

Participant Materials

Staying Focused Everyday: The 12 Touchstones of Good Teaching

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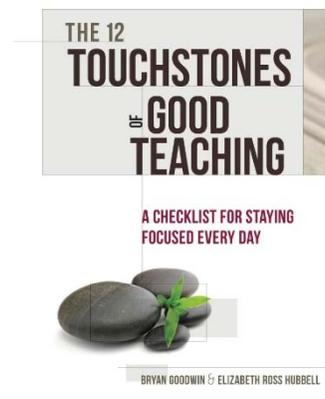
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Notes on Table Talk I

What teacher had the most impact on your life?

What made them special?

What do you remember most about them?

Self-Reflection I

Please reflect on your district or school's current use of the touchstones.

1 = This is new thinking for us.

2 = This is an area of growth for us.

3 = We are pretty good at this.

4 = We do this very well

Imperative: Be demanding

Touchstone: I use standards to guide every learning opportunity.

	1	2	3	4
I unpack standards to clarify what students must learn.				
I look for the big ideas embedded in standards.				
I use standards to guide lesson and unit planning.				
I use standards as a windshield and as a rearview mirror for lesson planning.				
I use standards to provide structure and autonomy for student learning.				
I use standards as a platform for creativity.				

Touchstone: I ensure students set personal learning objectives for each lesson.

	1	2	3	4
I help students set learning goals.				
I ensure students set long-term goals.				
I translate standards into specific learning objectives for students.				
I help students personalize learning objectives.				
I clearly communicate and remind students of their learning objectives.				
I begin every lesson with the end in mind.				

Touchstone: I peel back the curtain and make my performance expectations clear.

	1	2	3	4
I use performance criteria to help students find their "Goldilocks zone."				
I put performance criteria at the heart of my teacher talk in the classroom.				
I use performance criteria to help students link effort and results.				

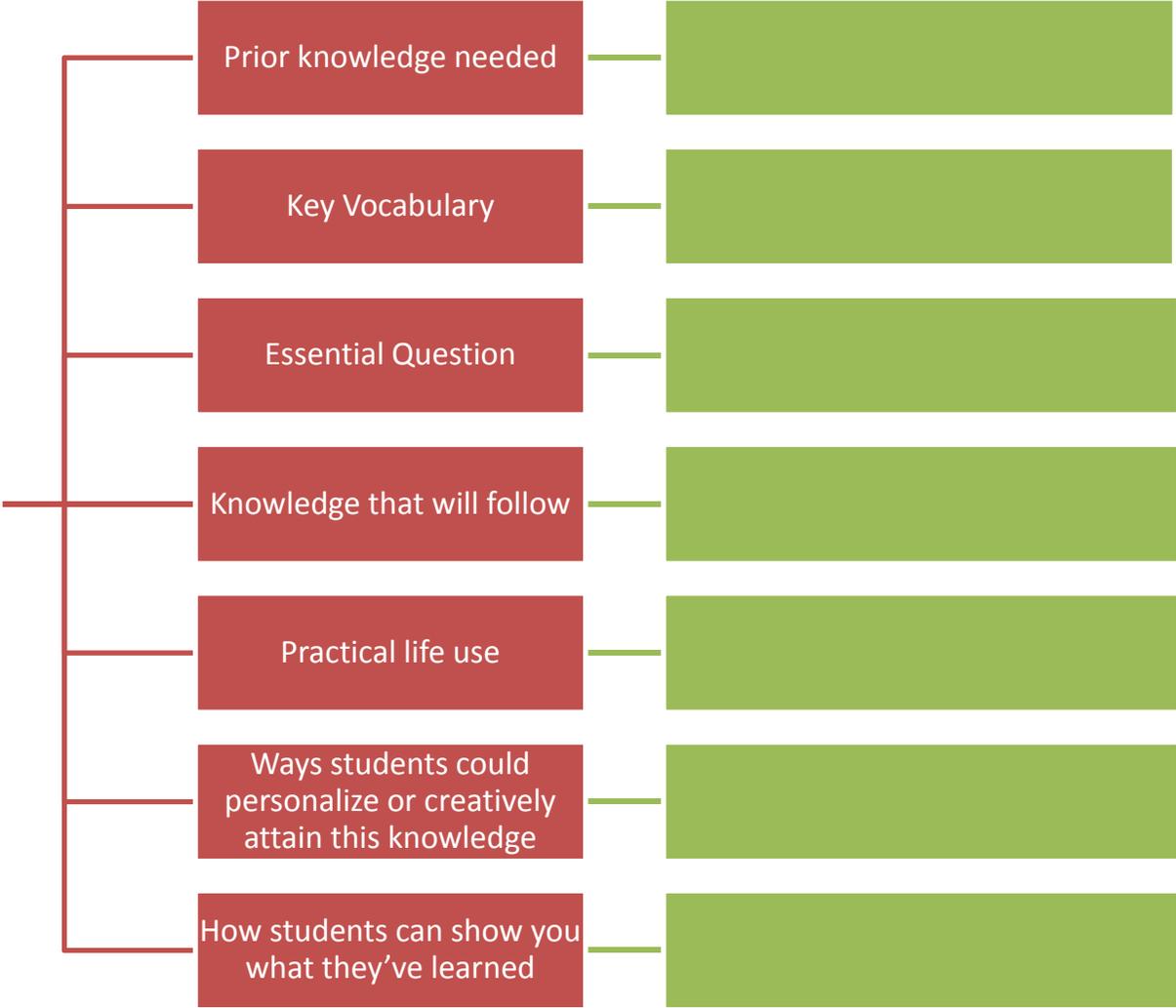
Touchstone: I measure understanding against high expectations.

