

New Year News



ASES

What It Is: The After School Education and Safety (ASES) Program is the result of the 2002 voter-approved initiative, Proposition 49. The ASES Program funds the establishment of local after school education and enrichment programs.

Who Gets It: All our elementary schools and Middle School have been awarded monies to be deployed starting this year and for the following two years with an opportunity to reapply then.

Benefits: Many students can participate in after school programs designed to give them extra learning time as well as unique enrichment opportunities. Teachers who work with their kids in the program get paid for their extra efforts!

ARRA EETT

What It Is: It is a competitive federal grant to enhance college and career-readiness programs and to improve high school graduation rates. It must supplement not supplant current resources. The grant must provide professional development to support the grant's goals and participants.

Who Gets It: The high school will receive the funds to support the use of technology to improve the passing rate for Algebra 1 students.

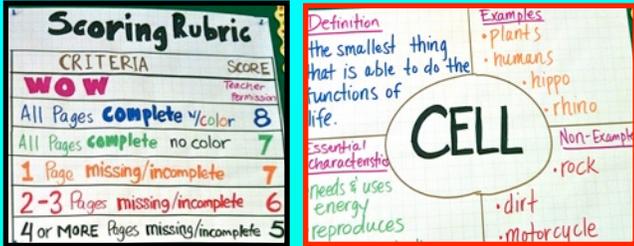
Benefits: Algebra 1 instructors will receive time and training to implement new technology that will provide interaction in teaching as well as real time data to adjust instructional decisions.

Administrator Training

What It Is: Pursuant to AB 430, it provides professional development funds for school administrators using California State Board of Education (SBE) approved training providers.

Who Gets It: Any site administrator who has not received this training previously.

Benefits: Administrators will learn more ways to support the curriculum and instructional components teachers' use.



Ms. Sadorra's 7th Grade Science, scoring rubric and vocabulary 'frame'.

DEAR COLLEAGUES:

Happy New Year! I know this will be a great year for us as we continue to build on our successes and improve the outcomes for all of our students. Last year it was inspiring to see the increased use of student learning focused practices like the rubric and language frame in the above photo. It will be exciting to see just how far we take our students academically as we extend our work together this year.

As we are all painfully aware, the State budget crisis continues, therefore C & I is aggressively perusing alternative funding opportunities to support teachers' hard work. We have acquired grants for training, technology and curricular materials for use in the classroom.

I am thrilled to announce the promotion of Sharon Thompson from Computer System Technician to Management Information System Technician! Congratulations to Sharon, whose impact will be even greater in her new position.

As we begin this new year I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their dedication and hard work in the service of our children. Looking forward to a new year full of learning and growing together!

Warmest wishes for a great year,

Jamie Marantz

Assistant Superintendent
 Curriculum and Instruction

Instructional Corner

Mirror Mirror... in our brains??



Is there a difference in a learner's outcome if a student simply hears an expert (model), hears a model and imitates the model, or just does the task after instruction on 'how to' do it?

New research says **yes!** In the past decade science has uncovered the existence of learning pathways called **Mirror neurons**.

"Mirror neurons provide clues to how children learn: they kick in at birth ... human children are hard-wired for *imitation*, he said, their mirror neurons are involved in **observing what others do and practicing doing the same things.**" (Arbib, 1998)

"These networks of neurons fire either when a person acts or when that person observes the same action performed by someone else, and most intensely **while mimicking the actions they observe** (Iacoboni et al., 2005)."

Language is based on mirror neurons, according to Michael Arbib, a neuroscientist at the University of Southern California.

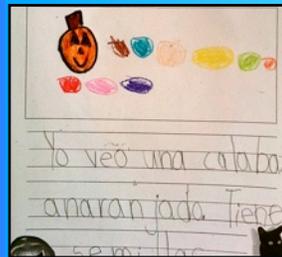
So what are the implications for classroom learning activities? This information gives us the proof, or the scientific explanation, for why modeling and *then* repeating, or 'imitating the expert' can be so powerful in helping students acquire new knowledge--especially language patterns, structures and vocabulary. It makes perfect sense if you think about it. How do children learn language at all? By listening to the expert adult speakers repeatedly modeling, and then practicing themselves. This combination is exceedingly powerful because it takes advantage of the power of the 'Mirror neuron' network already built in to every human's brain!

When lesson planning, think about this, what key learning could be overtly modeled, and how could students practice the same pattern? Choral response? Structured pair-share, echo reading, the possibilities are almost endless!

From ASCD, Educational Leadership; *Brain-Friendly Learning for Teachers* - David A. Sousa



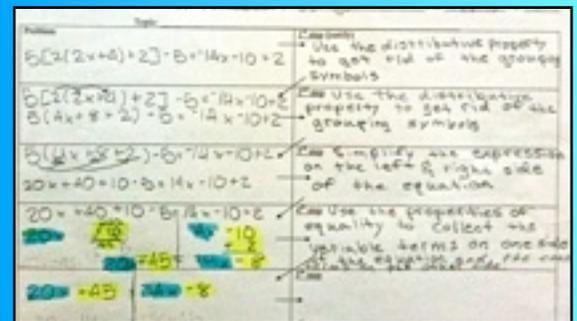
TEACHING WITH STYLE



Ms. Saladña's Kindergarten

High Expectations

Bilingual kindergarden students first illustrate, and then write several sentences in Spanish describing their scenes. This is in preparation for transferring these skills to writing in English in the Spring!

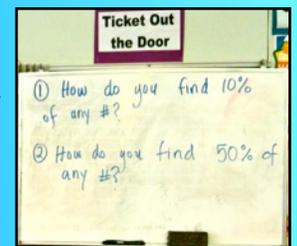


Explain Your Thinking ... or How Do You Know, and How Do I Know You Do?

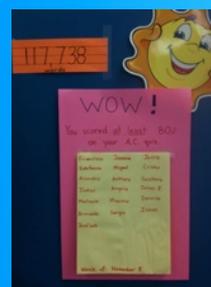
Expecting math students to explain their thinking requires higher order processing and really exposes each student's depth of understanding. This formative assessment reveals a wealth of information for both the teacher and the students. Mr. Rutherford's Algebra 1

Instructional Routines

Here is an example of a high leverage instructional routine. The board is dedicated to an Exit Ticket. Students know they are expected to show their understanding consistently, no opting out!



Ms. Romers's 7th grade math



Goal Setting

Here the teacher has established a goal of 80% accuracy for her students' Accelerated Reading quizzes. She makes the goal public, helps her students track their progress and celebrates students' success!

Ms. Nuñez's 2nd Grade Bi-lingual