

# Instruction for All Students

Second  
Edition

Paul

**Sneak  
Peek**

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## **Instruction for All Students**

### **Second Edition**

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# Introduction

The purposes of these introductory pages are to introduce new readers to the text and to inform those familiar with the text that this second edition is “an old friend in a new dress.”

The content changes in the second edition of *Instruction for All Students* are based on new research, new learning, and new experiences. The use of the first edition of this text in workshops all over the world for the past thirteen years provided clear data about what organizational changes needed to be made in the text. Furthermore, the availability of technology resources led to the inclusion of templates and exemplars on a CD-ROM.

## What Is the Same?

- Holds student learning as the central goal of our work
- Is based on the premise that the best management program is a strong instructional program
- Includes practical applications of research-based practices
- Is presented in a teacher-friendly format
- Printed in easy-on-the-eyes font sizes
- Features K-12 practitioner examples
- Is based on the same philosophical underpinnings as the first edition. To that end the following is reprinted from the Introduction to the first edition:

A wise educator said: We will conduct all of our interactions with students based on the most current data, research, and current thinking in our field. When this information changes, we will change our practice.

I do not believe that this statement in any way implies that we should continue to hop from bandwagon to bandwagon looking for materials and programs that will ensure quick fixes or successes. Quite the contrary. It means that we must constantly reach out to analyze, reflect on, and react to the massive body of research on teaching and learning that comes, not only from those doing formal research, but also from those of us working directly with students.

There are three additional ideas that we must come to terms with before we can accomplish all we might. The first is that we and our students have the capacity to achieve far more than we have so far. Ron Edmonds called us to action when he said that whether or not we and our students achieve more depends, to a large extent, on how we feel about the fact that what we've been doing has not brought all the results we seek.



The second important idea is that we cannot accomplish all we might until we see ourselves as part of a greater whole and expand our efforts for working collaboratively. The third major component is that we must agree on, and become much more clearly focused on, what students should know and be able to do; then we must focus our time and energy on moving all students toward those goals. It is no longer good enough for the lesson to be a “good lesson,” it must also be the “right lesson.”

This book is based on an analysis of the research base on teaching and learning, and on the work of educators in schools around the world. The ideas presented here have been productive for educators in many situations, but there is absolutely no guarantee that all of the material and ideas will work for you. There is, however, a strong likelihood that we will all accomplish far more if we engage in our practice with:

- A sense of self-efficacy
- A focus on clearly articulated standards
- An ever growing repertoire of skills for teaching and assessing diverse learners
- A passion for engaging all students in the learning process
- The use of data to make and assess instructional decisions
- A mission to promote high standards and expectations for both students and educators
- A commitment to collaborate with colleagues and parents

## **What Is New?**

- An up-to-the-minute review of initiatives that are in the news and influencing our thinking
- Clearly articulated purposes for each of the strategies for actively engaging students
- A greater focus on the range of diversity in our classrooms and strategies for working with all students
- Strategies for vocabulary development and supporting struggling readers
- Multiple approaches to lesson and unit design with a focus on using the standards-based planning process
- Cutting-edge information on technology integration

- Thought-provoking information on formative assessment
- An expanded focus on 21<sup>st</sup> century thinking skills that promote rigor and relevance
- An array of formats for creating learning communities and opportunities for job-embedded learning and collegial collaboration

## What New Tools Are Included?

- A CD-ROM of templates including multiple templates for lesson and unit design, learning buddies, and organizational tools
- Exemplars of standards-based units of study on the CD-ROM
- Multiple self-assessments both embedded in the text and on the CD-ROM
- An updated list of resources and references
- A mini-index of the uses and purposes of the active learning strategies (pages 88-89)
- An extensive index of the book
- The use of the Top Ten Questions to provide focus for chapters II through IX (The questions explored in each chapter are highlighted on the second page of each chapter.)

