

RANKIN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

# SECONDARY CONNECTION

MIDDLE / HIGH SCHOOL  
CURRICULUM NEWSLETTER

*Cultivating  
a Love  
of Learning*

*Project Based Learning*

*Science  
of Reading*

*Chat GPT in the Classroom*

*Standards-Based  
Learning*

*Data-Driven Feedback*

*Podcast  
Project*

APRIL 2023

ISSUE NO. 21



## **RCSD Secondary Curriculum Department**

**Catherine Beasley**

*Social Studies Curriculum Specialist*

**Sheri Blankenship**

*Director of Secondary Curriculum, Instruction,  
and Professional Development*

**Karin Bowen**

*Mathematics Curriculum Specialist*

**Heather Bryan**

*English Language Arts/Literacy Curriculum  
Specialist/AP Coordinator*

**Jana Comer**

*English Language Arts Curriculum Specialist*

**Angy Graham**

*Executive Director of Academics*

**Montgomery Hinton**

*College and Career Ready Preparation Specialist*

**Heather Drennan**

*Administrative Assistant*

**Rhonda Kilgo**

*Data Specialist*

**Jasmine Rosemon**

*Mathematics Curriculum Specialist*

**Lorie Yates**

*Science Curriculum Specialist*

**Erin Barrios & Stephanie Cotnam**

*Instructional Technologists*

## **Guest Contributors**



**Jessica Huffman**

*ELA Teacher*

*Richland High School*

**Leah Ivey**

*ELA Teacher*

*Pisgah High School*

**Grace Mercer**

*History Teacher*

*Northwest Rankin High School*

**Lindsay Pecou**

*Art Teacher*

*McLaurin High School*

**Jordan Savell**

*Math Teacher*

*Puckett High School*

**Victoria Yates**

*ELA Teacher*

*Brandon Middle*

## **6th Grade Teachers and Administrators**

*Brandon Middle School*

*Florence Middle School*

*Northwest Rankin Middle School*

**ELA Department**

*Brandon High School*





# Literacy Spotlights

Did you know our brains are naturally designed to learn to speak, but learning to read does not happen automatically? Scientists have found that we must develop certain parts of the brain to create the pathways for learning to read.

During the 2022-2023 school year, 6th grade ELA, math, science and history teachers were trained on the science of reading and how to plan lessons that intentionally focus on skills needed to become proficient readers.

Brandon High School intentionally worked to grow fluency in high school students through ELA classes.

And, our Secondary Principal Academy focused on the role all grade levels and content areas play in developing proficient readers.

Click below to see and hear some of the Science of Reading in action in RCSD classrooms.

## Grade Level Focus on Literacy at BMS



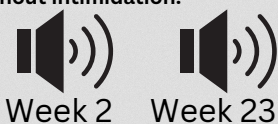
## Syntax and Body Mapping at NWM



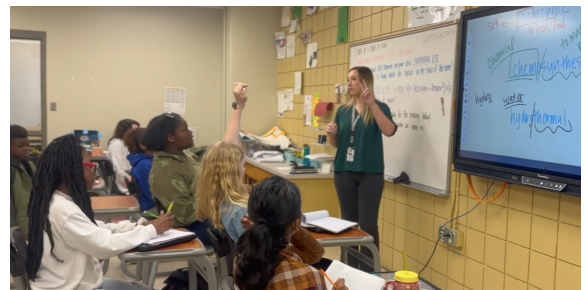
## Fluency Project at BHS

Teachers read a passage/excerpt outloud and upload the recording along with a physical copy of the text to Canvas. The student listens to the recording, following along with the hard copy. Then, the student records themselves reading the same passage and uploads it for the teachers. It is a way to practice inflection and fluency without intimidation.

Click to listen  
to a student  
reading



## Morphology Mini-Lesson at NWM





# Project Based Learning in Reverse

By: Lindsay Pecou

Art Teacher - McLaurin High School

As an art teacher, project based learning is second nature to me. Every day that I come to school, I love being able to explore my content area and come up with different ways for students to illustrate, paint, draw, or collage their way to the understanding of that subject matter. As a class, we've built Noh theater masks and discussed Japanese history, created temple drawings to understand Ancient Greek architecture, and designed paintings that illustrate the emotion or symbolism from poetry. A couple months ago, I was able to work with several English teachers to create a unit on symbolism, something I like to think about as project-based learning in reverse.

## The Lesson

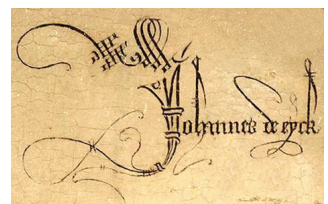
Symbolism is defined as the representation of subjects or ideas by use of a device or motif to create underlying meaning. Symbolism is also a literary and artistic movement that originated in France and spread through Europe in the late nineteenth century. I asked the students to think about the colors black, white, red, purple, and yellow. What did they think these colors could be symbolic of? Black is often used to represent death or evil. White stands for life and purity. Red can symbolize blood, passion, danger, or an immoral character. Purple is a royal color; it can symbolize grandeur, pride, or extravagance. Yellow can stand for violence or decay. We discussed how the students have seen examples of this in art, and they even talked about the use of color as symbols in writing.



I showed the students *The Arnolfini Portrait* that was painted in 1434 by Jan van Eyck. This painting is a portrait of the couple Giovanni de Nicolao Arnolfini and his wife Costanza Trenta. I asked the students the following questions: "What do you think is the meaning behind this painting? What clues make you think that? What symbols are represented in this painting?" Students were then asked to back up their explanations with evidence from the painting.

