



## Upward and Onward

**A**t the Tri-Association's 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Educators' Conference, we will continue to move upward and onward, providing our educators and students with the skills they will need in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The conference will support our vision of Success for all Students. The Conference venue this year will be Cartagena, Colombia, and the dates are September 24-28, 2012.

We are very pleased to have Pam Allyn, Executive Director of Lit-World, a global organization advocating for worldwide literacy in all children. Ms. Allyn is the author of many books for teacher and families and she is the Global Ambassador-at-Large for Scholastic's Read Every Day Campaign. Her Keynote Address, "Be the Story: A New Era for the Power of Narrative in Children's Lives", will inspire us to use Literature and children's own stories to transform the teaching of reading and writing.

Drs. Susan Baum and Hank Nicols will keynote on Thursday showing that Science on developing brains demands that we change educational pedagogy to meet the needs of today's learners as they share with that differentiation is not just a buzzword anymore.



*Hilton Hotel Cartagena*

Tim Burns is an educator and author, whose background includes over thirty years of experience as a high school teacher, counselor, First Offender Program facilitator, adolescent and family drug-treatment program director, university instructor and professional development specialist. On Friday in his keynote, he will explain why Three Brains are Better than One: Integrating Brain, Body and Heart Intelligences for Engaged Learning.

The Children for Haiti Project will be given the 2012 Paul G. Orr Award its outstanding work in benefit of the most needy children in Haiti. The project

began after the 2010 Earthquake. A group of International Educators came together, lead by Mr. Forrest Broman to begin a program to build a school and run it for children needing help and education. The presentation of the award will be made at our 2012 Conference.

On Friday, the Association will present to the Lincoln International Academy, the 2012 Community Service Award for their outstanding Program Entertaining for a Cause E4C.

The Jorge Washington School community, with the leadership of Mr. Michael Adams will be our conference host. The conference is scheduled for September 26-28, 2012, at the Hilton Hotel Cartagena. Our pre conference institutes will take place on September 24 & 25 at the Hilton Hotel

This year's conference, will include the following institutes:

### **Pre-Conference Institutes September 24 & 25, 2012**

- No More Excuses! Must Do High Leverage Practices for International School Leaders—Ms. Bambi Betts.

*Con't. on pg. 2*

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- Tribes Institute, Dr. Judith AP
- Literacy Institute: Lifting the Level of Literacy Instruction to Maximize Student Achievement
- AP Institute

### **September 25**

- Stumbling Blocks to Learning: Identifying the warning signs, Dr. Susan Grant
- Tri-Association GeoNet/Virtual School Project, Mr. Nigel Robinson
- SACS/CASI AdvancED QAR Training Institute, Mr. Steve Sibley
- NEAS&C Accreditation Workshop, Mr. Pete Woodward
- CIS Counselors' Institute. Ms. Paula Mitchell

### **Concurrent Session**

#### **September 26-28, 2012**

- Having Hard Conversations, Ms. Jennifer Abrams
- Habits of the Mind for the School Savvy Teacher, Ms. Jennifer Abrams
- Digital Story Telling, a New Strategy for Language Arts and Other Curriculum Areas, Mr. John Canuel
- Students Work Shares: Creating Common Visions about Student Writing, Mr. Vincent Ventura
- Keeping Up with Students Ideas From Integrating Technology into Literacy, Ms. Lisa Stone
- Improving Student Behavior: Strategies You Can Use Next Monday, Dr. Judith Felton
- Study Skills and Metacognition: Understanding the Neuro-development of How Children Learn, Dr. Susan Grant
- Thinking and Collaborating: Two Non-Negotiables in Schools, Dr. Jane Ellison
- Transitions, Dr. Jane Ellison
- Scored Discussions: A Means of Grading Student Discussions, Mr. John Zola
- Teaching Strategies that Engage AND Assess Students, Mr. John Zola
- Rescuing Children from the Entitlement Trap, Mr. & Mrs. Richard Eyre
- Teaching Children Values, Mr. & Mrs. Richard Eyre

- Apple iBooks, Mr. Dan Fossey
- What is cooking in a Live Math Classroom K-8 grades, Ms. Marcy Cook
- Effective Conflict Management Strategies for Schools, Mr. Richard Barbacane, Ms. Joanne Cashman and Ms. Debra Grabill
- Let's Develop Curriculum for your Country/Regional Studies Courses, Ms. Jaye Zola
- Is Talking Discussion? How to Bring Student Voice into the Classroom, Ms. Jaye Zola
- Making Prevention Fit, Ms. Desirae Vasquez
- Map Users Group (MUG) Meeting
- Prevención y Detección de Conductas Autodestructivas en Adolescentes, Ms. Sandra Ayales, MSc.
- Habilidades Comunicacionales en la Era de la Información, Ms. Sandra Ayales, MSc.
- Creating Teaching Techniques in Today's Music Classroom, Dr Russell Robinson
- Teach Concepts through Poetry and Song, Dr. Russell Robinson
- La Producción Efectiva del Trabajo en Equipo, Lic. Virginia Espinosa Jiménez
- Felicidad y Aprendizaje, Dr. Annie Acevedo
- Update on College Admissions and Financial Aid in the United States, Dr. Michael Sexton
- AP Update
- The Universe Story as a Basis for Embracing Diversity in Education, Dr. Karen Burke
- Generational Savvy, Recruiting, Retaining and Supporting Employees of All Generations, Ms. Jennifer Abrams
- Taming the Wild Texts: Helping Children Who Struggle to Overcome Fear and Become Courageous Readers, Ms. Pam Allyn
- New Skills, New Horizons for Child Writers of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Ms. Pam Allyn
- Digital Content in the Classroom, Mr. John Canuel
- Digital Storytelling, a New Strategy for Language Arts and other Curriculum

- Areas, Mr. John Canuel
- Active Science: Using Project-based Science Design Challenges to Promote Critical Thinking Skills, Dr. Griff Jones
- Thinking Globally: Using Interactive Warm-Up Activities to Infuse Global Issues into the K-12 Science Curriculum, Dr. Linda Cronin Jones
- Finalsite
- NWEA Map Assessment
- Integrating Art and Primary Sources into Social Studies, Mr. Jaye Zola
- Teaching Controversial Topics with Rigor and Balance, Mr. John Zola
- The Strategies for Engaged Learning: Using Movement, Rhythm and Creative Play to Facilitate Classroom Learning, Mr. Tim Burns
- The Amazing Teen Brain: A Work in Progress, Mr. Tim Burns
- Algebraic Thinking Experiences for One and All: Grades 3-8, Ms. Marcy Cook
- Make It, Move It and Shake It Up, Dr. Susan Baum and Dr. Hank Nicols
- Make It Rich, Mr. Kevin Simpson
- Practice What You Preach: Common Core Standards for Mathematical Practice K-12, Mr. Kevin Simpson
- Developing Global Citizenship across the Curriculum, Dr. Edgar Miranda
- The World Virtual School Geo Net Project, Mr. Nigel Robinson
- Flipping the Classroom-One Lesson at a Time, Mr. Ernest Peterson and Mr. Nigel Robinson
- The Happy Dividend: Recognizing and Positive-Reinforcing our Faculty Staff, Ms. Elisa del Carmen Penela Quintanilla
- Colegio Bolivar and Plastic Pollution Coalition, Ms. Maggie Chumbley and Mr. Manuel Maqueda
- Simply Teaching with Technology, Ms. Lynn Notarainni
- Building Caring School Communities, Ms. Pat Handly
- Las TIC como Invocación en el Proceso de Enseñanza-Aprendizaje, Lic. Dione Isabel Astrudillo, Lic. Sandro Hernández, Lic. Daniel Rodriguez
- Estrategias Pedagógicas para Mejorar los Estilos de Aprendizaje, Lic. San-

# How can you turn these challenges into opportunities?



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# Regional News

## TRI-ASSOCIATION

The Tri Association Board held its second winter meeting in Boston at the Westin Hotel on February 9.

The Association will hold its 31st Annual Educators' Conference in Cartagena, Colombia, September 26-28. The Pre Conference Institutes will take place on September 24 & 25. The Conference will be held at the Hotel Hilton Cartagena.

## AASCA

### AASCA Calendar of Events 2011/2012:

February 15-19  
Drama Festival  
Country Day School  
Costa Rica

February 29-March 4  
Invitational Soccer  
Lincoln School  
Costa Rica

March 7-11  
Middle School Choir  
Marian Baker School  
Costa Rica

March 15-18  
Invitational Cross Country  
Colegio Americano de Guatemala  
Guatemala

March 21-25  
Small School Volleyball  
Mazapán School  
Honduras

April 12-16  
Principals' Conference  
Balboa Academy  
Panama

April 18-22  
Large School Volleyball  
Colegio Decroly Americano  
Guatemala

TBA  
General Directors Meeting  
Miami

## ACCAS

ACCAS members held their General Business Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia at the Gran Hyatt in Buckhead at 6:00 p.m. on December 1, 2011.

