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By Rob Jenkins

Santa Ana College / National Geographic Learning

Developing a

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY

TEACHING VS LEARNING

Richard Dufour in 2004 stated:

> "To create a professional learning community, focus on learning rather than on teaching, work collaboratively, and hold yourself accountable for results." (Richard Dufour, 2004)

He has also said in 2002:

In Hot Pursuit of the Wrong Questions

> "Eventually, after years as a principal, I realized that even though my efforts had been well intentioned—and even though I had devoted countless hours each school year to those efforts—I had been focusing on the wrong questions. I had focused on the questions, What are the teachers teaching? and How can I help them to teach it more effectively? Instead, my efforts should have been driven by the questions, To what extent are the students learning the intended outcomes of each course? and What steps can I take to give both students and teachers the additional time and support they need to improve learning?"
>
> "This shift from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning is more than semantics. When learning becomes the preoccupation of the school, when all the school's educators examine the efforts and initiatives of the school through the lens of their impact on learning, the structure and culture of the school begin to change in substantive ways. … teachers and students benefit when principals function as *learning leaders* rather than *instructional leaders*."

http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/may02/vol59/num08/The_Learning-Centered_Principal.aspx

Let's take the words of Dufour and apply them to our classes for a moment:

When learning becomes the preoccupation of the ***class***, when ***the teacher*** examines the ***curriculum and the instructional strategies*** through the lens of its impact on learning, the structure and culture of the ***class*** begins to change in substantive ways. Teachers and students benefit when ***they*** function as *learning leaders* rather than *instructional leaders*.

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TEACHING VS LEARNING

Instructions: Read the chart below. In pairs, discuss the differences between the ***teaching*** column and the ***Learning*** column. Then write a "one sentence summary" of the differences between teaching and learning approaches.

Teaching Approach	Learning Approach
Methodology • Start with the objective: What do we want students to know? • Teach - focusing on good established techniques and methodology with the intent of getting though the curriculum on time.	**Methodology** • Start with the objective: What do we want students to be able to do? • Teach – focusing on what students learn based on evidence from what they are ultimately able to do.
Outcomes • The instructor makes sure students take full responsibility for learning while maintaining a consistent instructional delivery. • Student outcomes reflect how well the teacher gets across the information and how willing students were to internalize it.	**Outcomes** • The instructor shares the responsibility for student outcomes with the students by adjusting and changing the instructional approach to teaching based on student performance (learner-centered Instruction). • Student outcomes reflect how well students internalize the information based on the ability of the instructor to tap into student needs, schema, past experience and personal learning modalities or styles.
Instructional Presentations and Practice • Mostly lecture with student questions and answers. • Mechanical practice – memorize data, make lists, and prove through exercises and activities that the ***Information*** (knowledge) is understood. • Activities are mostly fill-in and multiple choice with a high percentage correct used to identify comprehension.	**Instructional Presentations and Practice** • Interactive presentations where context, student schema, real-life application, and student learning styles are taken into account. • Activities go from mechanical, to meaningful and communicative leading to application and personalization to stimulate learning. • Activities are varied and include multiple choice, fill-in, role-plays, focused listening, critical thinking, etc. with observation and teacher evaluation including the use of rubrics to identify students' ability to communicate.
What Students Do with New Information • Take multiple choice standardized tests and prove they can use the new information in controlled and mostly writing environments.	**What Students Do with New Information** • Perform in multiple environments including standardized tests and impromptu circumstances using all four skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) to prove they can adequately communicate needs and ideas as well as pass tests.

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Defining Professional Learning Communities

Instructions: In 2012 our emerging PLC discussed the PLC principles and shared different definitions. Read the definitions and be prepared to vote for your favorite and tell why.

PLC Defined

1. A PLC is a learning community formed to assist student learning by creating a team of teachers. The team works collaboratively to create procedures, to communicate, to share, and to reflect on students' differentiated needs.

2. A PLC is a group of institutionally supported educators who come together to work toward the common goal of improving student learning by identifying essential learning goals, within a collaborative and structured forum.

3. A PLC is a team of educators who commit to respectfully share, improve and activate classroom procedures, methods and materials for improved outcomes for all students.

4. A PLC is a group of teachers collaborating to identify classroom practices that we can test and refine to try to achieve optimum learner results. These practices can be taught to and used by others for continuous improvement.

5. A PLC is a collaborative group of teachers who share expertise on student needs; develop skill-appropriate learning activities; and continually review curricula in response to student assessment data.

6. A PLC is a team involvement to establish teaching goals and to identify Best Practices that best meet the students' instructional needs.

