Always and Anywhere

Adapting Universal Teaching Practices
To Fit Needs and Dreams
In Rural, Remote, and
Isolated Pacific Communities

May 2024

A Teacher-Driven Project From Region 19

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PART 1:
ALWAYS AND ANYWHERE

Introduction

This project, Always and Anywhere, begins with universally effective teaching practices and shows how a school faculty chooses and adapts strategies and actions to fit the specific needs and dreams of their students.

We suggest how faculties in four distinct communities might utilize a continuous improvement process called *practice-focused collaboration*. The locations of the four communities are all either very rural, remote, or isolated, however while each community requested assistance to ensure that all students receive effective, high-quality services, each is unique. Each faculty can best determine for itself the teaching strategies and actions that will be most effective for its students. The four unique communities are:

- Ebeye, Republic of the Marshall Islands
- Hawaiian Ocean View, Hawai'i
- Pohnpei State, Federated States of Micronesia
- Yap State, Federated States of Micronesia

[See more below on the four communities.]

Fitting Practices to the Place and People

Some things are universal. In teaching, one universally effective *practice* is the teacher's familiarity with the student, which makes sense *always and anywhere*. To know the student is to understand the student's personal interests, aspirations, and inclinations toward learning. It also helps to understand the context within which the student, family, and the community live. With this knowledge, the teacher can adapt instruction for the greatest advantage to the student's learning.

Just as the student is nested within a family, families live within broader surroundings that provide their own influences, opportunities, and impediments to the child's learning and progress in school. Although knowing the child is the cardinal rule for teachers, understanding the child's surroundings—family and community—is also important in fitting practices to the child.

A caveat to our concern for the child's environment is that gross assumptions about the impact of surroundings and backgrounds on a child's learning are almost always in error. For example, the differences in academic achievement among students in rural, urban, and suburban schools are far less attributable to location (rural, urban, suburban) than to the economic circumstances of the specific schools and their communities. Also, no two children in the same household, let alone the same school or community, are alike, and we err when attributing the characteristics of one child to another because of their common backgrounds.

Poverty tends to depress achievement—rurality does not. Where there is poverty, there is typically a dearth of supportive community in exactly the places where it is needed most. Isolation from resources in remote areas can also be debilitating, especially when combined with poverty. Isolation from broadening life experiences can inhibit healthy expansion of general knowledge. Differences in school achievement among racial and ethnic groups largely disappear when controlled for socio-economic status because families and communities with greater means are able to provide greater resources for children. But even this categorical disadvantage of children from poverty and isolation is not universal. Some schools and certainly many individual students overcome it. The schools stimulate the latent resiliency in children who might otherwise be held back by the constraints of poverty and isolation. Effective school practices overcome the disadvantages of poverty and isolation and stimulate the innate resiliency of children, all children.

Howley & Redding (2021) explain that "rural places, people, and conditions are not homogenous. They vary widely across the country, representing a diversity of economic, demographic, political, social, and historical contexts" (p. 3) … "Relatedly, rurality is not an impediment to student achievement. In fact, research repeatedly demonstrates that once the effect of socioeconomic status is controlled, any apparent disparities between rural and nonrural student achievement disappear (Lee, 2001; Williams, 2005). Put another way, wealthy rural and nonrural students perform similarly to each other, and impoverished rural and nonrural students perform similarly to each other. One recent study also found that the achievement gap between White, African American, and Hispanic students is smaller in rural districts than in urban ones (Gagnon & Mattingly, 2018, p. 3).

Howley & Redding (2021) also note that rural life, including life in remote and isolated locations, "… offers its people benefits—often unheralded—that can support and add value to education. For example, because schools in rural places are often community centers, hosting community events, adult education opportunities, or fundraisers, rural residents tend to be strong supporters of their schools" (p. 4). In other words, rural places have common strengths and also unique strengths. These

strengths can be tapped by each rural faculty as they seek the best teaching strategies for their students.

Practices and Their Strategies

A straight-forward declaration to "Know the student" is obviously true; it is a universally good practice. But what exactly does it mean? What does it look like? What are the ways it can be achieved? Which ways are right for a given school or classroom? To help answer these questions, we identify strategies for each practice. Strategies are specific examples of aspects of a practice. Strategies give us useful ways to express a practice. They are, in fact, guideposts in our improvement journey. For each strategy, we describe several actions that can be chosen by a faculty, inserted into an action plan, and added to the school's routine. They become part of the practice in every classroom and contribute to the unique character of the school itself.

Best practices for leading and teaching, including those designated as evidence-based or effective practices, are general statements of how work is best done, substantiated by research and experience. A strategy for a practice is a concrete behavioral expression of the practice. Strategies are expressed in plain language so that practitioners can identify with greater certainty which strategies are the best fit for their students. A faculty adapts a practice to its situation by selecting strategies and designing actions to implement as new routines, which become part of the instructional program throughout the school.

Photo Credit: Cooper Beio

Example of a Practice, Strategy, and Two Actions
Practice: Build students' capacity for learning.
   Strategy: Teach students to orchestrate their own mastery.
     Action: Teach learning strategies.
     Action: Model the learning process.

This example shows how a practice becomes clearer and more applicable with each level in the hierarchy. The hierarchy of practice-strategy-action opens options for a faculty to make choices that best fit the needs and hopes of their students.

Practices and Strategies
Practice A: Know your students.
Strategy A1: Nurture positive relationships.
Strategy A2: Create knowledge-centered classroom cultures.
Strategy A3: Practice reciprocity.
Practice B: Build students' capacity for learning.
Strategy B1: Establish a strong foundation for instruction.
Strategy B2: Fortify students' confidence as learners.
Strategy B3: Teach students to orchestrate their own mastery.
Strategy B4: Challenge students to grapple with rich content.
Practice C: Provide students with a verbally rich curriculum.
Strategy C1: Build foundational knowledge.
Strategy C2: Extend verbally rich content.
Strategy C3: Exercise oral language.
Strategy C4: Grow vocabulary.
Practice D: Engage students with learning.
Strategy D1: Include Active Student Response (ASR) in lessons.
Strategy D2: Include Student Learning Pictures (SLP) in lessons.

A Three-Phase, Continuous Process for Practice-Focused Collaboration

Two or more people can engage in practice-focused collaboration, each helping the other improve their practices toward an agreed upon standard. Ideally, an entire faculty engages in the process to achieve a high level of schoolwide implementation of strategies and actions selected for each practice. The Three-Phase, Continuous Process for Practice-Focused Collaboration, sometimes referred to as Three Circles or PFC, has been applied to many organizational contexts, including state education agencies, district and school improvement, instructional transformation, rural school associations, and Native American consortia. The process varies according to the context in which it functions. The three phases, or circles, *each itself a collaboration*, are as follows.

Circle 1
Planning Team <u>assesses and prioritizes</u> current Practices and Strategies and <u>select</u>s Actions to implement.

Circle 2
Planning Team <u>engages</u> broader group (e.g., faculty, community) to provide feedback on Circle 1 outputs and ideas for how to implement Actions.

Circle 3
Planning Team <u>engages</u> broader group (e.g., faculty, community) to provide feedback on Circle 1 outputs and ideas for how to implement Actions.

The result of the three circles of collaboration is a plan formed with the full engagement of the people whose practices it is aimed at improving. The collaboration does not end there. Constructive change requires consistent monitoring of progress and adjustments in course based on feedback and incremental notching up of each person's practice (Layland & Redding, 2017; 2021).

The feedback, critique, challenge, correction, and encouragement from someone external to the self is critical to self-improvement. These include teachers and coaches, professional mentors, and mothers and fathers. Improvement requires personal effort aimed at an external standard and is accelerated by feedback and guidance from a knowledgeable arbiter of progress.

Practice-focused collaboration begins with an unassailable confidence in each person's potential for polishing each practice to a fine sheen. Practice-focused collaboration is built on a foundation of trust. It requires each person's openness to change in their own practice and sincere desire for the success of colleagues. Collaboration thrives on candor, humility, and the willingness to give and receive honest appraisals of professional practice. Discussion of practice becomes the *lingua franca* of daily conversation.