### ACCAS Colombia 2012 Schedule of Events

March  
Curriculum Leaders Job-Alike

March 7-10  
ACCAS Drama Festival, 7th year  
Colegio Dominico-Americano

March 28  
ACCAS Islands Spelling Bee, 4th year  
Colegio Dominico-Americano

April  
ACCAS Islands Soccer Tournament, 4th year

September  
Island Planning Meeting  
Carol Morgan School

## ASOMEX

### ASOMEX ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2011/12

February 11-15  
Soccer Juv. B & C, Boys and Girls  
Puebla

March 3-7  
Basketball Inf. & Juv. A, Boys and Girls  
ASFG

March 21-25  
Soccer Inf. & Juv. A, Boys and Girls  
AS Pachuca

April 20-21  
Arts Festival and Creative Writing  
Peterson School

May 18-20  
Directors & Athletic Director Meeting  
ASPV

## INVITATIONAL EVENTS


February 16-18  
Model U.N. (grades 6th-12th, English)  
ASFM

February 24-26  
Soccer Rápido (fútbol 7) Juv. ABC  
Cancún

March 9-11  
Math Counts Competition, Grades 7-8  
JFK Querétaro

March 24  
Regional Competition  
Destination Imagination

TBA  
ISR Monterrey  
AS Puebla


April 25-29  
Environment (grades 7-12)  
Cancún 

*Con't. from pg. 2*

- dro Hernández
- RenWeb, Mr. Mark Wile
- K12, Mr. Michael Spencer
- Happiness and Learning, Dr. Annie Acevedo
- The 4 Cs and Science: Incorporating 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning and Innovation Skills into K-12 Curriculum, Dr. Linda Cronin Jones and Dr. Griff Jones
- Lesson Study as Professional Development Nirvana, Ms. Pat Handly

- The Anxious Mind Can Not Learn, Dr. Susan Baum and Dr. Hank Nicols
- Dealing with Unknowns/Variables in a Variety of Ways-Grades 6-8, Ms. Marcy Cook
- Mathematics Program Virtual Tool for Leadership Teams and Administrators, Mr. Kevin Simpson
- Destination Imagination: A Transformative Journey, Ms. Jessyca Eve Canizales and Mr. Francisco Javier

- Canizales
- Todo Final Trae un Inicio, Lic. Sandra Ayales, MSC
- Worrying about Worries: Strategies to Help Counselors and Teachers Deal with Anxiety in Children, Lic. Patricia Marti

We look forward to having all of you with us in Cartagena for the 2012 Tri-Association Conference. 



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# NOTES TO A 21<sup>st</sup>-CENTURY STUDENT

**WILLIAM G. DURDEN\***

To give purpose to learning in the 21st-century classroom, in the course of mentoring k-12 and college students, I often share lessons I have found useful in navigating challenges and opportunities in today's complex world. These lessons do not constitute a formal curriculum, but inform my own ways of acting and are often incorporated informally as guidelines for reflection and accomplishment within the communities with which I associate. They represent a benchmark against which actions in the community might be guided and judged. The lessons are divided into two categories, those that have been directly communicated to me by my own mentors throughout my life and those that I call "A 21st-Century Skill Set—the Dickinson Dimensions" that inform the community I now share at Dickinson College.

## **Lessons Learned from My Mentors**

(from reading or conversations):

- Attempt to meet and speak with the great people of your time—approach them civilly and in an informed manner. Ask them to share their advice about how to live an engaged life professionally and personally. Ask them about their passion and motivation for what they do.
- Be out in the world—engage it safely and vigorously, as it is only in this way that things happen.
- Live intensely during your first 25 years, since during that period you will essentially establish the patterns of your life.
- Never underestimate or belittle any experience you have had in your life. Think about the knowledge and skills you have gained. You never know what might come in handy in another context.
- Develop the ability to anticipate events. Visualize the endpoint—various possible endpoints—before they occur, as it is good to have "already been there."

- Work hard but mask the effort in the end product, just as a fine literary work looks effortless but stands upon hours of hard work.
- Approach a subject or task from many perspectives—connect disparate areas where others just see a blank.
- Live on the "diagonal." Look for answers where others have not already tread.



*Dr. William G. Durden*

- Don't worry about having a life plan—rather, be prepared for chance; when it occurs, recognize and engage it.
- Seek a tough mentor—not a "yes-person" who artificially builds up your self-esteem. In general, beware of sycophants offering you unearned praise.
- Leadership is often narrative—storytelling—with a protagonist, a plot and a foil.
- Boredom and repetition are essential parts of leadership as leadership consists primarily of telling a story again and again and in such a compelling manner that others want to be a part of it. Each repetition must sound as if it were being delivered for the first time with passion and urgency.
- Do not underestimate the role of passion in your profession—you must be-

lieve strongly in what you pursue and it must be far bigger than yourself.

- Look at objects and people straight on and seek to know precisely what defines them singularly and collectively.
- Remember that nothing is more mysterious than a fact closely examined.
- Just because something is allowed legally does not mean that option should be exercised. Good judgment is the arbiter.
- Know that rights are linked to responsibilities. People often proclaim their rights but do nothing to either guarantee those rights or assume the personal responsibilities that uphold them.
- Question the simplicity of an either/or approach to life. Find meaning in the "grey" area and see it as substantive—an active force.
- Live in the connective tissue as well as in the bone—that is, appreciate the qualitative and associative as well as the quantitative and orderly dimensions of life.
- Find meaning in contradictory ideas as a step to maturity and pragmatic action.


## **A 21st-Century Skill Set—The Dickinson Dimensions:**

- Write and communicate clearly, persuasively and logically in more than one language.
- Possess a global sensibility that permits you to be comfortable in the world, and engage it without hesitation or anxiety.
- Listen well to others and realize that not all good ideas issue from you alone or from those who speak only English.
- Appreciate the quantitative dimension in human knowledge while simultaneously comprehending that it is highly dangerous to believe that all truth can be incorporated in a single digit.



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- Appreciate that we live in a world with dwindling natural resources. There is no need to consume more than is necessary.
- Value the entrepreneurial capacity of human beings and cultivate it to purposeful and beneficial ends.
- Gain a comfort level with uncertainty and ambiguity as these qualities will define much of the professional and personal life you will encounter.
- Appreciate that change is inevitable and can be engaged productively. Remember that today's novelty is tomorrow's tradition.
- Recognize that all that is "different" is not necessarily good or virtuous. Some historical differences within cultures conflict with our global society's contemporary understanding of ethics and morals.
- Gain the ability to distinguish fact from rumor both in direct human contact and on the Internet.
- Internalize a sense of civility and respect for other peoples that considers the interactive protocols of a variety of cultures—in more old-fashioned terms, employ "good manners."
- Develop a personal voice and use it to speak out confidently, yet civilly, on issues that matter.
- Appreciate the key moments of understanding and misunderstanding that have occurred through the ages in the humanities, the sciences, the arts and the social sciences and apply them to grasp contemporary challenges and opportunities.
- Appreciate that the liberal-arts education you gain at Dickinson is ultimately pragmatic and commits you to engage democracy in all its manifestations—from citizenship (both historically informed and entrepreneurial) to employment to public service. This commitment defines a distinctively "useful" American education as in-

tended by the college's founder, Dr. Benjamin Rush, and his friend and fellow revolutionary, Thomas Jefferson.

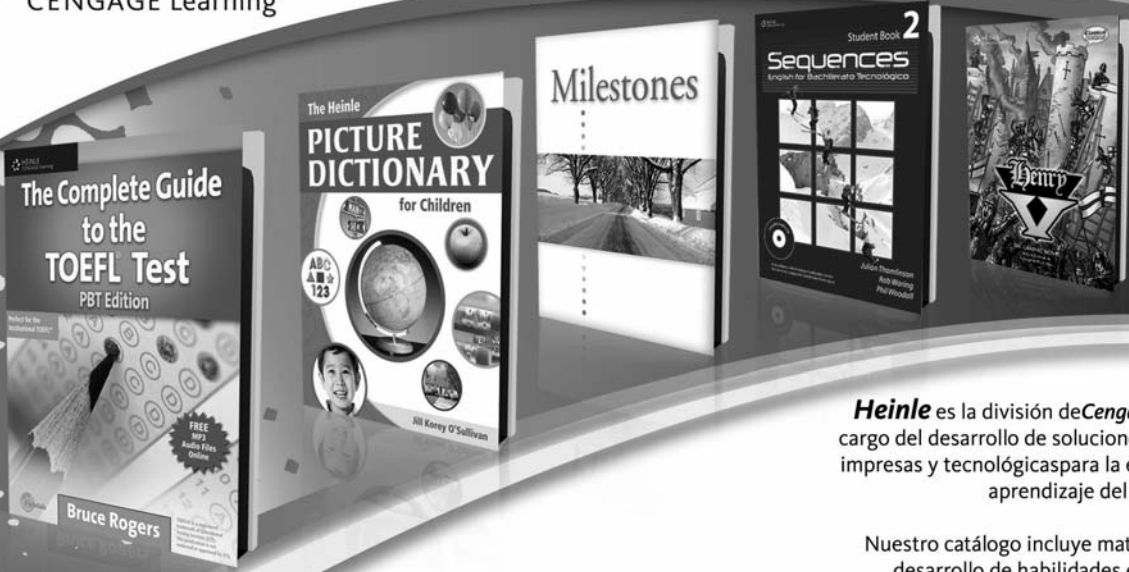
These "Notes" are highlights of a keynote address delivered Oct. 13, 2010, in Monterrey, Mexico, at the annual meeting of The Tri-Association: The Association of American Schools of Central America Colombia-Caribbean and Mexico. My speech included the following—I lamented the demise of mentoring in American education as well as the movement away from teachers and administrators incorporating their own—sometimes "colorful"—personalities into the classroom setting. I elaborated upon many of the points above with examples from my own life, and I cited three "movements" in contemporary education—the self-esteem movement, a radical quantitative accountability and "either/or" thinking—that often conflict with the lessons and the 21st-century skill set outlined above. 📖

*\*President, Dickinson College*



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# TEACHERS AS MEDIATORS OF SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING

“The success of an intervention depends on the inner condition of the intervener.”  
Bill O’Brien

ARTHUR L. COSTA, ED. D.\*

**T**eachers, with the clear intention of promoting students’ self-directedness, use certain verbal and non-verbal communication tools. The teacher becomes a “mediator”—facilitating the cognitive growth of students. This article describes what it means for a teacher to assume the identity of mediator, it defines self-directedness and stresses the importance of a teacher’s conscious use of certain verbal and nonverbal skills to engage and transform (mediate) student’s cognitive growth.

