Enriching the Elementary Classroom

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Teacher Leader Institute

Motivating Reluctant and Resistant Learners:
How to help every student invest in your classroom
October 2-4,
Madden’s Resort, Brainerd, MN

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acclaimed trainer
and author of several books including the
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Strategies for Enrichment

- Compacted to essential learning
- On-going investigations
- Interest based
- Advanced levels of thinking

Compacting for the Essentials

- Curriculum compacting enables teachers to streamline the regular curriculum, ensure students’ mastery of basic skills, and provide time for challenging and interesting enrichment and/or acceleration activities.

Renzulli & Reis (2008)
Compacting should...

- Eliminate repetition of mastered content and/or skills
- Increase the challenge level of the regular curriculum
- Provide time for investigation of topics beyond the scope of the regular curriculum or of interest (Heacox, 2012)

Steps to Compacting

1) Identify the essentials of learning
Essentials of Learning

What expect your students to KNOW

- Grounds the student in the discipline
- Knowledge of:
  - Terminology
    - Vocabulary, symbols, academic language
  - Knowledge of specific details
    - Major natural resources
  - Elements
    - Chemical elements

Essentials of Learning

What expect your students to BE ABLE TO DO

- Strategies within a specific subject,
- Discrete, conscious actions
  - Step-by-step procedures
  - Example: Scientific method:
    1. Ask a Question
    2. Do Background Research
    3. Construct a Hypothesis
    4. Test Your Hypothesis by Doing an Experiment
    5. Analyze Your Data and Draw a Conclusion
    6. Communicate Your Results
Essentials of Learning

What expect your students to BE ABLE TO DO

Skills within a discipline

- When strategies have been amassed, and
- Becomes automatic
- Including general thinking skills
  - Problem solving & Decision making
  - Critical and Creative thinking
  - Communication & Collaboration
  - Self-Regulation

Essentials of Learning

What expect your students to UNDERSTAND

- The interrelationships between disciplines
- Knowledge of:
  - Classifications and categories
    - Periods of geological time, animal kingdoms
  - Generalizations and principles
    - Pythagorean theorem, economic laws
  - Theories, models and structures
    - Theory of evolution, governmental structures
Steps to Compacting

2) Assess students’ understanding of the content standards

3) For students who represented mastery of all the objectives allow them to participate in enriched/enhanced/extended or acceleration activities

Enrichment/ Extension/ Enhancement

**Enrichment:** focused study within the unit

**Extension:** broader study within the field

**Enhancement:** connecting contents
Math: Ratio/Proportion

**Enrichment:** Study how ratio/proportion are used in daily life

**Extension:** Study how mathematicians or statisticians use ratio/proportion to relay information

**Enhancement:** Study how ratio/proportion can be used to distract or distort information

Elementary Science: Solar System

**Enrichment:** Study of Black Holes

**Extension:** Study of famous/controversial astronomers

**Enhancement:** Study of how systems in general operate or can dysfunction
On Wisconsin!
- Choose a career of an early Wisconsinite and explain what individual characteristics you would need to be successful.
- Compare and contrast individuals who have had a significant influence on the state's development.
- Choose a career path where you can have the most impact on the future of Wisconsin. Describe what it will take to achieve that goal: schooling, personal/character development, networks/affiliations, professional duties...

Your turn
- Think of a unit of study, create:
  - Enrichment: Focused study within the unit (narrow)
    - Example: Study PI
  - Extension: Broader study within the discipline/field
    - Example: Study famous mathematicians
  - Expansion: Connecting disciplines/fields through concepts
    - Example: Explore how math is used in music
Steps to Compacting

4) For students who mastered some but not all the objectives, provide small group or mini-lessons on objectives not mastered so they too can move on to enrichment or acceleration activities.

5) Create a contract that describes the enrichment or acceleration activities, due dates, norms of self-study or small group work, and expectations and rubrics for final projects.

Anchor Activities for Self-Directed Learning

On-going assignments that encourage students to work at their own pace, independently and with self-direction throughout the course of a unit, semester or school year.
Anchor Activities

• Should:
  • Offer meaningful experiences that extend learning
  • Connect in some way to what is being learned in the classroom
  • Allow for starting and stopping easily
  • Be expectation and outcome driven
  • Encourage student and teacher to collaborate on assessment criteria
  • Nurture students’ independence and development of self-regulation
  • Timely, interesting and fun!

