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Strong Instruction Through an Acceleration Framework

February 28, 2024

The Team



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WHO WE ARE

TNTP believes our nation's public schools can offer *all* children an excellent education.

A national nonprofit founded by teachers, TNTP helps schools put all the elements of great teaching to work in their classrooms so that more students graduate ready for success in college, a career, and life.

We believe giving *all* students the challenging, vibrant education they deserve starts with supporting and sustaining great teaching.



Who: Talent

Is there a robust, diverse pipeline of high-quality teachers and leaders?



What: Content

Are they teaching content that sufficiently challenges and engages students?



How: Instruction

Are they being efficiently trained to inspire students to reach new heights?

Sustainability

Is the community invested in the systems and policies that will scale great teaching to every classroom, and ensure it continues over the long term?

Icebreaker

At your tables, share:

1. Your **name** and **role**
2. Why you registered for this session
3. An inconsequential thing you have strong feelings about



Objectives

- **identify** the impact of the 4 key resources on students' educational experiences & academic growth
- **reflect** on how implicit bias and underlying beliefs about rigor may be impacting instructional leadership
- **explore** the characteristics of grade-level rigor in student assignments
- **internalize** the essential components of strong Tier 1 instruction and reflect on areas of greatest opportunity
- **determine** your call to action for your classroom, school, or region.

Norms

Stay Engaged

Remain emotionally, intellectually, and socially involved in the dialogue, especially during breakouts & reflections.

Experience Discomfort

In moments where you experience competing thoughts or beliefs, seek to understand what's challenging you and why

Speak Your Truth

Share your personal truth, experience and expertise; avoid saying only what you think others want to hear.

Expect & Accept Non-Closure

Focus on the journey and embrace that disrupting and eliminating inequities is an ongoing process.

Opening

 **The Opportunity Myth**

Learning Acceleration


You as the Unit of Change

Grade Level Rigor

Strong Instruction

Closing

Students expect that school will set them up to meet their goals if they do what's asked of them—and they generally do just that.

An illustration on the left side of the page shows four hands of different skin tones (dark brown, light brown, medium brown, and dark brown) reaching up from the bottom to hold the strings of four balloons. The balloons are arranged in a cluster, with two in the front and two slightly behind. Each balloon is split vertically, with the left half being a lighter shade of orange and the right half being a darker shade of orange. The strings are thin white lines. The background is a solid teal color with some darker teal geometric shapes in the upper left and lower right.

88% of the time, students are working on activities related to class

71% of the time, students met the expectations of assignments they're given

83% earned As, Bs, and Cs in English language arts

78% earned As, Bs, and Cs in math

SOURCE: Student surveys (for time on task); Student work samples (for meeting assignment expectations); District extant data (for grades)

But even when they do what school asks,
they're not set up for success to reach their long-term goals.

Students
succeeded on

71%

of their
assignments

They met grade-level
standards on

17%

of those exact
same assignments

Even though most students are meeting the demands of their assignments—and many are earning As and Bs—they're not prepared for college-level work.

The "opportunity myth" is the false promise that if students do what they're asked in school, they'll be set up for success—and that if they *don't* succeed, they must've done something to blow their chance.

It's on all of us, not just teachers, to give students better school experiences that set them up for success.
We can choose to upend the opportunity myth.

We found four key resources that influence a student's school experience and outcomes.

1 Consistent opportunities to work on **GRADE-APPROPRIATE ASSIGNMENTS**

2 **STRONG INSTRUCTION**, where students do most of the thinking in a lesson

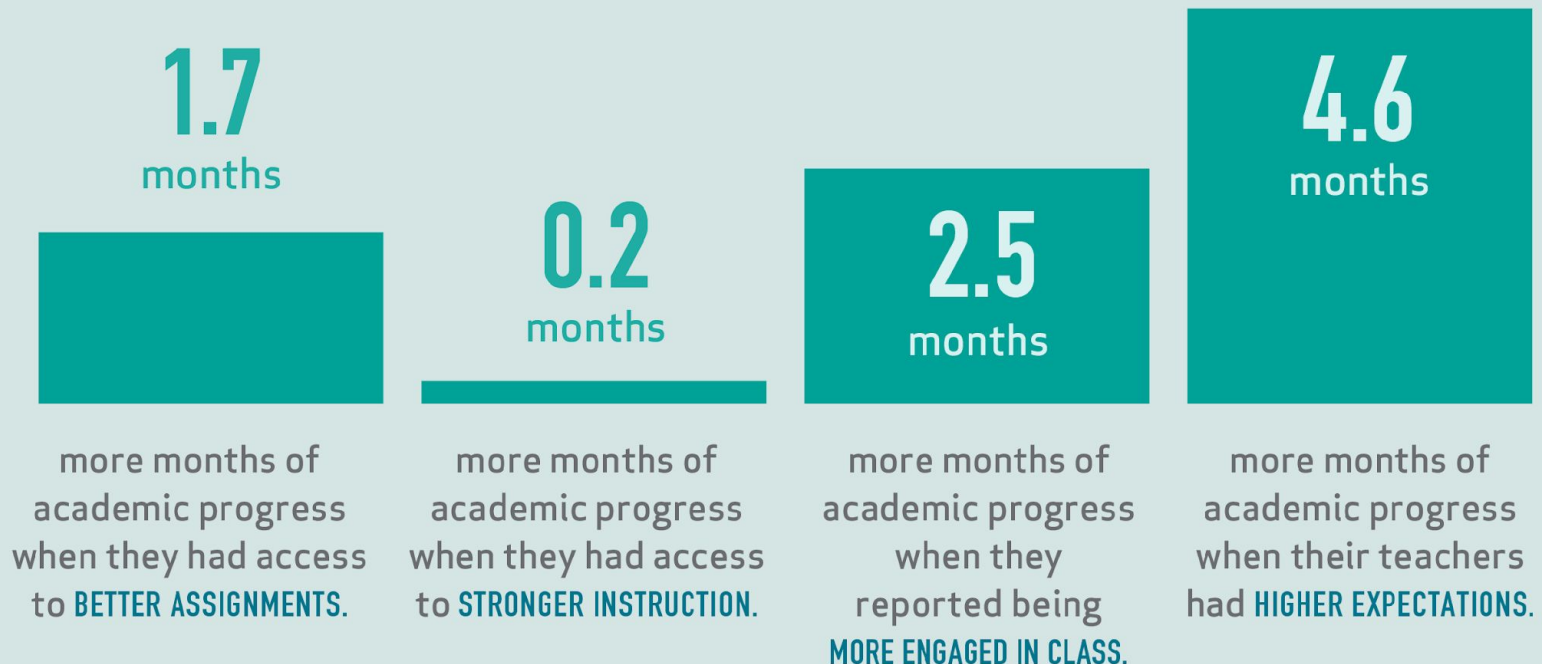
3 **DEEP ENGAGEMENT** in what they're learning

4 Teachers who hold **HIGH EXPECTATIONS** for students and believe they can meet grade-level standards

Unfortunately, these resources are few and far between for most students –and *particularly* for students of color, those from low-income families, English language learners, and students with mild to moderate disabilities.

These four resources make a difference.
When students get greater access to them, their outcomes improve.

In our sample, all students made:



SOURCE: Value-added models

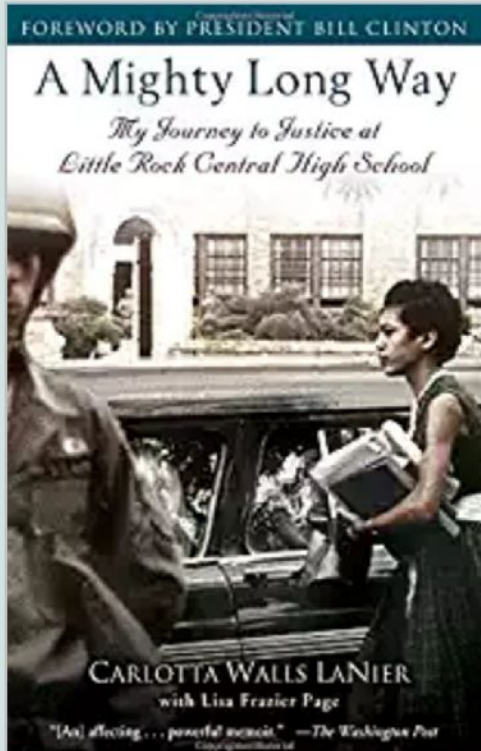
...That's especially true for students who started the year below grade-level.

In our sample, students who started the year performing substantially below average made:



SOURCE: Value-added models

Assignment quality varied widely. Some students—like the eighth graders in this language arts class—did have the opportunity to grapple with high-quality assignments.



Education

GRADE 8: MODULE 3B: UNIT 2: LESSON 16

Informational Essay Planner

Name:

Date:

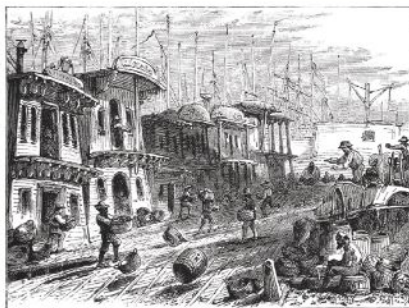
Focusing Question: In the events surrounding the Little Rock Nine and the struggle to integrate Central High, the press played a newly powerful role. In what ways did it serve to illuminate events for a national audience, and in what ways did it give an incomplete or even inaccurate picture of events?

Students read *A Mighty Long Way* and wrote an informational essay analyzing historical events, getting the chance to fully meet the depth of multiple standards and learn relevant content.

But eighth graders in another language arts class—
in the same district—did not have that same chance.

The “Billion Oyster Project” Brings Life Back to NYC Waters

Gazing at Manhattan’s East River, you will see huge cargo ships, ferries, and barges. You’ll see a stream of cars and trains zooming over the city’s bridges. It’s hard to imagine that this river was once an unspoiled marine habitat. Years of industrial development have taken a toll. Much of the natural ecosystem here was lost or damaged. But today, with the help of the Billion Oyster Project and lots of New York City students, that’s starting to change.



OYSTER BOATS, NEW YORK.

Long ago, oysters thrived in the waters around NYC. Have you ever heard of Pearl Street in downtown Manhattan? That street was named for all the oysters that swarmed the nearby river. But as NYC became a shipping hub, the rivers became polluted. The oyster population nearly disappeared. This impacted the whole ecosystem, because oysters were a key ingredient.

As oysters eat, they filter the water supply by removing nitrogen. We see great biodiversity around oyster reefs, because the oysters’ filtering ability attracts life. Around NYC’s oyster reefs, there were large habitats of fish and marine creatures. Even whales were a common sight here. Oyster reefs also helped to buffer Manhattan from erosion. They limited the damage from storms and waves. As NYC’s oysters died off, so did many other creatures, and so did the protective quality of the reefs. This was a big loss for the city.

The Billion Oyster Project has set out to address this loss. The project works to bring oysters back to NYC’s waters. The project began with students at New York Harbor School. It has since expanded to include many schools in the city. Thousands of NYC students have participated in reef construction and oyster planting. So far, over 26 million oysters have been planted in the waters around NYC. And it’s working! With the oysters, many more fish and marine creatures have returned as well. Even whales have been spotted again.

These NYC waterways and harbors will always be some of the world’s busiest. But with the help of the Billion Oyster Project, the dynamic natural world that once thrived here is beginning to return and to coexist more peacefully with the ferries, barges, cars and trains.

After reading a fifth-grade level text, students completed multiple-choice vocabulary questions and filled in the missing vowels in words, which is not aligned to any eighth-grade literacy standard.

Sample question from this assignment:

Add vowels (a, e, i, o, u) to complete the words from the reading.

It’s hard to imagine that this river was once an unspoiled marine H_B_T_T.

The opportunity myth wasn't created by teachers, who are working hard and doing what they've been trained and told to do.

Most students—**93% OF THOSE WE SURVEYED**—told us it's important to their teachers that they learn a lot.

Teachers exist in schools, systems, and environments that can either set them and their students up for success—or not.

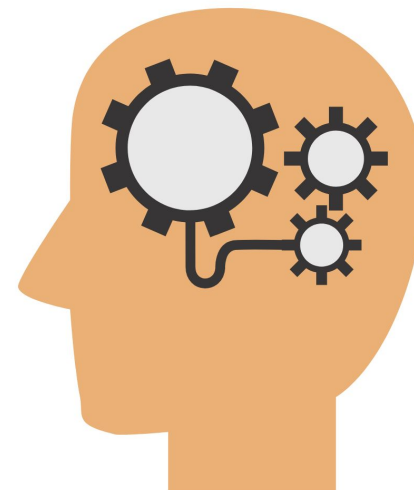


Reflect & discuss



What's resonating with you about the 4 key resources?

