

RIGOR IN CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

“Rigor is creating an environment in which each student is expected to learn at high levels, each student is supported so he or she can learn at high levels, and each student demonstrates learning at high levels.”

-Williamson and Blackburn, 2011.

Rigor is the goal of helping students develop the capacity to understand content that is complex, ambiguous, provocative and personally or emotionally challenging.

Source: *Teaching What Matters Most: Standards and Strategies for Raising Student Achievement* by Richard W. Strong, Harvey F. Silver and Matthew J. Perini, ASCD, 2001.

RIGOR QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Rigor IS Characterized by:	Rigor is NOT (necessarily) Characterized by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students being challenged to understand and work with difficult concepts. ➤ Students being challenged to make their own discoveries and expand their understanding about how the world works. ➤ Students receiving support, when needed, to complete rigorous work at high levels. ➤ Strong research-based instructional practices. ➤ Increasing the level of expectation of what you are already doing. ➤ Students raising questions, thinking, reasoning, solving problems and reflecting. ➤ Students being asked to comprehend, apply, analyze, synthesize and evaluate. ➤ Students being given time to think through answers. ➤ Teacher’s consistent and correct use of higher levels of questioning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A lot of homework as the main indicator of rigor. ➤ Simply doing more in each class. ➤ Assignments which are able to be completed by everyone. ➤ An assumption that the standards alone take care of rigor. ➤ Assignments in which students never need support. ➤ Work which is only ‘harder’ without being more complex. ➤ Simply moving first-grade curriculum into kindergarten or algebra into the seventh grade.

Additional Resources on Rigor:

Rigor is NOT a Four-Letter Word by Barbara R. Blackburn

Rigor Made Easy by Barbara R. Blackburn

How to Plan Rigorous Instruction (Mastering the Principles of Great Teaching) by Robyn Renee Jackson

Rigor in Your School: A Toolkit for Leaders by Ronald Williamson and Barbara R. Blackburn