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A reading autobiography is a reflective whitetask I assign in my online gradulative I reading assessment and intervention course. This assignment provides students the opportunity to use writing to reflect on their past experiences as readers. Reflective writing can be a useful tool to engage undents (Liu, 2019). The reading autobiography is the first assignment in a comprehensive case study project students complete for this course.

for the striving reader to achie within a 10week intervention period. Students implement reselected strategies during weekly structured tutoring sessions with the student to affect reading growth.

Before students begin working with a striving reader, they must first reflection with experiences with reading and memories of themselves as readers. Writing a reading autobiography prompts students to use their reading experiench spositive, neutral, or negative inform their work with striving readers. This reflective writing is also an empath wilding exercise. Empathy is crucial for teacher effectiveness, especially for teachers of ethically, culturally, and linguistically diverse sixuters most likely to exhibit reading difficulties (Griffin et al., 2020; Warren, 2018).

Online learning brings with it several limitations. Connecting with students can be especially challenging in an online learning environment (Martin et al., 2019). To that end, this writing activity is designed to give students an outlet for selisclosus, which can cultivate meaningful connections in the online learning environment (Faulkner et al., 2028aza et al., 2020; Song et al., 2019).

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Students routinely share how much they enjoy this writing assignment. While applicament, those who wish also post their autobiographies to a class discussion board and reply to each other Os pieces. This self disclosure works to bridge physical distance and establish meaningful connections in an online class (Faulkner et al., 2025 ang et al., 2019).

I also share my reading autobiography on the discussion board, as I affirm effective online instructors should also serve as mentors who actively seek ways to inspire students (Martin et aldiados): my childhood struggles with reading to communicate the potential of the case study task that lies ahead:

My parents, while well-tentioned, were not well educated, and they did not read to me during my formative early years. I was placed in a special class for struggling.readeushout my long, arduous, often painful journey through elementary school, I remember being stuck with the label of Opoor reader. Of My sense of the struggling around my neck.

I document how, with the support of veetal teachers who chose to believe in me, I eventually reclaimed my selfefficacy. As a testament to those teachers of influence, I graduated as the valedictorian of my high school class, earned the highest academic achievement award given to an undergradur wow hold four degrees in the field of education. The impetus for my academic and professional success I attribute to teachers who looked past my early deficiencies and believed in me. Without them, I wouldnot be where and who I am todal a teacher beachers. My students have the same potential to be mentors for striving readers who have been weighted with ther beachers.

Like me, more of my students report childhood struggles with reading than the opposite. Even those who were avid readers **gw**ing up recognize others around them were not. The early reading challenges some students face are illustrated in the following excerpt:

Growing up, I was surrounded by many people who did not value reading. My mother did not read to me as a child, and was not introduced to reading until kindergarten. I can remember my kindergarten teacher calling us to the rug and reading stories to the class. I loved listening to the stories because it allowed me to hear about new and exciting things. Even though listening to the stories, I could not read fluently . . . I had a tough time in first grade. My teacher would call on me to read the information on the blackboard, and I could not do so. The teacher labeled me a non-reader.

Opening up to others abouthese struggles takes courage, yet most students choose to share their autobiographies. The conservations that ensue on the discussion board have helped to create empathic bonds and shared understandings among peers in the class. I have noticed corbetations students being made that both highlight their shared experiences and show how their experiences differ. For example, a student with a very different cultural background and experiences responded to the student in the excerpt above as follows:

Reading about your challenges with reading growing up made me think of my little brother, who also struggled a lot with reading as a student. In truth, he still does as a young adult. I read everything I could get my hands on as a child. Reading was always ea

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exercise and giving students the choice to sha**i**e **dad**y reading experiences and respond to their classmates has helped to foster an engaging, meaningful online learning environment.

Faulkner, S. L., Watson, W. K., Pollino, M. A., & Shetterly, J. R. (2021). ÒTreat me like a person, rather th

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