How is this research making you think about your instruction and your students differently, if at all? Why?



In the spring of 2023, TNTP worked with nearly all CSI schools (34) to better understand students' access to four key resources at the heart of high-quality academic experiences: **grade-appropriate assignments**, **strong instruction**, **deep engagement**, and **teachers with high expectations**.

ACADEMIC DIAGNOSTIC

Nebraska Department of Education, Spring 2023



WHAT'S IN YOUR ACADEMIC DIAGNOSTIC REPORT?

The Nebraska Department of Education partnered with TNTP to begin to understand students' access to four key resources at the heart of high-quality academic experiences – grade-appropriate assignments, strong instruction, deep engagement, and teachers with high expectations. To understand students' access to these resources, we worked with a set of 320 ELA¹ and math classrooms in grades K-12 across the 33 CSI schools participating in the Academic Diagnostic, collecting assignments and student work samples, observing classrooms, surveying students in grades 3-12, and surveying teachers about their expectations for students. Not-yet-exited CSI schools were required to participate in the Academic Diagnostic, while newly identified CSI schools had the opportunity to opt-in to the Academic Diagnostic.

Opening

The Opportunity Myth

 **Learning Acceleration**

You as the Unit of Change

Grade Level Rigor

Strong Instruction

Closing

Imagine this...

You are preparing to kick off the new semester with the **first unit of your curriculum (HQIM)**, which you know is aligned to grade-level standards. But you also know that many of your students are starting the year with **significant gaps in their understanding of prior grade-level content**, and they will likely struggle with this unit. You plan to spend the first several days focused on classroom culture and systems, but then you need to start content. You can either dive into the first unit or spend time catching kids up since you know they have gaps.

What approach do you typically see or take?

Catching kids up vs. prioritizing grade-level content

When students come to us with unfinished learning from previous years, we can either remediate or accelerate their Tier 1 instruction...



REMEDiate

Prioritize catching kids up on **previous grades' content**

Adjust rigor of content & instruction to **meet students where they are**



ACCELERATE

Prioritize exposing students to **current grade-level content**

Embed strategic scaffolds to support students with rigor of grade-level content

What happens when we prioritize catching kids up *first*?

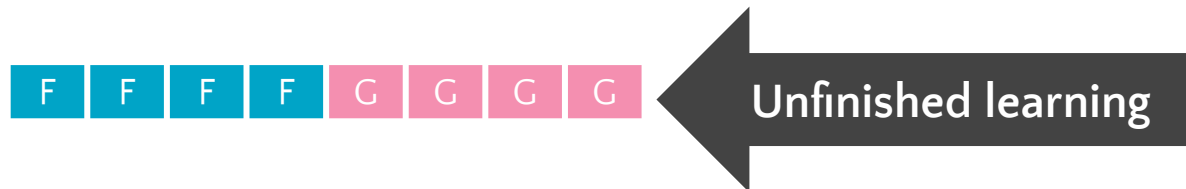
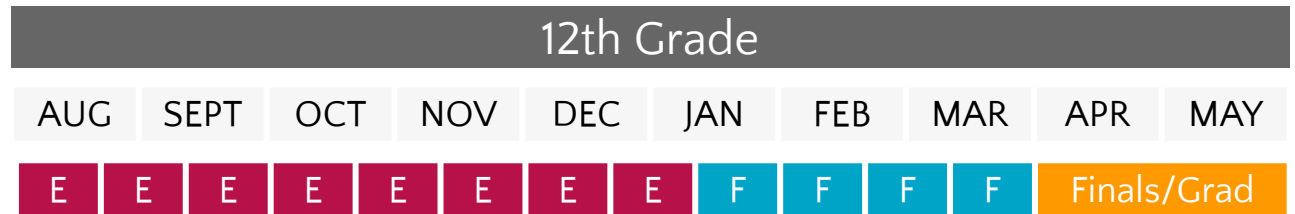
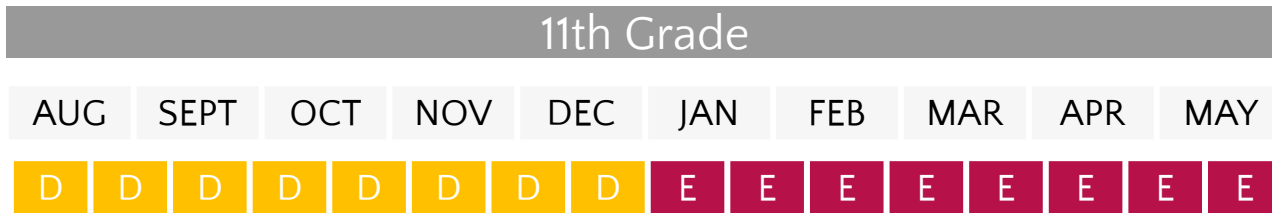
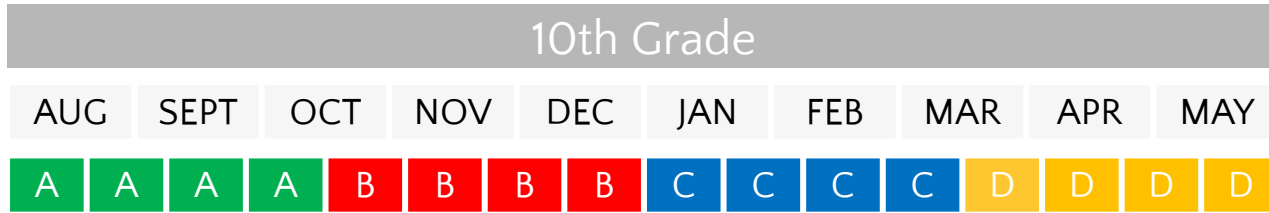
Knowledge, standards, skills, and practice from the prior grade(s)



AUG SEPT OCT NOV DEC JAN FEB MAR APR MAY

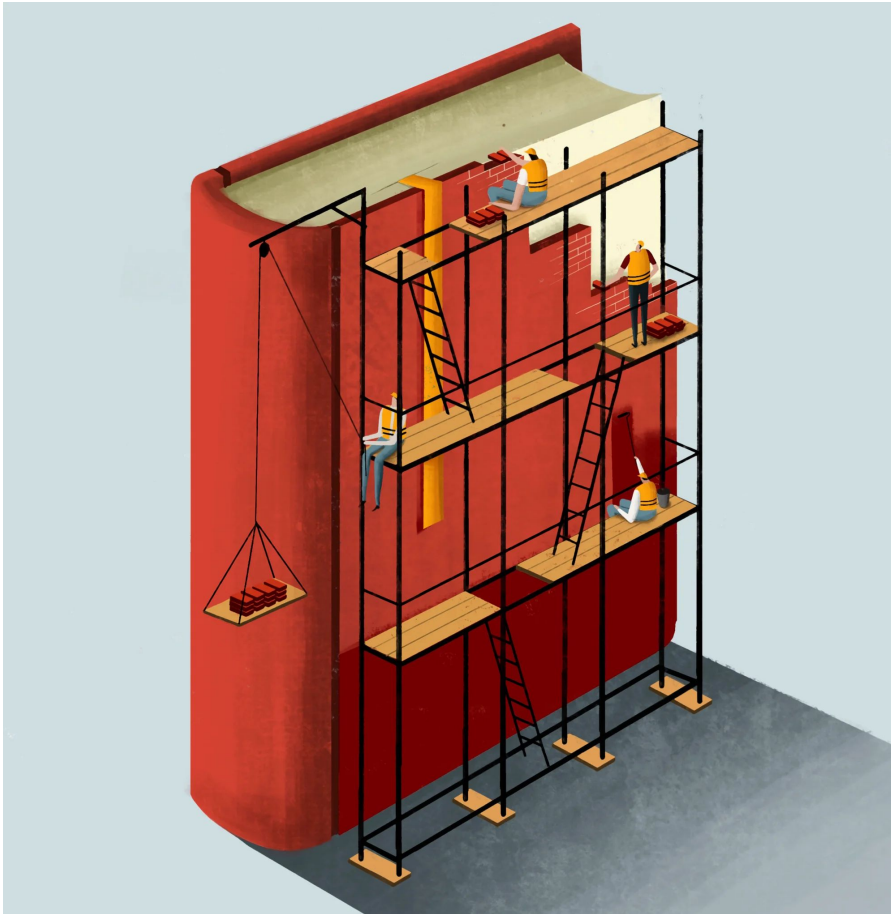


Long-term impact of “meeting students where they are”



What is the long-term impact of a remediation approach on young people?

What is an instructional scaffold?



Instructional Scaffold *Noun*

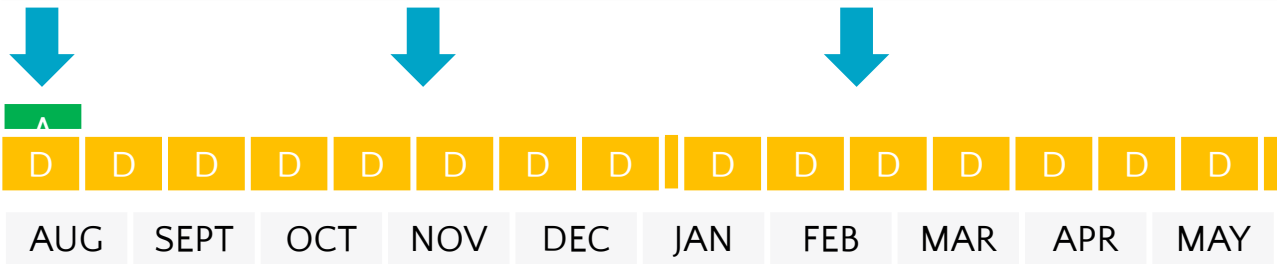
A temporary, student-specific support structure designed to maximize access to grade-level concepts and tasks.

What happens when we prioritize **grade-level content first**?

Knowledge, standards, skills, and practice from the prior grade(s)



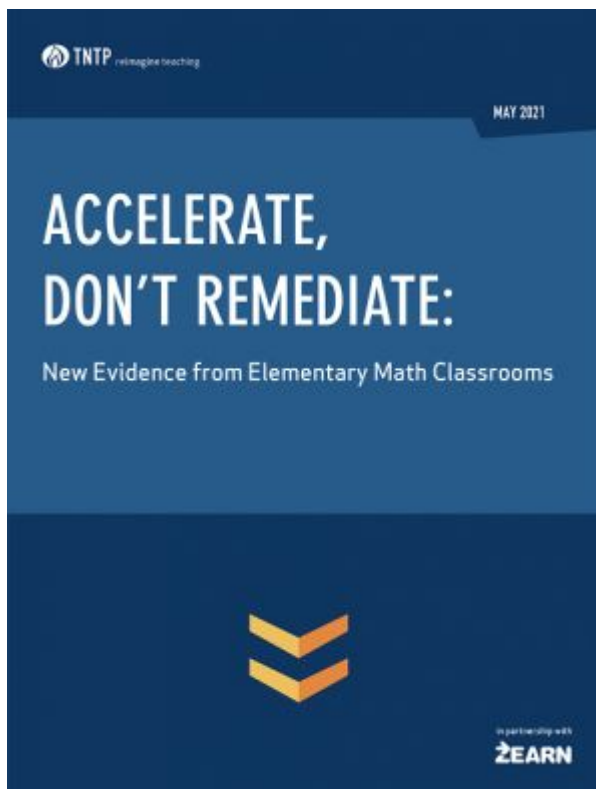
Strategically prioritized knowledge skills from prior grade(s) are taught before or alongside new content – **“just in time” scaffolds to access grade-level rigor.**



A research-backed approach



- Data from over 100,000 classrooms and over 2 million students who used Zearn’s K-5 online math platform during the 2020-21 school year—approximately 10% of the total elementary public school enrollment nationwide.
- Zearn published revised scope and sequences prior to the start of the 2020-21 school year to help teachers use the platform to implement a learning acceleration strategy.
- Some teachers ultimately followed these new scope and sequences, while others opted for **traditional remediation** by starting with other, less-connected below-grade-level content—essentially beginning their instruction wherever students left off when schools closed in the 2019-20 school year.
- Zearn compared the results of students in identified 3rd-5th grade classrooms who experienced **remediation** with those who experienced **learning acceleration** during the 2020-21 school year.