	1	2	3	4
I focus my grades on student learning.				
I manage behavior outside of my grade book.				
I view homework as practice (and assign grades accordingly).				
I use assessments that challenge students.				

Unpacking Standards Activity

Generic Template

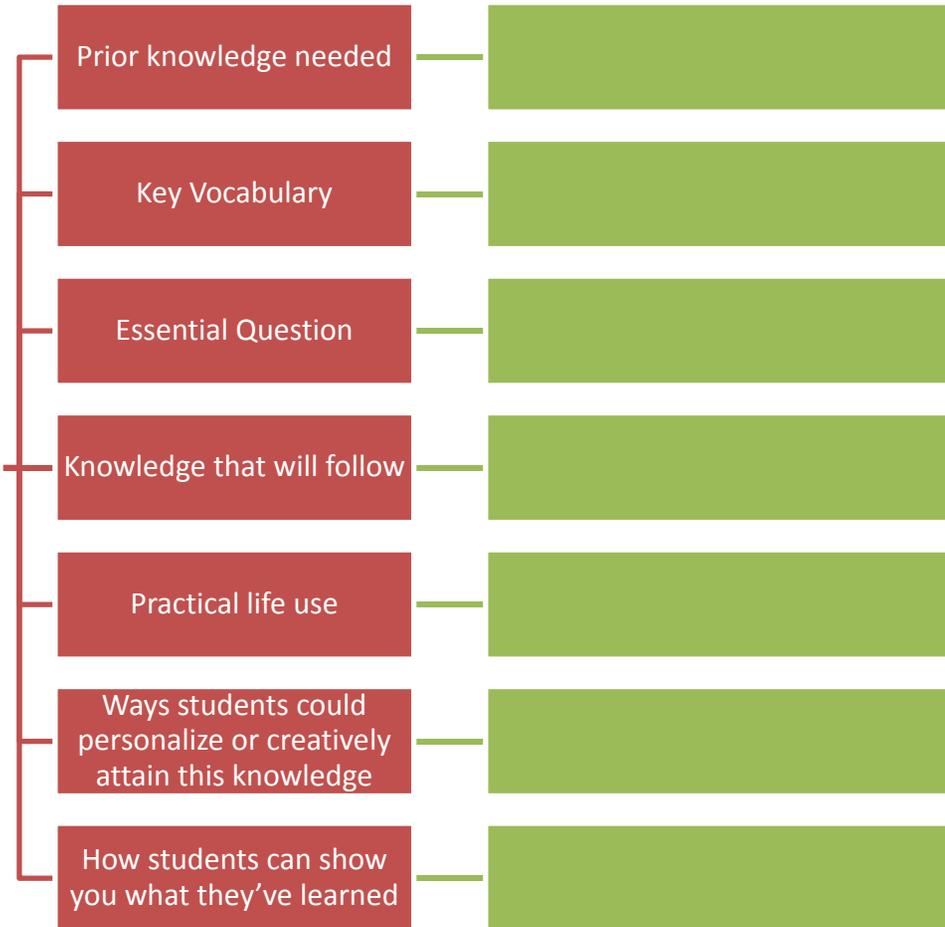
Standard or objective



Unpacking Standards Activity

High School ELA Standard

Standard or objective
Apply *grades 9-10 Reading standards* to literature (e.g., "Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work [e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare]").