The Four Project Communities

Four communities identified a need and a shared interest in participating in a facilitated community of practice (CoP) designed to support their efforts to cultivate and support rural school educators. These communities needed assistance in building knowledge of evidence-based practices that might be a good-fit or customized for their community; articulating a strategic approach; developing clear theories of action; and coordinating practical and sustainable plans for rural school leaders as they design and implement local priorities to ensure that all students receive effective, high-quality services.

To support these communities in achieving the objectives listed below, the Rural and Remote Education Strategy CoP (RRES CoP) provided opportunities for members to learn from one another, to learn about resources available through the U.S. Department of Education's Rural Education Resource Center, to learn from Pacific region state educational agencies, from exemplar school leaders, from subject matter experts, from relevant community-based non-profits, from schools outside the CoP, and from other federal technical assistance providers, including the National Comprehensive Center (NCC), Regional Educational Laboratory – Pacific (REL Pacific), the Student Engagement and Attendance Technical Assistance Center (SEAC), the National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (NCSSLE), and the Western Educational Equity Assistance Center (WEEAC). These centers, and the collaborative efforts they are leading, provided opportunities for cross-collaborative work in a CoP learning cycle, as well as leveraging resources.

In this RRES CoP, school leaders and school-based educators strengthened their knowledge and capacity to:

- Build knowledge of universally effective teaching practices and gain understanding of how a school faculty chooses and adapts strategies and actions to fit the specific needs and dreams of their students.
- Map existing community assets and resources; engage in comprehensive needs assessment.
- Assess and prioritize practices and strategies; identify high-leverage activities to implement.
- Engage in practice-focused collaboration, a continuous improvement process.

- Learn about and connect to USED and other resources to support the implementation of their SEA's strategic plan and support rural teacher and leaders as change agents within the context of implementing SEA and school community priorities.
- Build capacity to monitor existing efforts and make adjustments in course based on student, family, educator, and broader stakeholder feedback.

Participating CoP members included teachers and leaders from Ebeye in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Hawaiian Ocean View on the Island of Hawai'i, Pohnpei State in the Federated States of Micronesia, and Yap State in the Federated States of Micronesia.

Ebeye, Republic of the Marshal Islands

Ebeye (pronounced *EE-by*) is an island in the Kwajalein Atoll in the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI). With a population of approximately 15,000 (about one-third of the total RMI population) on just 80 acres of land, it is the second largest urban center in the RMI and one of the most rural and densely populated islands in the world. The population of Ebeye has grown significantly since the early 1940s, when it was fewer than 20 people. The current population of Ebeye is a result of relocation from other parts of the RMI impacted by nuclear testing and migration to Ebeye in search of work connected with the military presence there and on neighboring Kwajalein.

Life in Ebeye is closely tied with the presence of the US military and the close proximity of Kwajalein to Ebeye entwines the lives of the two islands. Getting to Ebeye from afar requires first flying into Kwajalein and then taking a ferry. This ferry also serves as transportation for Ebeye residents who commute daily to jobs on Kwajalein or U.S. military personnel who come to Ebeye in the evenings for the nightlife. This military-local division is also seen in stores on Ebeye, as many island residents are not allowed to use some of the military shops. Restaurants are few, as are hotels, and ATMs are virtually non-existent. Not lacking, however, are churches, which form a crucial foundation in the lives of most residents. Also prevalent are numerous cars and trucks, which may serve as taxis that one can hop on or off at any point for one U.S. Dollar, the official currency. If a doctor visit at a clinic or the local hospital (one of only two in the entire RMI) is needed, dollars are also used to cover the copay required as part of the island's subsidized healthcare system.

Although the official language is Kajin M̧ajeļ (Marshallese), English is widely used. Other languages from across the Pacific are also spoken, such as Chuukese and Pohnpeian. This language diversity presents many assets and opportunities for the few schools on the island. Bilingual and multilingual education creates classroom environments that promote cross-cultural learning and students who are naturally multilingual. However, many schools are underfunded, overcrowded, and understaffed—making it difficult for teachers to support effective learning environments for their diverse populations.

Hawaiian Ocean View

Hawaiian Ocean View (usually referred to as "Ocean View") is a census-designated place (CDP) in Hawaiʻi County, Hawaiʻi, United States, located in the District of Kaʻū. Kaʻū was one of the six original districts of ancient Hawaiʻi on the island, known as *moku,* and is the largest and southernmost district in the island chain. The district contains much of Hawaiʻi Volcanoes National Park and is flanked by the active Kīlauea rift zone to the east and the Mauna Loa rift zone to the north and west. Despite the area's high precarity for lava flow, the population more than doubled in the past 20 years; it was 4,864 at the 2020 census, up from 2,178 at the 2000 census.

The population of Ocean View is 33% white, 33% two or more races (White + AANHPI as the largest category), NHPI, Asian, and Hispanic/Latine. 24.7% speak a language other than English. In 2022, the median household income was $28,766, with just under 30% of the population 100% below the federal poverty line (U.S. Census, 2022).

Ocean View is more than 100 square miles in size and lacks a municipal water system. Residents in the area rely on cesspools or septic systems. It does have some paved roads and modern amenities including three gas stations, stores for groceries and hardware, a laundromat, a restaurant, and a post office. Many residents live off grid with some homes having access to solar or wind power and catchment systems to gather water.

There is no school system in Ocean View, so the community's students commute to Naʻalehu or Pahala every day. There is one bus stop serving this neighborhood. Less predictably, the buses stop and pick up school children along the roads, not necessarily at a designated bus stop. At Naʻalehu Elementary School, 82% of students missed 15 or more days of school in SY2021-22.

Ocean View does have a post office, however, with the exception of Mamalahoa Highway addresses, USPS does not provide street delivery services in Ocean View. Airports and medical centers in Kona and Hilo are about two hours away by car on a single lane highway (and have the potential to be cut off by lava flow on both sides).

Pohnpei State

Pohnpei State is one of four states in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). Pohnpei State is comprised of nine island groups, with the SEA headquarters located on Pohnpei Island. This large volcanic island is the main island of the state surrounded by smaller volcanic islands, all encircled by a barrier reef. The other eight islands are coral atolls, which are referred to as "Outer Islands". The Indigenous languages spoken within Pohnpei State, as represented by the Indigenous communities who inhabited their home islands prior to Western colonization, are as follows: Mahsen en Pohnpei (Pohnpeian) on Pohnpei Island; Loakiahn Ngatik (Ngatikese) on Sapwuahfik Atoll; Lal in Mwoakilloa (Mokilese) on Mwoakilloa Atoll; Lokaiahn Pingelap (Pingelapese) on Pingelap Atoll; Basa de henua (Nukuoro) on Nukuoro Atoll; and Leelee Kilinis (Kapingamarangi) on Kapingamarangi Atoll. Furthermore, Kapasen Mwoshulók (Mortlockese) is widely spoken on Pakin Atoll and throughout Sokehs Municipality on Pohnpei Island due to the relocation of Mortlockese communities from their home atolls in Chuuk State to Pohnpei State during the devastating typhoon of 1907.

Educational contexts in Pohnpei State are extremely varied, paralleling the diversity of social, cultural, geographic, and linguistic contexts. Formal education in the public-school setting is offered starting from Early Childhood Education, followed by grades 1–12. Elementary school encompasses grades ECE–8. On both the high volcanic islands and low coral atolls of Pohnpei State, facilities are concrete buildings, usually with adjacent local-style structures such as community houses. High volcanic islands and low coral atolls differ in access to resources such as electricity and water. In the former, those resources are accessed through the municipal grid whereas in the latter, solar panels, water catchments, and well water provide those resources. Wi-fi is becoming more and more accessible, even for remote school locations in high mountainous regions and on coral atolls. Busing is generally available, although a large majority of students walk to school because school buildings are usually centrally located within each village or municipality. Most rural schools have multi-grade structures with one to three teachers per school being responsible for teaching all elementary grades. Some schools have multi-grade classrooms, where one teacher is responsible for two or more grade levels in a single classroom. For outer island communities, students must relocate to Pohnpei Island to pursue high school. Students usually live with family/clan members on Pohnpei Island or stay in dormitories, if available, at the local high school. Travel back-and-forth from these remote islands requires boat travel. For those who live close to Pohnpei Island, this can entail an hours-long trip on a fiberglass boat. Those who live much further away must travel by hours or days on a ship or small plane.