Anchor Activity Options

• Independent investigations
• Magazine/book reviews
• Silent reading
• Experiments
• Listening stations
• Webinars
• Creating iMovie about topic
• Garage Band/music creation
• Case study
• Games or puzzles
• Brain builders
• Portfolio construction

• Individual interest project
• Passion projects
• Author study
• Journal writing
• Vocabulary log
• Logic problem solving
• Learning centers, stations
• Early assessment options
• Book writing
• Web Quests
• Wiki creations
• Daily brain teasers
Anchor Activity Assessments

- Rubrics
- Performance
- Portfolio
- Check Lists
- Tests
- Reports

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www.engine-uity.com
Interest-Based Learning

Interest is essential to deep learning

Interests should be included throughout a unit of study

Interest is two-way
- Use of students’ interests in the unit
- Getting students interested in the unit

Options include:
- Forming Special Interest Groups (SIGs)
- Passion projects within the study
- Variety of activities based on students’ general interests
- Experts or mentors from the field of study
- Community service projects that incorporate the learned skills
- Use of technology to explore/research/develop/discuss...
Advanced Levels of Thinking

**Critical Reasoning**

- Making good decisions based on evidence and facts
- The ability to analyze and critique information without bias or prejudice
- The use of both inductive (from the gut) and deductive ("just the facts ma’am") reasoning

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A major pharmaceutical company has developed a pill that can increase intelligence.

Your school is considering testing the pill. What are the possible consequences of the testing that should be taken into account?

PNI

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<tr>
<th>POSITIVE</th>
<th>NEGATIVE</th>
<th>INTERESTING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do we know?</td>
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<td>What don’t we know?</td>
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<td>What questions should be asked?</td>
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## PNI

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<tr>
<th>POSTIVE</th>
<th>NEGATIVE</th>
<th>INTERESTING</th>
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<tr>
<td>Positive consequences</td>
<td>Negative consequences</td>
<td>Interesting or neutral consequences</td>
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Essential Steps in Curriculum Compacting

Curriculum compacting enables teachers to streamline the regular curriculum, ensure students’ mastery of basic skills, and provide time for challenging and interesting enrichment and/or acceleration activities. Renzulli & Reis (2008)

Studies have found that the basic curriculum is well below or insufficiently challenging for bright learners. Therefore, curriculum compacting is an essential tool for meeting the needs of gifted learners.

**Curriculum Compacting should:**

- Eliminate repetition of mastered content and/or skills
- Increase the challenge level of the regular curriculum
- Provide time for investigation of topics beyond the scope of the regular curriculum or of interest (Heacox, 2012)

**STEPS TO CURRICULUM COMPACTING**

1) Identify the key content standards all students must know, understand and be able to do within the context of the unit
2) Assess students’ understanding of the content standards
3) For students who represented mastery of all the objectives allow them to participate in enriched/enhanced/extended or acceleration activities
4) For students who mastered some but not all the objectives, provide small group or mini-lessons on objectives not mastered so they too can move on to enrichment or acceleration activities
5) Create a contract that describes the enrichment or acceleration activities, due dates, norms of self-study or small group work, and expectations and rubrics for final projects.

**Possible options for students:**

- Accelerated content (moving up a year)
- Interest or learning centers
- Self-directed learning units
- Passion projects
- On-line course work
- Service learning projects
- Working with mentors or experts in the field

**Benefits of Curriculum Compacting for all students**

- Continuously learning new information
- Attaining higher level of cognitive stimulation
- Greater sense of self-efficacy
- Develop skills of self-regulation
- Attain greater motivation to learn
- Demonstrates persistence
- Independence
- Willingness to learn in small groups or through self-instruction
- Ability to dig deeper into content areas
Anchor Activities for Self-Directed Learning

**Anchor Activities** are on-going assignments that encourage students to work at their own pace, independently and with self-direction throughout the course of a unit, semester or school year.

**Anchor Activities** should:
- Offer meaningful experiences that extend learning
- Connect in some way to what is being learned in the classroom
- Allow for starting and stopping easily
- Be expectation and outcome driven
- Encourage student and teacher to collaborate on assessment criteria
- Nurture students' independence and development of self-regulation
- Timely, interesting and fun!

**Anchor Activities** can be:
- Used in any subject at any grade level
- Done by all students
- Worked on in whole or small groups
- Independently completed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Anchor Activities</strong> offer students:</th>
<th><strong>Anchor Activities</strong> offer teachers:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Choices</td>
<td>Time to work with individual and small groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engagement &amp; Motivation</td>
<td>Ideas of student interests</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategy development for overcoming barriers</td>
<td>Sponge time activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>A sense of accomplishment</td>
<td>Options not offered in the core curriculum</td>
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</tbody>
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**Anchor Activities** can be used:
- As students enter the classroom
- When a student completes assigned work
- When students are compacted out of a unit or lessons
- When waiting for assistance from the teacher
- During those rainy/snowy/too cold or hot to go outside days
- In case of an unexpected emergency where the teacher must break from instruction (sub-days)
- To enrich, enhance or extend the core content

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<th><strong>Anchor Activity</strong> options:</th>
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<td>Individual interest project/</td>
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<td>Performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portfolio</td>
<td>Reports</td>
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Guidelines for Creating a Passion Project

