problems of the three teachers. Mary experienced some bad moments during the year, but she stayed upbeat and optimistic most of the time.

The teachers' daily logs were dominated by comments on students, whether good or bad. Besides the normal classroom activities, the teachers interacted with students for FFA events, supervisory visits, and other out-of-school activities. The majority of these experiences were positive for the teachers. Classroom activities, on the other hand, were a source of stress for the teachers. Discipline, instructional management, and administrative details were a constant source of problems for all three teachers.

Finally, the teaching conditions do not stay constant. Tom and Mary both worked under new administrators for their second years. Mary also worked with a new horticulture teacher during her second year. Susan changed from teaching agriculture in the public schools to teaching adult basic education in the prison system.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion on the Results of the Study

The first year of teaching may well determine the success of a person's teaching career. There are many factors which influence how a teacher experiences the induction phase. However, not all beginning agriculture teachers are influenced by all of the factors. Also, some beginning teachers go through the induction phase rapidly and others may take several years. Even though each teaching setting is different, there are certain common events that most beginning agriculture teachers experience.

Assistance Needs

The early assistance needs of the three agriculture teachers in this study were very different. Susan had problems with classroom management and student discipline during the first month of school. Mary, on the other hand, needed assistance on instructional management and teaching techniques earlier than when she received it. Finally, Tom needed assistance on time management. He had an especially difficult time grading students' assignments and completing report cards at the end of a grading period.

All three of these beginning agriculture teachers needed assistance early in the school year. The results of this study suggest that this assistance should be provided no later than the third or fourth week of school. Also, beginning teachers may need specific assistance in different

problem areas, such as student management, lesson planning, or stress management. Even when the three teachers expressed concern about the same area their specific problems were quite different.

When assistance programs are developed for beginning teachers, they should be available to the teacher during the first weeks of school rather than waiting until later. This would allow the teacher to get settled into teaching, but would intervene before serious problems develop. These interventions could be offered in a menu-style format from which the teachers would receive the specific help that they need at a given point in time.

Student Discipline

All three teachers experienced problems with student discipline. The most common complaint was with the students talking in class or with general misbehavior. Mary received a less than satisfactory mark in her annual evaluation on the management of student behavior because of these and similar problems. Susan, on the other hand, experienced more severe discipline problems with students stealing tools and houseplants from the laboratory.

It would seem that managing student behavior is a difficult task and a major source of stress for beginning teachers. These beginning teachers did not have the experience to know when or how strictly to discipline students. It was also clear that these new teachers were

not consistent in their discipline, so the students were continually trying their limits. The results of this study imply that beginning agriculture teachers need assistance in classroom management.

One way to provide this assistance is for teacher education programs to include more instruction in classroom management. This may possibly help to better prepare teachers to control discipline problems. Also, principals need to make sure that new teachers understand school rules and policies regarding student discipline. Finally, mentors, buddy teachers, and co-workers need to provide helpful suggestions for managing problem students to the new teacher.

Instructional Management

Neither teacher education teacher, Susan nor Tom, expressed much concern with lesson planning, however the alternative certification teacher, Mary, was extremely concerned with lesson plans. This concern continued throughout the school year, even though Mary attended several education courses. All three teachers were at one time or another concerned with making curriculum decisions, such as what unit to teach next, how much time to devote to a unit, and what resources to use.

For the two teacher education trained teachers in this study, making and using lessons plans was not difficult. Apparently their teacher education programs adequately

prepared them to make and use lesson plans. However, the alternative certification teacher needed early and intensive instruction in making and using lesson plans before she start teaching. Also, all three beginning agriculture teachers needed more assistance in planning the curriculum than they had received.

Teacher educators and state staff are usually the most knowledgeable about curriculum matters in their content area. They provide a valuable service to new teachers through workshops, classes, and visits, but visits and assistance need to occur early in the school year possibly even in the summer. School administrators could prepare an in-service to assist alternative certification teachers in making and using lesson plans. They should also make sure that current curriculum guides are available when the new teacher arrives on the job.

Unique Requirements

All three of these teachers had job requirements that were unique to agriculture and/or vocational teachers. The FFA, a co-curricular organization, was one unique job requirement. Tom, Susan, and Mary spent many hours outside of class time coaching, transporting, and otherwise working with students. This included time spent on weekends and time away from home at contests and other events.