Research supports prioritizing access to grade-level content for ALL students



MAY 2021

ACCELERATE, DON'T REMEDIATE:

New Evidence from Elementary Math Classrooms



in partnership with
2EARN

Students who experienced grade-level content with just-in-time supports struggled less and learned more than students who started at the same level but experienced remediation instead.

Students of color and from low-income backgrounds were more likely than their white, wealthier peers to experience remediation — *even when they had demonstrated success on grade-level content.*

Prioritizing grade-level content with just-in-time supports was particularly effective for students of color and those from low-income families.

The state of a learning acceleration approach in Nebraska schools

ACADEMIC DIAGNOSTIC
 Nebraska Department of Education, Spring 2023



These standards focus on the right content.



These standards prepare students for their future.



These standards reflect my beliefs about good teaching.



Disagree Somewhat disagree Somewhat Agree Agree

Because of where students in this class began the year, I spend nearly all my time focusing on standards from earlier grades.*



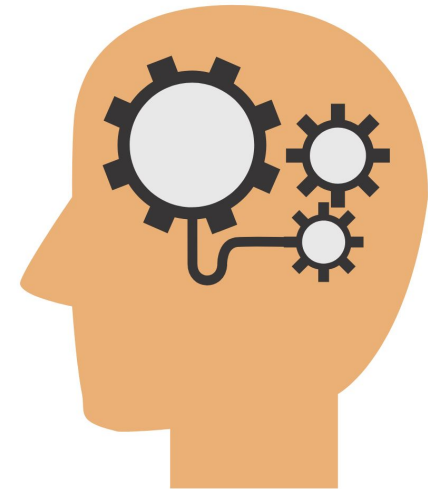
Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat disagree Disagree

57%



How is this research making you think about your instruction and your students differently, if at all? Why?

What do you think needs to shift in order to increase students' access to grade-level rigor?





KEY IDEA

Research from *The Opportunity Myth* makes the case for using grade-level curriculum, even when students are behind. Additional research on acceleration shows that students struggle less and learn more when they have regular opportunities to grapple with grade-level rigor.

B R E A K

10 minutes

<https://tinyurl.com/Y2PLFolder>

Opening

The Opportunity Myth

Learning Acceleration

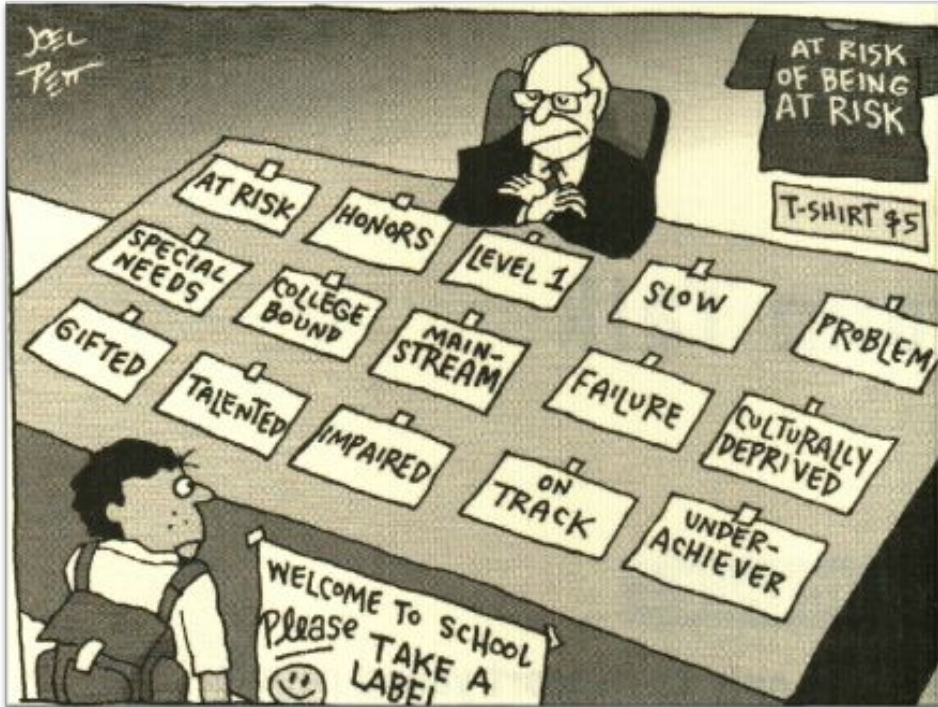
 **You as the Unit of Change**

Grade Level Rigor

Strong Instruction

Closing

Turn and talk: Find the image below in your handout and discuss with a shoulder partner



What is the artist trying to convey in the cartoon?

How do you see this playing out in your schools?

Learning acceleration is anchored on the belief that ALL students can do grade-level work. Often, though, we let biases we don't even know we have influence us to label students. By placing labels on them that follow them on their K-12 journey, we can unintentionally lower the bar for them, making acceleration impossible.

What is implicit bias?

An implicit bias is a preconceived notion we hold about a person or group based on an identity marker they hold.



Many of these implicit biases are formed from immediate external factors like the **people** in our lives such as our family, friends, and community members, or from **society** at large such as media, and political institutions.

Implicit bias shows up in deep-down prejudices and assumptions that we often don't even know we hold. More so, they sneak up on us because of an external circumstance or experience.

Verna Myers: Bring awareness to your bias

What bias did Verna recognize she had?

What circumstances caused her to realize that she possessed that bias?



Why does knowing my implicit biases matter?

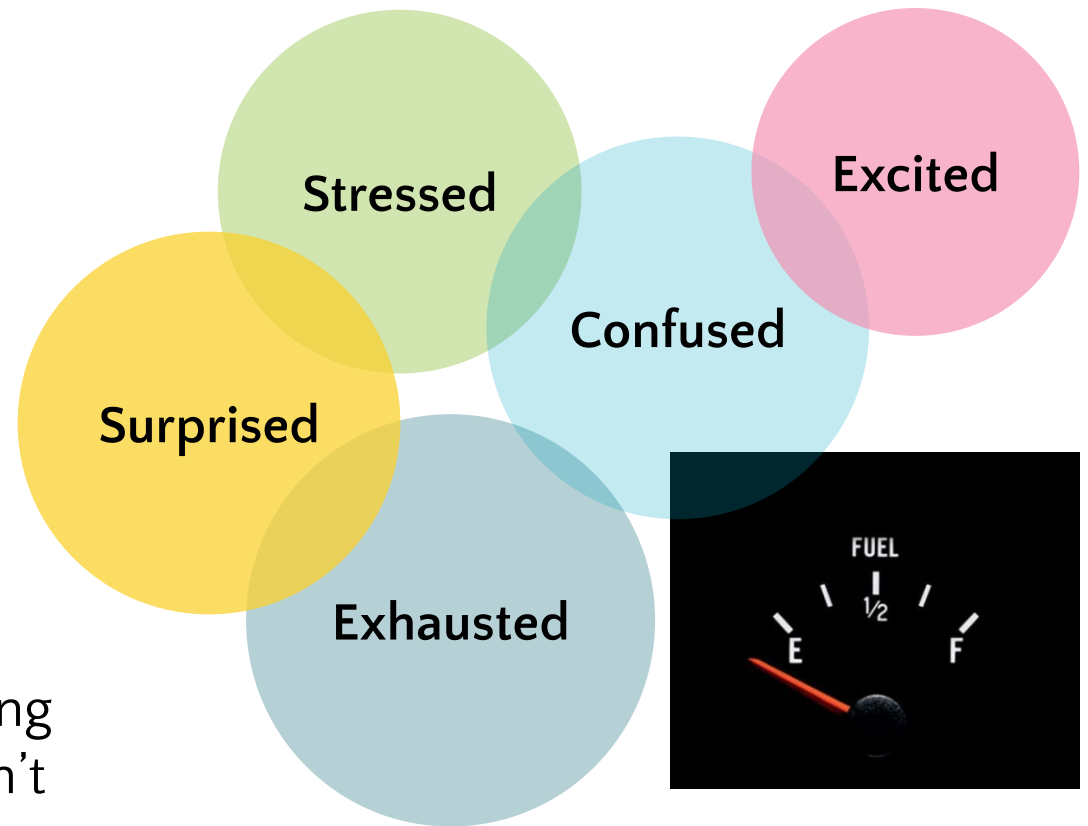
Bias isn't a dirty word!



- Bias itself isn't always negative—it's a useful survival mechanism that helps us filter information based on what's important to us.
- The quick perceptive shortcuts people make daily, like telling friends and strangers apart, require some form of bias.
- The issue comes from the reality that these biases ultimately affect *how* we interact with colleagues, teachers, students, and parents as well the policies we put in place or assignments we pick.

Our biases creep up on us when we least expect them

- The average adult makes thousands of decisions each day.
- When we are in an elevated state, our willpower and ability to discern decreases.
- This means that we become susceptible to seeded patterns of thinking or behaviors that we didn't even know existed.

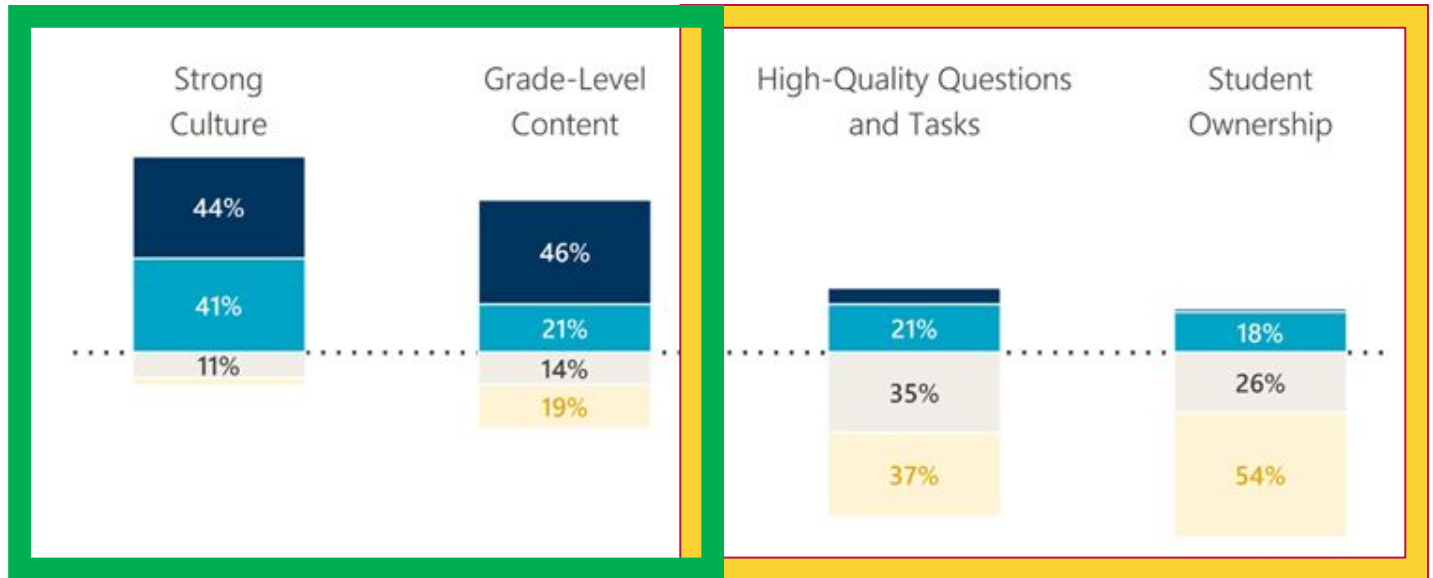


Is implicit bias playing a role in classroom instruction?

Time with Strong Instruction



■ Yes ■ Mostly ■ Somewhat ■ Not Yet



Percent of Lessons Demonstrating Elements of Strong Instruction

While there are any number of factors impacting the state of classroom instruction, we can't rule out whether implicit bias is one factors.

What can we do to safeguard ourselves against biases?

The goal is NOT to avoid biased thoughts. The goal is keep biased thoughts from becoming actions.

- **Hijack your sympathetic nervous system**
 - Take a breath! Make sure your exhale is longer than your inhale. This forces your heart rate down and floods your system with hormones that fights the cortisol triggering your fight or flight response
- **Protect time for planning and prep**
 - This is a full team effort. Leaders have a role to play in lesson planning and prep by protecting teacher time to do this valuable work. At the ESU level, often teachers need help wading through their curriculum and making the best, standards aligned choices in what to prioritize.
- **Possess a growth mindset**
 - Students aren't going to make leaps and bounds in their learning over night. The grade-level standards WILL challenge them, especially if they're behind. But as the research shows, it's what's best for their long term success.
 - Social emotional learning can be a valuable tool in equipping students with tools to persevere through rigor.