1) Passions are those things you love, greatly enjoy and have a good storehouse of knowledge about. Clearly explain your passion and why others would want to know about this topic:

_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

2) Meet with the teacher to find an appropriate unit project that can be replaced by your Passion Project.
Teacher meeting date: _________
Agreed upon unit project to be replaced by the Passion Project: ________________________
Agreed upon date the Passion Project will be due: _________________________________
Signature of Teacher: ___________________________________________________________________

Signature of Student: ___________________________________________________________________

3) Construct your Passion Project for presentation to the class:

A) Think of an interesting way to present your Passion Project to the class (PowerPoint, speech, role play, charts/posters, etc).
B) In your presentation tell the class:
   a. How you become involved with the topic,
   b. How you came to know your topic,
   c. Why you enjoy your topic, and
   d. What makes your topic interesting?
C) Provide the class with information that could stimulate them to investigate this topic.
D) Offer the class a list of resources, websites, books and/or materials that could get someone else started on your topic.

4) Your passion project will be graded based on the rubric attached. The grade from the Passion Project will replace the grade on the agreed upon unit project.

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## Rubric for the Passion Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparedness</strong></td>
<td>Student is completely prepared and has obviously rehearsed.</td>
<td>Student seems pretty prepared but might have needed a couple more rehearsals.</td>
<td>The student is somewhat prepared, but it is clear that rehearsal was lacking.</td>
<td>Student does not seem at all prepared to present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enthusiasm</strong></td>
<td>Facial expressions and body language generate a strong interest and enthusiasm about the topic in others.</td>
<td>Facial expressions and body language sometimes generate a strong interest and enthusiasm about the topic in others.</td>
<td>Facial expressions and body language are used to try to generate enthusiasm, but seem somewhat faked.</td>
<td>Very little use of facial expressions or body language. Did not generate much interest in topic being presented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>Shows a full understanding of the topic.</td>
<td>Shows a good understanding of the topic.</td>
<td>Shows a good understanding of parts of the topic.</td>
<td>Does not seem to understand the topic very well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resources</strong></td>
<td>Provides a wide range of resources (at least 10) from websites to text to artifacts.</td>
<td>Provides a range of resources (at least 8) which include websites, text and artifacts.</td>
<td>Provides some resources (at least 5) which include websites and text.</td>
<td>Provides few resources (less than 5) which include websites and text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connection to Content</strong></td>
<td>Student made exceptional connections to content including math, science, social studies, language arts, the arts, physical education and/or other areas of study.</td>
<td>Student made some connections to content including math, science, social studies, language arts, the arts, physical education and/or other areas of study.</td>
<td>Student made few connections to content including math, science, social studies, language arts, the arts, physical education and/or other areas of study.</td>
<td>Student no connections to content.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Extending Strategies based on Student Interests

Activities that spark students’ curiosity and motivation and promotes collaboration

✔ Group students by interests--then jig-saw the material from alike to mixed groups. Advanced learners often have deep interest in content areas. Allowing them to be grouped with other like-minded learners allows them the opportunity to go into advanced levels of knowledge. The students should then share their interest-based learning with other students.

✔ Allow students to opt out of assigned work by doing a "Passion Project" that focuses on a complex issues related to the course of study. Students develop Passion Projects based on personal interests or hobbies. Through this project students should discover the skills required, utilized, developed and career possibilities within their interest or hobby.

✔ Through the use of interest surveys teacher develops lessons and projects that require multiple interests to be utilized as well as interdisciplinary subjects that encompass the arts, sports, family life, social and civic issues. Interest surveys can help students define their levels of engagement in a topic, specify what they like in learning, and what assets the child brings to the learning environment.

✔ Allow students to design units, lessons or projects based on a meaningful question, requires investigation, semi-structured with articulated benchmarks, tangible end product to an authentic audience and includes reflection on learning. Students complete the work based on an interest contract developed in concert with the teacher, student and parents.

✔ Independent projects that require students to use inquiry and discovery that expands and extends the classroom curriculum.

✔ Incorporate authentic mentors and coaches from the wider community within the content areas. Connect students to these adults to explore their areas of interest.

✔ Develop community or service projects based on student interests. Expose the students to the social and civic issues that involve their interests. Engage them in solving an authentic problem through community service or volunteerism.

✔ For tech-savvy gifted learners, have them construct a "wiki" to share information on a particular topic of study or to assist other learners in gaining the necessary knowledge of a course of instruction.

✔ Develop "Special Interest Groups" (SIG) that meet throughout the school year to discuss topics, work on tasks, network, create products, and find solutions to authentic student issues. Students learn to collaborate, define problems that are common to a greater number of individuals, share resources, plan and work toward solutions and develop leadership skills within a community.