## Being a Mediator

The word mediate is derived from the word middle. Therefore, mediators interpose themselves between a student and their learning task. Based on the work of Reuven Feuerstein’s “Mediated Learning Experience,” (Feuerstein 2000) the mediator intervenes in such a way as to enhance the student’s self-directed learning.

Feuerstein suggests that planning for and reflecting on learning experiences activate these knowledge structures. With mediation, existing knowledge structures can be made more complex through more connections. The structures also can be altered to accommodate new understandings, or they can be made obsolete because some new experience has caused the creation of a new knowledge structure. This sifting and winnowing of prior knowledge structures constitutes learning. As Feuerstein states, “Mediated learning is an experience that entails not just seeing something, not just doing something, not just understanding something, but also experiencing that thing at deeper levels of cognitive, emotional, attitudinal, energetic, and affective impact through the interposition of the mediator between the learner and the experienced object or event (stimuli). In such a context, learning becomes a deeply structured and often a pervasive and generalizable change.”

Mediators influence the intensity, flow, directionality, importance, excitement, and

impact of information coming to the awareness of the learner. One way they do that is by posing questions that bring consciousness to the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic systems in which experiences are held. This activates the neural pathways of the original experience, and in looking back, recovers omitted and sometimes valuable information. For example, you might ask a student to recall the events of a lesson. Should the student report only what he/she remembered seeing, you might ask her to elaborate about what she also heard. Such a mediated learning experience enhances the detail and quality of information necessary for self-assessment. Accuracy in self-assessment is a critical prerequisite to self-directed learning.

As a mediator, you do not solve problems for students. Rather you help the student analyze a problem and develop his or her own problem-solving strategies. You help a student set up strategies for self-monitoring during the problem-solving process and, upon completion you invite the student to reflect on and learn from the problem solving process to find applications in future challenges. Thus, a skilled you help the student become more self-directed. A mediator:

- Is alert to the mediational moment—usually when a student is faced with a complex task, dilemma, discrepancy, or conflict the resolution of which is not immediately apparent.
- Facilitates students’ mental processes as they understand more completely their own challenges, make their own decisions, and generate their own creative capacities.
- Helps students become continuous self-directed learners.
- Maintains faith in the human capacity for continuing intellectual, social, and emotional growth.
- Possesses a belief in his or her own capacity to serve as an empowering catalyst for students’ growth.

Feuerstein believes that mediation produces new connections in the brain. He

states: “One of the most interesting and exciting aspects of mediated learning . . . is that the quality of interaction not only changes the structure of behavior of the individual, not only changes the amount and quality of his repertoire, but—according to increasingly powerful sources of evidence from fields of neurophysiology and biochemistry—changes the structure and functioning of the brain itself in very meaningful ways.”

Ian Jutes (2006) reports that over the past 20 years, as a result of new scanning techniques and combined with neuroscience and neurobiology research, the brain is highly adaptive, and is constantly reorganizing itself based on the intensity and duration of input or experience. Ornstein (1991) claims that “to make a personal change, we have to be able to observe the automatic workings inside ourselves.” This requires the kind of consciousness evoked by mediation. He describes the brain as having a neural selection system that wires up the nervous system differently depending on the demands on the organism. Managing and developing the mind is to bring automatic processes into consciousness.

## What is Meant by Self-Directedness?

A self-directed person can be described as being:

- **Self-Managing.** They approach tasks with clarity of outcomes, a strategic plan, and necessary data. They draw from past experiences, anticipate success indicators, and create alternatives for accomplishment.
- **Self-Monitoring.** They establish metacognitive strategies to alert the perceptions for in-the-moment indicators of whether the strategic plan is working or not and to assist in the decision-making processes of altering the plan.
- **Self-Modifying.** They reflect on, eval-



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uate, analyze, and construct meaning from the experience and apply the learning to future activities, tasks, and challenges (Costa and Garmston, 2001).

- Self-directed people are resourceful. They tend to engage in cause-effect thinking, spend energy on tasks, set challenging goals, persevere in the face of barriers and occasional failure, and accurately forecast future performances. They proactively locate resources when perplexed. Seeking constant improvement, they are flexible in their perspectives and are optimistic and confident with self-knowledge. They feel good about themselves, control performance anxiety, and translate concepts into action.

### Structured Classroom Conversations

The talking cure can physically change the brain and. . . anytime you have a change in behavior you have a change in the brain.  
Lewis Baxter

In any classroom there is a constant “din” of idle chitchat. This is not a criticism but rather reality. Such dialogue is what makes groups congenial: birthdays, sports, bad hair days, and humorous events. All essential for welding individual students into bonded groups. It is not necessarily, however, growth producing. We also need structured dialogue.

Being conscious of their purpose to create self-directedness in others, mindful teachers seize opportunities, both planned and informal, to use their language tools deliberately to achieve these goals. For example, when a student or group of students is planning a project (such as doing an investigation, writing a report, preparing a demonstration, conducting an experiment, etc.) you carefully construct and pose questions intended to engage the mental processes of self-management. Those questions are invitational, open ended, and cognitively complex, as shown by the examples in Table 1.

**Table 1 Mediator’s Questions for Self-Managing**

Self-Managing People Approach Tasks With:	Examples of Teacher’s Mediational Questions
Clarity of outcomes	What specifically do you want to accomplish by doing this project?
A strategic plan	What is your plan or strategy for approaching and completing this project?
Necessary data	What information have you already gathered about this subject?
Knowledge drawn from past experiences	What effective strategies have you used before in projects like this?
Awareness of alternatives for accomplishment	What might be some alternative strategies you have in mind to accomplish these goals?
Anticipation of success indicators	How will you know that your project is successful?

Furthermore, you pose questions (see Table 2) so that during the event, the student will be alerted to cues that would indicate whether their strategic plan is working or not and to assist in the conscious application of metacognitive strategies for deciding to alter the plan and select alternatives.

**Table 2 Mediator’s Questions for Self-Monitoring**

Self-Monitoring People:	Examples of Mediational Questions
Establish metacognitive strategies to alert the perceptions for in-the-moment indicators of whether the strategic plan is working or not and to assist in the decision-making processes of altering the plan	What will guide your decisions about . . . ? What are some of your predictions about how this project will turn out? What will you be aware of to let you know that your strategy is working?

After the event, and if conditions are favorable, you may also invite reflection to maximize meaning making from the experience (see Table 3). Meaning is made by analyzing feelings and data, comparing results with expectations, finding causal factors, and projecting ahead to how the meaning may apply to future situations.

**Table 3 Mediator’s Questions for Self-Modifying**

Self-Modifying People:	Examples of Mediational Questions
Reflect on	As you reflect on your project, what feelings (or thoughts, or impressions) do you have about it?
Recall	What are you recalling that leads to those impressions?
Evaluate	What is your sense of the project’s effectiveness?
Analyze	What might be some factors that contributed to your success? How does your completed project compare with what you envisioned?
Construct meaning from the experience	As a result of working on this project, what insights or new learnings are you forming?
Apply the learning to future activities tasks and challenges	As you anticipate future assignments of this type, what big ideas will you carry forth to those situations?

### Teaching Tools That Build Trust and Rapport

Mediators know that the neocortex of the brain shuts down under stress. The greater the stress, the greater the shutdown. Under great stress, we lash out, run away in terror, or freeze up. Subtleties of body language, voice tone, pausing, implied value judgments, and embedded presuppositions in our language all have an effect on students’ comfort and thinking. The neuro-systems that process nonverbal signals and feelings are as important to thinking processes as they are to establishing a trusting relationship necessary for self-reflective learning.





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Trust is belief in and reliance on a teacher's consistency, skills, and integrity developed over time. Mindful teachers know they cannot manipulate a student into a relationship of trust and rapport, but they can draw on specific nonverbal and verbal behaviors to nurture the relationship. For example, direct eye contact, a concerned voice and facial expression are better at conveying empathy than are words (Burgoon, Buller, & Woodall, 1996). In addition, the teacher's matching of the student's gestures, posture, or voice qualities contributes to rapport. Some scientists refer to this phenomenon as "mental state resonance" when people are in a form of alignment. Taken together, these have an enormous impact on feelings of connectedness and rapport. Such an alignment permits a nonverbal form of communication that the student is being "understood" in the deepest sense; they are "feeling felt" by the teacher (Caine & Caine, 2001).

The safer the student feels, the greater the access to neocortical functioning. When students experience stress, there is an altered blood flow and changes in activity patterns in the brain. The body-mind functioning is minimized. The learner is less flexible and survival patterns override pattern-detection and problem solving. Students "lose their train of thought" and resourcefulness. The teacher knows that all communications are important and pays attention to physical signals.

### **Verbal Response Behaviors**

Skillful teachers intent on engaging the mind are aware of employing and monitoring their own use of certain nonjudgmental response behaviors. Their intent is to enhance the quality of communications, model skillful listening, and create a feeling of trust and rapport with their students. While nonverbal communications may convey much of the meaning in a dialogue, the words you choose—and how you state them—also have a strong effect. Mediators create a nonjudgmental environment in which students feel safe to experiment and risk. This environment can be partially created through the response behaviors of silence, acknowledging, paraphrasing, probing, and structuring.