Other requirements that were unique to these teachers included preparing for several different classes, purchasing

laboratory supplies, managing the laboratory, completing state-required reports, and designing the curriculum without the benefit of a textbook. Tom commented that he had more class preparations than another first-year teacher in chemistry. Each of these teachers, especially Tom, had to learn the procedures for ordering laboratory supplies. Each of the teachers was responsible for managing a laboratory. Susan had problems with storing lumber, Mary with managing the land laboratory, and Tom with the agricultural mechanics laboratory. Finally, these three agriculture teachers had to use many different sources to write their curriculum since there is not an agriculture textbook.

Since the job of agriculture teachers has many unique requirements, it is clear that mentor/buddy/peer teachers who teach in the same or a similar area should be assigned to guide first-year teachers. These more experienced teachers could assist the new teachers in handling the situations unique to agricultural education. Administrators should alert beginning agriculture teachers to the proper procedures to follow when ordering supplies, planning field trips, and other such activities. Finally, state department of education personnel should consider conducting workshops to assist beginning agriculture teachers in completing required state reports.

Unique Pitfalls

The daily lives of these three teachers were complicated by activities that teachers from other subject-matter areas may not experience. Two of Tom's students injured themselves in the agriculture laboratory. The responsibility for students' safety is a concern that academic teachers probably do not face to this degree. These agriculture teachers also had liability concerns when they transported students to various activities.

It would seem that agriculture teachers, as well as other laboratory instructors, have a greater responsibility for students' safety than do most other teachers. It would also seem that these teachers have unique liability concerns that they may not completely understand. I recommend several things that may assist the first-year teacher in these areas. Teacher preparation programs should include instruction on teacher liability. A first-aid course should be required for agricultural education graduates. First-year teachers who did not take a first-aid course in college should be encouraged to participate in a local Red Cross first-aid class. Professional organizations such as the National Education Association (NEA), American Vocational Association (AVA), and the National Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association (NVATA) are sources of information on teacher liability and liability insurance. Finally,

administrators should encourage safe working habits in laboratories and should provide for safe working conditions.

Teacher Isolation

These three agriculture teachers were physically isolated from their co-workers and the rest of the school. Tom's laboratory was in a separate building, Mary's classroom was in a separate pod, and Susan's laboratory was at one end of the building. Each teacher had minimal contact with other teachers and, except for Tom, had minimal contact with other agriculture teachers. Mary even had a mentor, but rarely spoke of any contact with her.

The induction process is difficult enough without the added stress of isolation. First-year teachers should be encouraged to spend time with their co-workers. This could be accomplished through holding morning or afternoon socials, encouraging first-year teachers to eat lunch with other teachers, holding picnics or other functions beginning the week before school starts and continuing throughout the year, or by other appropriate activities.

Administrative Assistance

The types of assistance given by principals and other administrators tended to be in matters of student discipline and administrative paperwork. These three teachers rarely received help on curriculum or pedagogy matters. Tom's department chairman was the exception in that he helped Tom on curriculum related matters. Neither Susan nor Mary were

evaluated until late in the school year, even though Susan had asked for help earlier.

Thus, it appears that the principals tended to be concerned with maintaining the smooth operation of the school. They were not as concerned with individual classes as long as student behavior was appropriate. If this is the philosophy, then agriculture teachers tend to have a great amount of freedom in making classroom management decisions.

Principals, other administrators, and mentors should give beginning agriculture teachers early and frequent feedback on their teaching performance. New teachers should be evaluated early in the year to identify problems before they become too serious and to allow them time to correct the deficiencies.

Students

As a group, students received the most comments from the teachers for both negative and positive events. Also all three teachers made references to gauging the success of a class period on whether certain students were present or absent. Many times the teachers made comments such as, "The students were well-behaved. It was a good class."

Students are the main group that beginning agriculture teachers come in contact with on a day-to-day basis. Because of this beginning teachers tend to gauge their worth as a teacher based on the results of these contacts.

For situations involving students and especially student discipline, beginning teachers should have another teacher that they can go to for assistance in handling specific situations. This person may or may not be an assigned mentor, but definitely should not be an evaluator of the beginner.

More positive student interactions should be encouraged. The beginning teachers themselves could help by planning classroom activities that allow more students to succeed. The use of out-of-school agricultural projects with the students is another way to encourage positive teacher-student interactions. On the administrative level, principals could promote classroom excellence by recognizing superior students through special awards, bulletin boards, or some other honor.

FFA activities were many times the one bright spot in an otherwise disastrous week for these teachers. The teachers also commented that the FFA and the students made them feel proud to be advisors. The teachers made numerous comments about enjoying the out-of-class interaction with the students through FFA activities.