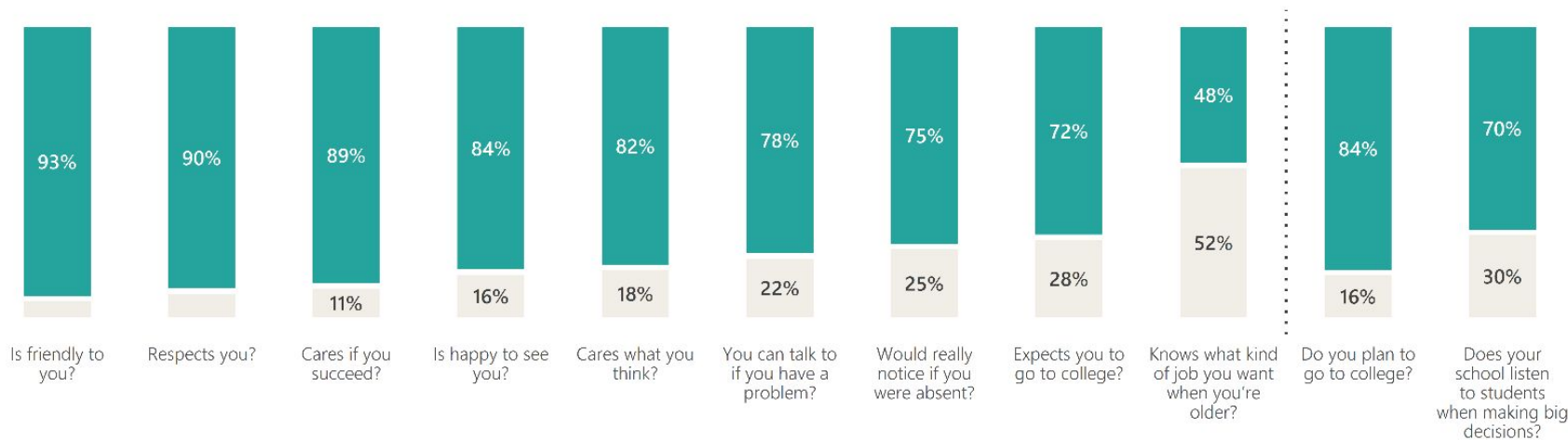
How did this information expand, shift, validate, or challenge your current understanding of implicit bias?

What implicit biases might you have that could become barriers to accelerating learning if left unchecked? What steps do you want to take to ensure they don't go unchecked?

Nebraska teachers CARE! Let's continue to show that care by putting rigorous work in front of kids that secures their futures.

Based on 3,270 student survey responses about their general experience in school...

Is there an adult at your school who...



→ The average NE student has a strong relationship with at least one adult at their school – and generally, they feel respected and cared for at school.

→ The average NE student expects to go to college and has at least one adult figure at school who expects that of them, too.



KEY IDEA

Each of us plays a role in ensuring *all* students have access to the resources that are the foundation of learning acceleration: grade-appropriate assignments, strong instruction, high expectations, and deep engagement. To accelerate learning effectively, we *must* attend to both our *systems* and *beliefs*. Without the right mindsets, structures and processes will ultimately fail to live up to their potential. By interrogating and addressing our biases, we can continue being impactful instruments for change.

B R E A K

5 minutes

Opening

The Opportunity Myth

Learning Acceleration

You as the Unit of Change

 **Grade Level Rigor**

Strong Instruction

Closing

Let's get tactical

We've spent the first half of the day at the big picture level by...

- exploring valuable research that makes the case for grade-level standards, grade-appropriate assignments, and strong instruction
- interrogating the impact of a remediation and learning acceleration approach on student learning
- reflecting on the role that implicit biases may be playing in our decision-making

Now, we're going to get more tactical by...

- identifying criteria for a grade-appropriate assignment
- analyzing REAL assignments together for rigor
- identifying criteria for strong instruction
- observing videos of REAL classrooms together



What is rigor?

- Rigor doesn't mean just giving students *more* or *harder* work.
- Instead, it's the result of work that **challenges students' thinking** in new and interesting ways.
- It occurs when they are encouraged toward a **sophisticated understanding of fundamental ideas** and are driven by curiosity to discover what they don't know.



A closer look at a rigor

3.A.1.a Add and subtract up to four-digit whole numbers with or without regrouping using strategies based on place value and algorithm

Assignment A

Adding With NO Regrouping (A)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Calculate each sum.

$$\begin{array}{r} 4605 \\ + 2263 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 1010 \\ + 3864 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 6300 \\ + 1532 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 2380 \\ + 4518 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 5016 \\ + 4541 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 6664 \\ + 1004 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 1584 \\ + 2402 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 1374 \\ + 1513 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 6453 \\ + 3546 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3161 \\ + 2134 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 1138 \\ + 5460 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 2043 \\ + 7901 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 1046 \\ + 8610 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3524 \\ + 1154 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 4521 \\ + 5025 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

Assignment B

Solve each problem:

$$\begin{array}{r} 1136 \\ + 4541 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 2288 \\ + 8313 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

Circle the problem that you used regrouping to solve.

Why is regrouping necessary for one problem and not the other one? Use a drawing of each problem to show your answer.

Students are encouraged toward a sophisticated understanding of fundamental ideas and are driven by curiosity to discover what they don't know.

We found four key resources that influence a student's school experience and outcomes.

1 Consistent opportunities
to work on
**GRADE-APPROPRIATE
ASSIGNMENTS**

2 **STRONG INSTRUCTION,**
where students do
most of the thinking
in a lesson

3 **DEEP ENGAGEMENT**
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4 Teachers who hold
HIGH EXPECTATIONS
for students and
believe they can
meet grade-level
standards

Unfortunately, these resources are few and far between for most students –and *particularly* for students of color, those from low-income families, English language learners, and students with mild to moderate disabilities.

Standards help establish a common bar of grade-level rigor for all kids

Our content area standards tell us:

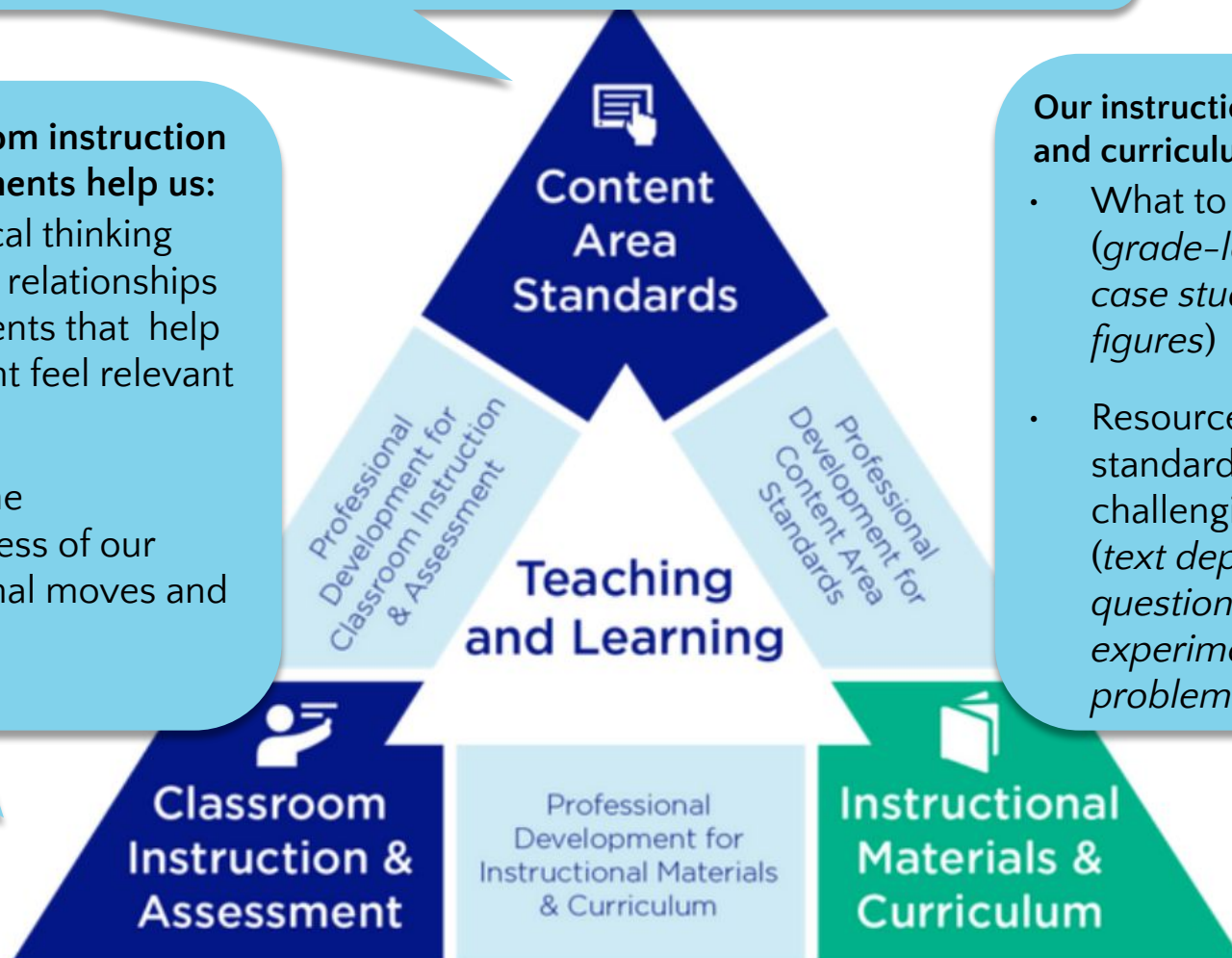
- What students should be learning for that grade
- How they should be demonstrating that learning for that grade

Our classroom instruction and assessments help us:

- Build critical thinking and foster relationships with students that help the content feel relevant to them
- Monitor the effectiveness of our instructional moves and decisions

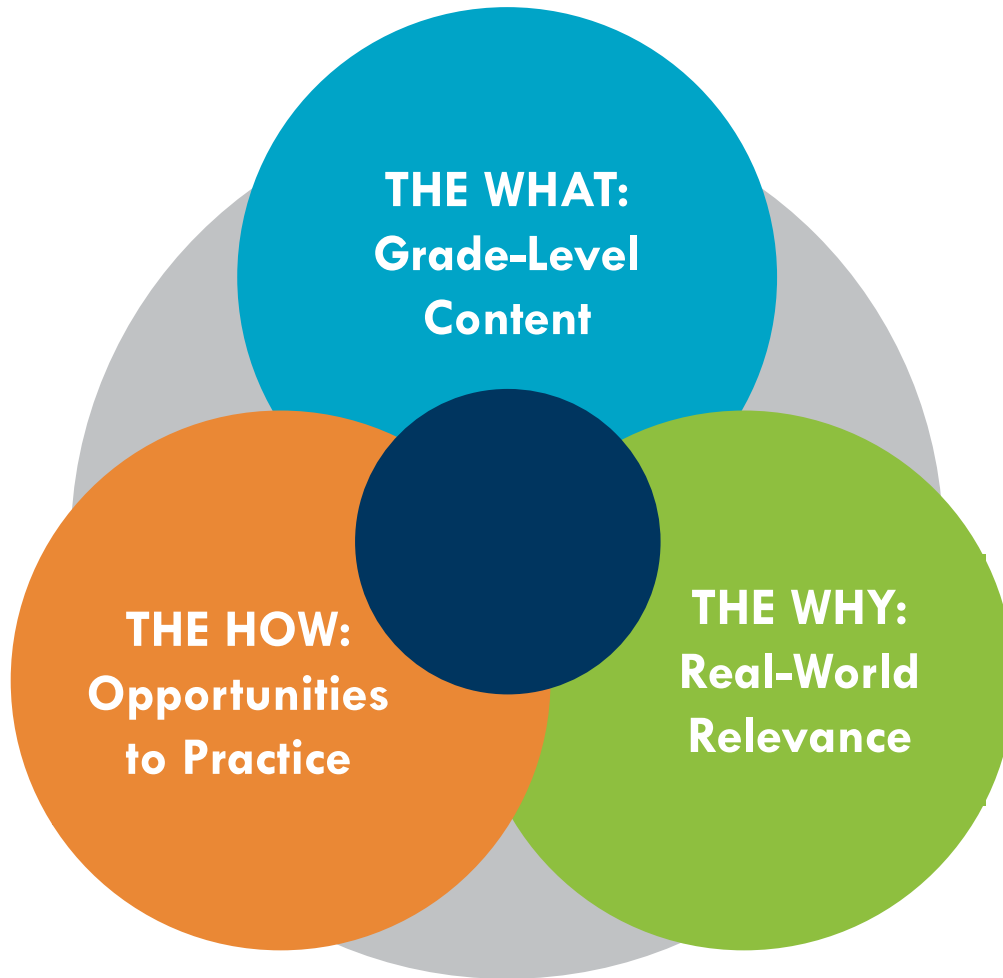
Our instructional materials and curriculum give us:

- What to teach (*grade-level texts, case studies, facts, figures*)
- Resources for standards-aligned, challenging practice (*text dependent questions, experiments, problem-sets*)



How do you know if an assignment is grade-appropriate?