Pausing (Silence, Wait-Time). Using wait-time before responding to or asking a question allows time for more complex thinking, enhances dialogue, and improves decision-making. Pausing during the conversation allows the listener to breathe while the message is delivered. Breathing is essential for supporting cognition. When we hold our breath, the carbon dioxide levels in the blood increase. The body

reacts to the carbon dioxide increase much in the same way that it responds to threat by releasing hormones that support the fight-or-flight response. In addition, the human brain is hardwired to detect threat, which results in decreasing blood flow to the frontal lobes and increasing blood flow to the brain stem. When we hold our breath or perceive a threat, thinking is negatively impacted (Zoller, 2005). Action, not thought, becomes the priority. Pausing in appropriate places during the delivery of content supports group breathing and establishes a low-threat environment, thus allowing students to think more clearly and effectively (Garmston, 2005).

Sometimes periods of silence seem interminably long. But if trust is the goal, students must have the opportunity to do their own thinking and problem solving. Your silence after asking a question communicates, "I regard you as sufficient; I trust your processes and knowledge; also I trust that you know best the time you need to formulate a response."

Paraphrasing. One function of a paraphrase is to acknowledge a student's communication and is a strong trust builder. When people feel they are being understood, they breathe more deeply. Deeper breathing provides more oxygen to the brain. As stated earlier, oxygen is an essential resource for thinking. Empathic paraphrasing changes blood chemistry and helps the student maintain a resourceful state.

Paraphrasing lets students know that you are listening, that you understand or are trying to understand them and that you care. Since a well-crafted paraphrase communicates, "I am trying to understand you—and, therefore, I value what you have to say" and establishes a relationship between students and ideas, questions preceded by paraphrases will be perceived similarly. Questions by themselves, no matter how well constructed, put a degree of psychological distance between the asker and the asked. Paraphrasing creates a safe environment for thinking.

Mediational paraphrases reflect the speaker's content and the speaker's emotions about the content. The paraphrase reflects content back to the speaker for further consideration and connects that response to the flow of discourse emerging within the group. Such paraphrasing creates permission to probe for details and elaboration. Without the paraphrase, probing may be perceived as interrogation.

To paraphrase effectively, mediators must:

- Listen and observe carefully to understand the content and detect emotions of the student.
- Signal your intention to paraphrase. This is done by modulating intonation with the use of an approachable voice and by opening with a reflective stem. Such stems put the focus and emphasis on the student's ideas, not on the teacher's interpretation of those ideas.

For example, reflective paraphrases should avoid the pronoun "I." The phrase "What I think I hear you saying . . ." signals to many speakers that their thoughts no longer matter and that the paraphraser is now going to insert his or her own ideas into the conversation. Instead, the following paraphrase stems signal that a paraphrase is coming:

- "You're suggesting . . ."
- "You're proposing . . ."
- "So, what you're wondering . . ."
- "So, you are thinking . . ."
- "So, your hunch is . . ."

Acknowledging. To acknowledge is not to agree but to signal, "I got your communication" or "I am understanding your view point." In "Western" cultures, this is accomplished by nodding the head or using "subverbals," like the phrase "uh huh." Not all cultures use these cues, however.

### **Probing and Clarifying**

Clarifying signals that you care enough to want to understand what a student is saying. Clarifying is not meant to be a devious way of redirecting what a student is thinking or feeling. It is not a subtle way of expressing criticism of something the student has done. The intent of probing and clarifying is to help you, the teacher, better understand the student's ideas, feelings, and thought processes. However, clarifying not only assists the teacher's understanding, it also sharpens the perceptions and understandings of the student.

Clarifying that is preceded by a paraphrase helps make clear that the probe for more detail is for understanding, not judgment or interrogation. Clarifying contributes to trust because it communicates to a student that his or her ideas are worthy of exploration and consideration; their full meaning, however, may not yet be understood.



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**Barry Drake**  
BDrake@searchassociates.com

**Harry Deelman**  
HDeelman@searchassociates.com

**Sally Gordon**  
SGordon@searchassociates.com

**Gez Hayden**  
GHayden@searchassociates.com

**Ralph Jahr**  
RJahr@searchassociates.com

**Nick Kendell**  
NKendell@searchassociates.com

**Dexter Lewis**  
DLewis@searchassociates.com

**Jessica Magagna**  
JMagagna@searchassociates.com

**John Ritter**  
JRitter@searchassociates.com

**Ray Sparks**  
RSparks@searchassociates.com

**Michael Williams**  
MWilliams@searchassociates.com

## Structuring

A safe, trusting relationship exists when your students know what is expected. When expectations are unclear, students spend their energy and mental resources interpreting cues about what the teacher really wants and detecting any hidden agendas. With structuring, the teacher clearly and deliberately communicates criteria for excellent work, expectations about the purposes for and use of resources such as time, space, and materials. Structuring generates a common understanding of the purposes for the lesson, the roles that each student should play, time allotments, the placement of the teacher and the students in the classroom during the lesson, etc.

## In Summary

Why self-directed learning? In one study reported by Carol Sanford (1995), team members in a corporate setting listened to feedback from peers, supervisors, and subordinates about how to be better workers. The hypothesis is that if they got quality feedback about their performance, they would be able to improve the effectiveness of their teamwork. The exact opposite occurred, with feedback undermining the goals of producing improved performance. As a result the company initiated systems of self-reflection and self-assessment for employees.

In another study, nine- and ten-year-old students were asked to self-assess behaviors on which they were working. In one group, students reported self-assessments to teachers who reflected back what students were saying and then added a few observations of their own. In another group, students reported self-assessments and teachers listened, paraphrased, and sometimes would ask questions to clarify

meaning. In the first group, the ability to accurately self-assess declined as students became more dependent on the teacher for an assessment of their behaviors. In the group in which teachers only reflected their understanding of student reports, accuracy increased. Self-assessment also led to improvements in student behaviors.

Mindful Mediation enhances the capacity for accuracy in self-assessment. This is the foundation for self-directed learning for both adults and students. Becoming a mediator of others' cognitive growth, however, takes time and practice to consciously employ these behaviors in the flow of conversations. It sometimes means relinquishing old habits and identities. However challenging this is, the benefits outweigh the tasks of "unlearning" what had become habitual. Teachers who mediate experience greater feelings of power and satisfaction in observing others become more self-reliant and resourceful, and in applying these tools and skills in their own personal lives at home, and in the community (Edwards, 2004).

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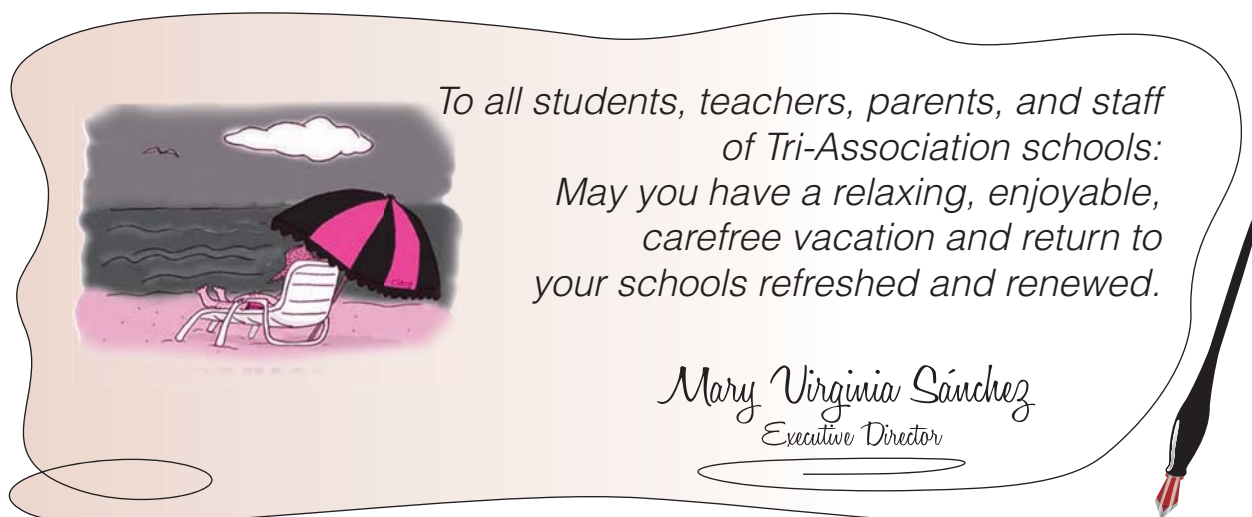
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# THE POETRY OF SCIENCE: A TOOL FOR ASSESSING ELEMENTARY STUDENT SCIENCE JOURNALS

JENNIFER C. MESA, MICHELLE L. KLOSTERMAN, & LINDA L. CRONIN-JONES

**I**nquiry-based science offers rich hands-on and mind-on experiences that encourage students to ask and search for answers to their own questions. Writing about inquiry-based science experiences can provide students with opportunities to communicate their questions, observations, and reflections while expanding our instructional and assessment options as teachers. But how can teachers encourage and assess student writing in science? POETRY is an authentic assessment tool that can be used to analyze elementary student science journal entries and track the development of both language arts and science skills and concepts.

## What is a science journal?

The terms science journal and science notebook are often used interchangeably. Although both provide students with opportunities to write about their individual science learning experiences, journals and notebooks differ significantly in both format and purpose. Consider the following examples:

### Example 1:

In Mr. Mendez's classroom, students record their observations and measurements from an investigation of the physical properties of water (cohesion and adhesion) in their science notebook. They also paste their instruction sheet and copy notes from the board into their notebook.

### Example 2:

In Mrs. Nelson's classroom, students record their predictions, observations, and measurements during an investigation of seed germination in their science journals. After completing the investigation, they reflect on their predictions and use their own observations and measurements to explain what factors are essential for seed germination. Students are also encouraged to write about their own prior expe-

riences growing plants from seeds and share information they remember from a previous week's video about the life cycle of plants.



