WELLSTON CITY SCHOOLS
CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION FOCUS

February 6, 2013   Submitted by Karen Boch

"Students who can identify what they are learning significantly outscore those who cannot."   *~Robert Marzano*

Purpose:
- To provide information on the role of the District Leadership Team
- To provide information on the Explicit Direct Instruction
- To provide information and feedback on the Instruction Rounds Process

INSTRUCTIONAL ROUNDS

FEEDBACK & INSTRUCTIONAL ROUNDS

Many times following Instructional Rounds, individuals want feedback on what transpired in their classrooms. ***The purpose of Instructional Rounds is not to evaluate individual performance.*** As a District Leadership Team, we will not be giving feedback to individuals as the process then becomes evaluative. Rounds are a way to progress monitor practices being put into place across the district. With the results, we develop recommendations to support the buildings' implementation efforts. If you ever would like feedback in order to enhance your practices, please ask. *Many of us would be willing to come in at a time outside of a Rounds Observation to provide feedback to you on what we see in your classroom related to our Problem of Practice without it being evaluative.*

PROBLEM OF PRACTICE:
FORMATIVE INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES (FIP)

Formative Instructional Practices consist of four components (see diagram below):
- ☆ Clear Learning Targets;
- ☆ Evidence of Learning is Collected & Documented
- ☆ Student Ownership of their Learning
- ☆ Effective Feedback.

While all the pieces of Formative Instructional Practices are critical to increased student achievement, the District Leadership Team along with members of the RttT Transformation Team has been focusing specifically on Clear Learning Targets.

Clear Learning targets drive the teaching and learning process. It is important that students see the relevance in what they are learning. Everyone should be focused on what students need to learn and be able to do. Clear learning targets answer the question, "Where am I going?"

LEARNING TARGETS ARE CLEAR — LEARN MORE

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING IS COLLECTED AND DOCUMENTED — LEARN MORE

STUDENTS TAKE OWNERSHIP OF THEIR LEARNING — LEARN MORE

FEEDBACK IS EFFECTIVE — LEARN MORE

WHY CLEAR LEARNING TARGETS?

Clear Learning Targets are beneficial for both the educators and the students. The question, "Where are we going?" is answered by deconstructing Ohio's New Learning Standards into student-friendly language.

As educators, we must be clear about the appropriate learning progressions for our students who are achieving below, at , or above the standards outlined at each grade level.

Clear learning targets help to communicate clearly to students and parents what the student should know and be able to do.

Based on the standards and the clear learning targets, we can develop quality rubrics and utilize strong and weak student work samples to assist both teachers and students identify their needs and strengths.

Clear learning targets allow us to collaboratively work together and create assessments better aligned to the standards which will ultimately benefit our students and increase achievement.

Clear Learning Targets: Connection to the Educator Standards

There is a connection to Clear Learning Targets in all five of the Educator Standards. However, the connection is explicitly stated in Standard 4.

Standard 4 [Instruction]: Teachers plan and deliver effective instruction that advances the learning of each individual student.
- ☐ **4.1 Teachers align their instructional goals and activities with school and district priorities and Ohio's academic content standards.**
- ☐ **4.3 Teachers communicate clear learning goals and explicitly link learning activities to those defined goals.**

Examples of Clear Learning Targets	Non-Examples
☆ I can find and compare lengths of segments.	☆ Students will understand graphing.
☆ I can describe the differences between Federalist and Anti-Federalists.	☆ Make inferences about relationships in bivariate data and recognize the difference between evidence of the relationship (correlation) and causation. 1-5.
☆ I can explain the use of stem cells.	
☆ I can identify key characteristics of a linear function and use them to create a graph.	☆ Read pages 80-91 and then answer questions
	☆ Do Exercise 3.7 on page 148
☆ I can identify key characteristics of a linear function and use them to create a graph.	☆ Adding Fractions
	☆ Students will underline words.

THANK YOU!

The District Leadership Team would like to express our gratitude and thank to all of you for giving us the opportunity to visit many of the classrooms in November, January and February.

The purpose of our visit was to use the Instructional Rounds process to find evidence of our Problem of Practice: Formative Instructional Practice with an emphasis on Clear Learning Targets.

After each session, the DLT looks at Next Steps by making recommendations for what can be done next week, next month, and next year. These recommendations are given to the principal to share with the Building Leadership Team. In turn, the BLT will develop an action plan.