Yap State

Yap State is one of four states in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). Yap State is comprised of the island group of Yap Proper—which comprises Waab (Yap), Marbaa (Gilman, Kanify, Rull, Dalipebinaw, Weloy, and Fanif) Gagil, Tomil, Maap, and Rumung—and a total of 78 neighboring Islands, consisting of mostly coral atolls and some raised limestone islands. The SEA is headquartered on Waab. The Indigenous languages spoken within Yap State, as represented by the Indigenous

communities, who inhabited their home islands prior to Western colonization, are: Thin nu Waab (Yapese); Yal'ool Yiuldiy (Ulithian); Kepesaen Saetaewan (Satawalese); and Kapetali Weleya (Woleaian). Multiple island/atoll-specific dialects of each of these languages are spoken by the communities.

Educational contexts in Yap State are extremely varied, paralleling the diversity of social, cultural, geographic, and linguistic contexts. Formal education in the public-school setting is offered starting from Early Childhood Education, followed by grades 1–12. Depending on the location, elementary school encompasses grades 1–8 or grades 1–4, followed by "junior high" for grades 5–8. On both the high volcanic islands of Yap Proper and the neighboring islands, facilities consist of concrete buildings, usually with adjacent local-style structures such as community houses. High volcanic islands and low coral atolls differ in access to resources such as electricity and water. In the former, those resources are accessed through the municipal grid whereas in the latter, solar panels, water catchments and well water provide those resources. Wi-fi is becoming more and more accessible, even for remote school locations. The Yap Department of Education provides Very High Frequency (VHF) radios to neighboring island schools for communication. Busing is generally available on Yap Proper, although many students walk to school, because school buildings are usually centrally located within each village or municipality. For neighboring island communities, students who attend high school need to relocate to the location where a high school is located, either on Yap Proper-Waab, Ulithi Atoll, or Woleai Atoll. There are four private high schools on Yap Proper. Students who relocate to attend high school usually stay with family/clan members. Travel back and forth from these remote islands requires multi-hour or multi-day travel on ships or small planes. Private schools are located on Yap Proper and the contexts there are similar to those of public schools there.

Photo Credit: Caroline Dabugsiy

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PART 2:
PRACTICES, STRATEGIES, ACTIONS

Universal Practice

With Strategies and Actions Fit to the Place and the Child

The Practices, Strategies, and Actions described here were adapted from those in the book *Opportunity & Performance*. They were selected to provide a set of schools that are rural or remote or isolated with a variety of ways to improve teaching practice. Each school or community selects, adapts, and implements the Actions it determines to best fit the needs and dreams of its students.

Practice A: Know your students.

Always and anywhere, the foremost teaching practice is to know your students. Better yet, know each student. Knowing the student means knowing the student's story and the story of the student's family (Edwards, 2016). This is not the same as knowing the "data", although good teachers do that as well. To know the student is to know the *person* of the child. Knowing the story implies that chapters in the child's life build upon one another and the saga changes over time. Last year's story is only a part of this year's story. To know the child is to know the child's evolving inclinations toward learning, hopes for the future, and personal interests.

Knowing the student's story, however, is only part of this first "effective practice". Another part is how the teacher makes use of what we call "relational suasion" (Redding, 2013). Students view their teachers with respect and admiration, which puts the teacher in a great position to influence each student in positive ways. If the teacher knows the student and the student knows that the teacher knows and cares about him or her, the relationship is optimal for teaching and learning.

Similarly, the relationships among the students are critical and these relationships are strengthened when the classroom culture encourages mutual support in gaining knowledge. In a knowledge-centered classroom, learning is reciprocal—everyone encourages everyone else's acquisition of knowledge and skill.

Strategy A1: Nurture positive relationships.

Not only is it critical for teachers to know their students, it is also important for students to know their teachers and each other. "Knowing," of course, means understanding and positively interacting with the other people with whom each day is spent in school. Here are some suggestions for nurturing positive relationships. Actions for your Action Plan may be drawn from these suggestions.

1. Be a "warm demander". Exercise "hard caring" with your students. We hear a lot about having high expectations for our students. We also have to show our students that we sincerely believe they will meet those expectations and we will help them work to achieve them (Antrop-Gonzalez & De Jesus, 2006; Kleinfeld, 1972).

2. Explicitly teach social/emotional skills. Skills related to self-regulation, communication, and cooperation are a foundation for academic learning. But students sometimes exhibit social behavior that we interpret as callous or diffident when they simply lack the behavioral steps to interact in certain situations. Role play. Teach the behaviors. Using strategies such as cooperative learning groups, the teacher can also support students in teaching each other, learning from each other, and assuming responsibility for each other's learning (Durlak et al., 2011; Taylor et al., 2017).

3. Get real. Kathleen Budge and William Parrett understand kids from poverty and write in a way that both inspires teachers and gives them practical advice. In fact, their advice is good for forming constructive relationships with any young people. Especially keen are their "practical suggestions for building relationships". They suggest four building blocks for establishing and maintaining relationships with students: (1) Identification—find something in common with each student; (2) Authenticity—students don't want their teacher to be one of them or be like them, they want to know who the teacher is; (3) Empathy—kids have fears and anxieties and go through tough times and also experience joy and have victories, and the teacher tries to feel what they feel to understand them and for them to know the teacher understands them; (4) Trust—this is sometimes the hardest for a teacher, to always operate with a positive presupposition, but it is so important for students to trust the teacher, and to gain that trust the teacher has to show it for them. Teach these four relationship builders to your students. Write them on the board. Discuss them. Refer to them (Budge & Parrett, 2018).

4. Catch them being good! Provide high rates of contingent positive reinforcement. For some students, positive reinforcement is hard to come by in their lives outside of school, making it critical that the classroom always be a safe and encouraging environment for students. Positive reinforcement is key to instilling a feeling of confidence, self-worth, and motivation in children. Without sincere, encouraging words, many students shut down their educational experience. Maintain high standards for your students and challenge them to achieve difficult goals, while accurately encouraging them along the way (MacSuga-Gage et al., 2012; Premack, 1959; Wolfe, 1988).

5. Prioritize positive, intentional relationships. Encourage and facilitate meaningful interactions and develop strong, sustaining relationships within the classroom and throughout the school. Assign each student a designated staff member (e.g., mentor, learning coach, advisor) who will maintain a relationship with the student and their primary caregiver during the full school year (Louisiana Department of Education, 2020).

Strategy A2: Create knowledge-centered classroom cultures.

The school's culture both reflects the broader culture outside its doors and is unique unto itself. Likewise, "teachers create classroom environments that emphasize learning goals and provide support. They help students build skills in setting learning goals, thus fostering intrinsic motivation and high-quality learning. Students who have opportunities to set goals, apply learning strategies, and track their own progress toward mastery become confident, independent learners" (Corbett & Redding, 2018, p. 5). This is what we call a knowledge-centered classroom culture that exalts a community of learners.

Here are some suggestions for creating knowledge-centered classroom cultures. Actions for your Action Plan may be drawn from these suggestions.

1. Exalt a community of learners. Foster a sense of community among students in the classroom and with their families. Base the community on learning—the thrill of learning together and of helping each other learn. Explain to your class that they are like the scientists and engineers and astronauts they see on TV or at NASA launching a rocket. They have so much to learn in order to succeed at what they do. They exude a joy in helping each other learn, in getting smarter to get better at what they do. Exploration of space is a huge laboratory for learning. Your classroom is like that, and your students carry this excitement home to their families— the families are part of your community of learners. Your classroom is *knowledge-centered*. *You strive for every student to sense that he or she is seen, matters, and belongs* in this community of learners (Ladson-Billings, 2006, 2009).

2. Create a classroom culture with values and routines. Culture is a mix of a group's values, beliefs, traditions, customs, and rituals. A classroom culture also is built on these components, and it transcends the cultures the students bring to the classroom. Classroom routines are part of the customs of a classroom, and for students they are touchstones to the day, the week, the order of things in this class. Routines give stability and comfort for children

whose lives might otherwise be filled with uncertainty and confusion. Maintain a *knowledge-centered classroom*. That value for "what we know" permeates your classroom culture.

Strategy A3: Practice reciprocity.