## What Support Materials Are Available?

- A set of **Visual Tools** on CD-ROM is available separately. You can use these tools to create full color handouts, charts, overhead transparencies or embed them in PowerPoint and KeyNote presentations.
- The text, *Leading the Learning: A Field Guide for Supervision and Evaluation*, is cross-referenced to *Instruction for All Students*. This helps administrators provide explicit suggestions during coaching and supervisory conferences.
- The text, *Why Didn't I Learn This in College?*, provides new teachers and their mentors an abbreviated look at instruction aligned with the information in *Instruction for All Students*. It also adds essential information about creating a positive and productive learning-centered environment so that new teachers can implement a strong instructional program.
- The text, *The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Mentor's Handbook*, is cross-referenced to both *Instruction for All Students* and *Why Didn't I Learn This in College?*

# ASK Framework for The Study of Teaching & Learning

The components of the **ASK Framework for the Study of Teaching and Learning** addressed in this text are marked below. One \* means some information is included and two \*\* means extensive information is included.

## Planning Instruction

- \*\* Standards-Based Teaching, Learning, and Assessment
- \*\* Lesson, Unit, and Course Design
- \*\* Essential Understandings, Key Concepts, and Big Ideas
  - Content Specific Pedagogy
- \*\* Learning Styles, Multiple Intelligences, and Brain Research
- \*\* Diversity of Students
- \*\* Active Learning
- \*\* Connections to the World Beyond the Classroom
  - \* Integration of the Curriculum

## Implementing Instruction

- \*\* Framing the Learning
- \*\* Dealing with Naïve Understandings and Misconceptions
- \*\* Communicating Purposes, Expectations, and Directions
- \*\* Using a Repertoire of Strategies, Materials, and Resources
- \*\* Designing Rigorous Questions and Assignments
- \*\* Promoting Connections and Meaning Making
- \*\* Incorporating Literacy Instruction
- \*\* Differentiating Instruction
  - \* Accommodating and Adapting for Special Needs Students

## Assessing Learning & the Instructional Program

- \*\* The Assessment Continuum
- \*\* Formative Assessment
- \*\* Making Assessment a Learning Experience
- \*\* Designing, Selecting, and Assessing Paper and Pencil Assessments
- \*\* Designing, Selecting, Implementing, and Assessing Performance Tasks
- \*\* Designing and Using Rubrics and Performance Assessment Task Lists
- \*\* Using Assessment Results to Inform Teaching Decisions

# ASK Framework

## Orchestrating a Positive Learning Environment

- \* Building a Community of Learners
- \* Having and Communicating High Expectations to All Students
- \* Using Attribution Theory to Re-Frame Belief Systems
- \* Building Capacity Through Learning How to Learn Strategies
- \*\* Using Errors and/or Lack of Background Knowledge and Skills as Learning Opportunities
- \*\* Building in Reflection and Metacognition
- \*\* Developing Thinking Skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- \* Building Appropriate and Positive Personal Relationships with Students

## Organizing & Leading a Productive Learning-Centered Environment

Creating and Using Organizational Systems for Professional and Instructional Materials

- \* Developing and Implementing Organizational Systems for Learners and the Classroom
- \* Planning Proactively to Work with Reluctant and Resistant Learners

## Professionalism & Collegial Collaboration

The Ways We Collaborate: Consultant, Collaborator, and Coach

- \*\* Formats for Collaboration and Job-Embedded Learning
- \*\* Peer Observation
- \* Mentoring
- \* Co-Teaching

Professional Responsibilities  
Parents as Partners



# Acknowledgements

The first people to come to mind when I think about who has significantly influenced my thinking about teaching, learning, and leading are my two sons, Doug and Mike, and my grandchildren, Will, Carter, Kelly, and Quinn. When it is personal, educational theory quickly becomes grounded in reality.

In addition to those acknowledged in the first edition: Clint Van Nagel and Paul Eggen of the University of North Florida; Jon Saphier, Executive Director of Research for Better Teaching (RBT), as well as all my colleagues in that organization; and incredible educational leaders, Katherine Ruh, Mary Alice Price, Janie Smith, and Mary Herrmann, the contributions of the three ASK Group Senior Consultants, Brenda Kaylor, Bruce Oliver, and Louise Thompson to this work must be noted. In addition to constantly teaching me what they know, these three continuously challenge me by asking hard questions that cause me to think deeply and re-examine old understandings.

This book also represents what I have learned from the thousands of educators and students I have had the good fortune to work with in schools and workshops throughout the past thirty plus years. Educators of special significance are those who have so willingly shared their expertise and thinking by providing specific examples of strategies that have worked well in their instructional programs. They are cited by name and school district; their contributions are presented on pages with the sub-title: Through the Voice of... These colleagues have taught me much about teaching and learning and truly exemplify the concept of collegial collaboration.