Reflection & Discussion

Group protocol

1 minute quiet reflection

4 minute everyone share out

10 minutes select one item and list what it would take

Personal reflection

Do these checklist items make sense to you?

Be demanding

Align teaching with high expectations for learning

- ✓ I use standards to guide every learning opportunity
- ✓ I ensure students set personal learning objectives for each lesson
- ✓ I peel back the curtain & make my performance expectations clear
- ✓ I measure understanding against high expectations

Group discussion

Which of these items would be your school/district's biggest opportunity for improvement?

Report out

What would it take to do these things well in our classrooms?

Self-Reflection 2

Please reflect on your school or districts' current use of the touchstones.

1 = This is new thinking for us.

2 = This is an area of growth for us.

3 = We are pretty good at this.

4 = We do this very well

Imperative: Be supportive

Touchstone: I engage student interest with every lesson.

	1	2	3	4
I hook student interest as I launch my lessons				
I mix things up during my lessons				
I offer learning choices to students				
I build lessons around mysteries and puzzles				

Touchstone: I interact meaningfully with every student.

	1	2	3	4
Interact with every student every day				
I get to know my students				
I show my students that I care about them as individuals				
I bring personality and enthusiasm to the classroom				

Touchstone: I use feedback to encourage effort

	1	2	3	4
I link feedback to learning objectives				
I keep feedback non-controlling				
I make feedback growth oriented				
I make guidance specific, actionable, and tailored to each student.				
I keep feedback formative and non-evaluative				
I ensure an appropriate level of immediacy with my feedback				
I provide opportunities for students to self-assess and give peer feedback				

Touchstone: I create an oasis of safety and respect in my classroom

	1	2	3	4
I establish rules of behavior and consequences for misconduct				
I catch students in the act of doing things right				
I am "with it" (am aware of what's happening in my classroom)				
I enlist student support				
I encourage positive classroom discourse				

Table talk

1 Minute Quiet Reflection

Picture an engaging classroom. What makes it engaging? How many of our lessons are engaging?

5 Minute Discussion

What makes classrooms or lessons engaging?

Why aren't all classes engaging?

What would it take for us to make all lessons and classrooms engaging?

Student Engagement Activity

Here is an activity your schools could use to see how well they are engaging with students.

Write down the name of students in your school or classroom. Rate your interactions with them using this scale below.



I interact regularly with this student regarding both school work and on informal subjects. We have a good rapport. I feel that I know him or her well.

OK

We have a good teacher/student relationship. Our conversations are professional, but comfortable. I know a little about his or her hobbies and interests. We interact frequently, but not daily.



I do not know this child very well. Our conversations can be strained or awkward. I don't know his/her hobbies. Our interactions are strictly formal.

Student	Rating

Notes on Feedback

Growth vs. fixed mindset feedback

Growth mindset	Fixed mindset
	You blazed right through those problems! You're a math whiz.
	It's okay. Not everyone is a natural at this. We'll move on to something you're better at.
	Wow. This is beautiful. You're such a good artist!
	This book is for advanced readers. Let's find one that's easier one for you to read.

Non-controlling vs. controlling feedback

Non-controlling	Controlling
	I'm disappointed in your performance. You should've done what I recommended.
	Your essay was good. That's the level of work you should be doing if you're serious about college.
	You had a lot of careless mistakes in your homework. You should check it more carefully before turning it in to me.
	You'd better buckle down and study hard for this test.

Table Talk Activity

Applying the Touchstones to a Case Example

Case example

I am a first year, long-term substitute teacher. I have inherited an unruly, poorly behaved fourth-grade class.

To keep them in line, I've resorted to giving them little treats for good behavior. It has helped a bit, but seems to have diminishing returns.

What should I do?