Formative Assessments

A. In a small group, discuss the difference between a physical exam or check-up and an autopsy. When are they performed? Why are they performed?

B. Look at the information in the box below. In your group, put the information under the appropriate column. Some can go under both, but be prepared to say why.

Formative Assessment (Physical Exam)	Summative Assessment (Autopsy)

student self-assessment	pass / fail	final examination
feedback	chapter test	validity / reliability
identify student needs	diagnostic	grades
anonymous	observation	change

C. Discuss in your group the following quote about the connection between interactive, learner-centered teaching and formative assessment.

> "If the teacher assumes that knowledge is to be transmitted and learned, that understanding will develop later, and that clarity of exposition accompanied by rewards for patient reception are the essentials of good teaching, then formative assessment is hardly necessary. However, most teachers accept the wealth of evidence that this transmission model does not work, even when judged by its own criteria, and so are willing to make a commitment to teaching through interaction. Formative assessment is an essential component of such instruction. We do not mean to imply that individualized, one-on one teaching is the only solution; rather we mean that what is needed is a classroom culture of questioning and deep thinking, in which pupils learn from shared discussions with teachers and peers. What emerges very clearly here is the indivisibility of instruction and formative assessment practices."

https://www.measuredprogress.org/documents/10157/15653/InsideBlackBox.pdf

D. Now, as a group, write a ***one sentence summary*** of what you think formative assessment is and share with the group.

Peer Coaching and Research

Santa Ana College School of Continuing Education

Goal: Analyze our teaching related to best practices through peer coaching with a goal of becoming more effective instructors in order to better meet our students' needs and influence improved student outcomes.

Peer Coaching Defined for Our Purposes

Our peer coaching is defined as observing a partner and annotating what we see in the class without judgment. As we observe, we relate what we see to the perception we have of our own teaching, looking to ourselves as if looking in a mirror. Our goal is ***not*** to evaluate our partner's skills but to observe and supply factual information so our partner can come to his or her own conclusions, set goals, and develop teaching skills. Peer conferences further solidify our goals and help us be accountable for our practices.

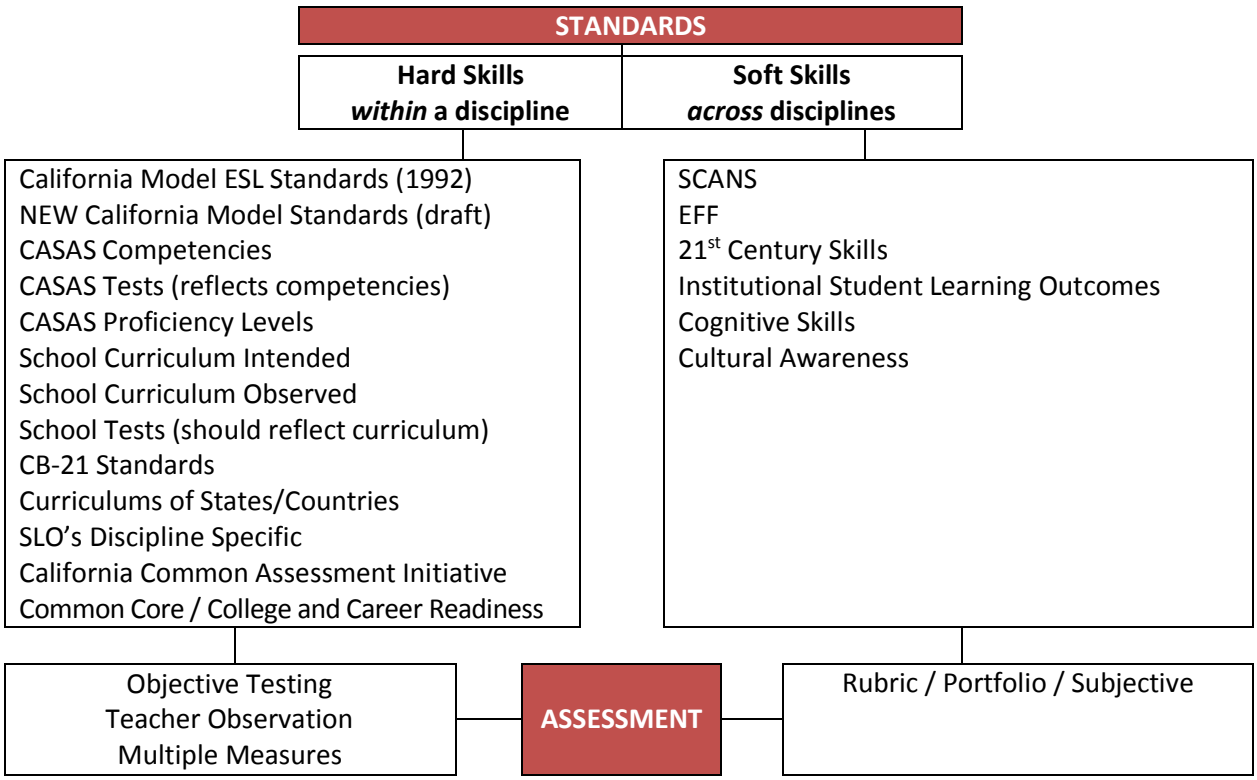
"Here I am with my lens to look at you and your actions. But as I look at you with my lens, I consider you a mirror. I hope to see myself in you and through my teaching. Seeing you, allows me to see myself differently and to explore the variables we both use." (Fanselow 1990)