Redding (2021), advocating for reciprocity in schools, explains that,

A reciprocal learning environment begins in the classroom and radiates out. Putting the onus for initiating and growing a reciprocal learning environment on the individual classroom teacher does not mean that the process can't be fostered by a team of teachers or that the principal can't play a big role in supporting teachers and teams. But a reciprocal learning environment need not wait for that infrastructure of collegial engagement to be launched. In fact, the individual teacher may be both the champion for her students in creating a reciprocal learning environment and the leader for her colleagues in spreading the idea through the school (p. 140).

Here are some suggestions for practicing reciprocity. Actions for your Action Plan may be drawn from these suggestions.

1. Teach each other. The main point of reciprocal teaching and learning is that the roles of teacher and learner are interchangeable. We learn when we teach. Create situations where students teach other students (peer-teaching), tutor other students (peer-tutoring), and prepare and present lessons in groups. Swap roles in small groups and with individual students. Soon the formal arrangements of planned reciprocity become organic, fluid, and the way of the classroom.

2. Bridge cultural referents. Don't change the standards. Bridging cultural referents means starting with examples that resonate with the students' lives and then bridge from the familiar to the new, which may be more common in the dominant culture. Exercise students' prior knowledge. That is always a good way to build a bridge to new learning and to honor the world from which the student comes to you. (Ladson-Billings, 2009)

3. Use story. Stories establish bridges across other factors that separate people (such as race, culture, gender, and social class), penetrate barriers, and create feelings of kindredness (Gay, 2010). Stories can create links between home, family, and school and can be used to give deep meaning to many different kinds of lessons. Teachers use story in their lessons, and students learn to tell stories. They can be based on student interviews with family members. Students might bring parents into the classroom to tell their family stories. Students learn that stories describe the motivations of their characters. For all these reasons, stories shared and held in common among classmates contribute to their sense of community and attachment to the classroom and school.

4. Embrace families. Reach out to them, include them in your reciprocity. Hear their voices. Learn from them. Teach them. Wrap them around the lives of your students. Connect them with each other to form a community among them, an extension of your classroom community (Redding, Murphy, & Sheley, 2011).

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Practice B: Build students' capacity for learning.

Once the school and each teacher have established the relational base for understanding their students, their students' families, and their students' surroundings, they bolster student resiliency and learning by building each student's capability as a learner. Capacity comes from the spiraling effects of *competence and confidence*. Knowing how to learn, possessing the skills and strategies for learning, produces results, and that success engenders confidence in the learner. Greater confidence in learning reinforces assertiveness and persistence with learning tasks. When we look at resiliency in learners who emerge from situations of disadvantage, we find high confidence fed by competent application of skills and strategies. These skills and strategies can be taught.

Strategy B1: Establish a strong foundation for instruction.

The first requisite for building strong student learners is for the teachers to master the basics of sound teaching. All teachers, given a little experience, find their way toward these same principles but every teacher can also benefit by reviewing them and polishing them.

1. Clearly communicate goals and objectives, expectations, assignment rules, and procedures. Clarify expectations so that students know what is expected of them. Each instructional day, ensure each task has a clear goal and well-defined expectations and that all of your students are aware of them. Both students and teachers need to understand the of goal each task (Marzano, 2007).

2. Monitor student work. An accurate view of student progress allows effective classroom decision making. Monitoring provides answers to questions like: who is ready to move to the next unit? Who is in need of remediation? Who would benefit from enrichment activities? While formative assessments help monitor students' development, even more frequent, informal assessment should occur regularly during every lesson. Regularly circulate around the room, conduct "over the shoulder" check-ins, discuss the work with the student, use exit tickets, short quizzes, and other means to make the status of your students increasingly clear (Marzano, 2007).

3. Provide frequent and timely feedback. Consistently share feedback with students during the learning process. Encourage student monitoring of progress (e.g., learning pictures), conduct frequent check-ins, offer a variety of formative assessments, and discuss learning in real time (Wiggins, 2012).

4. Balance your instruction. Integrate explicit, direct skill and strategy instruction with authentic reading and writing texts and tasks throughout the day. Provide rationale for the objective, well-crafted lessons, modeling, and demonstrations before actively involving students in practice and application opportunities (Carlisle & Rice, 2002).

5. Devote a lot of time to reading and writing. Include a dedicated literacy block and apply reading and writing to all curriculum areas to help students connect lessons to real-world experiences. Meaningful, purposeful, clear, and concise instruction allows teachers weave

previously taught skills and strategies into new lessons. Using best-practice techniques, teachers are also able to integrate numerous goals into single lessons (Metsala et al., 1997).

6. <u>Support students with timely, concentrated instructional assistance</u>. Ensure each individual experiences success in learning, and ensure that success comes early. Provide individualized coaching, prompts, mini-lessons, and enrichment. Support students' progress with titrated scaffolding complemented by a gradual release of responsibility (Morrow, Gambrell, & Pressley, 2003).

Strategy B2: Fortify students' confidence as learners.

Confidence in learning comes from success in learning, and success comes from competence with learning skills and persistence with learning tasks. The relationship between competence and confidence can spiral upward, with both gaining strength, or, unfortunately, it can drag a student down. This strategy considers how to build students' confidence in learning, and the next one focuses on competence with learning skills.

Here are some suggestions for fortifying students' confidence in their learning success. Actions for your Action Plan may be drawn from these suggestions.

1. <u>Inspire students to self-direct their learning.</u> Through modeling and demonstration, show students how to solve problems. Through guided practice, help students use a suitable problem-solving strategy for the occasion. Through intentional opportunities, allow students to learn and progress on their own (Francom, 2010).
2. <u>Enable students to keep track of their learning progress</u>. Students need to have a vested interest in their own achievement. Ensure all students know where they stand in the assignment, curriculum, or class, so they know when to feel pride about keeping up or when to avoid falling behind. Provide support with regular, quick conferences to ask and provide feedback about their progress (Marzano, 2007).
3. <u>Allow students to progress at their own optimal pace</u>. Instructional pace should be determined by individual progression and is not a reflection of ability (i.e., fast ≠ smart; slow ≠ less smart). View pace as a dimension of how a particular student may cover particular material at a particular time, as students may progress through familiar, simple, or personally interesting material at a much quicker pace than material that is completely new, complex, or of less personal interest. Supporting progression through assignments or curriculum at each student's own optimal pace helps one get to know their own strength and areas for improvement. The pace of learning should serve mastery of learning: different learners— different pace; different material—different pace (Marzano, 2007; Twyman, 2018c).

Strategy B3: Teach students to orchestrate their own mastery.

Metacognition is the ability to not only accomplish a learning task but also to see that it is being accomplished, and know how it is being accomplished. It is seeing the task clearly, knowing what is expected, laying out a strategy to accomplish it, being aware of progress, knowing when it is

completed. Do the students give this much thought to the learning tasks they are assigned? If they do, we would say that they are *orchestrating their mastery*. They are competent learners. Does they eagerly tackle tough assignments and stick with them until the job is done? If they do, we would say they *grapple with rich content*. They are confident learners. The two go together—competence and confidence— in a circular relationship in which one feeds the other. "A stronger set of learning skills enhances the learner's self-efficacy, and greater success with mastery reinforces the patterns of behavior that accomplish it" (Surr & Redding, 2017, p. 18).

Here are some suggestions for teaching students to orchestrate their own mastery. Actions for your Action Plan may be drawn from these suggestions.