A special thanks goes to the women who worked with me as graphic designers and administrative assistants as I wrote the first edition. They are: Karen Grady, Anna Daley, Margie Spendiker, Valerie Fairchild, Kris Saum, Jennifer Wiley, Connie Phares, and Mary Crohn.

The second edition could not have made it to print without Donovan Goode and Mike Rutherford's patient reformatting, Caitlin Cooper and Bruce Oliver's amazing proofing and editing skills, Shilpa Shah's incredible cover design, and Laura Pavlock-Albright's organizational skills.

The biggest thanks goes to the person who is still president of my fan club and believes in me beyond all reason, my husband, David.

# The N4ALL News

That's Shaping Our Thinking

## Vocabulary Development

Read through this list of words related to the integration of technology.

- teacher and student-made videos
- class blogs
- Google Books
- Flex cams
- Inspiration
- classroom websites
- WebQuests
- PDF
- Photo Story 3
- podcasts
- CyberGuides
- Skype
- streaming video
- KeyNote
- TeacherTube
- webcast
- Wikis
- key pals
- Fly Pens
- Google Scholar
- Classroom response systems...Clickers

If you have any questions, do a Google search or ask a digital native, that is, according to Marc Prensky, anyone under 40.

## Some Things Never Change!

Ralph Tyler's Questions in *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction*, 1949

- What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?
- How can learning experiences be selected which are likely to be useful in attaining these objectives?
- How can learning experiences be organized for effective instruction?
- How can the effectiveness of learning experiences be evaluated?

## We Are All on the Same Team

What do Judith Warren Little, Susan Rosenholtz, Ann Lieberman, Jon Saphier, Shirley Hord, Rick and Becky DuFour, Bob Eaker, Kent Peterson, Terry Deal, Linda Lambert, Michael Fullan, and Roland Barth have in common?

They all have written extensively on creating a culture for

learning. They describe a culture where all the adults in a school use data, common vocabulary and concept systems, and work collaboratively around a shared mission and vision to promote student learning.

The challenge is clear. Now it is up to us to make it happen.

## N4ALL Recommended Books

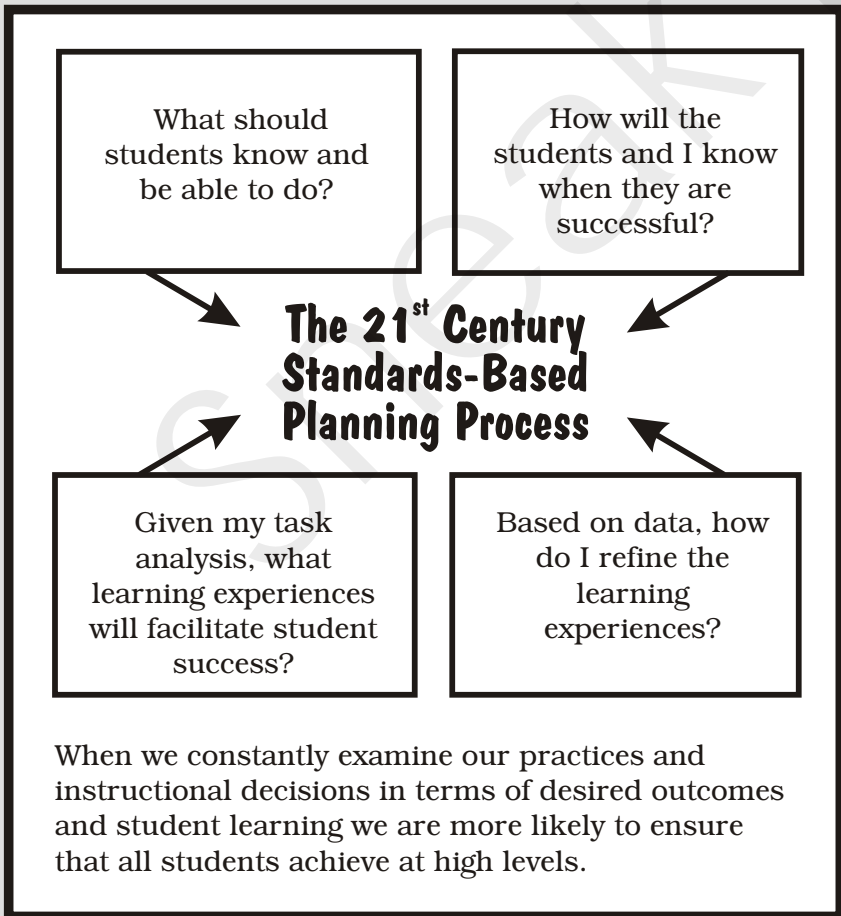
- *A Whole New Mind* by Daniel Pink
- *Classroom Instruction That Works* by Marzano, Pickering, and Pollack
- *Concept-Based Curriculum and Instruction* by Lynn Erickson
- *Content Area Reading and Learning* by Lapp, Flood, and Farnan
- *Instruction for All Students* by Paula Rutherford
- *Results Now* by Mike Schmoker
- *The World Is Flat* by Thomas Friedman

