Introduction to Rigor/Relevance Framework

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Appendix A

Rigor/Relevance Framework

The Rigor/Relevance Framework is a tool developed by staff of the International Center to examine curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The Rigor/Relevance Framework is based on two dimensions of higher standards and student achievement.

First, there is a continuum of knowledge that describes the increasingly complex ways in which we think. The Knowledge Taxonomy is based on the six levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy:

1. awareness
2. comprehension
3. application
4. analysis
5. synthesis
6. evaluation.

The low end of this continuum involves acquiring knowledge and being able to recall or locate that knowledge in a simple manner. Just as a computer completes a word search in a word processing program, a competent person at this level can scan through thousands of bits of information in the brain to locate that desired knowledge.

The high end of the Knowledge Taxonomy labels more complex ways in which individuals use knowledge. At this level, knowledge is fully integrated into one’s mind, and individuals can do much more than locate information. They can take several pieces of knowledge and combine them in both logical and creative ways. Assimilation of knowledge is a good way to describe this high level of the thinking continuum. Assimilation is often referred to as a higher-order thinking skill: at this level, the student can solve multistep problems and create unique work and solutions.

The second continuum, known as the Application Model, is one of action. The five levels of this continuum

1. knowledge in one discipline
2. apply in discipline
3. apply across disciplines
4. apply to real-world predictable situations
5. apply to real-world unpredictable situations

describe putting knowledge to use. While the low end is knowledge acquired for its own sake, the high end signifies action — use of that knowledge to solve complex real-world problems and to create projects, designs, and other works for use in real-world situations.

This material is taken from Chapter 1 of the Rigor and Relevance Handbook
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The Rigor/Relevance Framework has four quadrants.

Quadrant A represents simple recall and basic understanding of knowledge for its own sake. Quadrant C represents more complex thinking but still knowledge for its own sake. Examples of quadrant A knowledge are knowing that the world is round and that Shakespeare wrote *Hamlet*.

Quadrant C embraces higher levels of knowledge, such as knowing how the U.S. political system works and analyzing the benefits and challenges of the cultural diversity of this nation versus other nations.

Quadrants B and D represent action or high degrees of application. Quadrant B would include knowing how to use math skills to make purchases and count change. The ability to access information in wide-area network systems and the ability to gather knowledge from a variety of sources to solve a complex problem in the workplace are types of quadrant D knowledge.

Each of these four quadrants can also be labeled with a term that characterizes the learning or student performance.
Quadrant A — Acquisition

Students gather and store bits of knowledge and information. Students are primarily expected to remember or understand this acquired knowledge.

Quadrant B — Application

Students use acquired knowledge to solve problems, design solutions, and complete work. The highest level of application is to apply appropriate knowledge to new and unpredictable situations.

Quadrant C — Assimilation

Students extend and refine their acquired knowledge to be able to use that knowledge automatically and routinely to analyze and solve problems and create unique solutions.

Quadrant D — Adaptation

Students have the competence to think in complex ways and also apply knowledge and skills they have acquired. Even when confronted with perplexing unknowns, students are able to use extensive knowledge and skill to create solutions and take action that further develops their skills and knowledge.

The Rigor/Relevance Framework is a fresh approach to looking at curriculum standards and assessment. It is based on traditional elements of education yet encourages movement to application of knowledge instead of maintaining an exclusive focus on acquisition of knowledge.

The Framework is easy to understand. With its simple, straightforward structure, it can serve as a bridge between school and the community. It offers a common language with which to express the notion of a more rigorous and relevant curriculum and encompasses much of what parents, business leaders, and community members want students to learn. The Framework is versatile; it can be used in the development of instruction and assessment. Likewise, teachers can use it to measure their progress in adding rigor and relevance to instruction and to select appropriate instructional strategies to meet learner needs and higher achievement goals.

Here is an example involving technical reading and writing.

Quadrant A
Recall definitions of various technical terms.

Quadrant B
Follow written directions to install new software on a computer.

Quadrant C
Compare and contrast several technical documents to evaluate purpose, audience, and clarity.