Because of the positive results, beginning agriculture teachers should be given some FFA responsibilities during their first year. Another recommendation is that there should be available a videotape or other in-service on the FFA for teachers that did not have an FFA background.

Time Management

First-year teachers spend an enormous amount of time grading papers, planning for instruction, and completing other paperwork. All three teachers in this study commented about spending late nights and weekends preparing for classes. In addition, these three teachers devoted many hours to coaching judging teams, taking students to conferences, and preparing for other FFA activities.

Because of their lack of experience, beginning teachers probably spend more hours in planning and grading than do experienced teachers. Administrative paperwork is a large contributor to the beginning teachers' lack of time and time-related stress. Even though the teachers enjoy the FFA, events such as FFA fundraisers, field trips, and judging contests seem to be a large source of stress and extra work for the beginning teacher.

Beginning agriculture teachers need to know that a teaching job extends beyond forty hours per week. Prospective teachers should also be warned that teaching requires work at night and on weekends. A possible source of assistance would be to offer a mini-course on time management to prospective teachers or to beginning teachers shortly after the start of the school year. Also, beginning teachers need to be prepared for doing the extra tasks and assignments that are a part of the teaching job.

Teaching Techniques

All three teachers relied almost exclusively on lecturing early in the school year, but Mary continued to use lecturing as her main technique throughout the year. This was in spite of her observation of how well the students participated and learned when she used other teaching techniques. Both Tom and Susan incorporated more hands-on activities into their lessons as the year progressed. Mary did however use the school farm as an instructional activity during the latter part of the year.

It may be that beginning teachers use lecturing almost exclusively until they feel comfortable enough to experiment with other techniques. Some teachers continue to use lecturing even after they have established their authority in the classroom. However, most teachers eventually incorporate different techniques into their lessons to improve the flow of the class and to hopefully improve student learning.

College professors serve as role models for future teachers, therefore they should be encouraged to model teaching techniques other than lecturing in their classes. Then, possibly, beginning teachers may feel more comfortable in doing something other than lecturing to their students. If principals, mentors, and co-workers encourage the use of various teaching techniques, then first-year teachers may begin to use more techniques. Finally, alternative

certification teachers should receive teaching methods workshops during the summer before school starts. If this is not possible, then alternative certification teachers should be provided means to develop their teaching skills early during the school year.

Student Counseling

All three teachers had to counsel students at some point during the school year. A student at Tom's school committed suicide and even though most of his students did not know the person very well, it affected all of them deeply. A student at Mary's school was killed by a drunk driver and it affected her students for over a week. Susan's miscarriage was a personal tragedy, but her students were affected by it in a similar way to Tom and Mary's students.

Susan also had to counsel a student that was having family problems. In a similar fashion, Tom and Mary had students to come to them with personal problems. These students confided in their teachers even though the teachers had no training in counseling.

We might conclude from this that when tragedies occur, students are deeply affected by them. Students may also view teachers as people who are able to give them support in times of tragedies and personal conflicts. Clearly, teachers are important to students as an initial source of counseling.

Teachers are not trained counselors, yet students come to them with problems. Thus, beginning teachers should receive instruction on how to help students. They also need to know how to recognize students that need to be referred to a trained counselor. This may best be accomplished at a faculty meeting or in-service early in the school year.

Administrative Changes

Both Tom and Mary had different principals for their second year. In each situation, the new principal had different priorities and a different philosophy for guiding the school from those of the preceding principal. Susan not only changed principals, but changed administrative structures entirely.

Administrative changes can greatly affect the daily lives of teachers. Duty assignments, chain of command, and school atmosphere are determined to a large extent by the philosophy of the principal. If the beginning teacher does not adjust to these changes, then the teacher may not have a successful year.

Principals, especially those new to a school, should consider the effect that proposed administrative changes would have on beginning teachers. Any changes should be explained at the beginning of the school year so that teachers would know what was expected of them.

Teacher Health Concerns

Both Susan and Mary had problems with colds, flu, and other illness throughout the school year. Susan, in fact, used up all of her sick leave a few months before the end of the school year. Tom was more fortunate in that he only had to use sick leave for one or two days. However, all three teachers commented on how often students were absent and also how often students were sick but still in school. At one point in the year, Mary had so many students absent that she was forced to change her lesson plans.

