

Thursday, May 31, 2007

## Quick Tips

### Teacher Sharing: Standards are the Key to Efficient Sharing

Standards are the key to efficient and effective teacher sharing. But, we are not talking about anything like the arbitrary, grade level/ scope and sequence, or rubric-based standards (while these are invaluable).

What we are describing is a practical, "technical or project management; kind of meaning for the term, "standards."

What we are suggesting is just obtaining agreement with other teachers, agreement with team teachers; or, taking the easy route and appropriating standards similar to the ones that are promoted on Websites projects such as Classroom Toolkit Formality not Needed for Forms, Templates, Checklists, Frameworks Just one or two teachers agreeing to cooperate by using the same forms, templates and checklists; can create huge paybacks in time saved.

For example, if three teachers work together on the same lessons, individual effort is reduced by two thirds. Four teachers working together decreases the individual workload by three quarters.

And, with high-speed computer networks, teachers can work together from just about anywhere in the world. (How can any teacher justify blazing a fresh trail for every lesson when so many willing partners are available? Why "go it alone?") Leveraging and Streamlining your Workload A standardized system, such as the modular system that Classroom Toolkit recommends, is ideal for building a library of reusable instructional and classroom management components.

These standardized strategies can take the form of

Lesson Plans

Templates

Forms

Checklists (for students and teachers)

Thematic Unit Frameworks

Open-Ended Worksheets

Rubrics, especially self-correcting, group correcting models

Flowcharts and Mind Maps

Visit the Classroom Toolkit Website for samples of structured, modular learning materials.

Classroom Toolkit's materials are available for free use, as long as any subsequent sharing continues to provide the materials without cost. The idea is to wean yourself, and your colleagues, from the bland materials that connect with your district's adopted textbooks, to free yourself from the addiction to blackline master teacher books (purchased at your own expense, using your disposable income), and to extricate yourself from the bumps and grind of the photocopy chorus line as you tread water to keep a one or two day fix of worksheets available on your desk.

Samples of what can be done include:

Daily Oral Language

Daily Oral Math

Daily Oral Vocabulary

Graphic Organizers

Thematic Units

Lesson Plans

Story Starter Framework

Math Word Problem Framework The potential for time saving multiplies as you enlist your colleagues to partner with you. Approach them now. Selling the concept will be easy. Do you know of a colleague who would rather work more just so they can "do it all," all by themselves?

If you do, steer clear of this colleague. You don't need a partner like that.

But, if you find that you have "rugged individualistic tendencies yourself," obtain therapy and overcome this compulsive addiction.

Your students deserve more of your time, and the more that you streamline your job with shared standards, the more time that you will have available to focus upon your students.

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