Quadrant D
Write procedures for installing and troubleshooting new software.
Defining Rigor

A versatile way to define the level of rigor of curriculum objectives, instructional activities, or assessments is the Knowledge Taxonomy Verb List (see page 6). The Verb List can be used either to create a desired level of expected student performance or to evaluate the level of existing curriculum, instruction or assessment.

An example of student performance at various levels follows. Notice each statement starts with a verb that comes from the appropriate section of the Knowledge Taxonomy Verb List. The expected achievement level for teaching about nutrition can vary depending on the purpose of the instruction. If a teacher only wants students to acquire basic nutritional knowledge, a student performance set at level one of two is adequate. If the instruction is intended to have a more significant impact on nutritional habits then some of the objectives need to be similar to levels four through six.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1 – Knowledge</td>
<td>Label foods by nutritional groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2 – Comprehension</td>
<td>Explain nutritional value of individual foods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3 – Application</td>
<td>Make use of nutrition guidelines in planning meals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4 – Analysis</td>
<td>Examine success in achieving nutrition goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 5 – Synthesis</td>
<td>Develop personal nutrition goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 6 – Evaluation</td>
<td>Appraise results of personal eating habits over time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that each of the levels requires students to think differently. Levels four through six require more complex thinking than levels one through three.

When creating lesson plans and student objectives, selecting the proper word from the Knowledge Taxonomy Verb List can help to describe the appropriate performance. Simply start with a verb from the desired level and finish the statement with a specific description of that skill or knowledge area.

The Verb List can also be used to evaluate existing lesson plans, assessments, and instructional experiences. Looking for verbs and identifying their level will give a good indication of the level of student performance in that instruction.
Defining Relevance

Defining the level of relevance of curriculum objectives and instructional activities is a little more difficult than determining the Knowledge Taxonomy level because there is no verb list. However, just as the Knowledge Taxonomy categorizes increasing levels of thinking, the Application Model described increasingly complex applications of knowledge. Any student performance can be expressed as one of five levels of the Application Model. The Application Model Decision Tree can assist in setting the desired level of expected student performance in application (see pages 7-8) by asking the questions: Is it application? Is it real world? Is it unpredictable?

The Basic Nutrition example below is similar to the one in the Defining Rigor section in that it uses nutrition to describe student performance at various levels. Each level requires students to apply knowledge differently.

Similarly, the expected achievement level for teaching about nutrition can vary depending on the purpose of the instruction. If a teacher wants students only to acquire basic nutritional knowledge, a student performance set at level one is adequate. If the instruction is intended to have a significant impact on nutritional habits, then some of the objectives need to be at levels four and five.

Use of the Application Model Decision Tree can help to describe desired performance. Start by writing draft statements of student objectives and then use the Decision Tree to reflect on and revise these statements. The Decision Tree focuses on the three key characteristics that distinguish levels of the Application Model: application, real world, and unpredictability. The second page of the Decision Tree offers additional criteria to determine whether an objective meets the test of application, real world, and unpredictability.

The Application Model Decision Tree can also be used to evaluate existing lesson plans, assessments, and instructional experiences. Answer the questions to identify at which level of student performance that instruction or assessment is.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1 – Knowledge in One Discipline</td>
<td>Label foods by nutritional groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2 – Application in One Discipline</td>
<td>Rank foods by nutritional value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3 – Interdisciplinary Application</td>
<td>Make cost comparisons of different foods considering nutritional value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4 – Real-world Predictable Situations</td>
<td>Develop a nutritional plan for a person with a health problem affected by food intake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 5 – Real-world Unpredictable Situations</td>
<td>Devise a sound nutritional plan for a group of 3-year-olds who are picky eaters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Rigor/Relevance Framework

## Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KNOWLEDGE TAXONOMY</th>
<th>A - Acquisition</th>
<th>B - Application</th>
<th>C - Assimilation</th>
<th>D - Adaptation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Knowledge in one discipline</td>
<td>Apply in one discipline</td>
<td>Apply across discipline</td>
<td>Apply to real-world predictable situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesis</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**International Center for Leadership in Education**
**Quadrant C Assimilation**

- Compare and contrast literary styles of different authors.
- Relate literature to historical context.
- Discuss role of media in a democracy.
- Research limits of First Amendment freedoms.
- Analyze characters from a novel.
- Create a storyboard.
- Analyze and improve typical student writing.
- Role-play characters from literature in new situations.