*Dr. Linda Cronin Jones*

As evidenced in these examples of science writing, journal entries are more flexible in their format and contain written and drawn observations and interpretations of observations as well as personalized reactions/perceptions (Dirnberger, McCullagh, & Howick, 2005). Science notebook entries are more formal and structured and focus on the collection, organization, and objective analysis of evidence. Common components of science notebook entries include written observations, scale drawings, diagrams, and numerical data such as charts, data tables, and graphs. Thus, science notebooks are primarily used to collect and organize data and other empirical evidence while science journals provide a vehicle for critical and creative analysis and reflection. Simply put, science notebooks focus on recording what students have done while journals focus on what students have learned. The process of writing in a science journal often leads to greater conceptual understanding in science because such writing is a constructive, reflective, and personalized process (Harmelink, 1998).

## What is POETRY?

The acronym POETRY stands for Predict, Observe, Explain, Think, Reflect, and Yearn to learn more (Figure 1). POETRY was adapted from White and Gunstone's POE (Predict-Observe-Explain) strategy (1992), which is typically used to guide student learning during an inquiry-based science investigation or demonstration. While the POE strategy focuses on three science process skills, POETRY focuses these three science process skills as well as higher-order processes (thinking and reflecting) and scientific habits of mind (yearning to learn more). In addition, while POE is primarily designed for use in inquiry-oriented science lessons, POETRY focuses on process skills, thinking skills, and habits of mind that represent essential elements of inquiry in both science and language arts contexts.

How does POETRY unite science and language arts? Understanding that time is a limited commodity in elementary classrooms, POETRY was designed to incorporate key elements of both national language arts and national science standards. As illustrated in the heuristic in Figure 1, combining science and language arts skills in one assessment tool was both logical and desirable because so many of the skills standards for the two subjects clearly complement and reinforce each other. For example, the National Science Standards require that students "use data to construct a reasonable explanation," while the National Language Arts Standards require students to "gather, evaluate and synthesize data from a variety of sources" (IRA/NCTE, 1996; NRC, 1996).

Once the heuristic was developed, three different scoring guide versions were created. These three scoring guides (a traditional rubric, a holistic rubric, and a checklist) differ only in their format; the language used in each is identical. Depending on your preferences, you can use any one of these three versions to evalu-



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ate your own students' individual science journal entries or entire journals.

How can I use POETRY as an assessment tool? To determine if the POETRY assessment tool was understandable and easy to use when analyzing student journals, we worked with a local 3rd grade teacher who had her students keep science journals for an entire school year. In order to get a more authentic picture of how science journals are actually used in elementary classrooms, we did not prompt her with specific instructions regarding the content or format of the journals nor did we provide any specific writing prompts. In order to determine if the POETRY assessment tool could be used to identify differences in the quality and content of student science writing over time, three journal entry samples were selected from the beginning, middle, and end of one 3rd grader's science journal (Figures 5-7). Each entry was then

"scored" using Version A of the POETRY tool.

### Entry #1

The first entry received an overall rating of developing for two reasons: 1. the entry indicated a limited understanding of how to make good predictions, observations, and explanations; and 2. the entry did not include significant examples of thinking, reflection, or yearning to learn more. In this early entry, the student wrote about an activity investigating a mysterious substance called "goo yuck." She was challenged to conduct several different tests to determine if goo yuck was a solid or a liquid. The student provided a prediction and a list of observations, but she did not provide any reasoning for her predictions nor did she provide much detail in her observations. The beginning of an explanation can be seen at the end of the entry where she attempted to draw a conclusion about the

physical state of the substance. Although she came to different conclusions (solid vs. liquid) for different tests, there was little evidence of thinking because she did not attempt to summarize and compare the relative number of tests that indicated solid vs. liquid but instead formed separate conclusions for each test. Furthermore, in this entry, she did not reflect on her experience or indicate a yearning to know more.

Although the predictions and observations in the first entry were more characteristic of a science notebook, the student used several language arts skills to develop her ideas. Accessing prior knowledge of the terms liquid and solid was necessary to form an appropriate prediction, organizational strategies were used to communicate the observations in a list appropriate for science, and the use of symbols in her explanation showed

Con't. on pg. 22.

Description		SCIENCE Examples and Standards	LANGUAGE ARTS Examples and Standards
<b>Predict</b>	The student makes a prediction about what is to occur and explains her reasoning.	I think that the bean plant will grow towards the light because it needs light to grow. (NSES Standard A)	I think that the worm will get eaten because the picture on the cover shows a robin looking at worm. Also, I have seen robins eat worms in my backyard. (NCTE Standard 3)
<b>Observe</b>	The students makes accurate observations or measurements.	The length of feather is 5.5 cm. It is grey and soft. (NSES Standard A)	In the story, the author described the duckling as small and clumsy. The video we watched showed ducklings swimming with their mother. (NCTE Standard 5, Standard 8)
<b>Explain</b>	The student uses evidence to evaluate her prediction and to develop an explanation for her observations.	I predicted the temperature of the bag would not change, but I felt the bag get hotter after I added the water. I think that chemical reaction happened because a temperature change is a sign of one. (NSES Standard A)	At the beginning of the story I thought that the uncle was going to be mean to the girl because he was short with her. But, he turned out to be very nice. For example, he bought the girl a dress for her birthday and he helped her with her chores. (NCTE Standard 5)
<b>Think</b>	The student devises alternative explanations for her observations.	I think that paper airplane B flew farther not because it was lighter but because there was a little bit of wind that helped it go farther. (NSES Standard A)	Maybe he didn't leave school because he didn't like it. Maybe his dad got a new job and the whole family had to move. (NCTE Standard 11)
<b>Reflect</b>	The student evaluates the approach used to collect data.	I think that we should have measured the amount of water we gave each of the plants during our experiment. Some of the plants may have gotten more water than others, making them grow more. (NSES Standard A)	I think that my book report would be better if I included information about the author. I could use the internet to find this information. (NCTE Standard 7, Standard 11)
<b>Yearn to learn more</b>	The student generates new questions and approaches to investigate her questions.	I want to find out if earthworms can see. I will put a bunch of earthworms near a light and see if they move away. (NSES Standard A)	I liked this book about birds but I want to know how to take care of a pet bird. (NCTE Standard 12)

### NSES Standards:

Standard A: Abilities necessary to do scientific inquiry including

- Ask a question about objects, organisms, and events in the environment
- Plan and conduct a simple investigation
- Employ simple equipment and tools to gather data and extend the senses
- Use data to construct a reasonable explanation
- Communicate investigations and explanations

### NCTE Standards:

Standard 3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

Standard 5. Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

Standard 7. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.

Standard 8. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

Standard 11. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.

Standard 12. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).





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knowledge of alternative forms of written language.

## Entry #2

This second entry received an overall rating of basic. More POETRY skills were included and the entry contained more detail, but the student still did not demonstrate an understanding of alternative explanations or a desire to know more about the topic being explored. In this entry, the student was asked to reflect on an energy lab conducted the previous day. Her prediction was advanced because she used several past experiences with heat and energy (such as her classmates' water fountain choices and the coolness of grass) to make the prediction "I thought the grass was going to be the coldest." Her observations were basic because several of them (such as tem-

perature ranks of the rock and road) did not include detailed descriptions. As in the first entry, her explanation was not supported with evidence, no alternative explanations were included, and no evidence of higher-order thinking was included. The second entry did contain some evidence of reflection when she described the process of reading her thermometer. However, nothing in her writing indicated a yearning to know more.

Regarding language arts skills, her basic language skills did improve in the second entry. Her predictions, observations, and explanations were more detailed and employed a greater use of symbols to convey meaning (e.g., emphasizing "energy" by surrounding it with rays like the sun). She also used alternative

forms of technology (e.g., reading a thermometer) to support her ideas.

## Entry #3

The third entry would receive an overall rating of developing because it contained fewer POETRY elements and lacked supporting details for each element. This third entry was much stronger in terms of language arts skills than science inquiry skills. In terms of science skills, she did not offer a prediction. She proposed that lichens can only live in specific types of locations (explanation) but did not provide any of her own observations to support her claim. The entry consisted of things she was told about lichens but did not include evidence of any of her own thinking, reflection, or yearning to learn more about lichens.

Interestingly, with no prompting, the student drew on her own knowledge of phonics to examine and comment on the sounds in the word "lichen" which is characteristic of making predictions in language arts. Another language skill demonstrated in this entry was the use of a word web to communicate the meaning of the term lichen. This is characteristic of making observations and explanations in language arts.

What can POETRY tell you about a student's thinking and understanding? Analyzing these three journal entries provides valuable insights into this student's mastery of three science process skills, two higher-order thinking skills, and an essential scientific habit of mind. Without the aid of a tool such as POETRY, a

Con't. on pg. 23.

# P.O.E.T.R.Y.

Predict ★ Observe ★ Explain ★ Think ★ Reflect ★ Yearn

	<u>Predict</u>	<u>Observe</u>	<u>Explain</u>	<u>Think</u>	<u>Reflect</u>	<u>Yearn</u>
<b>Advanced</b>	The student provides a reasonable prediction that is related to the topic at hand and uses many details from her prior knowledge to support it.	The student provides a detailed description of many characteristics of an object or person.	The student evaluates her prediction and poses a reasonable explanation, using many details from her prior knowledge and observations.	The student poses a reasonable alternative explanation, using many details from her prior knowledge and observations.	The student evaluates how she went about gathering information and suggests many reasonable ideas for improvement.	The student poses many new questions to investigate that are related to the topic at hand and suggests reasonable methods of for investigating them.
<b>Proficient</b>	The student provides a reasonable prediction that is related to the topic at hand and uses a few details from her prior knowledge to support it.	The student provides a detailed description of a few of the characteristics of an object or person.	The student evaluates her prediction and poses a reasonable explanation, using a many details from her observations.	The student poses a reasonable alternative explanation, using many details from her observations.	The student evaluates how she went about gathering information and suggests a few reasonable ideas for improvement.	The students poses a few new questions to investigate that are related to the topic at hand and suggests reasonable methods for investigating them.
<b>Basic</b>	The student provides a reasonable prediction that is related to the topic at hand and uses at least one detail from her prior knowledge to support it.	The student attempts to describe more than one characteristic of an object or person.	The student evaluates her prediction and poses a reasonable explanation, using at least one observation.	The student poses a reasonable alternative explanation, using a few details from her observations.	The student attempts to evaluate how she went about gathering information and provides at least one reasonable suggestion for improvement.	The student poses at least one new question to investigate that is related to the topic at hand and suggests a reasonable method for investigating it.
<b>Developing</b>	The student provides a reasonable prediction that is related to the topic.	The student attempts to describe at least one characteristic of an object or person.	The student evaluates her prediction <u>or</u> provides a reasonable explanation, using at least one observation.	The student poses a reasonable alternative explanation, using at least one observation.	The student attempts to evaluate how she gathered information <u>or</u> provides at least one reasonable suggestion for improvement.	The student poses at least one new question to investigate that is related to the topic at hand.