1. <u>Teach learning strategies</u>. Create your own list of learning strategies that you find most effective for learners in the grade level and subject area you are teaching. Then teach strategies to your students, reteach, and reinforce. Examples of learning strategies (Redding, 2013) are:
   a) Selecting the main idea;
   b) Taking notes, highlighting, organizing, outlining;
   c) Summarization: writing summaries (of various lengths) of to be learned texts;
   d) Highlighting/underlining: Marking potentially important portions of to be learned materials while reading;
   e) Keyword mnemonics: using keywords and mental imagery to associate verbal materials;
   f) Imagery for text: Attempting to form mental images of text materials while reading or listening;
   g) Rereading: restudying text material after an initial reading;
   h) Distributed practice: implementing a schedule of practice that spreads out study activities over time;
   i) Interleaved practice: implementing a schedule of practice that mixes different kinds of problems—or a schedule of study that mixes different kinds of material—within a single study session
   j) Self-testing—question cards, 2-4 notes with hidden answers;
   k) Peer feedback—ask co-learner to critique your work, question your understanding;
   l) Spaced practice—space out your studying over time;
   m) Retrieval practice—practice bringing information to mind without the help of materials;
   n) Elaboration—Explain and describe ideas with many details;
   o) Concrete examples—Use specific examples to understand abstract ideas;
   p) Dual coding—Combine words and visuals;
   q) Interview and question to get answers from teacher, peers, experts; and
   r) Anticipate questions—if you were the teacher, what would you ask?
2. <u>Model the learning process</u>. Use guided practice to model the exercise you are assigning, but also to walk through the five-step learning process (Redding, 2013).

a) *Define the task*—What am I expected to learn, and what do I already know? What is my goal? How will I know when I have completed the task?

b) *Plan your strategies*—What learning strategies will I apply? How will I use research, practice, questions, memorization, outlining, and other strategies?

c) *Apply your strategies.*

d) *Monitor your progress*—What new information do I need? How am I doing? Should I try a different strategy?

e) *Document your results*—Did I complete the task? Meet the goal? What strategies worked? Keep notes.

3. <u>Reward the learning process.</u> Reward the student's explanation and documentation of the process (see steps above). How do they plan to complete the task or get to mastery, and how do they document and explain their experience? What worked and what didn't. How did they know they were getting it? Or weren't. Awareness of what they have mastered. The knowledge they have acquired. Have them explain it, track it, document it, and then reward it (Hanushek & Jorgenson, 1996; Twyman, 2018b).

4. <u>Connect today's tasks with tomorrow's dreams</u>. Dreams are personal to each child, of course—their aspirations and hopes for a future day. Help each child envision that future. Open their minds to possibilities beyond their scope of experience. Now reference that future for each child and connect it to what they are learning today. Remind them of why they persist, how the effort and skill in learning reap immediate reward (mastery, grades, your smile) and pave the way to their desired future.

5. <u>Connect today's tasks with a sense of purpose</u>. Damon (2008) explained "Purpose is a stable and generalized intention to accomplish something that is at the same time meaningful to the self and consequential for the world beyond the self" (p. 33). Eagerness to learn, as we have described, is fortified by confidence in one's competence as a learner. It is also enlivened and sustained by personal association of today's learning tasks with an envisioned future and a growing sense of one's ability to contribute to the world because of the knowledge and skills being acquired.

Strategy B4: Challenge students to grapple with rich content.

Wexler (2019) noted the point where children turn the corner from decoding to grappling with content is about fourth grade. Children from poverty hit a speed bump that exacerbates an already present gap between their achievement and that of their peers. The gap continues to expand for the remainder of their school years. In Wexler's estimation, just when poor kids most need their knowledge to be stretched by grappling with complex text, their schools tend to revert to leveled reading material and are tempted to assign "relevant" text rather than encouraging students to acquire new relevance (expand and deepen their interests).

Here are some suggestions for challenging students to grapple with rich content. Actions for your Action Plan may be drawn from these suggestions.

1. <u>Grow concepts</u>. Build concepts by connecting key words. Build them directly, explicitly, in stories, in rapid question and answer exchanges. Illustrate the concept with words attached, discuss meaning. Don't be afraid of difficult concepts or tough words. This is a great mode of interaction for any subject (Fisher & Frey, 2010).

2. <u>Play with tough passages</u>. Read the passages in small groups. Read them independently. Read them as a whole class. Slowly but directly. Have fun with them. Parse the sentences and push for understanding. Then get the students writing about what they have read (or heard you read) (Richel, 2018).

3. <u>Ask and answer</u>. Alternate questions that elicit a short, snappy response (maybe a choral response) with questions that require exploration and elaboration (Redding, 2019; Twyman, 2018a).

4. <u>Memorize and recite</u>. Drill chorally. Drill in rapid Q & A. Push beyond rote to meaning held in memory. Celebrate what they now "know" that is new. Yours is a *knowledge-centered* classroom (Redding, 2014).

5. <u>Return and review</u>. Cycle back. Press the memories. Celebrate that they remembered. Now they *really* know. Repetition and feedback (Redding, 2014).

6. <u>Reward hard work and effective strategy.</u> To grapple is to persist toward a goal, each learning task and longer-term acquisition of knowledge. Celebrate effort and savvy learning strategy, not "smarts" (Dweck, 2000, 2006).

Photo Credit: Juanita Lawrence

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Practice C: Provide students with a verbally rich curriculum.

School learning is a daily exercise in the use of language—reading, writing, speaking, listening. Knowledge is acquired through language, and the use of language requires a basis in knowledge. Foundational knowledge is the information and understanding needed for the next level of learning. Children begin language acquisition at home and then acquire new skills in the very first days of schooling. The skill of reading is built during the primary grades and then, beginning in the intermediate grades, reading well depends upon not only the decoding skills but also a verbal facility with a store of foundational knowledge. Reading well is also formed by habit, so the goal for students is that they master the essential skills of phonics and decoding, acquire the knowledge that enables them to read and understanding, and develop the habit of regular reading both for pleasure and as an essential tool in learning. Children who grow up in rural, remote, and isolated environment may be disadvantaged in the knowledge they acquire from their immediate environment, however, reading and rich curriculum can supplement that knowledge.

For some children, their native language is not the language they hear in school. For them, the challenge is to acquire language skills, form foundational knowledge, and grow vocabulary at the same time they are learning to navigate a new language. The strategies provided here are useful for all students, and they are particularly helpful for teachers with students from different language backgrounds.

Strategy C1: Build foundational knowledge.

Cavazos (2021) explains that: "Reading informational or expository texts more frequently will increase exposure to more complex vocabulary and broadens knowledge (Neuman et al., 2016). Foundational knowledge is required to make coherent sense of new information. It enhances inferential understanding of often implicit text" (p. 112). Or, as cognitive psychologist Daniel Willingham puts it, "When it comes to knowledge, those who have more gain more" (Willingham, 2009, p. 42).

Here are some suggestions for building foundational knowledge. Actions for your Action Plan may be drawn from these suggestions.

1. Engage in cognitively challenging topics. Extend on a child's interest or previous teacher-directed activity by asking questions that promote thinking and problem solving (Whorrall & Cabell, 2015).
2. Link new concepts to background knowledge, existing schema, or other related concepts (e.g., Bartlett, 1995; Neuman et al., 2016; Thompson, 2020).
3. Increase exposure to informational or expository text with more complex vocabulary and to increase knowledge (Neuman et al., 2016).
4. Focus instruction on foundational knowledge, vocabulary, and the conceptual load of new learning (Neuman et al., 2016).
5. Practice oral reading fluency to support foundational knowledge and galvanize learning (Datchuk & Hier, 2019).

Strategy C2: Extend verbally rich content.
Cavozos (2021) advises that:

Research supports the need for verbally rich contexts to increase children's oral language and vocabulary development especially for children from poverty who may receive less language input and reduced quality and variety (Hart & Risely, 1995) and for English learner students (ELs) who may have their first exposure to English upon school entry (Mancilla-Martinez & Lesaux, 2011). Children's language development is correlated with the amount of time engaged talking or listening with adults and educators and the degree of syntactically complex speech (Huttenlocher et al., 2002, 2010).

Children's language development is correlated with the amount of time engaged talking or listening with adults and educators and the degree of syntactically complex speech (Huttenlocher et al., 2002, 2010).

Teachers can create the optimal conditions for a verbally rich context through modeling use of language and structuring conversations and class or group discussions around content and everyday classroom activities. A verbally rich context provides children with exposure to a variety of speech and language opportunities structured in the activities they engage in at school and discussion about activities that occur outside of the school setting. Teachers can model the language initiations and allow students to use and experiment with a multitude of strategies including peer to peer discussions (Turnbull et al., 2009) (pp. 112-113).

Here are some suggestions for extending verbally rich content. Actions for your Action Plan may be drawn from these suggestions.