THANK YOU

EXPLICIT DIRECT INSTRUCTION (EDI)
ARTICLE WRITTEN BY LINDA FINK

Explicit Direct Instruction (EDI) is a teaching approach with the goal of improving learning for all students. EDI is based on research which supports the idea that a well-crafted lesson results in better student learning which correlates with improved test scores. "Every time teaching improves…even a little bit…students learn more, and that's how test scores go up." (Explicit Direct Instruction, Hollingsworth and Ybarra, 2009, p.4).

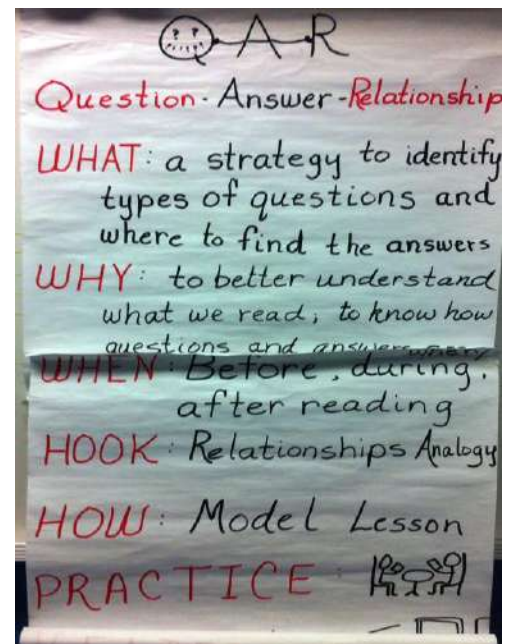**There are 5 specific instructional approach guidelines:**
- It is effective (students learn) and efficient (students learn quickly).
- It is based on research.
- The lesson planning process is clear and well-defined.
- The lesson planning process is independent of grade level, content, and student's age.
- It produces a high percentage of successful students.

EDI includes the following specific lesson design components:
- Learning Objective clearly describing what students must do by end of lesson; matches Independent Practice (what)
- Activate Prior Knowledge
- Concept Development (when do we use this)
- Skill Development – steps or processes used to execute skills in the Learning Objective (how)
- Lesson Importance (why)
- Guided Practice
- Lesson Closure
- Independent Practice

The EDI lesson uses the following delivery strategies:
- Checking for Understanding – a continual process
- Explaining - telling
- Modeling – thinking aloud to reveal strategic thinking
- Demonstrating – using physical objects to clarify content

Q A R
Question - Answer - Relationship
WHAT: a strategy to identify types of questions and where to find the answers
WHY: to better understand what we read, to know how questions and answers
WHEN: Before, during, after reading
HOOK: Relationships Analogy
HOW: Model Lesson
PRACTICE:

To put the EDI principle in a friendlier format, each lesson contains the following:
- What – What the lesson is about
- Why – Why this is important, how it relates to real life skills
- When – When this skill is used
- How – The steps for breaking down the skill.
- Hook – An activity to engage the learner's attention and to draw them in

This information should be put on a visual in order to continually refer to it and to check for student understanding. The "how" of the lesson can be extended over time until student understanding is achieved. This includes modeling the steps, practicing the steps with the whole group, practicing in small groups, and individual practice until the teacher is confident that students are able to demonstrate an understanding of what is being taught.

During the lesson and continuing through the practice, the teacher constantly checks for understanding, verifying that students are learning what is being taught while it is being taught. Checking for understanding determines the pace of the lesson, guarantees student success, confirms student knowledge, and improves classroom dynamics because students know the teacher will continually refer to the lesson visual and ask questions every 2-3 minutes.

Sample Lesson on teaching Mood in Literature:

WHAT: The underlying and pervasive feelings the reader gains from reading a text.

WHY: To better understand the characters' feelings and emotions
                 To make connections with and about the text
                 To better understand the writer's purpose and theme

WHEN: Before, during, and after reading
                 When we write

HOW: By looking for details, settings, descriptive words (adjectives, adverbs), imagery, figurative language, characters' feelings/emotions, illustrations

HOOK: Youtube.com – Short video on mood

1. Continue the HOW part of the lesson by reading a short book or excerpt aloud to the class stopping to note any words or phrases that contribute to the mood.
2. Next, have students read a selection with you asking them to note words or phrases contributing to mood.
3. Stop to review the what, when, why, and how of the lesson by asking those questions or having students read directly from the visual.
4. Provide reading selections to small groups of students or pairs of students. Have them read selection and identify what words/phrases contribute to the mood. Students can highlight this information or put it on a post-it to share out.
5. Check for understanding –What are we learning? Why? When do we use this information? How?
6. The next step would be independent practice and can relate to the text or selection being used for classroom instruction. Or, this can be a homework assignment once you are sure students understand what they are doing and how to do it.
7. Check for understanding.
8. Assessment – either formative or summative.