Across content areas...



- **CONTENT:** Does the assignment align with expectations defined by grade-level standards?
- **PRACTICE:** Does this assignment provide meaningful practice opportunities for this content/grade?
- **RELEVANCE:** Does this assignment provide an opportunity to connect standards to real-world issues?

Practice: 4th Grade ELA

Source: K12Reader.com

Text: *Why Does the Moon Orbit Earth*

Standards:

- **LA.4.RI.1** Determine the central idea of an informational text and how it is conveyed through key details
- **LA.4.RI.2** Analyze an individual, event, scientific idea or concept, or steps in a process.
- **LA.4.RI.8** Read and comprehend a wide range of informational texts of appropriate complexity for Grade 4 independently and proficiently.



Why Does the Moon Orbit Earth?
Cross-Curricular Focus: Earth Science

The moon orbits Earth. When it orbits, it travels in a circle around Earth. There is a force between Earth and the moon called gravity. Because of gravity, larger objects pull smaller ones toward them. Earth is larger than the moon, so Earth pulls on the moon. At the same time, Earth is being pulled by the sun. The sun is larger than Earth. The balance between those two "pulls" is what keeps the moon in orbit around Earth.

People say the moon shines. However, the moon does not actually have any light of its own. What we see as its light is really the sun's light reflecting off of the moon. As the moon orbits Earth, Earth orbits the sun. We see different amounts of light on the moon.

1,423,000 miles. The moon travels very fast. It moves at 2,288 miles per hour.

Answer the following questions based on the reading passage. Don't forget to go back to the passage whenever necessary to find or confirm your answers.

70

1) What two spheres are being pulled by the force of gravity?
Gravity pulls the the force toward them.

2) Why does Earth pull on the moon instead of the other way around?
It pulls the moon because the balance between those two pulls is what keeps the

3) What's really happening when the moon is said to shine?
and orbit is that when it orbits it travels in a circle around earth.

Discuss: Is this assignment grade appropriate? How do you know?

Whole group share: 4th Grade ELA

X CONTENT: text complexity is low for 4th grade and does not come from a high-quality text source (LA.4.RI.8); questions do not require using text evidence of analyzing concepts (LA.4.RI.1)

X PRACTICES: does not require students to *analyze* (LA.4.RI.2); task does not give students opportunity to support their ideas (LA.4.RI.1)

X RELEVANCE: Text and questions do not offer opportunities for students to form opinions or make meaningful connections to other contexts

NOT GRADE-APPROPRIATE

Why Does the Moon Orbit Earth?
Cross-Curricular Focus: Earth Science

The moon orbits Earth. When it orbits, it travels in a circle around Earth. There is a force between Earth and the moon called gravity. Because of gravity, larger objects pull smaller ones toward them. Earth is larger than the moon, so Earth pulls on the moon. At the same time, Earth is being pulled by the sun. The sun is larger than Earth. The balance between those two "pulls" is what keeps the moon in orbit around Earth.

People say the moon shines. However, the moon does not actually have any light of its own. What we see as its light is really the sun's light reflecting off of the moon. As the moon orbits Earth, Earth orbits the sun. We see different amounts of light on the moon depending on its position. We call the changes in the moon's appearance Lunar phases. From one new moon to the next new moon is one complete lunar cycle.

It takes the moon between 27 and 28 days to complete an orbit around Earth. The moon's orbit is measured from one new moon to the next new moon. It starts in the west and moves toward the east. To complete one full orbit, the moon travels about 1,423,000 miles. The moon travels very fast. It moves at 2,288 miles per hour.

70
Name: [Redacted] 9/13/18

Answer the following questions based on the reading passage. Don't forget to go back to the passage whenever necessary to find or confirm your answers.

X 1) What two spheres are being pulled by the force of gravity?
Gravity pulls the the force toward them.

2) Why does Earth pull on the moon instead of the other way around?
It pulls the moon because the balance between those two pulls is what keeps the moon in orbit around Earth.

3) What's really happening when the moon is said to shine?
When the moon is said to shine is that the light is really the sun's light reflecting off the moon.

4) Which moves faster, your family car or the moon?
I think the moon is very fast than the car because the moon travels about 1,423,000 miles per hour.

5) Name one new thing that you learned about the moon or its orbit. What I learned about the moon and orbit is that when it orbits, it travels in a circle around earth.

Whole group share: 5th Grade Math

GRADE-APPROPRIATE

- X CONTENT:** this assignment contains multi-step word problems about subtracting fractions with unlike denominators (5.NF.A.2:)
- X PRACTICES:** requires students to represent problems visually and symbolically (5.NF.A.2); allows students to engage with two mathematical practice standards.
- X RELEVANCE:** all five problems in this assignment are word problems that involve real-world situations

Solve the word problems using the RDW strategy. Show all of your work.

1. In a race, the second place finisher crossed the finish line $1\frac{1}{3}$ minutes after the first place finisher. The third-place finisher was $1\frac{3}{4}$ minutes behind the second-place finisher. The third-place finisher took $34\frac{2}{3}$ minutes. How long did the first-place finisher take?

Handwritten work for problem 1:

$1\frac{1}{3} = \frac{4}{3}$ $1\frac{3}{4} = \frac{7}{4}$ $34\frac{2}{3} = \frac{104}{3}$

$\frac{4}{3} + \frac{7}{4} = \frac{16}{12} + \frac{21}{12} = \frac{37}{12}$

$\frac{104}{3} - \frac{37}{12} = \frac{416}{12} - \frac{37}{12} = \frac{379}{12} = 31\frac{7}{12}$

The first place finisher finished in $31\frac{7}{12}$ minutes.

2. John used $1\frac{3}{4}$ kg of salt to melt the ice on his sidewalk. He then used another $3\frac{4}{5}$ kg on the driveway. If he originally bought 10 kg of salt, how much does he have left?

Handwritten work for problem 2:

$1\frac{3}{4} = \frac{7}{4}$ $3\frac{4}{5} = \frac{19}{5}$

$\frac{7}{4} + \frac{19}{5} = \frac{35}{20} + \frac{76}{20} = \frac{111}{20}$

$10 - \frac{111}{20} = \frac{200}{20} - \frac{111}{20} = \frac{89}{20} = 4\frac{9}{20}$

John will have $4\frac{9}{20}$ kg left.

3. Sinister Stan stole $3\frac{3}{4}$ oz of slime from Messy Molly, but his evil plans require $6\frac{3}{8}$ oz of slime. He stole another $2\frac{5}{8}$ oz of slime from Rude Ralph. How much more slime does Sinister Stan need for his evil plan?

Handwritten work for problem 3:

$3\frac{3}{4} = \frac{15}{4}$ $6\frac{3}{8} = \frac{51}{8}$ $2\frac{5}{8} = \frac{21}{8}$

$\frac{15}{4} + \frac{21}{8} = \frac{30}{8} + \frac{21}{8} = \frac{51}{8}$

$\frac{51}{8} - \frac{51}{8} = 0$

Sinister Stan needs 0 more slime.

Practice: 7th Grade Math

5:00

Source: mathworksheets4kids.com

Standards:

- **7.EE.B.4:** Use variables to represent quantities in a real-world or mathematical problem, and construct simple equations and inequalities to solve problems by reasoning about the quantities.
- **7.EE.B.4.B:** Solve word problems leading to inequalities of the form $px + q > r$ or $px + q < r$, where p , q , and r are specific rational numbers. Graph the solution set of the inequality and interpret it in the context of the problem.

Student 4

Graphing Inequalities

ES1

Graph the inequality:

1) $x \geq -2$	2) $x < 5$
3) $x \leq 6$	4) $x > 1$
5) $x < -14$	6) $x \leq 9$
7) $x > -2$	8) $x \geq -15$

Discuss: Is this assignment grade appropriate? How do you know?

Whole group share: 7th Grade Math

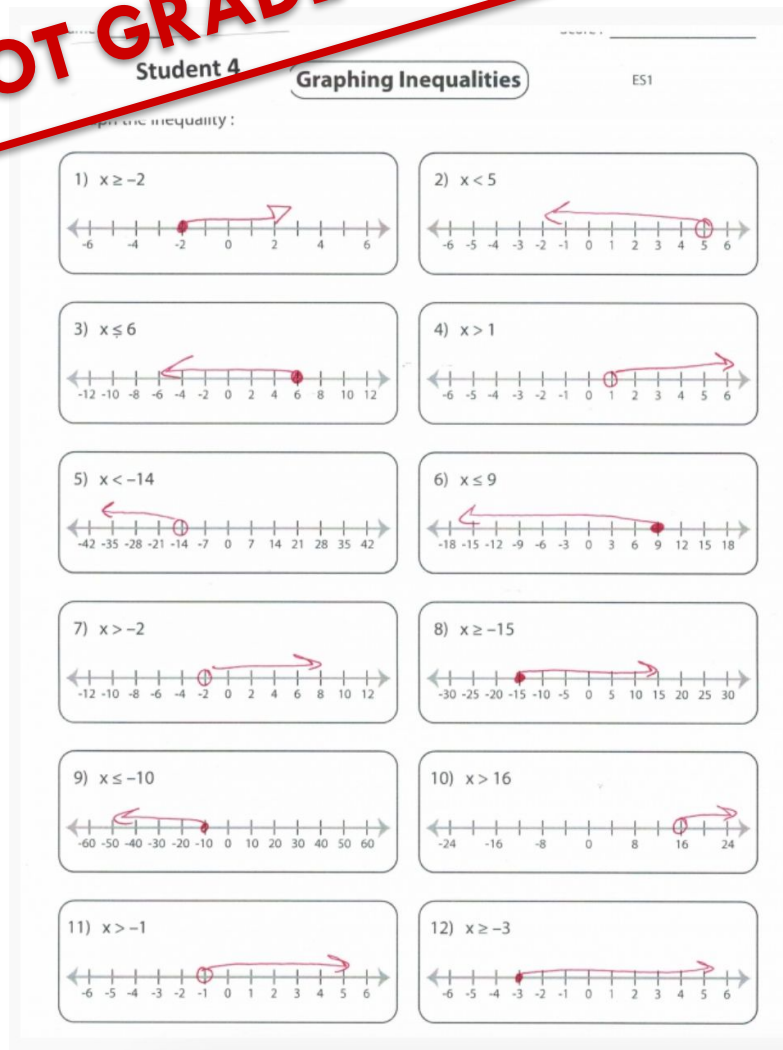
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NOT GRADE-APPROPRIATE

X CONTENT: This assignment is more closely aligned with sixth-grade standard (6.EE.B.8), which requires students to work with inequalities in the form of $x > c$ or $x < c$ and represent solutions of inequalities on number lines.

