

Turning Your Classroom into a Learning Organization



- **Active student empowered learning**
- **differentiated to meet different learning style needs and abilities**
- **learn to learn**

The Goal: Learn How to Learn

- **Various strategies and processes based on Systems Thinking Principles, are presented**
- **This is NOT a recipe - it a way of looking at the relationship between teacher, subject material & student**
- **The values are simple: enable active learning by giving as much power over to the students as is possible AFTER training them properly to work together**

Quality Improvement

- Based on the premise that when we feel in control we act out less and our learning is more relevant to our needs
- originated from E. Demmings work on TQM in Japan in the 1950's
- Used in some US schools and on a large scale in the State of Victoria, Australia
- D.Langford of Montana has workshops
- www.aqc.org.au
- www..net/langford

Systems Thinking

- A process based on the realization that since most of our thinking is based upon our personal experiences which are short-time and small in space we do the **WRONG** thing when we act upon **COMPLEX** systems that act over large time and space areas
- Comes from Cybernetics in the 1940's but moved into management theory in the 1960's
- P.Senge's bestseller "the Fifth Discipline" is a must read
- www.phrontis.com/systhink.htm
- <http://world.std.com/~rk arash>

deBono lateral thinking

- He believes that **creativity can be learned: when we understand what HOW to “think out of the box” or use Provocation to get out of the rut instead of as a threat, ALL of us can be trained to have new ideas**
- **teamwork is a key part of his methodology**
- He is a **business consultant whose “6 hats” team method is VERY popular in Australia**
- **www.debono.org**

Brain Based Learning

- **90% of what we know about the brain & its learning processes has been discovered in the last 10 years YET almost none of this research is being used to change how we teach**
- **there are many little changes that we can make that have HUGE impacts on learning**
- **G.Dryden & Dr.J.Vos’s book “ The Learning Revolution” has the most recent brain research that can be used directly in the class**
- **www.thelearningweb.net**

Layering: Student Choice & Rubrics

- **Students' needs cannot be met with one approach or one task thus CHOICE is essential**
- **the tasks to be chosen MUST meet different learning styles & be designed so that LD, ESL, etc, kids can do them**
- **when students FEEL they have some control they misbehave less**
- **K.Nunley of Idaho has turned our teacher roles upside down by giving students lots of CHOICE and having them orally defend all they have learned**
- **rubrics are integral**
- **www.help4teachers.com**

Self Mastery Club of LA

- **This "club" supports AT RISK students by using curriculum as therapy and teachers primarily as counselors**
- **they have an entire program developed along with workshops for teachers that focus on building self esteem and belief is success**
- **Paradigm that helps all teachers is to realize that we have 3 kinds of learners in all our classes that need a different "touch"**
- **at risk = counsel**
- **trade school = show me**
- **college - tell me**
- **www.stnews.org**

System Dynamics

- **A computer modeling method using graphical links developed in 1960 by J.Forrester of the MIT Business school**
- **used by the Club of Rome**
- **a simulation tool that allows hands on changes to be made by the students**
- **A hands on, cross curriculum, realistic scenario, student centred learning strategy**
- **method used by many business consultants**
- **includes many games and role playing activities**
- **<http://sysdyn.mit.edu>**
- **www.albany.edu/cpr/sds**

Other: literature support...

- **Strategic Learning**
- **this article in the "Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy" 43:6 March 2000 p.528 by M.Simpson & S.Nist compiles the last 20 years of research to support the need for giving students an explicit training in "learning how to learn"**
- **"Learned Optimism" by M.Seligman , a psychologist**
- **A study into why it is that "when the going gets tough the tough get going"**
- **his research finds that this attitude is learned and can be all of us can learn to feel in charge**

In Conclusion: Together...

- **Rather than focus on content and result "Learning How to Learn" values process and adding value over time**
- **student learning is increased and RETAINED past the exam when they are in control and understand why and how**
- **cooperation rather than competition is the goal**