# The N4ALL News

## That's Shaping Our Thinking

### Questions on Our Minds

- What do schools look like when they organize around a commitment to the achievement of high standards by all students?
- How do we use data to inform our practices?
- How can we provide multiple pathways to learning?
- How do we make assessment a learning experience?
- What learning experiences will connect with the digital natives in our classrooms?
- How do we work together to maximize student learning?



### Do You Hear What We Hear?

- standards-based planning process
- English language learners
- learning-centered
- formative assessment
- mentoring and induction
- differentiation
- inclusive education
- technology integration
- repertoire building
- smaller learning communities
- data-driven decisions
- rubrics
- homework
- graphic organizers
- rigor, relevance, and relationships
- common assessments
- high stakes testing
- response to intervention
- literacy across the curriculum
- co-teaching
- concept-based instruction
- creating a culture for learning

### Marzano's High Yield Strategies

1. Identify similarities and differences
2. Summarizing and note taking
3. Reinforcing effort and providing recognition
4. Homework and practice
5. Nonlinguistic representation
6. Cooperative learning
7. Setting objectives and providing feedback
8. Generating and testing hypotheses
9. Questions, cues, and advance organizers

# Yesterday & Today...

## Where We've Been & Where We Are Going

### Curriculum

What is taught	What is learned
Chapters covered and workbooks completed	Identification of what student should know and be able to do
Academic context	Life context
Textbook as resource	Multiple resources
Individual subjects	Integrated subjects
Basics emphasized for all; thinking skills emphasized for gifted	Basics and thinking skills emphasized for all

### Instruction

Teacher centered	Learner centered
Organized around time	Organized for results
Single teaching strategy	Multiple teaching strategies
Teach once	Reteaching and enrichment
Fixed groups	Flexible groups
Whole group instruction	Differentiated instruction
Passive learning	Active learning

### Assessment

Bell curve	Public and precise criteria
One opportunity	Multiple opportunities
After instruction	Integrated with instruction
Paper and pencil based	Performance based
Grades averaged	Standard met or not met
Proving and accountability	Diagnose and prescribe
Focus on product	Focus on product and process



# TOP TEN QUESTIONS

## to ask myself as I design lessons

1. What should **students know and be able to do** as a result of this lesson? How are these objectives related to national, state, and/or district standards?
2. How will **students demonstrate what they know and what they can do**? What will be the **assessment criteria** and what form will it take?
3. How will I find out what students already know (**pre-assessment**), and how will I help them access what they know and have experienced both inside and outside the classroom? How will I help them **build on prior experiences, deal with misconceptions**, and reframe their thinking when appropriate?
4. How will new knowledge, concepts, and skills be introduced? Given the **diversity of my students** and the **task analysis**, what are my **best options for sources and presentation modes**?
5. How will I **facilitate student processing (meaning making)** of new information or processes? What key questions, activities, and assignments (in class or homework) will promote understanding, retention, and transfer?
6. What shall I use as **formative assessments** or **checks for understanding** during the lesson? How can I use the **data** from those assessments to **inform my teaching decisions**?
7. What do I need to do to **scaffold instruction** so that the learning experiences are productive for all students? What are the multiple ways students can access information and then process and demonstrate their learning?
8. How will I **Frame the Learning** so that students know the objectives, the rationale for the objectives and activities, the directions and procedures, as well as the assessment criteria at the beginning of the learning process?
9. How will I build in opportunities for students to make **real-world connections** and to learn and use the **rigorous and complex thinking skills** they need to succeed in the classroom and the world beyond?
10. What adjustments need to be made in the **learning environment** so that we can work and learn efficiently during this study?