X PRACTICES: 7 of the 12 problems in this assignment do involve negative numbers, but none involve non-whole-numbers, more complex inequalities, or graphs (7.EE.B.4.B:)

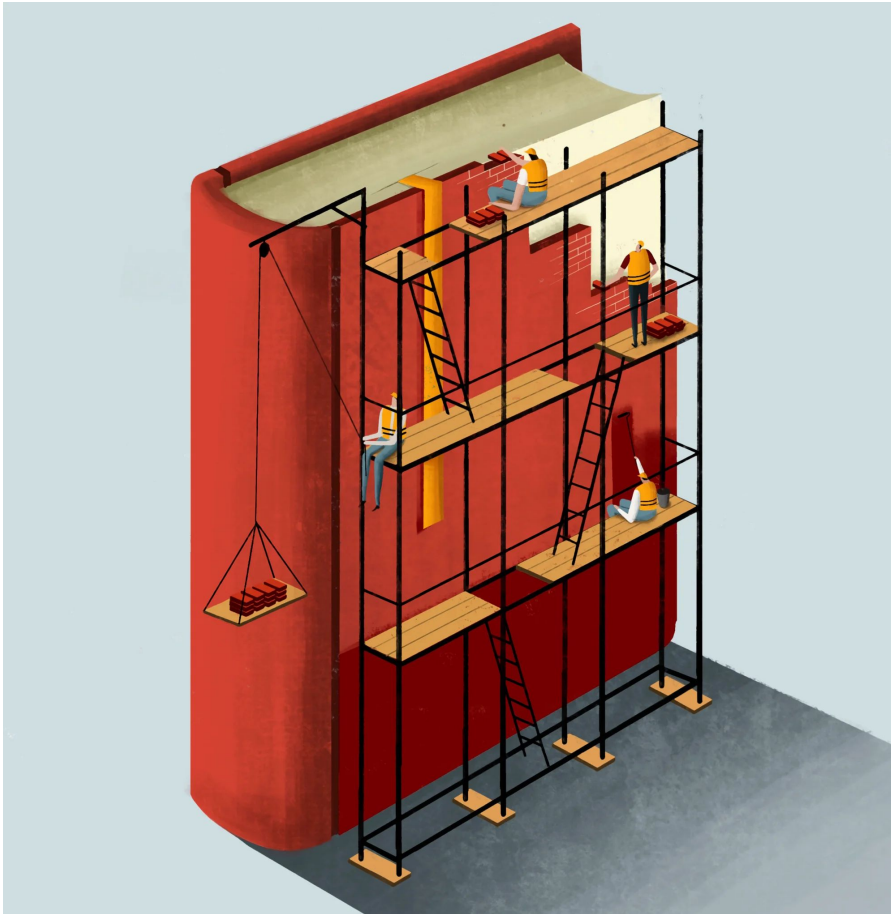
X RELEVANCE: None of the problems asked students to solve word problems about inequalities and represent the solutions in graphs on the coordinate plane



L U N C H

11:50-12:35

What is an instructional scaffold?



Instructional Scaffold *Noun*

A temporary, student-specific support structure designed to maximize access to grade-level concepts and tasks.

Practice: 11th Grade ELA

Source: StudySync, Unit 3: No Strangers Here

Text: “My True South: Why I Decided to Return Home” by Jesmyn Ward

Standards:

- **LA.12.RI.1** Evaluate the development of central ideas over the course of an informational text or texts
- **LA.12.V.2** Interpret an author’s use of figurative, connotative, and technical language in grade-level literary and informational text.
 - a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in text.
 - b. Analyze nuances in the meanings of words with similar denotations.

Prompt

[VIEW RUBRIC](#)[SPLIT SCREEN MODE](#)

LITERARY ANALYSIS: In “My True South: Why I Decided to Return Home,” Jesmyn Ward uses narrative nonfiction and employs figurative language to strengthen her argument that while she is critical of the South, it is her home and is worth fighting for. Identify the reasons and evidence that Ward provides to support her claim. Then, analyze how her use of figurative language throughout the essay serves to strengthen her claim. Use textual evidence to support your response.

Whole group share: 11th Grade ELA

GRADE-APPROPRIATE

Prompt

VIEW RUBRIC

SPLIT SCREEN MODE

LITERARY ANALYSIS: In “My True South: Why I Decided to Return Home,” Jesmyn Ward uses narrative nonfiction and employs figurative language to strengthen her argument that while she is critical of the South, it is her home and is worth fighting for. Identify the reasons and evidence that Ward provides to support her claim. Then, analyze how her use of figurative language throughout the essay serves to strengthen her claim. Use textual evidence to support your response.

- ✓ **Content:** The text is grade-appropriate and worthy of reading closely. The assignment requires students to *analyze* the role of figurative language (LA.12.B.2) in developing the author’s central idea (LA.12.RI.1)
- ✓ **Practice:** The assignment addresses multiple ELA standards, allowing students to practice and show mastery of multiple dimensions of literacy (reading, writing).. Students must use specific textual evidence to support their response; the assignment is highly text-dependent.
- ✓ **Relevance:** The text builds appropriate knowledge and addresses rich universal themes. The assignment gives students the opportunity to share and defend their thinking.

Practice: Evaluating scaffolds for grade-level rigor

1. Review the original as well as **two versions of the StudySync assignment**, one adapted by Teacher A and the other adapted by Teacher B.
2. Discuss which teacher has maintained grade-level rigor as described by the standards and which teacher has not.

What does this suggest about adapting or supplementing the curriculum to incorporate scaffolds?

Assignment Prompt: In “My True South: Why I Decided to Return Home,” Jesmyn Ward uses narrative nonfiction and employs figurative language to strengthen her argument that while she is critical of the South, it is her home and worth fighting for. ***In a multi-paragraph essay, explain how Ward uses figurative language to show her home is fighting for.*** Specifically, in your essay, be sure to...

1. Identify three instances where Ward uses figurative language to show her home is worth fighting for.
2. Tell what paragraph you found the example in.
3. Tell what type of figurative language it is.
4. Explain how that example strengthens her argument that her home is worth fighting for.

narrative nonfiction and
outh, it is her home and
g to say about her

trying to say?

mouth.”		
“I carry every slur, every slight, every violent malign within me; they have become a part of me , accreted in me year after year to settle in me and express themselves in my body. ”		

Whole group share-out

Which teacher maintained grade-level rigor as described by the standards and which teacher did not? How do you know? **What does this suggest about adapting or supplementing the curriculum to incorporate scaffolds?**

Adapted by
Teacher A

Assignment Prompt: In “My True South: Why I Decided to Return Home,” Jesmyn Ward uses narrative nonfiction and employs figurative language to strengthen her argument that while she is critical of the South, it is her home and worth fighting for. *In a multi-paragraph essay, explain how Ward uses figurative language to show her home is fighting for.* Specifically, in your essay, be sure to...

1. Identify three instances where Ward uses figurative language to show her home is worth fighting for.
2. Tell what paragraph you found the example in.
3. Tell what type of figurative language it is.
4. Explain how that example strengthens her argument that her home is worth fighting for.

Adapted by
Teacher B

Directions: In “My True South: Why I Decided to Return Home,” Jesmyn Ward uses narrative nonfiction and employs figurative language to strengthen her argument that while she is critical of the South, it is her home and is worth fighting for. Identify the type of figurative language and what the author is trying to say about her argument in each of the examples below.

Excerpt	Type of figurative language	What is the author trying to say?
<i>“But this is a toothless answer, as weak and harmless as a baby’s mouth.”</i>		
<i>“I carry every slur, every slight, every violent malign within me; they have become a part of me, accreted in me year after year to settle in me and express themselves in my body.”</i>		

But we've adopted high-quality instructional materials...

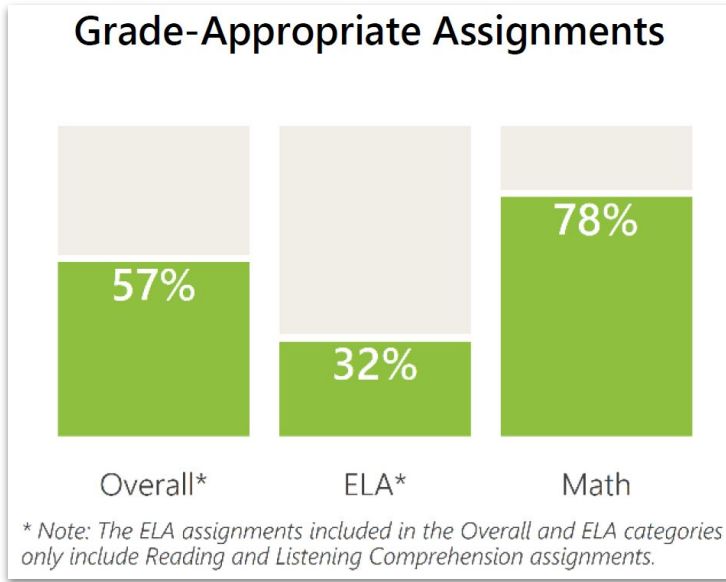


HQIM provide many resources to teachers and students like rigorous and aligned assignments, assessments, practice, and supports...

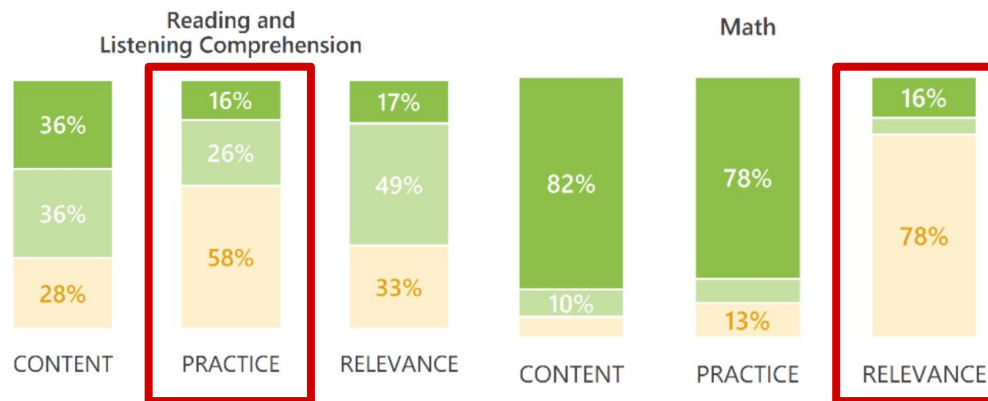
But *having* those resources is different than *using* them. It's important to reflect on *how* we're utilizing the high quality instructional materials.



Grade-appropriate assignments in Nebraska



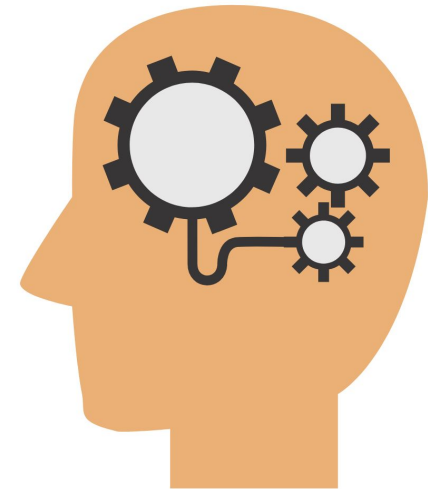
→ Students have access to grade-appropriate assignments in math and ELA more than half the time – but there is a significant disparity between ELA and Math.



→ The greatest areas of growth are giving students opportunities to apply their learning meaningfully in ELA (16%) and to connect content to real-world issues or contexts in Math (16%).



What did this exercise reveal to you, either about your own thinking or the state of the student experience, in your context?





KEY IDEA

Research has shown that ALL students benefit from regular access to grade-appropriate assignments and complex texts. The most powerful way to ensure this consistent exposure is by adopting high-quality instructional materials and *implementing them with fidelity.*

Opening

The Opportunity Myth

Learning Acceleration

You as the Unit of Change

Grade Level Rigor

 **Strong Instruction**

Closing

We found four key resources that influence a student's school experience and outcomes.

1 Consistent opportunities
to work on
**GRADE-APPROPRIATE
ASSIGNMENTS**

2 **STRONG INSTRUCTION,**
where students do
most of the thinking
in a lesson

3 **DEEP ENGAGEMENT**
in what they're
learning

4 Teachers who hold
HIGH EXPECTATIONS
for students and
believe they can
meet grade-level
standards

Unfortunately, these resources are few and far between for most students –and *particularly* for students of color, those from low-income families, English language learners, and students with mild to moderate disabilities.

