Improving Instructional Practice

Mark Walker, Principal
Sarah Salter, Assistant Principal
Elsternwick Primary School
Melbourne

Paper Title:
Using assessment data and feedback to improve instructional practice

www.mwalker.com.au
Goals

• Define our theory of action and context
• Instructional Improvement – a range of starting points
• Overcoming and resolving impediments along the way
"You don't change performance without changing the instructional core," states Anrig Professor Richard Elmore. "The relationship of the teacher and the student in the presence of content must be at the center of efforts to improve performance."

http://www.uknow.gse.harvard.edu/leadership/leadership001a.html
Theory of Action

Content

Teacher <-> Student
Leadership Dimensions
Derived from Quantitative Studies Linking Leadership with Student Outcomes

1. Establishing Goals and Expectations

2. Resourcing Strategically

3. Planning, Coordinating and Evaluating Teaching and the Curriculum

4. Promoting and Participating in Teacher Learning and Development

5. Ensuring an Orderly and Supportive Environment

Effect Size

Vivanne Robinson
Broad Context

- From curriculum modification to building teacher instructional capacity
- From private to public practice
- From prescription to mindful practitioners

Local Context

- Challenges of industrial agreements that amongst other items specify time allocations
- Challenges of a workforce in transition
## Improvement Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protocols</th>
<th>Walkthroughs</th>
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M Walker & S Salter. Singapore 2009
Essential Ingredients of School Reform

• Reciprocal accountability
• Distributed leadership
• Protected Meeting Time
• Ready access to experts
• Inclusion of Specialist Teachers
• Use of protocols
• Voluntary Participation
Protocol “Mindful” Conversations

- Conversational Norms
- Shared understandings around Student Work
- Description not judgement
- Implications for Practice – individual and school
- Opportunity to reflect
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement Strategies</th>
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<td>Protocols</td>
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<td>Walkthroughs</td>
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</table>
Principal’s Time

Where
• Office area
• Hallways/Grounds
• Off campus
• In classrooms

Time Spent
• 65%
• 17%
• 11%
• 7%

Elsternwick Primary Principles of Teaching and Learning

- Teachers put clear **scaffolds and structures** in place to support students’ thinking and learning.
- Connections are made with **students’ interests and lives** beyond school.
- Students are **actively** involved in their learning and when they interact with each other and learn interdependently.
- The **learning environment** is supportive and includes positive relationships. Teaching is passionate and students enjoy learning.
- Tasks are open ended - **allowing for different learning styles** and a range of outcomes. Individual needs and learning preferences are catered for.
- Teachers have **high expectations** of all learners and are **explicit** about what they are teaching.
- Students have **ownership of and take responsibility** for their learning.
- Learning is authentic and **hands on** - students are regularly involved in real, hands on experiences.
- Learning is **connected beyond the school** - into the local and global community.
- Students are engaged in **higher order thinking** - they reason, create and reflect. They think about their thinking.

July 2006
Walkthrough – what to look for

Cooperative Learning
Inquiry
Direct Instruction
Concept Attainment
Simulations
Mind mapping

Establish routines
Defuse power seeking behaviours
Informal and formal contracts
Provide choices
Low key responses

Art
Music
Mathematics
Science
Social Sciences
Literacy
Physical Education and Health

Formulate objectives
Frame questions
Accommodate learning styles
Stimulate interest
Give clear directions


http://www.beyondmonet.ca/
classification

Explicit Instruction

Supportive Learning Environment

M Walker & S Salter. Singapore 2009
Achievement Data

• We know that the biggest differences lie between classrooms in the same school
• Does the data confirm this? – Yes
• What did we do?
• Share our data
Why Data?

“The driving purpose for collecting data is for instructional improvement. There is no way to bridge the gap between data and results without changing what is taught, how it is taught, and how it is assessed. Instructional improvement is the last and essential segment linking data to results”.

What can a focus on data do for you?

• Help teachers understand why there are between class differences
• Help teachers ensure that there is consistency between classes with what is taught and how it is taught
Teacher Judgement Data

English Dimension Rating Percentages
Class Group SSA Girls and Boys

Mathematics Dimension Rating Percentages
Class Group SSA Girls and Boys

English Dimension Rating Percentages
Class Group SSB Girls and Boys

Mathematics Dimension Rating Percentages
Class Group SSB Girls and Boys

English Dimension Rating Percentages
Class Group SSC Girls and Boys

Mathematics Dimension Rating Percentages
Class Group SSC Girls and Boys

English Dimension Rating Percentages
Class Group SSD Girls and Boys

Mathematics Dimension Rating Percentages
Class Group SSD Girls and Boys

Legend:
- Reading
- Speaking and Listening
- Writing
- Measurement, chance and data
- Number
- Working mathematically
### Spelling Inventory Classroom Composite

**Date:** 02/2009

**School:** Elsternwick Primary School  
**Grade:** 1  
**Class:**  

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<th>Name</th>
<th>Emergent Late</th>
<th>Letter Name - Alphabetic</th>
<th>Within Word Pattern</th>
<th>Syllables &amp; Affixes</th>
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<tbody>
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**Possible Points:**
- Consonants: 7, 7
- Short Vowels: 7, 7
- Diagraphs: 7
- Blends: 7, 7, 7
- Long Vowels: 7, 7
- Other Vowels: 7
- Inflected Endings: 7

**Correct Spelling:**
- Hugo: 6
- ackson: 4
- S, Charlotte: 5

**Total Points:**
- Hugo: 35
- ackson: 35
- S, Charlotte: 33

*Highlight for instruction:*

- Consonants: 2, 2
- Short Vowels: 7
- Blends: 17
- Other Vowels: 11
- Inflected Endings: 17

**Date:** 02/2009
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Highlight for instruction: 1 1 4 6 5 15 16 17
Defining common assessment

• Teachers assess writing using standards
• From the lowest to the highest – 2 levels apart i.e. 4 years
• Continue with the process to refine our judgement – use other annotated samples
• Finally achieve agreement
Sally's Teddy

The day long ago Sally asked a few friends over, she asked her friends Lucas, Jamie, Louca and Bridget her closest friend and they all came to play so Sally said “let’s go to the forest” and so they all went to the forest. Sally took her favorite teddy (it was not a very good idea) but she did. So off they went and then Jamie and Louca said “let’s go and climb the tree over there”, the others said “Yes that’s a great idea”. So Lucas, Jamie, Louca, Sally and Bridget all climbed the tree but Sally had her teddy so she put next to the tree they were climbing. So off she went up the tree and caught up to the others, the tree was not very interesting so they went back down the tree. They had not gone very far and there was a tree.
“The enemy is ambiguity” by Douglas Reeves
Protocols | Walkthroughs
---|---
Achievement Data | Coaching
Coaching

- The model – sitting beside the teacher
- Experts in their field
- Teachers with coaching training
- Both working 1:1 with teachers
- Meet with teachers before and after sessions
- Pose questions, facilitating reflection
- Sometimes modelling teaching
Teacher Study Groups

• Voluntary
• Looking at improvement in writing instruction
• Reading a variety of papers
• Watching film of quality teaching instruction
• Teachers defining a project
• Lots of discussion
content

Study groups
Coaching
Protocols
Achievement data
Walkthroughs

teacher

student

E5
Elmore warns,  
"If you can't see it in the classroom, it's not there."  

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