HISD

Educator Update - March, 2018
Keeping Huron County Educators Informed

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This Educator Update includes:

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1. **HISD Website Quick Tips** – We have a wealth of literacy resources under the General Education tab of our website.

There are MANY resources available for LITERACY. Click the General Education tab, then scroll down to Literacy.

Literacy
For support in accessing or using these resources, contact us at (989) 269-6406.

Data Review Tools	Curriculum	Instruction	Assessment
Fall Data Review	Common Core Standards	Research Foundations	Benchmarks and Target - **Posted September 2016, valid for 2017-18**
Power Point	Standards for ELA	Literacy Essentials	

Literacy resources are sorted into multiple categories. Each blue link takes you to a new page or document.

Building Action Plan	Key Elements of the Standards Glossary of Key Terms	HISD. Contact a member of the Planning Team for more information.	Method-Match
District Action Plan	Appendix B: Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks	Write Well	Universal Screening Windows
Consolidated Needs Report	Appendix C: Samples of Student Writing	Rewards Writing - Sentence Refinement	Grouping Students for Interventions: (Print on 11x17) Reading:
Consolidated Needs Report Sample	State Standards	Rewards Writing - Sentence Refinement	

Step Up to Writing
Step Up to Writing is a set of instructional strategies developed by Maureen Auman and published by Sopris West. Step Up to Writing is being used in Kindergarten through Grade 12 to ensure that students have basic writing skills and that writing is used to advance learning in all content classes.

K-12 Implementation Guide

(Provides examples of Step Up to Writing Strategies useful for each grade and subject. Print on 11" x 17" paper.)

Try a Few Step Up to Writing Strategies
I-V-F Sentence and Summary Paragraph
Analayzing a Paragraph
Avoiding the "Things" Trap
Breaking Down Definitions
Either-Or for Persuasive Writing
Paragraph Elaboration and Ticket Out
Sentence Combining and Improving Sentence Quality
Summarizing Charts and Graphs
Using and Creating Bookmarks

For example, clicking Step Up to Writing, in the Instruction Column opens a new page with 20 additional resources.

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2. **Which is Best? Analytic or synthetic phonics?** From Timothy Shanahan's 2/4/2018 "Shanahan on Literacy" blog, http://shanahanonliteracy.com/blog

Teacher question:

I've taught literacy and literacy courses in every grade from K-graduate school. I take the view that synthetic phonics taught directly and systematically is essential to any literacy program. However, we also propose that teachers be given the training an option to use analytic phonics when, after reasonable attempts of using direct instruction, the synthetic phonics approach fails a particular child. I recognize that currently virtually no one is doing it that way. At the moment my criticism of systematic synthetic phonics is not that is shouldn't be done, it should. Rather it is that the way it is being done in many places is taking up far too much instructional time. Is there a middle ground that would help teachers help students? I await your answer.

Shanahan response:

Forty-eight years ago, I was taking my first-course in reading instruction. I had spent the previous fall tutoring reading in an inner-city classroom in Pontiac, Michigan. I wasn't planning on becoming a teacher, but the teaching experience had intrigued me and I wanted to know more.

One of the things that I was taught in that first class was that there were two kinds of phonics instruction: synthetic and analytic. These were supposedly very different in learning outcomes and the only reasonable approach, we were told, was analytic phonics. I knew nothing to refute any of those definitions or claims, so dutifully recorded it all in my notes.

Basically, synthetic phonics taught children the letter-sound correspondences and then had kids synthesizing words by blending the sounds for each of the letters or letter combinations. So, I know that b makes /b/, and a makes /a/ and t makes /t/… so it is buh-ahh-tuh… b-a-t… /bat/.

Analytic phonics, on the other hand, focused on combining larger sound units (such as word families or phonograms: ab, ack, ad, ag, am, an, ap, at, etc.) or using known words as analogies for figuring out words… I already know the words big and rat and here is a new word bat… so it starts out like /b/ig and ends up like r/at/… so it must be/bat/.