Standards help establish a common bar of grade-level rigor for all kids

Our content area standards tell us:

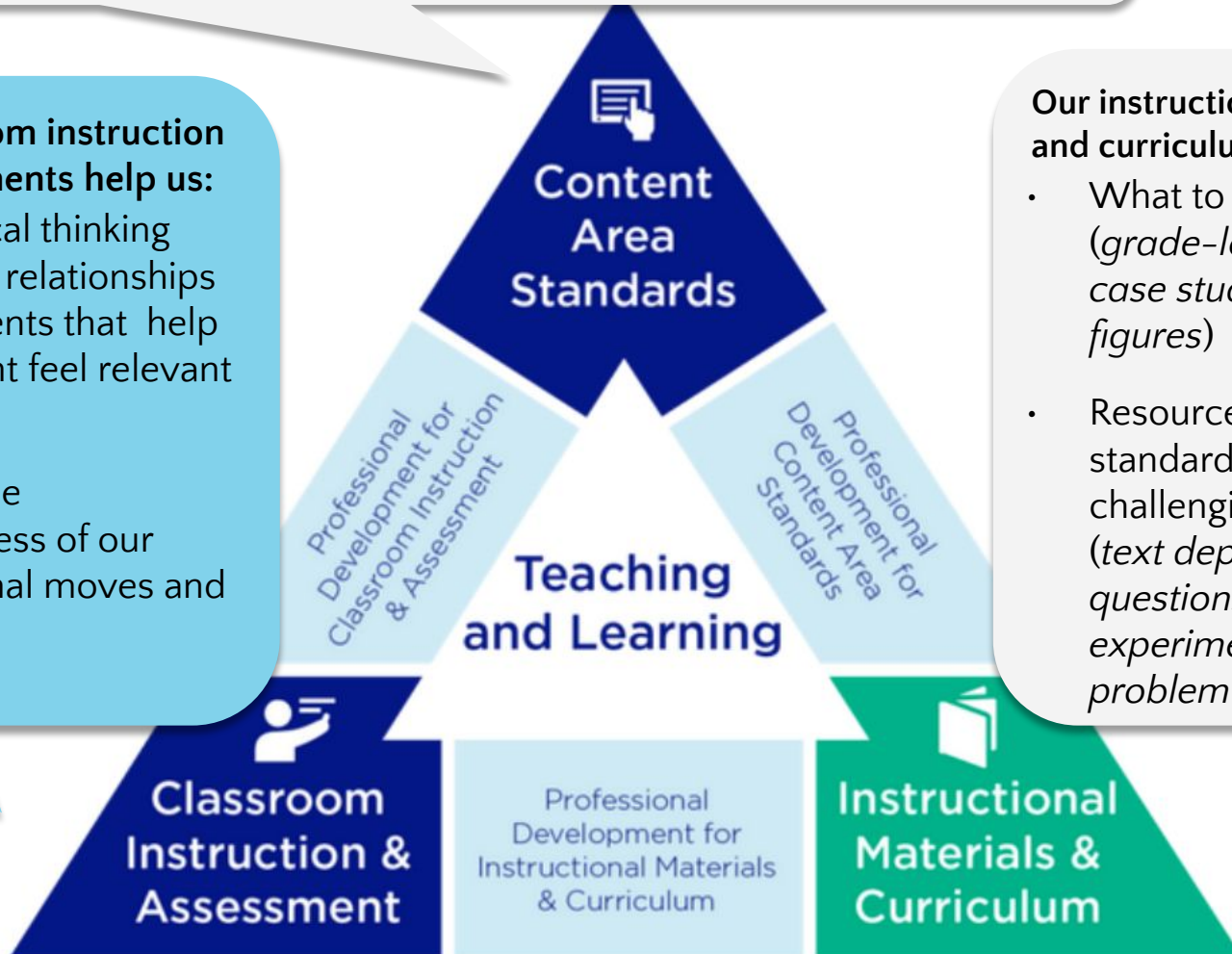
- What students should be learning for that grade
- How they should be demonstrating that learning for that grade

Our classroom instruction and assessments help us:

- Build critical thinking and foster relationships with students that help the content feel relevant to them
- Monitor the effectiveness of our instructional moves and decisions

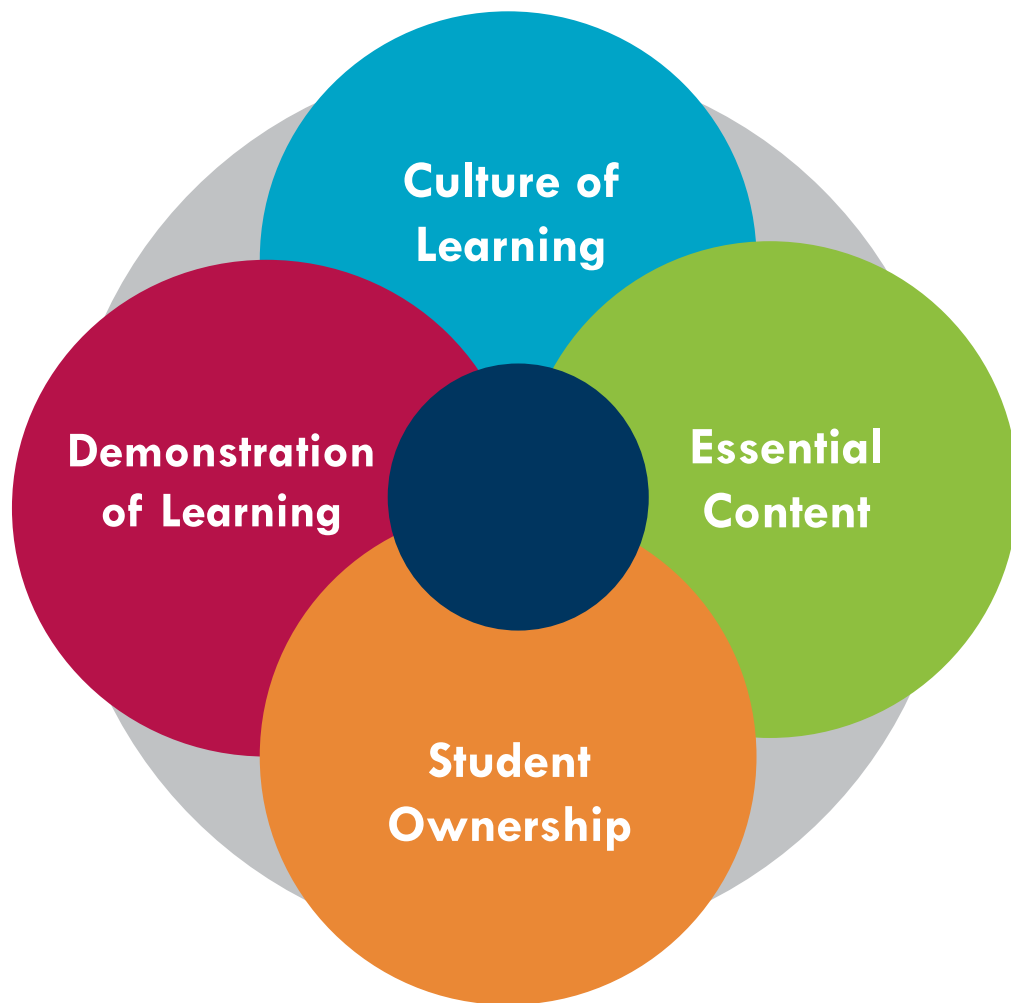
Our instructional materials and curriculum give us:

- What to teach (*grade-level texts, case studies, facts, figures*)
- Resources for standards-aligned, challenging practice (*text dependent questions, experiments, problem-sets*)



What are the critical components of a vision for strong instruction?

Across content areas...



- Are all students *engaged in the work* of the lesson from start to finish?
- Are *all* students engaged in content that is *aligned to grade-level standards* for their subject and grade?
- Are all students responsible for *doing the thinking* of the classroom?
- Are all students *demonstrating* that they are learning?

TNTP's core teaching rubric

- ✓ The 4 domains capture the essential components of strong instruction to help focus observers' attention to the things that matter most.
- ✓ What makes it unique: The language is teacher neutral and instead focuses on the student experience.

We believe that the ultimate purpose of improving our instructional practices is to **have an impact on student learning and engagement.**

This vision shifts the focus of our observations away from just the teacher towards the impact teacher actions are having on students.



TNTP CORE TEACHING RUBRIC

We are excited to support you in your use of the TNTP Core Teaching Rubric. This tool is meant to describe excellent instruction aligned to rigorous standards and provide a common language to articulate what it looks like in practice.

This short but comprehensive tool trains the user to focus on the essential components of instruction that can be identified in a classroom observation. By rating only four domains, TNTP Core allows observers and teachers to [focus on feedback and development](#). It is not a comprehensive evaluation system, but should be one of [multiple measures of performance](#). Schools are encouraged to pilot this rubric and customize the language to fit local context. If, after using this tool throughout your work with TNTP you would like to formally adopt the TNTP Core and want support in customization, we are happy to provide next steps. Additionally:

- The current selection of teacher actions and skills was developed based on TNTP's experience training and developing teachers. Be flexible in adding and adjusting the Core Teacher Skills and encourage observers and teachers to create their own additions in the field. After observers and teachers agree on a Core Teacher Skill to focus on, they should then discuss and agree on the specific and bite-sized action that the teacher will take within the next week.
- The "Yes, and..." rating should be reserved for truly exceptional classrooms. That means that 90% or more of learners in a classroom are engaged 90% or more of the time in all of the indicators.

Even the best rubric will fail to help teachers develop if it is not implemented with care. If considering long term adoptions, thoughtful introduction and deliberate training with ongoing practice will ensure that all stakeholders share an understanding of the rubric's meaning and use. Principals, coaches and teachers should also be well trained on the rubric and its use and have opportunities to practice observing instruction together to ensure consistent, accurate ratings. Take what you learn from a pilot to inform ongoing training and norming. And please tell us what you learn at info@tntp.org.

The TNTP Core Teaching Rubric and all associated materials for download are licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License](#). Under the terms of this Creative Commons license, you are free to use and modify the TNTP Core Teaching Rubric and associated materials at no cost. Modified works must be attributed to TNTP; for example, "This rubric was adapted from the TNTP Core Teaching Rubric (CC BY-NC 4.0)."



The TNTP Core Teaching Rubric is used to describe and assess classroom instruction across four domains:

- **Culture of Learning:** Are all students engaged in the work of the lesson from start to finish?
- **Essential Content:** Are all students engaged in content aligned to the appropriate standards for their subject and grade?
- **Student Ownership:** Are all students responsible for doing the thinking in this classroom?
- **Demonstration of Learning:** Do all students demonstrate that they are learning?

Each domain has three components:

1. **Essential Question:** The core question to answer about the particular domain. In an strong classroom, the answer to each Essential Question is "Yes."
2. **Descriptor Language:** Descriptions of each domain are used to differentiate five levels of student reach: Yes, and... Yes, Mostly, Somewhat, and Not Yet. The TNTP Core Teaching Rubric uses descriptors that focus primarily on student actions and responses.
3. **Core Teacher Skills:** A non-exhaustive list of the teacher skills and behaviors that contribute to the student outcomes in each domain. After observing and rating a lesson, we recommend that you select or identify one or two Core Teacher Skills to prioritize.

When observers use the TNTP Core Teaching Rubric, they select the rating where the combination of descriptors most closely describes the observed student experience, using evidence for each domain area. To collect accurate data, observers should also note the number of students present in class during the observation. Observers do not rate the teacher on Core Teacher Skills; those are included only for coaching and development purposes. The Core Teacher Skills can help an observer narrow in on development areas based on ratings in domains and guide conversations about specific strategies teachers can use to develop and grow.

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ESSENTIAL CONTENT Are all students engaged in the lesson?

1. NOT YET (49% or less of the lesson)	2. SOMEWHAT (50-69% of the lesson)
The lesson does not focus on content that advances students toward grade-level standards or expectations and/or IEP goals.	The lesson partially focuses on content that advances students toward grade-level standards or expectations and/or IEP goals.
Most of the activities students engage in are not aligned to the stated or implied learning goal(s) or to each other.	Only some activities students engage in are aligned to the stated or implied learning goal(s).
Instructional materials students use (e.g., texts, questions, problems, exercises and assessments) are not appropriately demanding for the grade/course and time in the school-year based on guidance in the standards and/or students' IEP goals (e.g., Lexile level and complexity of text).	Some instructional materials students use (e.g., texts, questions, problems, exercises and assessments) are not appropriately demanding for the grade/course and time in the school-year based on guidance in the standards and/or students' IEP goals (e.g., Lexile level and complexity of text).

Core Teacher Skills

Planning and Delivering Lessons Effectively

- Allocating instructional time to address the most important content
- Developing and clearly communicating a well-framed, standard-aligned lesson
- Delivering lesson content clearly, accurately, and with coherence
- Developing and/or using appropriately demanding instructional materials
- Developing a vision for student success and standards-aligned instruction
- Developing and/or using a long-term, sequential plan that leads to mastery on one or more important content or core grade-level courses
- Developing and/or using daily lesson activities that are well sequenced and move students toward mastery of grade-level standards
- Developing and providing the necessary scaffolds and supports as needed to ensure all students are able to attain learning goals
- Considering students' language development, literacy levels, and/or IEP goals and other specific learning needs in developing learning goals and preparing lessons (where applicable)
- Anticipating common student misunderstandings given the content and ensuring strategies are in place to overcome those misunderstandings

Note to observers: When assessing the content of the lesson, your goal is to first examine what students are being asked to do during the lesson and with what materials. Then, compare this to the expectation of the relevant Common Core or state standard for that particular subject/grade to assess whether or not the students are working with appropriately rigorous content.