The traditional rubric for scoring. The holistic rubric combines each element of the POETRY assessment tool into advanced, proficient, basic, and developing categories, while the scoring rubric breaks each of the POETRY elements into three categories, each of which is evaluated as advanced, proficient, basic, or developing.

teacher might conclude that since the second and third entries were longer and more detailed than the first, this student's scientific thinking and understanding significantly improved over the course of the school year. However, when examined more closely, results of the POETRY assessment indicate that while this student's language arts skills improved, a corresponding growth in her ability to think scientifically did not occur. In this case, the teacher we worked with assumed that her students' ability to think scientifically naturally improved as a result of required journaling time. She now realizes that her students need more specific prompts for journal entries, especially if her goals include helping students improve their ability to think and reflect and promoting a desire or yearning

to learn more about the world around them.

How else can POETRY be used to assess student learning and improve instruction? Other classroom teachers can use POETRY as both a formative and summative assessment tool. In its simplest application, it can be used to assess individual journal entries regarding one specific science inquiry activity and future instruction could be adjusted to address identified areas of weakness. As a more holistic assessment, multiple student writing samples could be scored and compared throughout the year to document student growth and progress over an extended period of time.

POETRY can also be used to inform your own instruction. After scoring student journal

entries, you may find that you need to provide more or less structure in a science inquiry activity, provide more explicit instruction regarding how to make good predictions and observations, provide more examples or prompts to promote thinking, provide more links with previous learning to promote reflection, or even include more creative/unusual experiences to stimulate a greater yearning to learn more.

Regardless of how the scoring guides are used, POETRY offers a more complete picture of your students' mastery of the skills and habits of mind used in true scientific inquiry while also assessing development of key language arts skills. This easy-to-use tool can help you get the most of your classroom journaling time and promote the develop-

ment of BOTH language arts and scientific thinking skills in the process!

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# ENTERTAINING FOR A CAUSE

MARÍA FERNANDA CASTILLO AND  
VANESSA SOLÓRZANO\*

The year 2007 was a memorable one for Lincoln International Academy and the Nicaraguan community. It marked the beginning of E4C (Entertaining for a Cause), a service learning group created with the purpose of providing a moment of happiness to children battling cancer at Hospital La Mascota.

As Mother Theresa said, "The miracle is not that we do this work, but that we are happy to do it." As LIA students became more aware of the difficulties children with cancer face, we decided to start acting and make a change.

Five years ago, children from various cities in Nicaragua went to the capital for treatment. To their surprise, they were told that they could not stay there because their condition wasn't "as bad" as that of other children sleeping at the hospital. So they had to sleep in the streets.

We created E4C to provide these children and their families with a place to live while the children received treatment. However, providing them with shelter was not enough. Equally important, the children needed distraction and love to deal with what they were going through, a moment at least once a week when they would just forget about what was going on in their lives, and have fun with a group of people interested in their well-being. That is how Entertaining for a Cause received its name.

With a clear vision and a concrete mission

to fulfill, we decided to visit the children once a week to teach them arts and crafts and play games with them, and become their friends.

We divide our efforts between entertaining the children and fundraising. Arts and crafts activities not only serve to distract the kids, but also help them develop their creativity and learn the virtues of orderliness, moderation, determination, confidence, and generosity. In addition, E4C participants transmit the Catholic faith to the children. Every year, the kids participate in the Purísimas to venerate the Virgin Mary. The E4C children also enjoy the piñata ritual with its music and festive atmosphere that raises all spirits. Other activities include dancing, sports, and other games.

E4C participants raise the funds needed for our activities and to support the center. Fundraising events include bake sales, jeans days, dress down days, bracelet sales, and raffles at school. We buy all the supplies for activities with the children and provide for their basic needs and those of their parents. E4C participants also help with the maintenance at the center. Part of the money we raise is used to pay workers at the center.

In 2007, our group consisted of seven members. Today there are forty. The shelter has been completely remodeled. E4C has members at two schools in Nicaragua.

Our goals are to enlarge the center to provide shelter for more children receiving medical treatment, to buy new toys, a swing set, clothes, and a dining table for the children.

Being a member of Entertaining for a Cause has been the best experience of our community service life. We are thankful for the opportunity to bring joy to these children, to give them a break from reality, and to show them that they are loved and that they are not alone in this world. And we are proud that, of all the other community services we participate in, E4C has had the greatest influence in our



*Members of Entertaining for a Cause E4C with cancer patients at the Shelter in La Mascota Hospital.*

lives. Interacting with these children has made us appreciate the health, education, and resources we have been blessed with, and it has enabled us to use these blessings for the benefit of others. E4C has taught us that the word entertain is a powerful one, that it can change peoples' lives.

*\*Class of 2013,  
Lincoln International Academy*

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## FROM THE ASSOCIATION'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**M**any thanks to all the directors and teachers who have contributed articles to the newsletter.

Please keep them coming, along with photos of your school, projects, and student and staff events.

Deadlines:

May 15, 2012 Vol. XXIV #1  
September 1, 2012 Vol. XXIV #2  
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**Marian Baker School**  
Linda Niehaus, Director  
Apartado 4269-1000  
San José, Costa Rica  
lniehaus@mbs.ed.cr

**Pan-American School**  
Alegría Lores Lores, Director  
Apdo. Postal de Belén, Heredia  
Costa Rica, C.A.  
alegrial@panam.ed.cr

## EL SALVADOR

**American School of El Salvador**  
Ken Templeton, Director  
P.O. Box 01-35  
San Salvador, El Salvador  
templeton.ken@amschool.edu.sv

**Colegio Internacional San Salvador**  
Chester S. Stemp, Principal  
Apartado Aéreo 05-15  
San Salvador, El Salvador  
c\_stemp@intschoolsansal.com

**Colegio Maya El Salvador, S.A. de C.V.**  
Ma. De los Angeles de Parker, Director  
Colegio Maya  
Calle Poniente Bis y Pasaje Verde #476  
Colonia Escalón, San Salvador  
El Salvador, C.A.  
maparker@colegiomaya.edu.sv

**Panamerican School of El Salvador**  
Claudia Pardo, Director  
VIP SAL 809  
P.O. Box 52-5364  
Miami, FL 33152-5364  
pardoc@panamschool.edu.sv

## GUATEMALA

**American School of Guatemala**  
Rob Gronniger, Director  
Section 1783, POB 25339  
Miami, FL 33102  
rgronniger@cag.edu.gt

**Colegio Americano del Sur**  
Robert Elser, Director  
Km.92.5 Carretera a Mazatenango  
Sta. Lucia Cotzumalguap, Escuinta  
Guatemala  
relser@prosur.uvg.edu.gt

**Colegio Decroly Americano**  
Martha Maristany, Director  
Fomento Educativo  
Sección 2941  
P.O. Box 0253-39  
Miami, FL 33102  
maristany@decrolyamericano.com

**Colegio Maya**  
Ambler Moss, Director  
c/o U.S. Embassy  
Unit 3326  
APO Miami 34024  
amoss@cm.edu.gt

**Interamerican School**  
Carl Wieburg, Director  
Boulevard La Montaña  
Apartado 1681  
Fca. El Socorro, Zona 16  
01901 Guatemala, Guatemala  
carlwieburg@yahoo.com

## HONDURAS

**American School of Tegucigalpa**  
Lillian Jenkins, Director  
c/o U.S. Embassy Tegucigalpa  
Tegucigalpa, Honduras  
ljenkins@amschool.org

**Escuela Internacional Sampedrana**  
Ron Vair, Director  
Apartado Postal 565  
San Pedro Sula, Honduras  
rvair@seishn.com

**Happy Days/Freeform High School**  
Norma Victoria Chávez, Director  
Luis Chávez, High School Principal  
2227 NW 79th Ave. #48  
Doral, FL 33122  
lopez@happydayschool.com  
lhavaz@happydayschool.com

**Mazapán School**  
Martha Counsil, Director  
MIA 951, 1601 NW 97 Ave.  
P.O. Box 025365  
Miami, FL 33102-5365  
martha.counsil@dole.com

## NICARAGUA

**American Nicaraguan School**  
Gloria Doll, Director  
c/o U.S. Embassy Managua  
Unit 2710 Box 7 APO AA 34021  
gdoll@ans.edu.ni

**Lincoln Internacional Academy**  
Adolfo J. González, Director  
NICA Box 250  
P.O. Box 527444  
Miami, FL 33152  
adolfo@lincoln.edu.ni

**St. Augustin Preparatory School**  
José Oyanguen, Director  
Del Club Terraza, 2.4 Kms.al sur  
400 mts al oeste  
Managua, Nicaragua  
headmaster@csa.edu.ni