1. Increase talking and listening opportunities with syntactically complex speech to develop oral language (Huttenlocher et al., 2002).
2. Model language initiations and allow students opportunities for peer to peer discussions (Turnbull et al., 2009).
3. Model conversations by asking open-ended questions, listening, encouraging turn taking, and providing feedback. Ask questions that require more than a simple yes or no response— questions starting with words like how, why, what do you think or feel, etc. (Whorrall & Cabell, 2015).
4. Use dialogic instruction by listening to students' oral responses with critical attention to cognitive understanding (Boyd & Galda, 2011; McElhone, 2015).
5. Ask probing questions to help students expand their thinking and connect ideas.
6. Allow wait time for student responses and take turns dialoguing at the child's level (Girolametto et al., 2003).

Strategy C4: Exercise oral language.

Here are some suggestions for exercising oral language. Actions for your Action Plan may be drawn from these suggestions.

1. Support productive discourse by engaging students in interactive dialogue focused on making meaning of content (Chang et al., 2012).
2. Plan strategic and continuous oral language and vocabulary instruction at school entry for the youngest learners (Wasik et al., 2006).
3. Promote active listening while modeling extensive language use and providing daily and continuous language opportunities with affirming and corrective feedback to increase students' oral language, vocabulary, reading, and writing skills (Whorrall & Cabell, 2016).
4. Develop language skills (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics) through structured oral language opportunities (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2008)
5. Allow students time to talk about their experiences and learn how to organize their ideas and thinking (Lyle, 1993).
6. Build time for practice, ample opportunities, and encouragement to develop oral language in and outside of the school (Zhang & Aiex, 1995).
7. Intentionally plan oral language opportunities across multiple grouping formats.
8. Provide language scaffolds that help organize language production and thinking (Quinn et al., 2012)
9. Engage students in interactive dialogue focused on making meaning of content (Chang et al., 2012).
10. Teach students to debate, explain, critique, use logic, and reason to support their thinking (Chang et al., 2012; Kelly & Brown, 2002).
11. Use structured academic discussions about text to reinforce word and content meaning and reinforce newly learned vocabulary (Frey & Fisher, 2011; Shanahan et al., 2010; Spies & Xu; 2018; van Kleeck, 2014).
12. Use open-ended questions to encourage deeper thinking about text or topics (Baker et al., 2014).
13. Incorporate writing into instruction to extend learning and deepen understanding (Baker et al., 2014).
14. Expose students to an expansive language repertoire supported by reading (Snow, 2014).
15. Teach students to think critically and make sound judgments about content and learning (Zhang & Aiex, 1995).

Strategy C4: Grow Vocabulary

"Vocabulary knowledge and oral language skills (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics) are the greatest contributors to reading comprehension and writing quality, which impact all areas of academic achievement" (Cavazos, 2011, p. 116). Cavazos further explains the importance of teaching vocabulary well:

Explicit teaching of vocabulary includes intentional and strategic planning and teaching of words that will be encountered in connected text or in teacher-directed reading, delivered through meaningful and engaging classroom activities (Fisher & Frey, 2010). Designing vocabulary instruction should include careful selection of vocabulary words, intentionally designed instruction, multiple opportunities for use, and an assessment component (Spencer et al., 2012). The teacher should purposefully select robust vocabulary words that impact learning and build receptive and expressive vocabulary (Coyne et al., 2004; Spencer et al., 2012) and provide explicit, student-friendly definitions ideally before reading. (p. 117)

Here are some suggestions for growing vocabulary. Actions for your Action Plan may be drawn from these suggestions.

1. Build vocabulary and oral language through repeated exposure via listening and reading. Use words from teacher-directed activities in a variety of contexts throughout the day and during child directed activities. Offer familiar words in various contexts, build on known words or concepts, and provide descriptions (Marzano, 2020; Whorrall & Cabell, 2015).
2. Use sophisticated vocabulary. Engage in child-centered conversations that offer richer words, synonyms, and antonyms based on the child's interest (Whorrall & Cabell, 2015).
3. Raise word consciousness and naturally encourage the repeated and authentic use of the words, thereby reinforcing new learning (Fisher & Frey, 2010; Graves, 2006).
4. Explicitly teach vocabulary through connected text, through meaningful and engaging classroom activities (Fisher & Frey, 2010).
5. Carefully select vocabulary words to teach and provide multiple opportunities for use (Spencer et al., 2012).
6. Select robust vocabulary words (Coyne et al., 2004; Spencer et al., 2012) and provide explicit, student-friendly definitions before reading.
7. Teach word learning strategies such as morphemic and semantic analyses so students can learn the words and other related words.
8. Provide multiple exposures to the words and opportunities to use the words (Baker et al., 2014).
9. Provide students with opportunities to identify unknown vocabulary through structural and morphological analysis, context clues, and discussion (Fisher & Frey, 2010).
10. Oral and written language instruction should be integrated into all content areas with opportunities for students to talk and engage in content and write about their learning to deepen understanding (Baker et al., 2014).
11. Encourage independent vocabulary study for middle school and older students to improve conceptual knowledge (Espin et al., 2005).

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Practice D: Engage students with their learning.

We use the term tactics to refer to actions that are carefully planned and performed to achieve a specific end. Tactics are concrete and involve specific plans based on best practices. For each strategy within each lever, we recommend several tactics. Because each of the four levers includes a strategy for engaged learning, we provide here a detailed discussion of the two tactics for engaged learning:

- Active Student Response
- Student Learning Pictures

These two tactics are grounded in research and encapsulate best practices—including those found by Hattie (2017) to have potential to accelerate student achievement. They are also "universal" in that not only do they provide the strength to pump our four levers, they also are broadly applicable to students regardless of age, content regardless of subject matter, and learning environment regardless of physical location. The following sections describe each tactic.

Strategy D1: Include Active Student Response (ASR) in lessons.

We know that individual knowledge and ability are not the only factors impacting educational achievement. Strong motivation and high engagement in learning have consistently been linked to increased levels of student success. In his discussion of student personal competencies, Redding (2014) defined motivational competency as "engagement and persistence in pursuit of learning goals" (p. 9). There are a number of instructional techniques that can help support and increase a student's engagement and participation in learning, including Active Student Response (ASR) (Heward, 1994).

The ASR strategies promote meaningful engagement by all students and are shown to increase student participation and decrease classroom disruption while also providing real-time formative assessment information to teachers. High rates of ASR not only increase motivation and performance, they also provide teachers with immediate, actionable information on how well all students are learning and understanding the material. Advantages include the following.

- Each student is engaged all the time.
- The teacher collects formative assessment information as students are responding.
- The teacher can adjust instruction based on student response.
- Students receive immediate feedback from the teacher.

The procedures to increase active student responding are quite simple and can be implemented by new or veteran teachers, with pre-K to college students, across all subject matter domains, in urban, suburban, rural, and island settings. No special materials or tools are needed (digital technology options are available but not required) and instructional planning doesn't require much more time or expertise than usual.

Here are some suggestions for including Active Student Response in lessons. Actions for your Action Plan may be drawn from these suggestions.

Three of many ASR procedures (Choral Response, Response Cards, and Guided Notes) are described in more detail below.

1. **Choral Response (CR).** Used during group and whole-class instruction, in Choral Response (CR) students respond orally in unison as the teacher quickly asks a series of questions that require brief responses (e.g., math facts, reading vocabulary, spelling words). CR can be used to review material as well as teach new information and provides real-time formative assessment for the group as well as individual students (when called upon).

   Prepping for Choral Response
   a) Select curricular content appropriate for short questions and answers. Choose content for which students can make frequent responses (e.g., stating the vocabulary word for definitions, naming science concepts).
   b) Schedule a 5- to 10-minute CR session. Use short CR lessons for different subjects throughout the school day.
   c) Prepare your questions and instruction materials. Keep CR questions short and require only one correct, one to five word answers (e.g., How many sides does an octagon have?).