- I engage student **interest** with every lesson
- I **interact** meaningfully with every student every day
- I use **feedback** to encourage effort
- I create an oasis of **safety and respect** in my classroom

Develop a 5-step action plan for this teacher that incorporates the touchstones listed above

Translating What Works into Why It Works

Classroom Instruction that Works	Why It Works
Identifying similarities & differences	Supports acquisition of new knowledge by linking to prior learning Deepens knowledge with critical thinking (analysis)
Summarizing & note taking	Focuses learning on important content Deepens knowledge with critical thinking (analysis), review & revision Demonstrates understanding and identifies misconceptions
Reinforcing effort & providing recognition	Motivates learning through positive reinforcement Motivates learning by developing growth mindset in students
Homework & practice	Motivates learning through development of good work habits Deepens knowledge through application Demonstrates understanding & identifies misconceptions
Nonlinguistic representations	Supports acquisition of new knowledge through visual learning Deepens knowledge, supports recall through visual learning
Cooperative learning	Motivates through “positive interdependence” Deepens knowledge through problem-based learning
Setting objectives & providing feedback	Focuses learning on important content Motivates by personalizing learning Supports acquisition of new knowledge by surfacing misconceptions
Generating & testing hypotheses	Motivates by accessing “mental set” for problem-solving Deepens knowledge through critical thinking (evaluating, creating)
Questions, cues, and advance organizers	Focuses learning on important content Motivates by increasing student curiosity, interest in topic Supports acquisition of new knowledge by linking to prior learning Deepens knowledge through critical thinking (analyzing, evaluating)

Self-Reflection 3

Please reflect on your school or district's current use of the touchstones.

1 = This is new thinking for us.

2 = This is an area of growth for us.

3 = We are pretty good at this.

4 = We do this very well

Imperative: Be Intentional

Touchstone: I make the most of every minute.

	1	2	3	4
I account for every minute of class time when planning.				
I establish routines / procedures to reduce time lost to nonacademic activities.				
I work with my instructional leaders to minimize disruptions to learning time.				

Touchstone: I help students develop deep knowledge.

	1	2	3	4
I help students connect new knowledge to prior knowledge.				
I help students find coherence in what they're learning.				
I help students concentrate their thinking on deep knowledge.				

Touchstone: I coach students to mastery.

	1	2	3	4
I use frequent checks for understanding.				
I provide opportunities for deliberate practice.				
I reteach as needed when my first approach doesn't work.				
I recognize that my students' failures are my own.				

Touchstone: I help students do something with their learning.

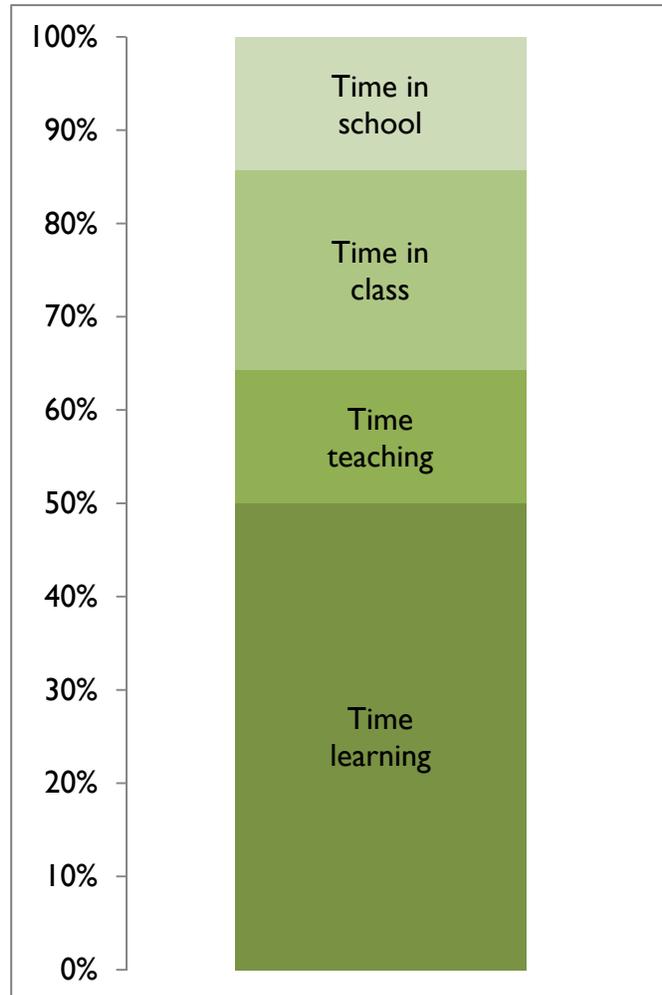
	1	2	3	4
I use classroom discussions to help students extend learning.				
I use writing assignments to help students extend learning.				
I use projects to help students apply knowledge.				
I provide students with complex problems to solve.				

Discussion: Use of Time

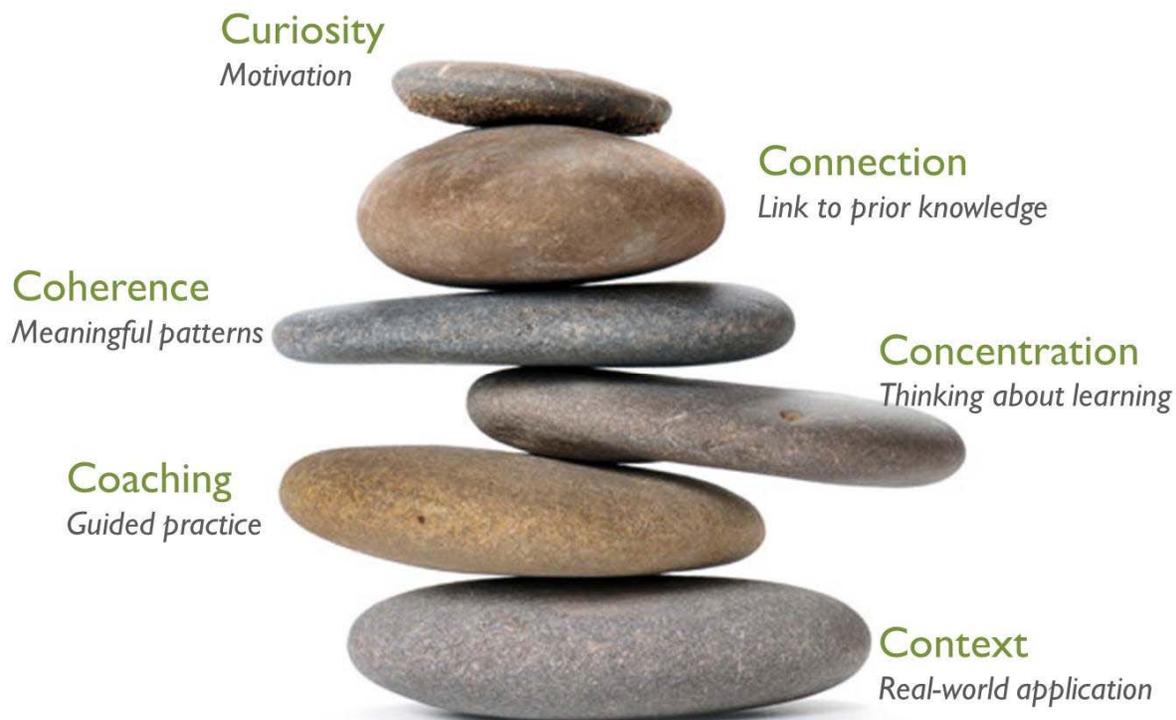
What would this graph look like in your school or district?

What things could your school or district do to improve its use of time?

What things should we *stop* doing?



Group Discussion: The 6 Cs of Deep Knowledge



Where do your school or district's greatest opportunities for improvement lie?

Final Reflection

What 3 things did you learn today?

What two things do you want to learn more about?

What one thing are you inspired to start doing?

Be demanding

Align teaching with high expectations for learning

- ✓ I use standards to guide every learning opportunity
- ✓ I ensure students set personal learning objectives for each lesson
- ✓ I peel back the curtain & make my performance expectations clear
- ✓ I measure understanding against high expectations

Be supportive

Provide a nurturing environment

- ✓ I engage student interest with every lesson
- ✓ I interact meaningfully with every student every day
- ✓ I use feedback to encourage effort
- ✓ I create an oasis of safety and respect in my classroom

Be intentional

Know why you're doing what you're doing

- ✓ I make the most of every minute
- ✓ I help students develop deep knowledge
- ✓ I coach students to mastery
- ✓ I help students do something with their learning