## PANAMA

**Balboa Academy**  
Jean Lamb, Director  
c/o U.S. Embassy Panama  
Unit 0945  
APO AA 34002-005  
jlamb@balboa-academy.org

**International School of Panama**  
Linda La Pine, Director  
c/o U.S. Embassy Panama  
Unit 4945  
APO AA 34002-008  
llapine@isp.edu.pa

## ACCAS COLOMBIA

**Altamira International School**  
Priscilla Ruiz de Vergara, Director  
Carrera 50 # 79-136  
Barranquilla, Colombia  
director@altimira.edu.co

**Colegio Albania**  
Ruth Allen, Director  
Intercom La Mina  
P.O. Box 02-5573  
Miami, FL 33102-5573  
ruth.allen@colegioalbania.edu.co

**Colegio Bolívar**  
Joseph Nagy, Director  
Apartado Aéreo 26300  
Cali, Valle, Colombia  
jnagy@colegiobolivar.edu.co

**Colegio Granadino**  
Robert Sims, Director  
Apartado Aéreo 2138  
Manizales, Colombia  
rsims@granadino.edu.co

**Colegio Jorge Washington**  
Michael Adams, Director  
Apartado Aéreo 2899  
Cartagena, Colombia  
mwadams@cojowa.edu.co

**Colegio Karl Parrish**  
Laura Horbal, Director  
Apartado Aéreo 52962  
Barranquilla, Colombia  
lhorbal@kcparrish.edu.co

**Colegio Nueva Granada**  
Eric Habegger, Director  
Apartado Aéreo 51339  
Bogotá, Colombia  
ehabegger@cng.edu

**Colegio Panamericano**  
Steve Desroches, Director  
Apartado Aéreo 522  
Bucaramanga, Colombia  
director@panamericano.edu.co

**GI School**  
Jaime Urazán, Director  
Apartado Aéreo 664  
Armenia, Colombia  
jurazan@gi.edu.co

**Liceo Inglés**  
Diane Zauscher, Director  
Apartado Aéreo 2096  
Pereira, Colombia  
dzauscher@liceo.edu.co

**The Columbus School**  
Susan Jaramillo, Superintendent  
Apartado Aéreo 60562  
Medellín, Colombia  
sjaramillo@columbus.edu.co

## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

**American School of Santo Domingo**  
A. Wyters, Interim Director  
EPS P-2240 - P.O. Box 02-5261  
Miami, FL 33102-5261  
awyters@assd.edu.do

**Cap Cana Heritage School**  
Yazmin Estrella, Director  
P.O. Box #025491  
CPS PC26967  
Miami FL 33102-5491  
y.estrella@heritageschool.edu.do

**Carol Morgan School**  
Jack Delman, Director  
CE # 7660  
P.O. Box 025273  
Miami, FL 33102-5273  
jdelman@cms.edu.do

**Colegio Domingo Americano**  
Alba Salterio, Director  
CPS # 2073  
P.O. Box 14920  
Coral Gables, FL 33114-9020  
colegio@icda.edu.do  
dir.dominico@codetel.net.do

**International School of Sosúa**  
Craig Selig, Director  
Sosúa, Dominican Republic  
craigaselig@yahoo.com

**MC School**  
Olga Salcedo, Director  
JP 100778  
P.O. Box 02-5284  
Miami, FL 33102-5284  
mcschool@mcschool.edu.do  
o.salcedo@mcschool.edu.do

**Santiago Christian School**  
Seth Cohen  
8400 N.W. 25th St. Ste. 110  
BM #2-30555  
Doral, FL 33122  
director@scs.edu.do

**St. Joseph's School**  
Janet Reyes, Director  
CPS-9797  
P.O. Box 149020  
Coral Gables, FL 33114-9020  
director@sjcs.edu.do

**St. Michael's School**  
Michelle Morel, Director  
CE-110 1733 North West Ave  
Miami, FL 33126-1112  
sms@sms.edu.do

**The Ashton School of Santo Domingo**  
Ines Gyag, Headmaster  
Jacinto Mañón No. 16, Ens.  
Paraíso  
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic  
headofschool@tas.edu.do

## ECUADOR

**American School of Quito**  
Susan Williams, Director General  
P.O. Box 1701157  
Quito, Ecuador  
swilliams@fcaq.k12.ec

**Colegio Menor**  
Andrew Sherman, Director  
Cumbayá, via Pillhua s/n  
Ecuador  
Tel: (593-2) 289-6472  
Fax: (593-2) 289-4419  
asherman@colegiomenor.edu.ec

## HAITI

**Union School**  
Marie-France Jean-Baptiste,  
Superintendent  
P.O. Box 407139  
Lynx AIR/UNSCN  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33340  
uniondirect@acn2.net

## JAMAICA

**Hillel Academy**  
Peggy Bleyberg, Director  
51 Upper Mark Way  
Kingston 8, Jamaica W1  
hilleldirector@cwjamaica.com

## VENEZUELA

**Escuela Campo Alegre**  
Jeff Paulson, Superintendent  
8424 N.W. 56th St.  
Suite CCS0007  
Doral, FL 33166  
jeffp@eca.com.ve

## ASOMEX MEXICO

**American Institute of Monterrey**  
Elizabeth Huergo, Director  
Apartado Postal 136  
Colonia del Valle 66220  
Garza García, N.L., México  
ehuergo@AIM-NET.MX

**American School Foundation A.C.**  
Paul Williams, Director  
Bondojito 215  
Manzanillo, Jalisco  
México D.F., México 01120  
pwilliams@asf.edu.mx  
asf@asf.edu.mx

**American School Foundation of Guadalajara**  
Janet Heinze, Director General  
Apartado Postal 6-280  
Guadalajara, Jalisco, México  
janet.heinze@asfg.edu.mx

**American School Foundation of Monterrey**  
Jeff Keller, Director General  
Apartado Postal 1762  
Monterrey, N.L., México 64000  
jeff.keller@asfm.edu.mx

**American School of Durango**  
Abel Valdez, Director  
Apartado Postal 495  
Durango, México 34000  
avaldez@cadurango.edu.mx

**American School of Pachuca**  
Neciforo Ramírez, Director  
Valle de Anahuac S/N  
Fracc Valle de San Xavier CP 42086  
Pachuca, Hdo., México  
nramirez@americana.edu.mx

**American School of Puebla**  
Francisco Galicia, Superintendent  
Apartado Postal 665  
Puebla 72000, México  
francisco.galicia@cap.edu.mx

**American School of Puerto Vallarta**  
Gerald Selitzer, General Director  
Apartado Postal 2-280  
Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco,  
México 48300  
gsel@aspv.edu.mx

**Colegio Americano de Saltillo**  
Jorge Alanis, Director  
Apartado Postal 45 Suc. "C"  
Saltillo, Coahuila, México 25000  
jalanisv@yahoo.com.mx

**American School of Torreón**  
Makhloof Ouyed, General Director  
Ave. Maya y Nogal  
Colonia Torreón Jardín  
Torreón, Coahuila 27200, México  
Makhloof.Ouyed@cat.mx.com

**Colegio Colombia**  
Laura Guajardo, Director  
Pozza Rica 507 - Col. Petrolera  
Tampico, Tamps 80110, México dirigene-  
ral@colegiocolumbia.edu.mx  
lauraguajardo@colegiocolumbia.edu.mx

**Colegio Inglés**  
Alejandra Garza de Tapia,  
Director General  
Apartado Postal 585  
Garza García, NL, 66220, México  
alejandra.garza@cingles.edu.mx

**Escuela Americana de Tampico**  
Emma Salazar, General Director  
Calle Hidalgo s/n Colonia Tancol  
Tampico, Tamps, México 89000  
egutierrez@ats.edu.mx

**Instituto San Roberto**  
Campus San Agustín  
Hortensia Prieto, Superintendente  
Ave. Real San Agustín # 4  
San Agustín 66260  
Garza García, N.L., México  
hprieto@sanroberto.edu.mx

**International School of Cancún**  
Nancy Marroquín, Director  
Calle de Acceso MZ 17 Lote 36 SM 309  
Rancho SINA  
Cancún, Quintana Roo 77000  
México  
nmarroquin@iasces.com

**John F. Kennedy School**  
Mirtha Stappung, Director  
Apartado Postal 93  
Querétaro, Qro., México 76000  
mstappung@jfk.edu.mx

**Peterson Schools**  
Kenneth Peterson, Director  
Huizachito #80  
Lomas de Vista Hermosa  
Cuajimalpa, México D.F. 05720  
kpeterson@petersons.edu.mx

**Westhill Institute**  
Charles Zeller, Director  
78657 Autumn Lane  
Palm Desert, CA 92201  
c\_zeller2004@yahoo.com

## INVITATIONAL MEMBERS

**Academia Internacional Árabe Panameña**  
Berta Marinas de García  
United Nations Street, Margarita  
Colon City, Republic of Panama  
bmarinas@abap.edu.pa

**Albert Einstein School**  
Raquel Katzkowicz, Director  
Ave. Diego Vasquez de Cepeda N77-157  
y Alberto Einstein (Carcelén)  
Quito, Ecuador  
rkatzkowicz@einstein.k12.ec

**Alliance Academy International**  
David A. Wells, Director  
Vialeangua 789 y 10 de Agosto  
Casilla 171106186  
Quito, Ecuador  
drdwells@gmail.com

**American International School of Kingston**  
Brian Hovarth, Director  
KIN 1399 PO Box 25580  
Miami, FL 33102-5580  
bhovarth@aisk.com

**Colegio Bilingue New Horizons**  
Priscilla Comer de Garrido  
Avenida Sarasota #51  
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic  
priscilla.g@cnnewhorizons.net