Exercise, well-balanced meals, and adequate amounts of sleep are essential if a new teacher is to remain healthy during the school year. Also student illness can adversely affect classroom instruction even when the students attend school.

Beginning agriculture teachers should be alerted to the fact that their health is important. Teacher educators may consider including teacher health concerns in an undergraduate seminar. New teachers should also receive information on preventing illness and on coping with disrupted classes due to illness. This information would be best distributed in a booklet at the start of the school year. Stress management and other health related issues could be topics of a school or district in-service for both new and experienced teachers.

Discussion

The first year in the career of an agriculture teacher is an exciting time. The new teacher is in a familiar setting, since he or she has attended school for over twelve years, but the situation is different from being a student. The new teacher is now in charge of the classroom and may feel lost. For most of the school day, the beginner is alone without adult contacts. The first year can also be stressful because the new teacher feels pressure from many directions. The beginner is expected to perform like a veteran teacher, but is rarely given the assistance and support needed to accomplish that task.

Of course, not all first-year experiences are bad. Beginning teachers receive positive feedback from students and others, and this encourages them to keep on trying. Agriculture teachers also may receive recognition because of student organization activities and other reasons. Finally, the mere realization of actually being a teacher is exciting for many beginners.

Beginning agriculture teachers need early, appropriate assistance. I believe that they should be hired in either July or early August, then be allowed to use the extra time to prepare for classes. It would also be helpful for principals to hold a conference with them to try to determine their weaknesses. Once this has been

accomplished, then appropriate interventions can be devised to help them overcome their weaknesses.

Leaders in the teaching profession need to make the induction process as smooth as possible. This is for the benefit of the students as well as for the improvement of the profession. Hopefully, research such as this case study will help in that task.

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APPENDIX 1
BACKGROUND SURVEY

VOCATIONAL TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
 NATIONAL CENTER FOR RESEARCH IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
 VIRGINIA TECH

Background Questionnaire

The following information is confidential, no names will be used. Any demographic data to be reported will be coded.

Name _____ Code # _____

School Address:

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

School Phone: _____

Best hours to be reached at school: _____

Home Address:

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____

Best hours to be reached at home: _____

Age (check one): 20-24 _____ 25-29 _____ 30-34 _____ 35-39 _____
 40-44 _____ 45-49 _____ over 50 _____

Marital Status: Married _____ Single _____

Children: Number _____ Ages: _____

Spouse's occupation _____

Prior occupational experience in the field in which you are teaching: _____

Occupational experience other than in the field you are teaching:

Education-State your highest level of education and the area(s) of study (degree, diploma, certificate, etc.) including any additional course work beyond this level of education.

Are there any specific dates to your knowledge that would not be good dates to come and visit with you. Examples: assembly days, inservice days, principal will be gone, you will be gone, testing days, and so on.

APPENDIX 2
INFORMATIONAL QUESTIONNAIRE

VOCATIONAL TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
NATIONAL CENTER FOR RESEARCH IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
VIRGINIA TECH

Informational Questionnaire

The following information is confidential, no names will be used. Any data to be reported will be coded. Indicate N/A if the questions do not pertain to you.

Name _____ Code # _____

1. How long were you on contract before classes actually began?

How much of that time was available for planning?
2. What type of instruction or information did you receive prior to or when you first started your job?
3. Was there any inservice training before classes started?
If so, describe
4. If yes, was this inservice training for new teachers only?
5. If you live in the community in which you are teaching, how long have you lived there?

If not, how far away do you live?

How much time do you spend traveling to and from work?
6. On the average how many total hours a week have you been working performing your responsibilities as a teacher?
7. How many years do you expect to teach? _____

If you plan to leave teaching, why?

If you plan to leave teaching, what do you plan to do in the future?

8. Do you have responsibility for any student organizations?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, how many hours does this take per week on the average?

9. What other responsibilities are assigned to you that are not part of your responsibilities in your teaching (instructional) position?
10. When did you know which classes you would be teaching this Fall?
11. How many classes are you teaching per day?
12. How many class preparations do you have (different lesson plans) per day?
13. If you use the coop method in your program, how many periods are spent in coordination?
14. How many planning periods do you have per day?
15. When did you know who would be enrolled in your classes?

16. Do you have an advisory committee?

If so, who is on the committee?

If no advisory committee, do you plan to organize one?

Yes _____ No _____

How often do you plan to meet?

17. Do you have adequate resources for your program?

Yes _____ No _____

If not, what is lacking?

18. Who are your immediate supervisors (positions and names)?

19. Do you have responsibilities during home room period?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what are they?