**Quadrant D Adaptation**

- Write and perform a radio play.
- Simulate a presidential debate.
- Write a legal brief defending a school policy.
- Prepare a demonstration video.
- Review newspaper editorials for a week and write a letter to the editor expressing an opinion in response to one of them.
- Develop guidelines for publishing content on Internet pages.
- Develop a reading list of historical biographies for a middle level social studies course.

**Quadrant A Acquisition**

- Practice SAT vocabulary words.
- Select books and read to younger children.
- Read important works of literature.
- Give an extemporaneous speech.
- Learn several graphic organizers.
- Use word processing outlining and table tools.
- Write an essay on an historical topic.

**Quadrant B Application**

- Participate in a debate on a current political issue.
- Write a research report on a national problem.
- Identify and analyze typical body language traits.
- Create a personal or class Website.
- Research a career field.
- Use word processing software to write a business letter.
- Prepare a multimedia presentation.
Student Activities in the Rigor/Relevance Framework

Quadrant A Acquisition
- Distinguish rational and irrational numbers.
- Simplify, factor, and compute polynomials.
- Solve and graph linear equations.
- Create and solve factorial expressions for permutation problems.
- Construct and solve for unknowns in ratio problems.
- Compute numbers with scientific notation.
- Predict the probability of events using ratios.
- Bisect line segments and angles.
- Provide examples to illustrate properties of real numbers.

Quadrant B Application
- Draw Venn diagrams to represent a set of real conditions, e.g., common characteristics of students in class.
- Find length of line segments without measuring.
- Take measurements using calipers and micrometers.
- Calculate measurement error in real observations.
- Calculate frequency of vibration of various piano strings.
- Calculate medical dosages for different weight animals.
- Calculate mathematical values for an excellent golf swing.
- Plot changes in temperature at different altitudes from a NASA space flight.

Quadrant C Assimilation
- Solve interdisciplinary problems with signed numbers, such as molecules with a charge of protons and electrons.
- Identify congruence of shapes from expressions and truth statements.
- Complete Euclidian proofs in geometry.
- Construct truth tables as a shorthand method for discussing logical sentences.
- Analyze factors in difference between theoretical and empirical probability.
- Select best measures of central tendency to support a particular point of view.
- Solve quadratic equations and linear inequalities.

Quadrant D Adaptation
- Determine types of measurements/calculations involved in designing everyday items.
- Make calculations of electrical load of appliances based on usage in homes in the community.
- Examine the different elements, visual effects, and features found in a computer game and use mathematics to design some of these elements.
- Create formulas to predict changes in stock market values.
- Design support posts of different materials and size to handle stress load in a building.
- Develop a sampling plan for a public opinion poll.
- Design a roller coaster ride.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quadrant</th>
<th>C Assimilation</th>
<th>Quadrant</th>
<th>D Adaptation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Solve a hypothetical science-related problem, such as helping dinosaurs to survive.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Explore designs of car safety restraints using eggs in model cars.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Design experiments and collect evidence to describe the movement of light.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Design and construct a robot.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Design a WebQuest on an aspect of chemistry.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Conduct debate on genetically modified food (GMF).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Design observations to demonstrate basic laws of physics.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Solve an organic chemistry case study problem in petroleum distillation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Calculate potential and kinetic energy in the movement of a roller coaster.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Select a method to build a tunnel under a real city.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create a digital electronic counter.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Discuss the social, ethical, and emotional consequences of genetic testing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Write test questions to illustrate understanding of empirical gas laws.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Participate in an online debate on a science issue, such as acid rain or deformed frogs.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research the discovery of a chemical element.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Research and write a newspaper article on a viral disease, examining economic and societal impacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quadrant</td>
<td>A Acquisition</td>
<td>Quadrant</td>
<td>B Application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Conduct laboratory experiments to observe chemical reactions.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Map a community site by collecting data with GPS device.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Apply number and computation skills to science, including scientific notation and significant figures.</td>
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<td>Collect and categorize organisms from a natural stream.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Determine latitude and longitude of geographic locations.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Apply Laws of Gases to design gas storage containers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Use a mnemonic system for remembering metric conversions.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Make weather forecasts based on data.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrate modulation of sound waves using computer animation.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Solve electrical current values using Ohm’s law.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conduct experiments to observe properties of acids and bases.</td>
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<td>Isolate DNA from unknown plant tissues and compare to sample DNA.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Memorize elements in Periodic Table.</td>
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<td>Participate in an online collaboration to collect scientific data on a global problem.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Make observations about the visual effects of concave and convex lenses.</td>
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</table>
Quadrant C Assimilation