# Active Learning Strategies to Use If You Want...

## Students to work in pairs or in small groups

Think-Pair-Share - 112  
Learning Buddies - 99-100  
Discussion Partners - 67  
Frame of Reference - 91  
Graffiti - 92  
Numbered Heads Together - 103  
Sort Cards - 94  
Collaborative Controversy - 76  
Literature Circles - 75  
Walking Tour - 116-117  
Five Card Draw - 97  
Jigsaw - 242-243

## To gather pre-assessment data

Anticipation/Reaction Guide - 110  
Signal Cards - 154  
Sort Cards - 94  
Frame of Reference - 91  
Line-Ups - 101-102  
Think-Pair-Share - 112  
Exclusion Brainstorming - 108  
Three-Column Charts - 113  
Graffiti - 92  
Stir the Class - 106  
All Hands on Deck - 96  
Take a Stand - 107

## Students to access prior knowledge and make real world connections

Anticipation/Reaction Guide - 110  
Corners - 90  
Stir the Class - 106  
Frame of Reference - 91  
Line-Ups - 101-102  
Think-Pair-Share - 112  
Graffiti - 92  
Personal Opinion Guide - 111  
Exclusion Brainstorming - 108  
Three-Column Charts - 113  
All Hands on Deck - 96  
Sort Cards - 94

## To surface misconceptions and naive understandings

Anticipation/Reaction Guide - 110  
Personal Opinion Guides - 111  
Three-Column Charts - 113  
Frame of Reference - 91  
Line-Ups - 101-102  
Think-Pair-Share - 112  
3-2-1 - 114  
Facts and Folklore - 109

## To promote vocabulary development

Inside-Outside Circles - 93  
Word Splash - 18  
Three-Column Charts - 113  
Journals - 14  
Tic-Tac-Toe - 98  
Interactive Notebooks - 228  
Graffiti - 92  
Word Sorts - 17  
Frayer Model - 18  
Five Card Draw - 97  
Six-Step Process - 19  
Reciprocal Teaching - 78

# Active Learning Strategies to Use If You Want...

## Students to set purpose for reading, listening or viewing

Walking Tour - 116-117

Three-Column Charts - 113

Corners - 90

Line-ups - 101-102

Personal Opinion Guide - 111

Anticipation Reaction Guide - 110

Exclusion Brainstorming - 108

Take a Stand - 107

Think-Pair-Share - 112

## Students to summarize their learning

3-2-1 - 114

Interactive Notebooks - 228

Three-Column Charts - 113

Scavenger Hunt - 104-105

Podcasts, blogs, etc. - 13, 73, 133-134

Journals/Interactive Notebooks - 14, 228

Graffiti - 92

Tic-Tac-Toe - 98

Ticket to Leave - 115

Connection Collections - 118

Think-Pair-Share - 112

ABC to XYZ - 119

## To check for understanding

Signal Cards - 154

Line-Ups - 101-102

Slates - 156

Sort Cards - 94

Scavenger Hunt - 104-105

Think-Pair-Share - 112

I Have the Question...? - 95

Numbered Heads Together - 103

## To have students "handle" their learning

Inside-Outside Circles - 93

Tic-Tac-Toe - 98

MI Kinesthetic Strategies - 128

Sort Cards - 94

Five Card Draw - 97

All Hands on Deck - 96

Connection Collections - 118

## To build in movement

Scavenger Hunt - 104-105

Stir the Class - 106

Graffiti - 92

Inside-Outside Circles - 93

Line-Ups - 101-102

MI Kinesthetic Strategies - 128

Walking Tour - 116-117

Learning Buddies - 99-100

Corners - 90

# Self-Assessment Assignments

Access your practice around each of these variables to ensure that the assignments you design are a good use of time and energy for you and your students.