20. What time does school start and end daily for students?

Start _____ a.m. End _____ p.m.

21. What time are you required to be at school?

Arrive _____ a.m. Leave _____ p.m. (Not necessarily the time you leave, but the time you are required to be on the job.)

22. Is there any other information that you feel is important to share with us. If yes, please describe.

APPENDIX 3
PERSONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

VOCATIONAL TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
NATIONAL CENTER FOR RESEARCH IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
VIRGINIA TECH

Initial Interview Questionnaire
First Year Teachers

Interviewee _____ Code # _____

Interviewer _____ Date _____

1. Tell me about yourself and what prompted your decision to go into teaching.

2. What has your first few weeks of school been like thus far?

3. What expectations did you have before you started your teaching position?

Has it been as you expected? If not, why not?

4. What concerns did you have about teaching in the beginning?

Do you still have those concerns?

5. How do you feel about the actual teaching part (instruction) of your job at this point?

6. Thus far, do you feel that you are lacking in any areas of preparation to become a teacher?

If yes, what are they?

7. What has best prepared you to become a teacher?

8. What assistance have you gotten thus far in relation to your job?

From whom? (Interviewer note: anybody)

Did you ask for it?

Was it volunteered or assigned?

9. What has been the biggest help to you in your teaching job?

10. What is your relationship with the students?

11. What kind of relationship do you have with your co-workers?

12. What are your relationships with your immediate supervisors?

13. Is the chain of command clear to you?

If not, do you think there is a problem?
(Interviewer note: If yes, tell me about it)

14. What kind of relationships do you have with the state staff, teacher educators, or others (e.g. business community) outside your school system that are in a position to be of assistance to you?

15. Do you live in the community in which you are teaching?

If yes, how does this affect you?

If no, what effect has this had on your job?

16. What do you think about the image of your school?

How do you think this image affects you and your job as a teacher?

17. Does your home environment affect your role as a teacher? (Note: If yes, have him or her explain)

18. What do you think is the biggest problem that you have had to date? (Note to interviewer--Keep wide open--anywhere)

19. Have you had any constraints to doing your job the way you would like to do it?

If so, what are they?

20. Do you perceive that there are sources of stress in your job?

If so, what do you think they are?

21. What do you anticipate the rest of the year will be like?

22. What is the most rewarding thing that has happened thus far?

23. How do you feel about yourself as a teacher today?

24. Is there anything else that you would like to tell me?

APPENDIX 4
DAILY LOG QUESTIONS

VOCATIONAL TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
NATIONAL CENTER FOR RESEARCH IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
VIRGINIA TECH

Questions to be answered and answers recorded daily:

Teacher Daily Log Questions (Set 1)

1. What significant event happened today?
2. Did you have any problems? If so, what were they?
How did you solve them?
3. Did anyone provide assistance to you today?
If so, who and in what way?
4. What did you learn today about teaching?
5. What was the best thing that happened today?

Each Friday answer the following questions:

1. Overall, how are you doing?
2. How do you feel about teaching?

Teacher Daily Log Questions (Set 2)

1. What significant events happened today?
2. What did you do as a result of those significant events?
3. What did you learn today about teaching?
4. If you could start the day over again, what would you do differently?

Each Friday answer the following questions:

1. At this point, how do you feel about yourself and your ability as a teacher?
2. At this point, how do you feel about teaching?

VITA

Brian Allen Talbert was born in Farmville, Virginia on May 14, 1961. Upon graduation from Buckingham County High School in 1979, he entered Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia. In June 1983, he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Education.

Upon graduation, he became a high school agriculture teacher at Western Albemarle High School in Crozet, Virginia. In 1987, he became an agriculture teacher at Stonewall Jackson Junior High School in Mechanicsville, Virginia.

In July 1989, he became a full-time graduate student at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. He served as a graduate research assistant on a National Center for Research in Vocational Education project in the Vocational and Technical Education Division. He received a Master of Science degree in Vocational and Technical Education in June, 1990.

He is a member of the Virginia Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association, the Virginia Vocational Association, the National Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association,

the American Vocational Association, the American Vocational Educational Research Association, and the American Association of Teacher Educators in Agriculture and was elected into membership in Alpha Tau Alpha, Phi Kappa Phi, Phi Delta Kappa, and Omicron Tau Theta.

He is the son of E. A. (Bill) and Helen Talbert of Dillwyn, Virginia.

Brian Allen Talbert
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