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In a classroom with strong instruction...

Culture of Learning

Students complete instructional tasks, volunteer responses, follow behavioral expectations, and execute efficient transitions; class has an **instructional pace that keeps students engaged.**

Essential Content

Activities, questions, materials, and exercises are not only **aligned to grade-level standards** but also appropriately demanding for the grade/course and time of year

Student Ownership

Students provide meaningful oral or written responses and respond to and build upon peers' responses; the **teacher rarely finishes the cognitive work students could own**

Demo of Learning

Tasks yield data that **demonstrate students' progress toward the learning goal** and pinpoint where learning breaks down; students have extensive opportunities to express depth of learning through academic writing and language

Practice: 12th grade ELA

LA.12.RP.2 Analyze the development and interaction of literary elements such as characterization, setting, and plot, and how they contribute to the meaning of the work as a whole.

LA.12.V.1 Integrate grade-level academic vocabulary appropriately for a variety of tasks and purposes.



What are this teacher's strengths in the 4 domains?

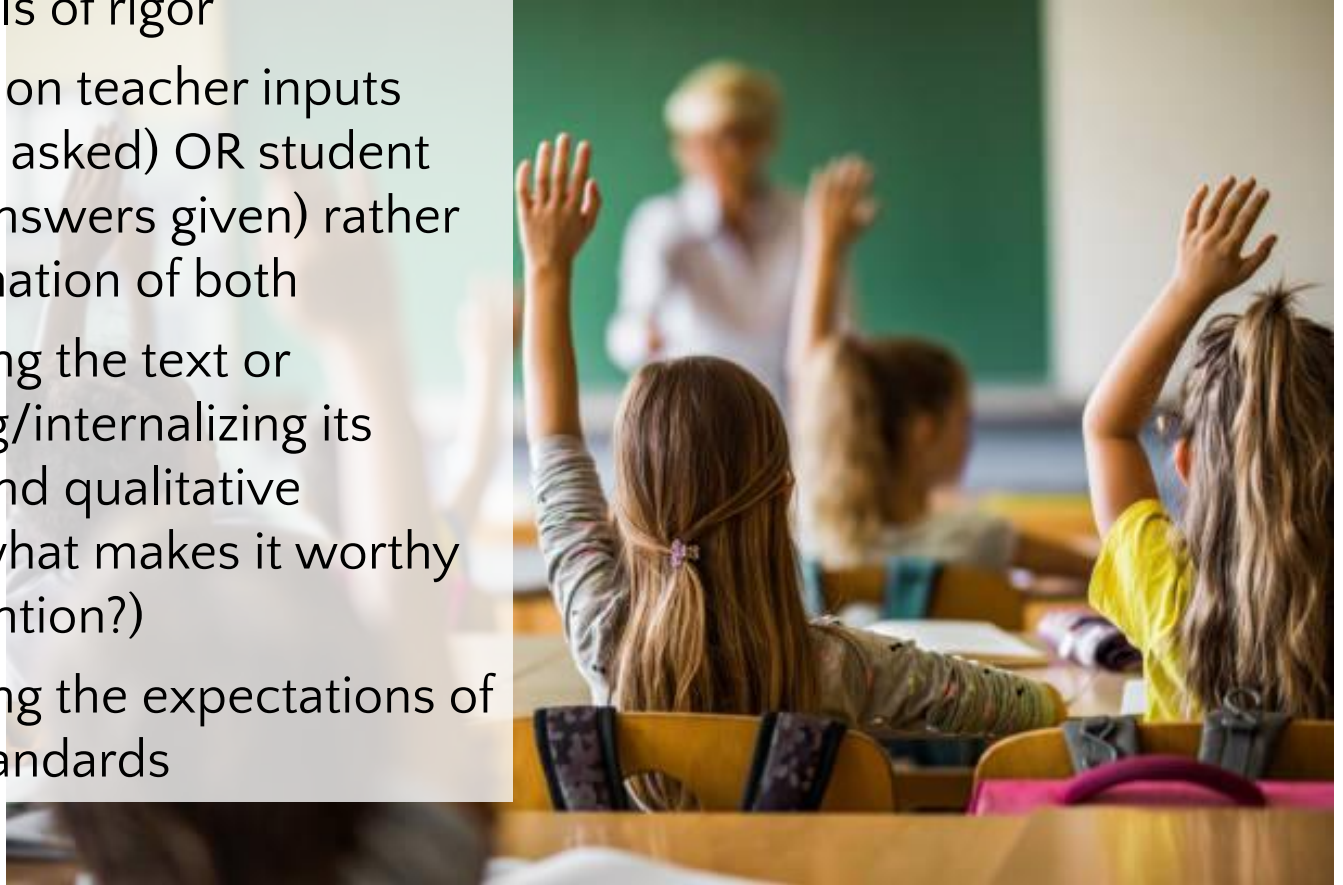
What are this teacher's areas of growth in the 4 domains?

What evidence are you using to make your conclusions?



Caution! Watch out for these traps...

- Equating high levels of engagement with high levels of rigor
- Focusing only on teacher inputs (ex. questions asked) OR student outputs (ex. answers given) rather than a combination of both
- Not considering the text or understanding/internalizing its quantitative and qualitative complexity (what makes it worthy of time & attention?)
- Not considering the expectations of the aligned standards



Let's practice: 6th grade math

6.NS.A.1 Interpret and compute quotients of fractions, and solve word problems involving division of fractions by fractions, e.g., by using visual fraction models and equations to represent the problem.



What are this teacher's strengths in the 4 domains?

What are this teacher's areas of growth in the 4 domains?

What evidence are you using to make your conclusions?





How might having a shared vision for strong, standards-aligned instruction be beneficial for both students and staff?

Where do you see overlap between tools currently in place to observe for instruction? What does this approach offer that your current tools may not?

Opening

The Opportunity Myth

Learning Acceleration

You as the Unit of Change

Grade Level Rigor

Strong Instruction

 Closing

What can I do to enable learning acceleration in my context?

Skim over the one-pager **Learning Acceleration: Tactics for Sustained Change** linked in your handout.

Reflect on:




1. Which of these tactics have you tried or do you already have in place? Are they starting to improve student outcomes? How do you know?
2. What tactic(s) can you try implementing for the remainder of this school year?
3. What tactic(s) might you want to put into place for next school year?

Learning Acceleration: Tactics for Sustained Change




General Resources

[The Opportunity Myth](#)
 [Accelerate, Don't Remediate](#)
 [Strong Instruction Through an Acceleration Framework](#)
 [Conditions for Learning Acceleration Self-Survey](#)


GRADE-APPROPRIATE ASSIGNMENTS

- 
 1. Deeply internalize the expectations of grade-level standards to establish a high bar.
- 
 2. Leverage planning and/or internalization protocols that support teachers with prioritizing grade-level rigor in their lesson prep.
- 
 3. Periodically engage in collaborative activities to evaluate student-facing assignments and norm on grade-level rigor (ex. during PLCs).

STRONG INSTRUCTION

- 
 4. Articulate and codify a common vision for strong instruction for your school, district, or region.
- 
 5. Leverage observation and coaching tools that align to the vision for strong instruction (ex. core rubric).
- 
 6. Spend ample time in classrooms to normalize feedback for continuous improvement and share best practices.

HIGH EXPECTATIONS

- 
 7. Make inquiry and interrogation common practices - and part of the culture of your classroom, school, district, or region - to develop self-awareness and interrupt biases.

Resources & Examples



- ✓ [Session 1 Slides: Essential Content](#)
- ✓ [Lesson Internalization & Planning Meeting Protocol](#)
- ✓ [CKLA Lesson Internalization Protocol](#)
- ✓ [TNTP Assignment Review Tool \(Adapted, Content-Agnostic\)](#)
- ✓ [TNTP Assignment Review Protocols \(Full, All Core Subjects\)](#)
- ✓ [PLC Agenda Sample](#)

Resources & Examples

- ✓ [Session 2 Slides: Strong Instruction](#)
- ✓ [Vision for Strong Instruction Impact](#)
- ✓ [TNTP Core Teaching Rubric \(Adapted\)](#)
- ✓ [TNTP Core Teaching Rubric \(Full\)](#)

Resources & Examples

- ✓ [Session 3 Slides: Equity Through Strong Instruction](#)
- ✓ [Question Formulation Technique](#)

We value your feedback!

<https://tinyurl.com/Y2PLSurvey>

Case Sensitive!



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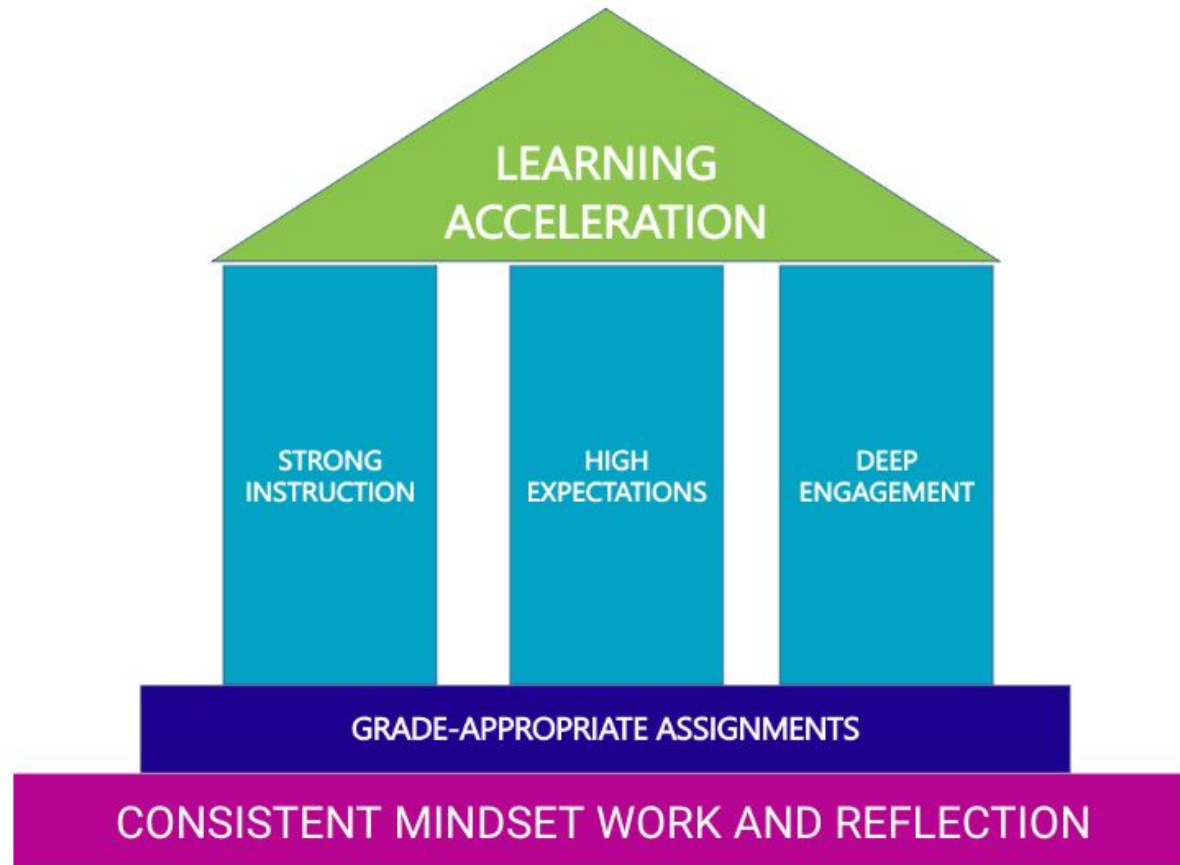


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Maintain momentum!

EVERYONE, within their locus of control, can help accelerate learning for **ALL STUDENTS**. Making space to pause and interrogate our lens helps us make the kind of real, *sustained* progress our students deserve.



Share what you're thinking, feeling, or wanting to do leaving today!



What are you leaving our time together thinking?

What are you leaving our time together feeling grateful for?

What are you leaving our time together wanting to do differently?