## Almost Always (A), Sometimes (S), Not Yet (N)

- \_\_\_\_\_ I provide a clear explanation of the task so that students know exactly what they are supposed to do. To double check my clarity, I complete the task following the directions exactly as they are written.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I provide the specific purpose for the task so that students know why they are engaged in the project or assignment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I explain the relation of the assignment or project to the learning outcomes, standards, key concepts, and essential understandings that provide the focus for our work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I clearly articulate the relevance of this assignment to life beyond the classroom.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I consider who might be an audience (beyond my inbox) and have students complete the work with that audience in mind.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I know and communicate to students the levels and kinds of thinking required by the task.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I consider how to build student choice into the task and include choice as often as possible.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am purposeful in the selection and communication of the working conditions for student learning. That is:
  - Individual and group work is identified.
  - Roles are assigned as appropriate.
  - Materials, resources, and equipment are identified and readily available to students.
  - Administrative constraints are planned and communicated: time line, order of tasks, how to obtain help and answers to questions, etc.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I task analyze so that I know who has the prerequisite skills and knowledge to successfully complete the task and then build background knowledge and provide scaffolding to those who do not have the needed skills and knowledge.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I communicate exactly how students will know when they have successfully completed the task.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I provide models of and/or practice with new behaviors, processes, and products.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I ensure that students know what to do when they are finished with the assignment or project.

# Integrating Technology

## WebQuests

Bernie Dodge, San Diego State University, created a model for web-based learning experiences. Access information and hundreds of examples of WebQuests at [www.webquest.org](http://www.webquest.org). There are almost 2,500 WebQuests published and ready for use with K-12 students. One of the purposes of these web-based learning experiences is to maximize the time students spend using the information rather than spending time looking for the information. Additionally, the site includes templates and guidelines for teacher and student-made WebQuests.

## CyberGuides

This amazing collection of lesson plans available at <http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/cyberguide.html> includes ready-to-use standards-based lessons on virtually every piece of literature being studied in U.S. schools today. For example, there are CyberGuides for *Stellaluna*, *Two Bad Ants*, *Blue Willow*, *The Giver*, *Canterbury Tales*, *The Odyssey*, *Hamlet*, and hundreds more. There are also CyberGuides for 20 foreign language texts.

## In the News

Kent Willmann, high school social studies teacher, St. Vrain Valley School District, Longmont, Colorado, has the three computers in his classroom on three different news sources such as CNN International, BBC, Reuters, or Aljazeera. Each day three students are assigned to read the current news about the region of the world they area currently studying. These web-based learning experiences provide up-to-the-minute relevance for the area being studied and provide students multiple perspectives on world events.

## Podcasts

- Teachers and students all over the world are creating audio recordings and posting them online so that they can be listened to on computers or downloaded onto mobile devices like iPods or MP3 players. This allows teachers and students to create information for their own use as well as the use and enjoyment of others. In addition to creating original podcasts, thousands of podcasts are available at sites such as [www.epnweb.org](http://www.epnweb.org). Always review the podcasts before directing students to use them.
- If podcasts are a new instructional approach for you, listen to Kathy Schrock's podcasts at [nausetschools.org/podcasts.htm](http://nausetschools.org/podcasts.htm) for reassurance and information. The only equipment you need is a computer, access to the Internet, and an inexpensive microphone. Give students the assignment of creating podcasts and learn from them.

# Thinking Skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

## Creative Thinking is

- open-minded
- fluent
- flexible
- innovative
- adaptative
- visualizing
- done with future-oriented lens
- synthesizing
- metaphorical
- responsible risk taking



## Metacognitive Thinking *(thinking about your thinking)*

- set goals
- have repertoire of thinking skills
- know which skills to use when
- monitor effectiveness of efforts
- monitor results
- assess processes and products

## Conceptual Thinking

*(includes creative, critical, and metacognitive thinking)*

- examine facts
- connect facts to prior knowledge
- seek and see patterns
- form conclusions or generalizations
- transfer understanding across time and situations

(Erickson, 2008)

Aha!