It will surprise and amaze you how well students will respond to this kind of instruction and well-constructed lessons. It will also clarify for you the standards being taught and the steps for reaching student success. Best wishes as you try this approach. Please feel free to contact me (Linda Fink) with any questions, concerns, or for assistance.

The information presented here is from Explicit Direct Instruction by Hollingsworth and Ybarra and workshops presented by Beth Duffy from the Athens ESC.
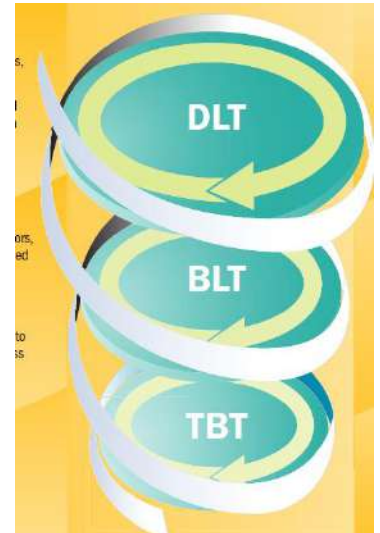
DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TEAM
Roles & Responsibilities

The District Leadership Team (DLT) was established during the 2007-2008 school year. The membership is comprised of teachers, WTA Representation, and administrators from all buildings.

Current DLT members include: Jackie Holzapfel, Cindy Ferguson, Tammy Smith, David Souders, Bronwyn Ervin, Nancy Huston, Melissa Justice, Valerie Carroll, Rich Maskiell, Kyle Exline, Rod Harness, Meaghan Lundeen, Linda Fink (Literacy Specialist), Belinda Dixon (WTA President), Leah Massie, Megan Aubrey, Mike Lackey, Shane Stevens, Sandy Pappas, Dana Eberts and Karen Boch.

The primary role of the District Leadership Team is to promote a culture of common expectations or commitment by maintaining a district-wide focus on high achievement for all students through the implementation and monitoring of the continuous improvement process.

As a district, we have worked to put structures in place that support the Ohio Improvement Process including establishing collaborative structures, Building Leadership Teams and Teacher Based Teams.   All of the team structures are interrelated and share the following functions (The Ohio Improvement Process Guide, 2012, page 13).

- ✓ Establishes, implements, monitors, and evaluates goals, strategies, indicators, and actions
- ✓ Identifies specific data and tools to collect information from the BLTs and TBTs
- ✓ Makes recommendations to BLTs
- ✓ Creates, implements, monitors, and evaluates actions aligned to district goals, strategies, and indicators
- ✓ Provides job-embedded professional development to teachers on the TBT process
- ✓ Monitors teacher-based teams and classrooms
- ✓ Follows the 5-Step TBT Process
- ✓ Periodically assesses the effectiveness of the TBT
- ✓ Collects, charts, and analyzes data from BLTs
- ✓ Uses data analysis to generalize successes across the district
- ✓ Revised the district plan as appropriate
- ✓ Reports BLT, TBT, and classroom monitoring data and results
- ✓ Reports challenges in implementing the district plan
- ✓ Identifies support needed for implementation with fidelity
- ✓ Reports TBT data using district tools and templates, including aggregated TBT data for the building
- ✓ Requests support for implementation with fidelity

During the fall of 2010, the Wellston City Schools DLT (District Leadership Team) began exploring the idea of monitoring tools that would be helpful in identifying if the professional development provided by the district was effective, or if it needed to be re-examined. It was at this time that the team decided to move forward with further training on the Instructional Rounds process, which has been led by, Dr. Jim Salzman, Executive Director of the Stevens Literacy Center at Ohio University.

Through the Instructional Rounds process, the District Leadership Team will monitor implementation of our Problem of Practice (Formative Instructional Practices). Additionally, the Rounds process will be used to determine the level of support we need to provide to teachers, departments, grade levels, buildings or the district. This is different from past practice in that we have never really had a method to evaluate the effectiveness of district-wide professional development. With that being said, we are still making adjustments to the process.

As a district, we will continue to work towards improvement and implementation of the Ohio Improvement Process and Instructional Rounds in a systematic and systemic manner. Continuous Improvement is a journey that takes patience, perseverance, collaboration and team work. It is through an all hands on deck approach that we will provide excellence in education for all learners!

Wellston City Schools: Soaring to New Heights