The reason for the claim that analytic phonics was better was it supposedly was showing students a process more like the one that they would actually use to read, and it wasn't messed up by all those extra vowel sounds that synthetic phonics was plagued by (it is impossible to pronounce most consonants without adding a vowel, hence the added "uh"s above for the /b/ and /t/ sounds).

Then I became a first-grade teacher.

I taught my analytical phonics lessons, following all the steps I had been taught… and my kids—well some of my kids—did fine. And, others… they struggled to make sense of it. They weren't resistant. They were trying to learn what I was teaching, but it was just too complicated or too abstract for several of these 6-year-olds. Instead of seeing these words that I was teaching as great analogies for unknown word pronunciations, they just seemed confused by it all.

Let's face it: It's a lot easier to teach that "b" is /b/ than that this word *big* is /big/ and the first letter of that makes the first sound that you hear in /big/ and that the first letter in bat is the "b" and it probably makes the first sound that you… ah, to hell with it!

So I started to "cheat."

Because they were having trouble I started "simplifying" my instruction—in other words, I started teaching synthetic phonics lessons to them and that seemed to help. I came to see this as a useful expedient... teach synthetic phonics to get kids started more easily.

Fast forward 28 years... I'm on the Alphabetics committee of the National Reading Panel. We review the 38 existing experimental studies on teaching phonics in grades K-12. We found that systematic phonics instruction was best. Please note the underlined word. It is amazing how many phonics proponents sound it out it as saying "synthetic." (I've considered suggesting syllabication lessons to help them to sound out multi-syllable words).

What we meant by systematic is an explicit phonics curriculum—teachers should be following an explicit regiment rather than trying to teach phonics skills as kids seemed to need them or to teach phonics by discovery. We didn't conclude that there was a particular sequence that was best, only that there was a need for some well-planned sequence.

What did we find out about synthetic phonics versus analytic phonics?

There was a higher effect size associated with teaching synthetic phonics than analytic phonics. In other words, across these studies, the kids who were taught synthetically did somewhat better on various reading measures (kids seemed to get a greater learning payoff from the simpler approach). However, that difference wasn't statistically significant (meaning that it could just be a chance occurrence that a difference of that size was obtained). Perhaps, with a larger number of studies that size of superiority could be attributed to the difference between synthetic and analytic phonics—and perhaps with more studies things would have just balanced out. But who knows.

What I am saying is that across 38 studies there was no clear difference in effectiveness between synthetic and analytic phonics (which angers both some of my phonics fans who are certain that synthetic is best, as well as some of my progressive pals who act as if I'd squandered the family jewels). But based on my personal teaching experiences, I would start out with synthetic approaches because I think they are easier for some kids to make sense of. However, while I would definitely start with synthetic (or I would insert some synthetic instruction into my analytic program as needed), at some point kids should be analyzing the similarities and differences in words (and this analysis should consider both phonemic and morphological features and should

address the pronunciation, spelling, and meaning implications of these patterns). The big take away from my years of experience with this argument: **If kids are having trouble *learning* something, simplify it.**

No matter what your beliefs about the complications of learning the alphabetic system, we are teaching it to young children. Simplifying things to get them started makes a lot of sense—and synthetic approaches are relatively simple. **However, if kids are having trouble *applying* something that they have learned, then you need to complicate it.**

When children know their phonics skills but are still struggling to figure out how to read or spell words, then working with word analogies and making sure that they are thinking hard about the alternative pronunciations of spelling patterns (*bread, break, bead*) or the alternative spellings of particular pronunciations is the way to go. (The same can be said about adding something like repeated reading or other oral fluency training procedures to the phonics program; such training helps kids to apply their already-learned phonics skills).

The idea of combining synthetic and analytic phonics instruction violates no research that I'm aware, and if done right, may help more kids to succeed. Godspeed.

3. **Students Taking Responsibility for Their Own Learning** – A summary from the Marshall Memo.

"We limit our potential to reach school achievement goals when we fail to involve students deeply in the assessment process," say Nancy Frey and Douglas Fisher (San Diego State University) and John Hattie (University of Melbourne, Australia) in this article in *Educational Leadership*. Too often, students are left out when teachers look at learning data: "The person at the center of the discussion is relegated to a passive role." Frey, Fisher, and Hattie argue that there's a big payoff when teachers and school leaders orchestrate a process that makes students "assessment capable," specifically:

- Students know their current level of proficiency and see the learning path ahead.
- They choose tools and resources (a writing rubric, for example) to guide their learning.
- They are confident about taking on academic challenges.
- They seek feedback and treat mistakes as learning opportunities.
- They monitor their progress and make necessary adjustments.
- They have a metacognitive sense of what they are learning and can teach others.

Hattie has studied the effect sizes of hundreds of classroom interventions and calculates that anything above 0.40 represents more than a year's worth of learning in a school year. Here's how the components of assessment capability stack up:

- Goal-setting in collaboration with teachers – 0.56
- Self-regulation, persistence, and study skills – 0.64
- Student motivation to take on challenges, seek information, and follow through – 0.72
- Feedback that's timely, specific, understandable, and actionable – 0.75
- Students' ability to report thoughtfully on their own performance – 1.44

From: "Developing 'Assessment Capable' Learners" by Nancy Frey, Douglas Fisher, and John Hattie in *Educational Leadership*, February 2018 (Vol. 75, #5, p. 46-51), available for purchase at
http://bit.ly/2EgV461

4. **Check out this plagiarism poster** – This detailed graphic, created by Curtis Newbold (Westminster College, Salt Lake City) can be used as a handout or wall chart to help secondary-school students understand the different dimensions of plagiarism:
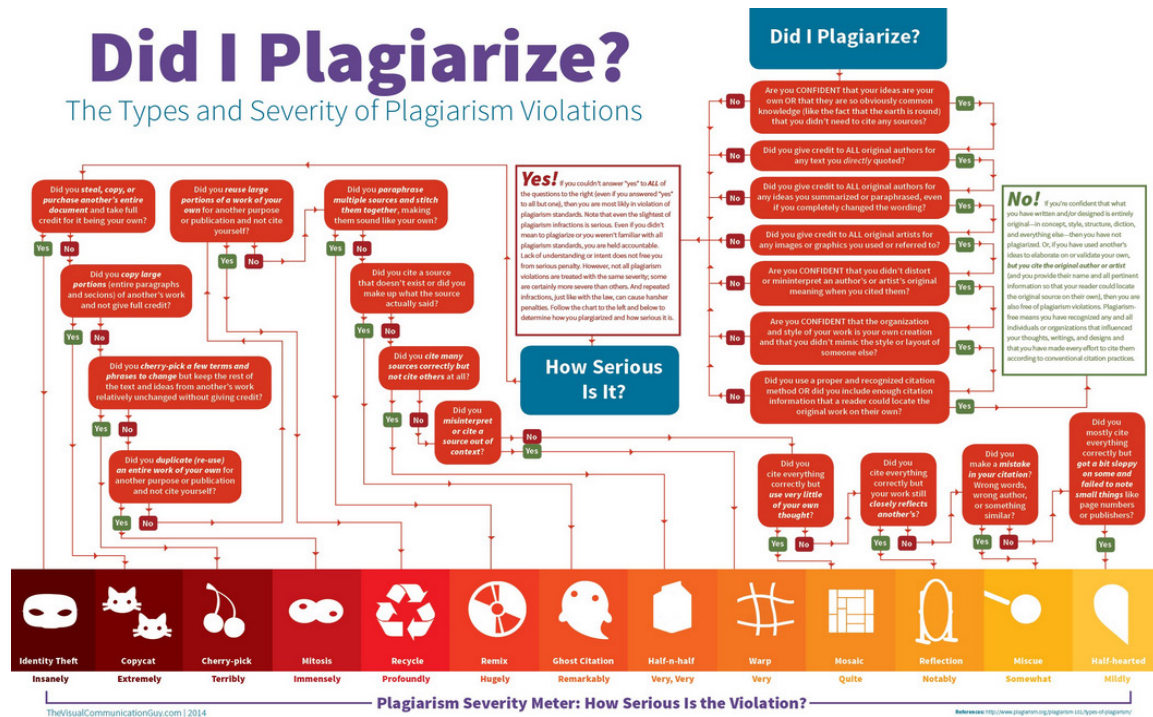
From: "Did I Plagiarize? The Types and Severity of Plagiarism Violations" by Curtis Newbold, 2014, http://thevisualcommunicationguy.com

5. **Using Games to Check for Student Understanding** – A summary from the Marshall Memo.

In this *Educational Leadership* article, California school curriculum director Jonathan Cassie sings the praises of "gamified" assessments that provide low-stakes, engaging ways for teachers to measure student learning in real time. "[I]t is not uncommon for students to feel confident that they have mastered a body of knowledge and skills before they go into an assessment," says Cassie, "only to be dismayed by a poor performance revealing that their sense of control over content and skills was much weaker than they realized… A well-designed game or gamified lesson is a customizable, persistence-reinforcing, socially stimulating, democratic, meritocratic, playful, and flow-aligned experience." The trick is creating a "magic circle" where students enjoy a metaphorical separation between the real world and the game space.

Cassie distinguishes between *game-based learning* – for example, a third-grade teacher getting students playing Machi Koro and building an ideal community by "buying" items like a family restaurant and a convenience store – and *gamified learning* – for example, students playing the game *7 Wonders* and taking on the role of leaders of ancient civilizations building one of the seven wonders of the world. Well-designed games are effective when they empower students to own their learning, are at the Goldilocks level of difficulty, help students persist when confronted with new obstacles, and encourage them to see mistakes and failures as feedback for improvement.

Cassie recommends that teachers look for games in online communities like Board Game Geek and Game Level Learn, matching games to classroom needs. He suggests the following:

- Codenames – A board game in which teams try to make contacts with their "secret agents" through word clues, suitable for any subject where recognizing patterns is key;
- Letters from Whitechapel – Students take on the role of Scotland Yard detectives tracking and arresting Jack the Ripper; the game measures and reinforces skills like collaboration and communication;
- Zendo – Can be used to tap students' critical thinking capacity;
- Socrative (free and paid options) – Provides games and other activities and collects granular data on student learning;
- Kahoot! (free and paid options) – Allows teachers to construct homework assignments almost as though they were video game-type quests;
- Quizlet www.quizlet.com – Allows teachers to convert data-gathering into a gamified form to check for student mastery;
- Quizizz– Lets teachers monitor the results of students' work as they do it;
- Quizalize (free and paid options) – Provides the same kinds of quizzes and assessments as other tools, but also lets teachers track the work of individual students;
- Plickers – Students hold up QR codes, orienting them to four different answer choices, which are then read by the teacher's smartphone.

"Playing Games with Formative Assessment" by Jonathan Cassie in *Educational Leadership*, February 2018 (Vol. 75, #5, p. 58-63), available for purchase at http://bit.ly/2GOSMtl

6.   Self-regulation intervention improves school readiness

Adding a self-regulation intervention to a school readiness program can improve self-regulation, early academic skills, and school readiness in children at higher risk for later school difficulties, according to the results of a study published in Early Childhood Research Quarterly. Robert J. Duncan and colleagues looked at the effect of adding a self-regulation intervention to the Bridge to Kindergarten (B2K) program - a three-week summer school-readiness program - in Oregon. The B2K program is aimed at children with no prior preschool experience, and therefore considered to be at risk for later school difficulties.

Children from three to five years old were randomly assigned to either a control group (B2K only) or the intervention group (B2K plus intervention). Children in the intervention group received two 20- to 30-minute sessions per week, involving movement and music-based games that encouraged them to practice self-regulation skills.

Results from this randomized controlled trial indicated that children who received the intervention scored higher on measures of self-regulation than children who participated in the B2K program alone. There were no significant effects on math or literacy at the end of the program. However, four months into kindergarten, children from the intervention group showed increased growth in self-regulation, math, and literacy compared to expected development.

This electronic newsletter is sent to all educators within the Huron ISD several times each year. If you have suggestions for future content or feedback, please contact us using the information below.

Check out our website at www.huronisd.org
Submit suggestions and feedback to curriekm@huronisd.org