- Compare/contrast how ancient civilizations valued women, social responsibility, and equality.
- Research and give a presentation on an historical example of nationalism.
- Answer data-based questions using copies of original historical documents.
- Participate in a Socratic seminar on a policy issue, such as privacy.
- Use case studies to investigate how economic systems affect people’s incentive for economic gain.
- Analyze decisions leading to major turning points in U.S. history and hypothesize about what might have happened if decisions had been different.

Quadrant D Adaptation

- Conduct a survey and analyze results on First Amendment issues related to Internet use.
- Analyze a local, state, or national issue and prescribe a response that promotes the public interest or general welfare (e.g., a voter registration campaign).
- Research and debate economic issues and public policy related to the Internet, such as sharing of online music.
- Evaluate a common practice or proposed legislation for consistency with the Constitution/Bill of Rights and write your opinion in a letter to an elected official.
- Analyze a school/community problem, suggest a solution, and prepare a plan to solve it.

Quadrant A Acquisition

- Observe local government proceedings.
- Complete interactive mapping activities on European geography.
- Report on a complex historical event.
- Complete an in-depth geographic study of a world region by analyzing demographic data.
- Recognize why international trade takes place and the role of exchange rates in fostering or inhibiting trade.
- Trace the evolution of American values, beliefs, and institutions through a study of their constitutional and institutional development.
- Research key aspects of the state constitution.

Quadrant B Application

- Be a juror on a local youth court.
- Conduct a school/community survey on a social issue and analyze results.
- Write letter of support for a proposed local or state policy.
- Complete an income tax form.
- Draw from memory a map of the world; indicating the relative location of continents, oceans, major river systems, nations in the news, and important cities.
- Locate and interpret current and historical economic data (e.g., GDP, CPI, employment).
- Analyze credit options, calculate purchase costs, and complete a credit application.
Planning Rigorous and Relevant Instruction

Step 1 - Focus - What defines or drives the learning experience?

Step 2 - Student Performance - What are students expected to know, do or be like and at what level of rigor and relevance?

Step 3 - Assessment - How will you assess desired student performance?

Step 4 - Learning Experience - What activities will enable students to achieve student performance?

Questions
Benefits of Using RR Framework
- Simple, versatile and powerful
- Something new that builds on what teachers know
- Inclusive
- Shift focus to Student Learning
- Avoids defending current practice
- Framework for selecting strategies and assessments
- Agenda for collaboration
- Natural build

Raising the Level of Rigor and Relevance
There are several ongoing strategies that must be in place to raise the level of rigor and relevance. Those strategies are:

Rubrics – assessments including rubrics, scoring guides and checklist used to measure learning in student performance
Reading – the fundamental skills that is pre-requisite for nearly all learning
Reflective Thought – behavior of students causes them to pause, think, question and reflect as part of learning
Revision - improvement of teaching in learning through experimentation, reflection and sharing best practices
Research – analytical evaluation of innovative practices
Resilience – the students character trait that causes them to try again, struggle to achieve and bounce back from poor performance in the education process
Relationships – the positive connection between students and their peers, parents and teachers that supports them to achieve at high levels
Reschedule – revisions to master schedules of teachers and students to work toward the goal of better meeting student needs
Rejuvenation – teacher professional learning that ignites passion to teaching and energizes teaching with new ideas and strategies
Rewards – recognition and awards provided to students and staff for accomplishing higher levels of achievement
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Partial</th>
<th>No</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rubrics</td>
<td>Common rubrics are used throughout the school for typical performances such as student writing and presentations.</td>
<td>Teachers are proficient in creating and adapting rubrics to their instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>All teachers use reading in the content strategies as part of instruction.</td>
<td>Teachers have access to data on the reading level of each of their students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Thought</td>
<td>Teachers often create student work that requires students to create an answer rather that recall an answer.</td>
<td>Teachers give students time to think in classroom instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>Teachers share innovative lessons with other teachers.</td>
<td>Teacher have the opportunity to observe other classroom demonstrating best instructional practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Teachers collect data to evaluate effectiveness of innovative practices.</td>
<td>Teachers select innovations and instructional programs based on research data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>Teachers know individual student’s strengths and give them daily opportunities to use their strengths.</td>
<td>There are ample opportunities for students to explore interest through in-class and other school activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Students actively support each other attaining higher levels of achievement</td>
<td>Teachers work with students frequently outside of classroom instruction.</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Partial</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Partial</th>
<th>No</th>
<th><strong>Rejuvenation</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Teachers are encouraged to participate in self-directed professional learning.</td>
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<td>Teachers collaborate frequently sharing ideas and strategies.</td>
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<td>Coaches are provided to work individually with teachers on professional development priorities.</td>
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<td>New teachers are provided mentors and time to meet together.</td>
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<td>School or district professional development is personalized to teacher needs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Partial</th>
<th>No</th>
<th><strong>Rewards</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Students are recognized in a wide variety of events and activities.</td>
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<td>Students and staff celebrate school wide academic achievement.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Students get frequent feedback from teachers on the quality of their work.</td>
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<td>Incentives are provided to teachers that take on extra work or made outstanding contributions.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parents and community are partners is providing rewards and recognition to students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
International Center for Leadership in Education Resources

The International Center for Leadership in Education has produced a number of resources kits and handbooks that are essential for planning teaching and learning. These are the result of research working with schools across the country. This section describes how several of these publications can be used in developing small learning communities. For further information on these publications, contact:

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Email: info@leadered.com
Web Site http://www.leadered.com

These resources will help you accomplish the following tasks.

- Develop Rigorous and Relevance Instruction
- Teach for Rigor and Relevance
- Provide Leadership for a School Culture of Rigor and Relevance

Develop Rigorous and Relevant Instruction

Teachers have a great capacity to develop creative engaging instruction for students. Once they understand the Rigor/Relevance Framework they have a common language and clearer vision of higher expectation that will guide curriculum planning with colleagues. The International Center has developed several resources to assist local administrators, curriculum coordinators and staff developers in helping teachers understand and apply the Rigor/Relevance Framework.

The Rigor/Relevance Handbook is an excellent teacher reference that all teachers should have to fully understand the framework and reflect on the levels of Rigor and Relevance in their own instruction. This Handbook includes many tools and references to assist teachers in planning and improving curriculum, instruction and assessment.

The Using the Rigorous and Relevant Framework for Planning and Instruction resource kit is ideal for local staff or curriculum developers. In addition to the references the teacher can use, it includes teacher activities, workshop outlines, video and PowerPoint slides. With these extensive resources any school leader can provide ongoing staff development to teachers to help them apply the Rigor/Relevance Framework.

Teach for Rigor and Relevance

The other resource kit that curriculum coordinators and staff developers should consider is Instructional Strategies: How to Teach for Rigor and Relevance. The resource
kit includes references, handouts, PowerPoint Slides and teachers activities to develop teachers in further achieving rigor and relevance in their teaching. The resources kit includes suggestions on 17 commonly used instructional strategies and how these correlate to the Rigor/Relevance Framework. By using these development activities, teachers will be more effective in using these strategies, but more importantly will know when to use these strategies based upon the expectations of the curriculum. A companion Strategies Teacher Handbook is an essential reference for teachers with tips on using each of the strategies and self-reflection checklists to improve their own practice.

Teachers looking for ideas on how to provide high rigor and high relevance can benefit from the experience of dozens of master teachers by using the Gold Seal Lessons. These are performance tasks along with scoring guides that are high rigor/high relevance learning. They have been written for all grade levels in language arts, mathematics and science. Teachers can incorporate these performance tasks or modify them to add challenging and engaging lessons to their existing lesson plans.