   Conducting Choral Response
   a) Model a few questions and responses for the class. (e.g., say, "I'm going to ask some questions about yesterday's science lesson. If I hold up this paper clip and ask, 'What will a magnet do to this object?' on my signal, you say, attract or repel.")
   b) Present questions clearly and directly. Avoid long explanations and discussions to maintain student attention to content.
   c) Allow thinking time. For difficult questions, have a longer pause between your question and your signal to respond. Hold your hand up with your palm out (as a gesture to "wait") to cue students to get ready to respond on your signal.
   d) Use a clear signal. Clear signals such as a snap, a clap, or simply saying, "everyone" indicate when it is the students' turn to respond. A cue helps students respond in unison, making it easier for the teacher to detect correct and incorrect responses.
      a. Give feedback on the group response. If all students respond correctly, give specific praise and move on to the next question. If most students respond correctly but a few do not, state the correct answer and return to it later. This will give those students an opportunity to correct their mistake.
   e) Call on individual students throughout the lesson. This formative assessment tactic allows you to assess low-performing students who may have difficulty with the content. If low performers answer correctly, you can be confident that other students are also correct. Use this as an opportunity to reinforce a student's accuracy, not to single out

a student for his or her mistakes. Ask your question before calling on a student so that students don't "drop out" when it is not their turn.

f) Maintain an energetic pace. Present the next question immediately after you have given feedback on the previous response. Fast pacing promotes students' participation, accuracy, and decreases off-task behavior.

g) Deliver praise and approval for students' participation and correct responding. Praise and approval can increase students' motivation and make the CR lesson more fun.

2. **Response Cards.** Response cards are simple to make and can be used in a variety of ways across different content areas and grade levels. Students simultaneously hold up a "card" in response to questions posed by the teacher. Students can also ask the questions of the class as another way for the teacher to check on their understanding.

Offered under the umbrella of "Every Pupil Responds", pinch cards or clip cards are often used to check for understanding in virtually any subject. In a small or whole group activity, students are given a card to show their response by pinching with a clothespin, a clip, or even their fingers. Teachers can easily scan all student responses by glancing around the room.

A simple way to create a response card is to fold an 8½" x 11" paper (lined or unlined) in half and then half again. This creates eight faces on which students can write individual responses. These cards can be used across a variety of content and purposes: check basic mathematics facts or responses to mental math problems; practice recall of a science term based on a verbal description given by the teacher; or check understanding of geography terms by drawing the formation named by the teacher (or peer).

Response cards can have "premade" content; old cardboard cut into pieces can serve this purpose well, for example, the words "Yes" and "No" written on either side or the same side of the card (two different colors can serve the same purpose). Cards can be made with numbering from 1–3 or 1–5. This approach easily supports multiple-choice questions, but also can be used to gauge how students feel about issues. Smiley or frowning faces or words at the extremes help students know what the numbers mean. Additionally, response cards can be used for short answer, open-ended responses. Depending on their ages and abilities, students can draw or write responses to more complex or creative prompts, including the following.

- From the description I just read, draw a picture of the setting for this scene.
- What do you think will happen next in the story?
- In three of your blocks on your response card, draw or write the beginning, middle, and end of the story.
- Write at least four different math sentences to express 18, including the use of addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division.

3. **Guided Notes.** Guided Notes are prepared materials (handouts) that support new content but leave "blank" space for key concepts, facts, relationships, definitions, and so on. They provide systematic student response opportunities during lectures or discussion. As students listen and learn, they fill in the blank spaces with the new information. Guided notes work well with lessons that require students to listen carefully and to take accurate notes and provide a way to convert a listening activity into a more active one, while also improving student learning. Additionally, guided notes are versatile, efficient study tools for students across all grade levels (elementary, middle, and high, both with and without disabilities; Heward, n.d.).

    Examples include worksheets provided during live or video lectures, visual or graphic organizers, word maps, or a similar format that increases student involvement while listening to lectures, watching a video, or even reading assigned text (see Figure 4)

    Creating and Implementing Guided Notes

    The teacher prepares a set of notes, an outline, or an organizer that contains the essential information that will be covered.

    The outline should contain consistent cues, such as bullet points, to draw students' attention to salient points in the lecture; special cues (e.g., stars, bells) can be used to draw students' attention to particularly important information.

    The teacher then removes key content and creates blank spaces for the missing information. Blank spaces should allow for one to three word responses, and the location of the spaces should vary to keep students focused on note taking.

    Before distributing the guided notes, the teacher should ensure that students understand their responsibility to attend to content covered in the lecture or the reading and to fill in each of the blanks in the guided notes with the appropriate concepts, definitions, or other content.

    Guided notes must have meaning for the student, which requires occasional checks for completeness or accuracy. There are several options to verify that students are actively completing guided notes. The teacher can randomly (unpredictably) collect and review them for accuracy and completeness or conduct spot checks of individual students' guided notes. Students can pair up and compare their guided note responses or exchange/share guided notes for later study. The teacher can also display the guided notes (via overhead projector, computer projector, or interactive whiteboard) and fill in the blanks with appropriate facts or concepts as they are presented.

Primary Source:
Twyman, J. S. (2018a). Enhancing motivation through active student response. Center on Innovations in Learning at Temple University. https://www.adi.org/PLTopicBriefs.html#gsc.tab=0.

Strategy D2: Include Student Learning Pictures (SLP) in lessons.
Research affirms the importance of thinking about thinking, often called "metacognition". Metacognition is one of the four essential personal competencies emphasized by Redding (2014a, 2014b). It involves self-reflection on one's current state, history, future goals, possible actions, and potential results and, hence, is critical in all aspects of school and in life (Fadel et al., 2015).

But how do we encourage our teachers and our students to think about thinking? In addition to building study skills and organizational strategies, we also need to foster our students (and our own) ability to know and talk about what they know.

Research concurs on the importance of thinking about thinking and knowing what you know. We can learn how to think about thinking through the deliberate use of practice and dedicated strategies that help us develop expertise faster and more effectively. In short, we can all get better at getting better (Boser, 2018). When learning something new, people who closely track their thinking outscore others, even those who have higher IQ levels. When developing mastery, focusing on what and how we understand produces greater outcome than intelligence. Some strategies to improve thinking about thinking include the following.

Setting achievable goals and then developing strategies to help reach those goals.

Considering your current state of knowing. Asking, do I really get this idea? Could I explain it to a friend? Do I need more background knowledge? Do I need more practice?

Reflecting on your learning by self-assessing. Where am I now? What can I do next? What might the outcome be?

When students track their own mastery, their personal responsibility for learning increases. Creating and reviewing SLP can help build successful learning habits and increase student autonomy—supporting students in choosing their route toward mastery and their goals. SLP can help students learn the value of self-assessment and tracking progress over time. They also can help students build self-efficacy; the visualization of their learning can spark effective action.

Studies show that when students track their own knowledge and data, they take ownership of their learning, have more "intrinsic" motivation, and perform better on tasks in school (Marzano, 2009, 2010). When students track their own progress on assessments using visual displays, the gains are even higher. Even small wins are enormous motivators. Student Learning Pictures are a way to help students recognize (and celebrate) each step forward toward meeting their goals. A learning picture dedicated to personal successes, big or small (victories), helps students remember what they have accomplished and is particularly useful for motivation or self-reflection when things aren't going as planned. A catalog of daily success serves as a concrete visual reminder of growth. A victory learning picture can be as simple as an ongoing (and hence growing) list of achievements kept on the back of a student's notebook or a dedicated display. The important thing is that the SLP is easily accessible for recording and reflection.

Student Learning Pictures provide students with the visual representations they need to self-monitor, self-reflect, and determine their next steps in learning. By supporting and enhancing metacognition, the use of SLPs encourages students to recognize how they learn best and take ownership of their learning. They are tools for lifelong learners, a goal we have for all our students and ourselves. Student Learning Pictures support educator analysis of their own teaching and impact on student learning, likely leading to more effective action. They are easy to create, have a positive impact on motivation, and support thinking about thinking.

They also appear to be an integral part of a number of high-poverty, high-performing schools, albeit perhaps under a different name. The majority of research and meta-analysis on high-poverty, high-performing schools cite the use and frequent review of measurable goals to establish a culture of achievement (see Carter, 2000; Haycock et al., 1999; Manset et al., 2000; Reeves, 2003, 2010, 2011). These high-poverty, high-performing schools continuously look analytically at learning and then do something about it. We translate those actions into SLPs, which are a lever and can be used across other tactics and strategies. We know through best practices that we need to measure and act; our levers tell us what to measure and act upon. Student Learning Pictures helps us put that power in the hands of teachers and students themselves.

