



The DCPS Academic Looking Glass

Issue 9

January 3 – 16, 2008

The DCPS Academic Looking Glass is produced bi-weekly to assist principals, teachers, parents, and district staff as a quick reference guide about what students are learning during a sliding two week window.

The learning schedules listed are not comprehensive due to space constraints and should be considered fluid in nature, as teachers are given flexibility in the speed of coverage according to the needs of students. More information on the district's curriculum can be accessed on the DCPS website at www.dreamsbeginhere.org.

Elementary Reading (Grades K-5)

WRITER'S WORKSHOP

Analyzing student work against state and national standards is paramount to planning purposeful, focused instruction. In order to offer students the right instruction at the right time, it is important for teachers to be aware of each student's level of understanding. In writing, our teachers should have a method of gathering and sharing information about the writing knowledge and application that a student exhibits in a writing piece (i.e. sticky-notes). By compiling information gathered when analyzing their students' writing pieces, teachers have information to guide whole-group, small-group and individual instructional planning and conferencing. (NCEE, 2004)

A method for Analyzing Student Work: "The Sticky-Strategy"
The sticky-note strategy is a quick and effective way for teachers to gather data about student writing performances as well as to communicate to students what they are doing well and what they may improve. Moreover, this assessment method helps the teacher determine the instruction that is needed. The sticky-note method may be used to assess the overall strengths and weaknesses of individual students, becoming a vital guide for student-teacher conferences and student revision. Using a Class Profile to compile the individual sticky-note data for the whole class provides valuable guidance for planning whole class instruction. The sticky-note method is one that can eventually be adopted by students as they begin to self-assess their own writing pieces. Below is a sample of a simple template for the sticky-note method a teacher might use:

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Elements the writer has included in the writing	Elements the writer has not included in the writing.

English Language Arts

Grade	Student focus:
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognizing the elements of fiction - Recognizing literary merit
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognizing author's purpose - Recognizing common elements across fairy tales
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding mood and tone - Recognizing author's purpose - Recognizing great authors by their distinctive styles
9-12	<p>SpringBoard 9th: Poetry Circle; Researching & Presenting a Poet; Semester Exams; Romeo and Juliet</p> <p>SpringBoard 10th: Persuasive Essay; Community: Gender Concept / What is a Hero?; Semester Exams</p> <p>SpringBoard 11th: Working with Critical Reviews; Writing an Analytic Essay; Fears & Expectations; Presenting the Pledge</p> <p>SpringBoard 12th: Building a Portfolio: Research Proposal; Building Background for Othello; Semester Exams</p>

READ 180

	Student focus:
Days 81-90	<p>Full implementation for Instructional Model:</p> <p>Whole-Class Direct Instruction: (20 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Direct instruction to the whole class is provided using the rBook - Workshop in consumable rBook (Note: Completion of each workshop may vary depending on the needs of the students.) <p>Small-Group Rotations: (60 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 20 minutes of individually paced instructional software - 20 minutes of small group diagnostically informed instruction using the rBook to meet individual needs - 20 minutes of independent reading in which students read books that are Lexile level appropriate or on grade level with the assistance of an audio book <p>Whole-Group Wrap-Up: (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closure and review of the Read 180 daily experience <p>NOTE: Teachers should be prepared to administer the third SRI from January 17 to February 1.</p>

Science

Grade	Student focus:
K	Lab activities that explore observations made using the five senses. Introduction to the needs of living things.
1	Lab activities that explore how people help or harm the Earth. Explore the physical makeup of Earth and plants and animals that live on the Earth.
2	Lab activities that summarize weather data collected for one month and using weather information to make decisions in daily life.
3	Lab activities that explore how water moving through the water cycle changes Earth's surface.
4	Lab activities that explore how electricity produces a magnetic force. Trace the flow of energy in an electrical circuit.
5	Lab activities that explore how mass, gravity, and friction affect the motion of an object. Lab activities that explore how energy is transformed from one form of energy to another.
6	Lab activities that explore earthquakes and volcanoes, rock cycle, and geological landforms.
7	Lab activities that explore bacteria, protists, fungi, plants, cells, and the classification of living things.
8	Lab activities that explore stars and galaxies, gravity in space and characteristics of planets in the solar system.
9-12	<p>Earth Space: Complete unit on factors that affect global climates and produce 3 articles including an editorial that detail their findings and their opinion on global warming as their chapter challenge.</p> <p>Biology: The cell, active and passive transport, organization, and homeostasis</p> <p>Chemistry: Write and balance chemical equations; calculate molar masses of elements and compounds. Complete an investigation of the percent composition of an element found in a compound.</p> <p>Physics: Investigate the effects of gravity on mass and weight and the components of projectile motion.</p>

Mathematics

Grade	Student focus:
K	Find different ways to visualize and arrange a set of six objects. Develop strategies for counting and keeping track of quantities through 12.
1	Observe, describe, compare, compose, and decompose shapes. Use rotation and reflection to arrange shapes. Notice relationships between shapes.
2	Develops strategies for comparing two quantities. Solves, records, and compares solution strategies.
3	Understand that fractions are equal parts. Partition areas into equal parts. Identify fractional parts that add to one whole. Exchange equivalent fractions and add and subtract fractions.

Mathematics (con't)

Grade	Student focus:
4	Calculate change. Count up to make change. Estimate making change. Estimate distances in and calculate total amounts miles and tenths of miles. Use a map scale. Measure distances on a map. Combine numbers in the hundreds and thousands.
5	Explore attributes, sort, and classify triangles and quadrilaterals. Generate geometric figures from descriptions of their properties.
6	<p>Standard: Concludes modeling situations involving fractions, decimals and percents. Add, subtract, multiply and divide with decimals. Begins exploring the process of data investigation, such as posing questions, and collecting data. Represents data using line graphs, bar graphs, stem-and-leaf plots and coordinate graphs.</p> <p>Advanced: Finds volumes and surface areas for rectangular prisms. Finds volumes for cylinders. Reasons about problems involving surface area and volume of prisms, cylinders, cones, and spheres.</p>
7	<p>Standard: Represent relationships among variables in a variety of ways. Solve linear equations. Find the slope of a line from a graph, table or equation. Find the y-intercept of a linear equation. Write linear equations given the slope and y-intercept.</p> <p>Advanced (Pre-Algebra): Read, write and interpret large numbers using scientific, standard and calculating notations.</p>
8	<p>Standard (Algebra IA): Solve systems of linear equations by graphing, substituting, and linear combination. Solve equations using addition, subtraction and multiplicity properties. Use appropriate mathematical symbols to translate word phrases into variable expressions. Find images for transformations.</p> <p>Advanced (Algebra I): Evaluate variable expressions for specific values. Use mathematical symbols to translate word phrases into equations or inequalities. Add & subtract polynomials.</p>
9-12	<p>Algebra I: Visualize square and rectangular patterns; Multiply binomials; Expand, simplify and factor polynomials</p> <p>Algebra II: Review and extend applications of logs; Explore inequalities through graphing; Apply properties of absolute value, circles, radicals, and inequalities</p> <p>Geometry: Review and extend congruence and proof; Explore similarity between given polygons</p> <p>Pre-Calculus: Sketch graphs of parametric equations and change to rectangular equations by eliminating the parameter</p>



Social Studies

Many Florida teachers, especially social studies teachers, are increasingly asked to improve students' skills in learning from text, causing some teachers to wonder, "Am I supposed to teach social studies content or reading skills?" The answer "Yes!" may be confusing at first but can be clearer with a closer look.

Many of us have been fortunate to have had great teachers and professors. We can probably remember key concepts and theories they helped us to understand. However, every one of these teachers also helped us develop our skills in learning from our texts. For example, they helped us set a purpose for reading, link new knowledge to existing knowledge, acquire content-specific vocabulary, and monitor our own comprehension. All great teachers, from the elementary school to the university, teach both content and the skills for reading content text.

Teaching students content and teaching students the skills to understand content texts really are inseparable; as the old song says, they "go together like a horse and carriage." We know the idea that "teaching is telling" is incomplete- that we must do more than tell students what they should know, we must design goals and activities that promote (even inspire!) understanding. As the Greek historian Plutarch wrote, "The mind is not a vessel to be filled but a fire to be kindled."

The Florida Association of Social Studies Supervisors has published a thoughtful and research-based Literacy Statement located at <http://www.fasss.org/FASSSLiteracyStatement.htm>.

Here is a brief summary: Many standardized tests, such as the FCAT, ask students to understand textbook passages. Often these passages are about social studies content. To do well on these tests, students need to have good reading skills *and* a good knowledge of social studies content. Therefore, secondary social studies teachers should embrace teaching skills in learning from text, *and* elementary teachers should embrace teaching social studies content. In other words, all teachers, regardless of level, should teach content and teach skills in learning from content texts.

To reach this goal we will all need to work hard without being rigid, and be flexible without being soft. We can begin by agreeing that great teaching is every great teacher's joy and duty!



Keystone

(Career Research and Decision Making)

	Student focus:
Week 17 (Sessions 39-40)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Career Choices Text and Workbook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determining Salaries - Making Choices: Money Isn't Everything - Possibilities Readings: "The Gift of the Magi" - FACTS.org: Develop ePEP and Select Major Area of Interest - Student Artifacts: Continue Budget Project
Week 18 (Sessions 41-42)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Career Choices Text and Workbook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How an Education Can Increase Financial Success - College Ed Workbook: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Your Ideal Career: Understanding Your Options - Personal Styles and College and Paths - FACTS.org: Develop ePEP and Select Major Area of Interest - Student Artifacts: Portfolio Chart Work



Advanced Placement (AP)

Schedules for other DCPS offered AP courses will be listed as they become available.

	Student focus:
English Language & Composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exposition: Cause and Effect - Review for Semester Exams - Semester Exams
AP English Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Characteristics of the Greek and Shakespearean tragedies and the tragic hero - Semester Exams
Statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter 6 & 7 Assessment - The Binomial & Geometric Distributions
US History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Late 19th Century: Urban Society & Western Development - AP Exam Prep: Multiple Choice - Semester Exams
Human Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Geopolitics - Semester Re-teaching and Review - Semester Exams

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)

STUDENT LEADERS AS RECRUITERS

AVID encourages students to become leaders. AVID students are well rounded educationally and socially, which allows them to become excellent role models for other students. They learn how to work with all groups, developing and practicing leadership and organizational skills school-wide. These skills are discovered in the AVID classroom, where students organize study groups, provide tutoring for classmates, plan fundraising activities and fieldtrips, and engage in public speaking within the school and community. AVID students are also encouraged to work with younger students at neighboring elementary and middle schools. Building leaders provides AVID students with a sense of pride for the school and community.

AVID student leaders are essential in the recruitment process. They help the program develop a positive image and increase the number of students who join. Now is the time for schools to advertise the program with posters, news articles, announcements, and letters. Schools may also want to schedule informational parent nights to promote their AVID program.

The AVID Student Profile

Students with Academic Potential:

- Average to High Test Scores
- 2.0-3.5 GPA in non-college prep curriculum
- College Potential with Support
- Desire and Determination

Meet One or More of the Following Criteria

- First to Attend College
- Historically Underserved in Four-year College Programs
- Low Income
- Special Circumstances



Special Services

(Exceptional Education and Student Services)

SAFE & HEALTHY SCHOOLS: FOUNDATIONS

Foundations, a Safe and Civil Schools project, focuses on increasing safety and civility in schools through a positive proactive systematic approach to school-wide discipline and climate. *Foundations* is a process not a canned program. It is designed to be ongoing and is built around a continuous improvement cycle. The process is guided by a school team representative of faculty and staff and is ideally co-chaired by a Principal/designated administrator and a classroom teacher. School teams attend ongoing training covering topics such as collecting and analyzing discipline data, improving safety in common areas through effective supervision, developing school wide guidelines for success, and skillfully managing angry students through verbal de-escalation. School teams report progress on implementation at the beginning of each training session. Many teachers report that this opportunity to learn from other schools is one of the most valuable aspects of the training. After reporting out, teams receive training in a *Foundations* content area by either a national or district trainer. They are then given team time to process this information and formulate a plan for implementation at their schools. The following are training topics for this year:

- Structuring for Success within a Common Area
- Establishing a Plan for Developing and Implementing Guidelines for Success
- Ensuring Adequate Supervision in Common Areas
- Defining Staff Beliefs Regarding Behavior Management and Discipline
- Dealing with Discipline Problems
- Encouragement Procedures to Motivate Students
- Meeting the Basic Needs of Students
- Verbal De-Escalation with Angry Students
- Classroom Based Behavior Strategies
- Addressing Safety Issues Related to Emergency Response in Schools

For questions or assistance please contact a Foundations Specialist in the Safe and Healthy Schools office at 390-2131.