What is the end product of teaching when you are in a rut?
"…teaching that is unthinking that is …divorced from the principles that lie behind it; it is…either purely imitative or…set into patterns that no longer reveal awareness on the teacher's part of why he or she should be teaching in a particular way." (Maingay 1988)

Task-based Experiences

Active engagement can take many forms: doing, thinking, reacting, absorbing, observing, reflecting, preparing, considering, applying, analyzing, listing, selecting, prioritizing, ranking, interpreting, completing, comparing, re-arranging, evaluating, etc. (Ellis 1990)

STANDARDS FOR UNWRAPPING



NOTES

Grammar only: easy to test but little distinction between "learning" and "acquisition"

4 Skills – more subjective and requires rubric for speaking (consider combining Listening and speaking)

Vocabulary and Grammar only – no level of "proficiency" is measured.

Proficiency – difficult to measure without making assumptions about learning vs acquisition – Rubric

Analysis by Rob Jenkins 2011

ESL Listening Expectations October 2014

After Unwrapping the Standards

				Critical Thinking	Demonstrate understanding, draw conclusions and make generalizations of short, simple oral reports in familiar and some unfamiliar contexts.	Demonstrate understanding, draw conclusions and make generalizations of complex oral reports in familiar and some unfamiliar contexts.
			Complexity	Distinguish high frequency words, phrases and short sentences with simple tenses.	Demonstrate understanding of discourse including idiomatic expressions and phrasal verbs using complex tenses.	Demonstrate understanding of discourse including idiomatic expressions and phrasal verbs/parts of speech.	Demonstrate understanding of discourse including idiomatic expressions and phrasal verbs/parts of speech.
Context	Demonstrate comprehension of high frequency words used in simple learned social exchanges in everyday situations.	Demonstrate comprehension of high frequency words and phrases used in learned social exchanges on a variety of topics.	Comprehend and engage in simple social, occupational and academic exchanges.	Comprehend and engage in extended social, occupational and academic exchanges with detail.	Comprehend and engage in extended social, occupational and academic exchanges with more detail and expression.	Comprehend and engage in extended social, occupational and academic exchanges with more detail and expression.
	Beginning 1	**Beginning 2**	**Beginning 3**	**Intermediate 1**	**Intermediate 2**	**Intermediate 3**

Professional Learning Communities

Websites:

- National Staff Development Council www.nsdc.org
- Solution Tree www.solution-tree.com and www.allthingsplc.com

Publications:

- *Facilitating with Ease: Core Skills for Facilitators, Team Leaders and Members, Managers, Consultants and Trainers*, Jossey–Bass

- *Learning by Doing, A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at Work,* Eaker, Dufours & Many , Solution Tree

- *Getting Started, Recruiting Schools to Become Professional Learning Communities*, Eaker & Dufours, Solution Tree

- *Unwrapping the Standards,* L. Ainsworth, Advanced Learning Press

CHECKLIST FOR ESTABLISHING A SUCCESSFUL PLC (CALPRO MODEL)

- ☑ Decide on scope of PLC.
- ☑ Select and train team facilitators.

- ☑ Unwrap / establish standards.
- ☑ Develop and implement common formative assessments.

- ☑ Analyze results of common formative assessments and revise as needed.
- ☑ Provide professional development as needed.
- ☑ Determine intervention, instructional strategies to implement based on assessment results.
- ☑ Observe changes in instruction and implement additional common formative assessment.

- ☑ Gather summative data on student learning outcomes.

Other outcomes beyond student improvement include adjustments to curriculum, buy-in by adjunct faculty, built-in professional development, and a new teacher community.

Adapted by Rob Jenkins from CALPRO - 2010