Critical features of Student Learning Pictures in practice can be summarized across three areas.

1. Students create and use their own learning pictures by:
   - using their classwork as a source for data, analyzing strengths, weaknesses, and patterns to improve their work;
   - tracking and analyzing their ongoing progress on assignments or assessments;
   - using data to set their own goals and reflect on their own progress over time; and
   - describing what they see in the data about their current level of performance, and whether they are improving, or if something needs to change.
2. Teachers support Student Learning Pictures by:
   - modeling the creation and use of learning pictures in their own or the class's work; and
   - providing students opportunities to create and reflect upon their own learning pictures.
3. Student Learning Pictures are used to:
   - foster analytical thinking and self-reflection (about one's own learning);
   - help students recognize and celebrate steps toward meeting their goals;
   - serve as a concrete, visual indicator of growth or catalog of achievements or success on a daily or weekly basis; and
   - provide students with the visual representations they need to self-monitor, self-reflect, and determine their next steps in learning.

Consider all the ideas above for creating Actions for your Action Plan to help teachers design learning picture procedures for their students.

REFERENCES FOR PRACTICE D: ENGAGE STUDENTS WITH THEIR LEARNING

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PART 3:
PRACTICE-FOCUSED COLLABORATION (PFC)

Practice-Focused Collaboration is a process in which a group works together to improve what they do. The group could be a school district or a community, but typically it is a single school or group of closely affiliated schools. The process works the same regardless of the group, but here we provide examples for PFC by a school faculty. In addition, we include action planning and progress reporting based on Strategic Performance Management (Layland & Redding, 2020).

The Planning Team. The principal selects two to five teachers to serve on the Planning Team. The membership may change over time, as membership rotates among family members each Action Cycle.

Purpose of Planning Team. The Planning Team reviews Part 2: Practices, Strategies, and Actions to determine which Actions to include in a short-cycle Action Plan; discusses their rationale for selection and the proposed Action Plan with the faculty (and school community when possible), gathers input, revises the plan, implements the plan, and reports progress.

Action Cycle. An Action Cycle is the period of time covered by an Action Plan, typically 60 or 90 days.

Practice Review. [See Practice Review Form below.] The Practice Review Form provides a structure for the Planning Team to determine which Strategy to prioritize and which Actions to Implement. The Planning Team discusses and completes the form at the beginning of each Action Cycle, typically 60 or 90 days.

Action Plan. [See Action Plan Form below.] The Action Plan Form helps the Planning Team put Actions into action, making them not something that is done once by one or two teachers, but part of the regular routine of each teacher's instruction.

Progress Report. [See Progress Report Form below.] While the Planning Team works closely with the Principal to carry out the action plan, the whole faculty (and school community, including

students) will be excited about the progress being made. The Progress Report Form is a way for the Planning Team to let everyone know how things are going and to signal when it is time to celebrate full implementation of the selected Actions.

Note: Practice-Focused Collaboration is a continuous improvement process, not an annual plan. An Action Plan guides the school for a short cycle of change, typically 60 or 90 days. Then the Planning Team initiates a new plan for another short cycle of change. An Action selected for implementation may be fully implemented and routinely practiced after one Action Plan is completed, or it may be recast in the next Action Plan for further work.

Photo Credit: Adhann Iwashita

REFERENCES FOR PART 3: PRACTICE-FOCUSED COLLABORATION

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Progress Review Form

School:

Date:

Planning Team Members:

At the beginning of each Action Cycle (usually every 60 or 90 days), the Planning Team meets to review Part 2: Practices, Strategies, Actions. The Team completes this form to record the results of its discussion and identify the Actions to include in the next Action Plan.

High Priority: This Strategy is a good fit for our school and we will greatly benefit from its implementation at this time.

Priority: This Strategy is worth reviewing again at the next Action Cycle because it could potentially be of benefit to our school.

Low Priority: This Strategy is not of interest to us at this time because we are already strong in this area or it is not a good fit for our school. We will reconsider as we plan each Action Cycle.

High Priority	Priority	Low Priority	1. **Planning Team: First discuss each Strategy and check its level of priority on the form.** 2. **Decide which one Strategy is your highest priority for this Action Cycle.**
			Practices and Strategies
			Practice A: Know your students.
			Strategy A1: Nurture positive relationships.
			Strategy A2: Create knowledge-centered classroom cultures.
			Strategy A3: Practice reciprocity.
			Practice B: Build students' capacity for learning.
			Strategy B1: Establish a strong foundation for instruction.
			Strategy B2: Fortify students' confidence as learners.
			Strategy B3: Teach students to orchestrate their own mastery.
			Strategy B4: Challenge students to grapple with rich content.
			Practice C: Provide students with a verbally rich curriculum.
			Strategy C1: Build foundational knowledge.
			Strategy C2: Extend verbally rich content.
			Strategy C3: Exercise oral language.
			Strategy C4: Grow vocabulary.
			Practice D: Engage students with learning.
			Strategy D1: Include Active Student Response (ASR) in lessons.
			Strategy D2: Include Student Learning Pictures (SLP) in lessons.

Action Description Form

Step 1: What is the highest priority Strategy for this Action Cycle?

Step 2: Describe the Actions to Include in this Action Plan related to the highest priority Strategy.

Action #1

      Action Title (give your Action a short name for future reference):

      Action Description:

Action #2

      Action Title (give your Action a short name for future reference):

      Action Description:

Action #3

      Action Title (give your Action a short name for future reference):

      Action Description:

Step 2: Share the Progress Review Form and Action Selection Form with the faculty (and others you wish to consult); seek their feedback and suggestions.

Step 3: Complete the Action Plan Form and implement the Action Plan.

Step 4: Report progress monthly with the Progress Report Form.

Action Plan Form

Complete one form for each Action selected for implementation during this cycle (60 to 90 days)

Strategy and Action 1 for this Cycle
Start Date: **Anticipated End Date:**
Strategy:
Action 1:
How will we know if the action was successfully implemented?
Primary Person Responsible for Leading the Change and Reporting Progress:

Activities (Steps to Full Implementation of Action

Activity	Target Date	Person Responsible	Resources Needed	Outputs	Completed (Yes/No)
Activity 1:					
Activity 2:					
Activity 3:					
Activity 4:					

Final Report: __No Progress   __In Progress   __Fully Met   **Date Fully Met:**
Results/Impact:
Challenges/Barriers:
Considerations for Next Action Plan:

Strategy and Action 2 for this Cycle					
Start Date:			**Anticipated End Date:**		
Strategy:					
Action 2:					
How will we know if the action was successfully implemented?					
Primary Person Responsible for Leading the Change and Reporting Progress:					
Activities (Steps to Full Implementation of Action					
Activity	**Target Date**	**Person Responsible**	**Resources Needed**	**Outputs**	**Completed (Yes/No)**
Activity 1:					
Activity 2:					
Activity 3:					
Activity 4:					
Final Report: ___No Progress ___In Progress ___Fully Met **Date Fully Met:**					
Results/Impact:					
Challenges/Barriers:					
Considerations for Next Action Plan:					

Strategy and Action 3 for this Cycle					
Start Date:			**Anticipated End Date:**		
Strategy:					
Action 3:					
How will we know if the action was successfully implemented?					
Primary Person Responsible for Leading the Change and Reporting Progress:					
Activities (Steps to Full Implementation of Action					
Activity	**Target Date**	**Person Responsible**	**Resources Needed**	**Outputs**	**Completed (Yes/No)**
Activity 1:					
Activity 2:					
Activity 3:					
Activity 4:					
Final Report: ___No Progress ___In Progress ___Fully Met **Date Fully Met:**					
Results/Impact:					
Challenges/Barriers:					
Considerations for Next Action Plan:					

Progress Report Form

Report on Progress—Strategies and Actions For this Action Cycle

Start Date:	Cycle End Date:

Strategy:

Action 1 (Title):

__No Progress	__In Progress	__Fully Met	Date Fully Met:

Action 2 (Title):

__No Progress	__In Progress	__Fully Met	Date Fully Met:

Action 3 (Title):

__No Progress	__In Progress	__Fully Met	Date Fully Met:

Comments from Planning Team:

Results/Impact:

Challenges/Barriers:

Considerations for Remainder of this Action Cycle: