

Beginning Educator Support Team NEWSLETTER

December 2017

EXAMINING STUDENT WORK



"If you want to know the truth, you have to get it from the horse's mouth."

While I've never been exactly sure how that saying came to be, when my grandmother said it, she meant you have to find out what you want to know by going to the source and asking the right question. That's what looking at student work is all about.

When we take time to consider, sort, analyze, and draw insights from the actual work students produce, we can discover not only where students' strengths and opportunities for growth lie in relation to the standards; we might also see where our instructional practice could be refined to meet their learning needs.

It takes time, collaboration, and a keen eye, but looking at student work to drive instruction can be a game changer for individual teachers and teams, alike.

TALKING POINTS

Find time to engage in data-driven mentoring or team collaboration by sharing and analyzing student work!

Here are some other topics of conversation for mentors and early career teachers:

Successes and challenges

Engaging students "bell to bell"

Managing small groups

Processes for shutting down for winter break

Goals for second semester

Calibrating overload and determining priorities

WHY I [TEACH]

"I teach so that my students may love music, the powerful means of expression which touches lives and comforts when nothing else in life makes sense. I teach so that my students may experience the passion, community, discipline, creativity, and love that inherently comes from learning music."

~ Misha Guderian, second-year choral teacher, Pioneer Middle and Lincoln High School



NEED TO KNOW

BEST PLC (first-year teachers)

December 14, 4:00-5:30

Wa-Hi, room S-11

No School for students

December 25-January 5, January 15

Video Learning Lab (second-year/new-to-assignment teachers)

January 9, 16, 23, February 6, 3:45-5:45

Davis Elementary, College Place

OSPI Southeastern Regional Mentor Roundtable

December 19, 4:00-6:00

SEA-Tech Skills Center

Connecting with Mentors

Find time to connect, reflect, and engage in learning through observation.

BEST Stakeholder Team Meeting

December 12, 3:45-4:30

BRIGHT IDEAS



We all grade papers, but sorting student work with a mentor, teaching partner, or team can provide a different perspective. When we look for trends in the evidence around learning targets, we can begin to plan for the needs of our students and for our own professional learning goals. Here are some tips from *Student-Centered Coaching* (Sweeney & Harris, 2017) for sorting and analyzing student work effectively:

PREP. If possible, make a copy of the set of class work for each participant. Otherwise, make fewer copies for participants to examine in pairs. Alternatively, the work can be divided among the group, and participants can write comments on sticky notes before passing their stack to the next person.

READ through the entire set of class work looking for trends relative to the learning targets.

DISCUSS the trends that were noticed. Collectively decide which ones are the most significant and needing further instruction - either whole or small group.

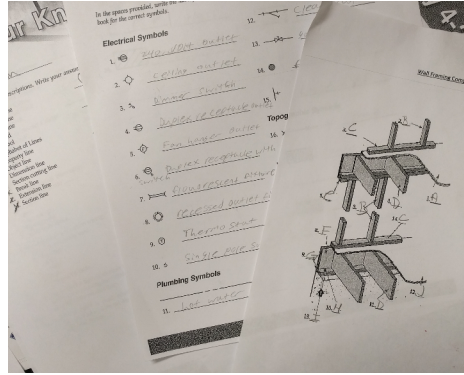
GO BACK to the work to sort students according to the identified needs. If something pertains to the whole class, this will be addressed in whole group instruction.

PLAN for instruction based on the needs of each group.

REFLECT on any new learning we require to meet our students' needs.

See the process in action at <http://qrs.ly/xu59nv7>

MENTORING SPOTLIGHT



(Upper: student work ready for sorting; second-year teacher, Eric Matson motivates his students with hard hat decals to indicate the skills they've mastered; Lower left: first-year teacher, Jazmin Lopez analyzes multiplication work to look for possible misconceptions; Lower right: Eva Katsel joins our certificated staff at Berney Elem. - let's give her a big BEST welcome!)

Early career teachers, their teammates, and mentors are engaged in examining student work to meet their students' learning needs all over the district. Here are some of their reflections:

"Creating exit tickets has helped me tremendously in planning my lessons... Analyzing the data is valuable to know which students are on track to make growth and which students are experiencing barriers. Analyzing with my teaching partner helps me to identify what those barriers might be and how to get around them." ~Lexie Mahan, 5th grade, Blue Ridge Elementary

"In WaHi's Claim-Evidence-Reasoning PLC, collaboratively analyzing student writing is central to our work. By looking at authentic evidence of student learning, we are able to zero in on the areas where our students most need our guidance. It keeps us honest and ensures we maximize our class time by focusing on areas of greatest need." ~Lindsey James, ELA, WaHi

CONTACT

Comments, questions, or want to know more about supporting early career teachers in Walla Walla?

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