## Introspective Thinking *(knowing self)*

- know own preferences for processing information and the world
- self-assess and self-adjust
- recognize own emotions
- recognize own world lens, perspective, and bias
- aware of own strengths and weaknesses



# Thinking Skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

## Systems Thinking

*(organizational, social and technological systems)*

- understand systems
- monitor and correct systems performance
- improve and design systems

(SCANS Report, 1992)

## Critical Thinking

*(skills apply to the acceptance, use, and creation of information and conclusions)*

Determine

- criteria to be used to assess information
- accuracy and relevance of information
- credibility of sources
- reliability and validity of the data used to support the information or conclusions drawn

Identify and reconcile

- inconsistencies
- lack of data to support conclusions
- missing/omitted information
- bias or prejudices of source

Navigate unpredictable situations

## Collaborative Thinking

- read environment
- be empathic
- understand social context
- know when to lead and when to follow
- know what to say and not to say

## Analytical Thinking

- note and remember facts and details
- grasp key points
- identify critical attributes
- sequence steps and events
- compare and contrast
- note similarities and differences
- identify patterns and trends
- determine cause and effect
- use data to make predictions

**Aha!**

**???**

**!**

# Orchestrating the Learning Environment

## Stop the Stoplight!

No more names on the board! No more names in lights! No more student's hearts in and out of the teacher's heart! What were we thinking when we engaged in such humiliating practices? Just imagine how we would feel if the principal or workshop leader wrote our names on the board when we arrived late, forgot our materials, had a side conversation, or some other infraction. If that response would make us feel bad, it has to be true for children as well. Yes, we should communicate clear expectations and have attitude adjustment chats with students, but we should have them privately. Nagging and public humiliation does not work in international relations and it does not work in the classroom. We want to provide students growth-producing feedback on both academic and behavioral issues and then provide scaffolding so that they can be successful.

## Stop the Pop Quizzes!

We should not use assessment as a management tool. The purpose of assessment is to help the students and teacher know what is being learned and to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the instructional program.

## Design a Strong Instructional Program!

Rather than focusing time and energy developing and implementing an elaborate control and compliance system, spend your time and energy on designing a strong instructional program. Humans, young and old, tend to act out when they are frustrated or bored. Given clear and realistic expectations along with engaging and relevant learning exercises, we will almost always join in the learning process with enthusiasm.

So, what do you do when clearly communicated and realistic expectations are not met? See the next two pages for alternatives to public humiliation and the gotcha' game of pop quizzes.





# Getting Started with Action Research

According to St. Vrain Valley School District's (Longmont, Colorado) **Results-Based Professional Development Models**, action research is:

- A methodical evaluation of topics or issues about teaching practice and student performance
- Research-based, data-driven, and centered on student learning
- A structure for determining areas of focus for research, for gathering data, and for writing summary reports that describe observations and findings
- Generating information that is talked about, shared with students and colleagues, and acted upon

While action research may be conducted by an individual teacher, the results should be shared with colleagues and impact their practice as well. A team approach to action research could provide valuable school improvement information and probably develop on-site expertise on the selected area of study.

**The Results-Based Professional Development Models** cited above, as well as several **Tools for Schools** from the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) and a variety of books from the Association for Supervision and Evaluation (ASCD), provide in-depth information on the action research process.

## Possible Purposes of an Action Research Project

- to develop reflective, inquiry-based skills as a teaching professional
- to enhance teacher decision-making
- to pursue, in depth, a topic or research question that is important to you or your students
- to enhance student learning opportunities
- to transfer your discoveries to classroom practices

## Questions to Ask When Selecting a Research Question or Topic

- What questions do I have about instruction either in a general sense or in the context of my own teaching? (Example: How should phonics be incorporated in instruction? How should I teach spelling? When/How should I group for math instruction?)
- What issues have I been wrestling with as a teacher?
- What teaching methods would I like to investigate more fully in an action research study?
- What topics interest me most?
- Based on student data, what do I/we need to know or learn?

# Ordering Information

Books	Order #	Price
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<i>Creating a Culture for Learning</i>	11055	\$ 34.95
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<i>Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners Facilitator's Handbook</i>	11056	\$ 74.95
<i>Standards-Based Classroom Operator's Manual</i>	11012	\$ 24.95
<i>Strategies in Action: A Collection of Classroom Applications: Volume I</i>	11049	\$ 19.95
<i>Strategies in Action: Applications in Today's Diverse Classrooms: Volume II</i>	11054	\$ 19.95
<i>The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Mentor's Handbook</i>	11003	\$ 34.95
<i>Why Didn't I Learn This in College?</i>	11002	\$ 29.95
<i>Why Didn't I Learn This in College? &amp; The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Mentor's Handbook</i> <b>Save 20%</b>	11029	\$ 50.00
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