**Colegio Bilingüe Santa Marta**  
Lucy López, Director  
Troncal del Caribe  
Urbanización San Francisco  
Santa Marta, Magdalena  
Colombia  
lucy.lopez@bilinguesantamarta.edu.co

**Cayman International School**  
Jean Caskey, Director  
P.O. Box 31364 SMB  
Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands BWI  
Jean.Caskey@caytainschool.ky

**Colegio Euroamericano de Monterrey, A.C.**  
Dorothee Cavazos, Director  
Blvd. Diaz Ordaz # 250 Ote.  
Col. Santa Marta  
Monterrey, N.L. 64650  
México  
dcavazos@euroamericano.edu.mx

**Colegio Gran Bretaña**  
Maureen Fleming-Director  
Carrera 51 215-220  
Bogotá, Colombia  
director@cgb.edu.co

**Colegio Internacional del Caribe**  
Vicente McIntosh, Headmaster  
8153 Margarita St. Colon  
Republic of Panama  
principal@cic.edu.pa

**Cotopaxi Academy**  
William Johnston, Director  
c/o U.S. Embassy Quito (Coto)  
Unit 5373  
APO AA 34039-3420  
director@cotopaxi.k12.ec

**Crossroads Christian Academy**  
Scott Bose, Director  
PTY-07681601 W.W. 97th Ave.  
P.O. Box 025207  
Miami, FL 33102-5207  
ccp\_panama@hotmail.com

**Discovery School**  
Debra Giles, Director  
c/o U.S. Embassy Tegucigalpa  
Unit 2915  
APO AA 34022  
debegiles@yahoo.com

**Golden Valley School**  
Ana Maria Bernini  
Patrick Miller  
2011 N.W. 79th Ave.  
Miami, Florida 33122-1612  
pmiller@goldenvally.com

**International School of Aruba**  
Ms. Sarah Putnam, Director  
Wayaca 238 A  
Aruba-Dutch Caribbean  
srputnam@gmail.com

**International School of Curacao**  
Margie Elhage-Cancio, Director  
P.O. Box 3090  
Koninginnelaan z/n  
Curacao, Netherlands Antilles  
ismec@attglobal.net

**Instituto Thomas Jefferson**  
Campus Guadalajara  
Melody J. de Martín del Campo,  
Director  
Ramal La Tijera No. 1753,  
Fracc. Amapas  
Municipio de Tlajomulco de Zúñiga,  
Jalisco, México  
melodym@infosel.net.mx

**Inter-American School of Quetzaltenango**  
Michael McNabb, Director  
P.O. Box 526125  
Miami, FL 33152-6125  
director.ias@gmail.com

**Metropolitan School of Panama**  
Nicolas Reeves, Director  
Edificio #104  
Ave. Vicente Bonilla  
Ciudad del Saber  
Clayton  
Panamá City, Panamá  
nicholasreeves@the  
metropolitanschool.com

**Notre Dame School**  
Maria Luisa de Ruiz-Alma, Director  
Calle Manuel de Jesús Troncoso No. 52  
Ens Paraíso  
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic  
notredamesch@codetel.net.do

**Ross University Preparatory School**  
Mary Grogan, Principal  
P.O. Box 266  
Roseau, Commonwealth of Dominica  
MGrogan@RossMed.edu.dm

**St. George School**  
Karina Pablo, Director  
Calle Portofirio Herrera No.6,  
Ensanche Piantini  
Santo Domingo, D.N.,  
Dominican Republic  
kpablo@stgeorge.edu.do



# THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN SCHOOLS OF CENTRAL AMERICA, COLOMBIA-CARIBBEAN & MEXICO ANNUAL Calendar 2011 / 2012

<b>Data Driven Dialogue: A Facilitor's Guide to Having Hard Conversations Collaborative Inquiry</b> Location: Hotel RIU Panama Plaza Panama City, Panama Dates: October 10 & 11, 2011	<b>The Tri-Association and the Virtual School Project</b> Location: Hotel RIU Panama Plaza Panama City, Panama Date: October 11, 2011
<b>The Impact of Our Learning Preferences on Teaching, Learning and Behavior in the 21st Century</b> Location: Hotel RIU Panama Plaza Panama City, Panama Dates: October 10 & 11, 2011	<b>Tri-Association Annual Educators' Conference</b> Location: Hotel RIU Panama Plaza Panama City, Panama Dates: October 10-14, 2011
<b>AP English Language and Literature</b> Location: Hotel RIU Panama Plaza Panama City, Panama Dates: October 10 & 11, 2011	<b>Tri-Association Board Meeting</b> Location: Hotel RIU Panama Plaza Panama City, Panama Date: October 11, 2011
<b>AP World History</b> Location: Hotel RIU Panama Plaza Panama City, Panama Dates: October 10 & 11, 2011	<b>ASOMEX Directors' Meeting</b> Location: Hotel RIU Panama Plaza Panama City, Panama Date: October 11, 2011 12:00 p.m.
<b>SACS/CASI AdvancED Institute: The Lead Evaluator</b> Location: Hotel RIU Panama Plaza Panama City, Panama Date: October 10, 2011	<b>ASSCA Directors' Meeting</b> Location: Hotel RIU Panama Plaza Panama City, Panama Date: October 14, 2011 2:15 p.m.
<b>Keeping Schools Healthy: The Economic Bedrock</b> Location: Hotel RIU Panama Plaza Panama City, Panama Date: October 11, 2011	<b>SACS Chief Administrators' Conference</b> Location: Gran Hyatt Buckhead Atlanta, Georgia Dates: November 29-December 1, 2011
<b>Practical Skills for Teacher Leaders to Transform Teaching, Learning and Relationships in Schools</b> Location: Hotel RIU Panama Plaza Panama City, Panama Date: October 11, 2011	<b>Tri-Association Board Meeting</b> Location: Gran Hyatt Buckhead Atlanta, Georgia Date: November 29, 2011 Time: 11:15 a.m.-12:45 p.m.
<b>How to Develop Positive Relationships and Reduce Conflicts in Your School</b> Location: Hotel RIU Panama Plaza Panama City, Panama Date: October 11, 2011	<b>Tri-Association Annual Business Meeting</b> Location: Gran Hyatt Buckhead Atlanta, Georgia Date: November 30, 2011 Time: 5:30-6:30 p.m.
<b>Supervising Your School's Reading and Writing Program: Strategies to Maximize Teacher Growth and Student Learning</b> Location: Hotel RIU Panama Plaza Panama City, Panama Date: October 11, 2011	<b>ACCAS Regional Meeting</b> Location: Gran Hyatt Buckhead Atlanta, Georgia Date: November 30, 2011 Time: 6:30-7:30 p.m.
<b>SACS/CASI AdvancED Institute: Accreditation Standards and Adaptive Schools for School Improvement</b> Location: Hotel RIU Panama Plaza Panama City, Panama Date: October 11, 2011	<b>AAIE Conference</b> Location: Hotel Westin Copley Place Boston, MA Dates: February 9-12, 2012
<b>CIS/NEAS&amp;C Institute</b> Location: Hotel RIU Panama Plaza Panama City, Panama Date: October 11, 2011	<b>NAIS Annual Conference</b> Location: Seattle, Washington Dates: February 29-March 3, 2012
<b>CIS/Tri-Association Counselors' Workshop</b> Location: Hotel RIU Panama Plaza Panama City, Panama Date: October 11, 2011	<b>NAESP Annual Conference</b> Location: Seattle, Washington Dates: March 22-24, 2012
<b>Special Education Certificate Program</b> Location: Hotel RIU Panama Plaza Panama City, Panama Date: October 11, 2011	<b>Special Education Certificate Program</b> Location: Hotel Quito Quito, Ecuador Dates: June 24-July 6, 2012



## Connected Classroom

### Dell Connected Learning

Transforming Education for the Digital Age

#### Preparing Students for Future Success

Our students are growing up in the digital age. They communicate, collaborate, and learn differently than previous generations. As a result, schools are utilizing technology to enhance the teaching and learning experience and transform education. Yet many education leaders are under pressure to improve the quality of education while experiencing severe budgetary constraints. Simply adding computers to the classroom is not enough to impact student achievement. To truly transform education for the digital age, we must help schools focus their vision on student learning and unite the entire school community to prepare our students for future success.

#### The Connected Classroom

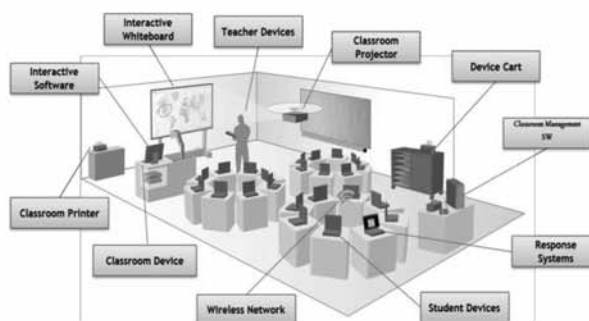
By infusing technology into the classroom environment, teachers have an opportunity to engage students in new ways and enhance the learning process. Dell's Connected Classroom empowers teachers with the latest tools and professional skills.

Create a rich, interactive learning environment. With innovative technology in the classroom, students can more effectively prepare for success in the digital age. They can express themselves creatively, problem-solve, and communicate their learning. They also have more opportunities to extend learning beyond traditional classroom walls to other environments.

Technology can impact the Connected Classroom in the following ways:

- Meaningfully interact and promote collaboration
- Regularly assess student progress
- Inspire creativity and innovation
- Engage students with robust digital content
- Further teaching through professional learning
- Extend learning beyond classroom walls and school hours

In a joint effort with our partners, Dell has managed to unify a more complete solution with high technological standards:



For more information about Connected Classroom please visit [dell.com/k12](http://dell.com/k12).