Provide Leadership for a School Culture of Rigor and Relevance

The resource kit Leadership for Rigor, Relevance and Relationships is directed to school leaders. This provides the background and suggested activities for school change toward a more rigorous and relevant curriculum. Activities are organized around the various stages that schools go through from setting the vision to supporting and recognizing innovation. This resource kit also connects the idea of relationship building and how student and staff relationships must be built to enable students to achieve at high levels of rigor and relevance.
The Successful Practices Network is pleased to offer a new service to schools and teachers in the Network. Many schools are excited about the Rigor and Relevant Framework as a simple but powerful tool for teachers to raise the level of their teaching. The Successful Practices Network is now offering online facilitated activities to assist teachers in developing high/rigor/high relevance lessons. This new service is called Collaborating Online for Rigor and Relevance (CORR). CORR is designed to take teachers through several steps to create high quality lessons that reinforce the use of the Rigor/Relevance Framework.

This online activity will take participating teachers through 10 steps to understand and apply the Rigor/Relevance Framework. At the conclusion of this activity all teachers will create one high rigor/high relevance (Quadrant D) lesson. These lessons will be shared with all teachers in the school and all schools in the network. CORR is designed to allow teachers to work in small groups to collaborate with other teachers in a school or district. For example you might have a group of all elementary staff, or a group of 5th grade teachers or a group of high school mathematics teachers. It is recommended the each facilitated activity include a maximum of 25 teachers. If a school has more than 25 teachers, you should set up multiple groups.

Requirements

The activity operates in a web browser format. All participating teachers will need internet access to complete the work. The ten activities can be started and completed at any time. The project is designed to require 30 hours of work. It can be done all at once or over several weeks. It allows all teachers to work at their own pace and convenient time. Any timeline or due dates are set by the facilitator.

The activities require a facilitator to guide teachers. The role of facilitator will require 40-50 hours including preparation, participation in teacher’s discussion and review teacher work. The facilitator should be comfortable working in the electronic environment and knowledgeable of the Rigor/Relevance framework.

Description

The purpose of CORR is to have teachers work together in an asynchronous mode to develop high quality lessons. In our experience, teachers produce better lessons when they collaborate. Because of so many significant time limitations, this project allows teachers to work together at convenient times through the use of an online management system similar to those used for online professional development. Participants in CORR will develop the following skills:

- Apply the Rigor/Relevance Framework to their instruction.
- Set expected levels of rigor and relevance for students
- Design performance tasks for a given level of rigor and relevance
- Design assessments for a given level of rigor and relevance
Each topic is designed to provide teachers with adequate background knowledge, increase collaboration and create a finished product. There are five activities in the CORR structure.

**Connect** is an advanced organizer activity to explain the importance of each topic and have teachers begin to think about this component of developing lessons.

**Explore** is background knowledge to help in preparation of this part of the lesson. It may include articles, web sites, videos, or audio. Each piece of background knowledge is broken into small segments.

**Share** is a discussion section that starts with a question related to the topic. Teachers contribute to the online discussion and share ideas, shaping each others perspective.

**Apply** is an interactive activity in which teachers apply what they know about this topic. Usually these are engaging activities that allow teachers to play a little and reinforce their knowledge.

**Develop** is the activity to create the pieces of the lesson. In this activity participants get feedback on their work from other teachers in their group.

The course includes the following 10 topics:

- Why Rigor and Relevance
- Rigor/Relevance Framework
- Identifying Levels of Rigor and Relevance
- Teaching for the High Rigor/High Relevance
- Identifying Student Learning
- Writing Performance Tasks
- Linking to State Standards
- Assessments for High Rigor/High Relevance
- Writing lessons for High Rigor/High Relevance
- Submitting and Revising lessons

**Accessing CORR**

The CORR project is accessible through the web address [http://rigor-relevance.com](http://rigor-relevance.com). At the site you can read descriptions of the project. To get set up a participating group of teachers or get a password, contact Linda Lucey at Linda@LeaderEd.com.