*The Arnolfini Portrait* is littered with symbols and is often the first example that comes to mind when artists think of symbolism. The fur-lined coat worn by Giovanni and the green dress worn by Costanza are symbols of wealth, also represented

in the citrus fruit behind Giovanni, the wooden shoes in the bottom left corner, and the dog. These were all expensive items for the time period. It is believed that the chandelier in the painting represents the death of Costanza. If you notice, there are only candles in the chandelier above Giovanni, not Costanza. There is melted wax on her side, symbolizing her life being snuffed out. The death of Costanza is represented in the mirror, featuring tiny illustrations depicting the death of Christ. On Giovanni's side, however, is the life of Christ, while the crucifixion is on Costanza's.



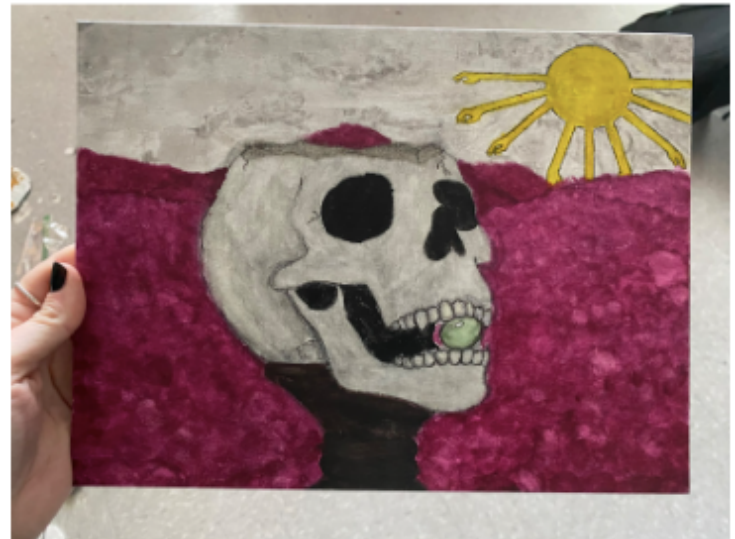


## The Project

After discussing the symbolism from this painting, I gave each student one of three poems: "To Althea, From Prison" by Richard Lovelace, "Life Doesn't Frighten Me" by Maya Angelou, and "Lines on a Skull" by: Ravi Shankar. We read the poems together out loud, then individually the students highlighted the symbolic words or phrases in each poem. Finally, they discussed the symbolism of each poem as a group.

This culminated in the physical project. Each student took one of those three poems and created a painting that either represented the emotions or symbolic words from the poem. This painting needed to go with the poem as a pair. My students worked for a week on these paintings and upon completion, we had a class-led critique. In the critique, we lined all the paintings into groups based on which poem was used for inspiration. Each student discussed their own idea behind the painting, and the class analyzed the work to see how well it went with the poem. This gave the students insight into fellow classmates' work. By the end of this unit, students were asked to read, write, think, and discuss. They utilized critical thinking skills, positive and constructive criticism, and subtly created symbolism in writing and painting.

Art teachers can incorporate content from any other course into their lessons. **Your school's art teacher can be one of your best resources when it comes to project based learning.** Utilize them! I can guarantee that they already have a lesson that uses geometry, chemistry, or even the French Revolution! If they do not, they would certainly be willing to offer up some ideas for you.



# PROJECT-BASED LEARNING: CREATING MEANINGFUL VISUAL NARRATIVES

By: Victoria Yates

ELA Teacher - Brandon Middle School

## WRITING CAN BE ENGAGING

Writing narratives tends to be the highlight of writing each year for students. While the groans start every time an essay is mentioned, you can see students' faces light up once they find out that narrative writing will be the focus of the unit. By incorporating project-based learning into this unit, my students were able to truly enjoy and learn from the experience, rather than simply creating a product to illustrate their learning.

## THE FOCUS STANDARDS

Within this unit, we worked on the standards of:

- W.7.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
- W.7.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- W.7.5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well the purpose and audience have been addressed.
- W.7.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.
- SL.7.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- SL.7.5 Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points.

## THE UNIT

For the narrative unit, students chose a chapter from The Running Dream to rewrite from another character's perspective. Within groups, the students analyzed different student examples of texts written from a different character's perspective to determine what qualities were commonly present. They also brought in different examples of short stories that they found particularly engaging or interesting. Again, in groups, they analyzed the texts to determine what made these narratives both interesting and engaging. Using what they had learned through their group analyses, the students drafted their own narratives for the prompt provided. Throughout the process, they also regularly submitted their draft to Paper for feedback.

Once their draft was complete, they created a "read-aloud visual presentation" in which they had to determine the most effective way to present their narratives. In the eyes of the students, this is where the real fun began!

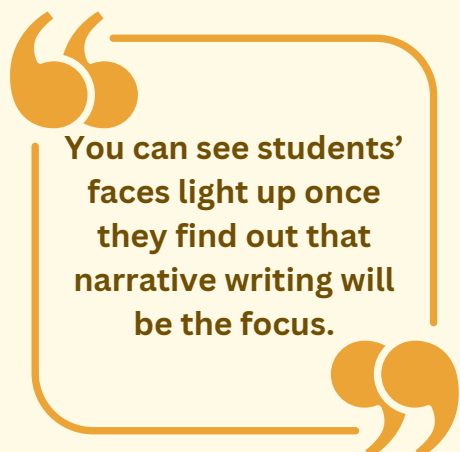
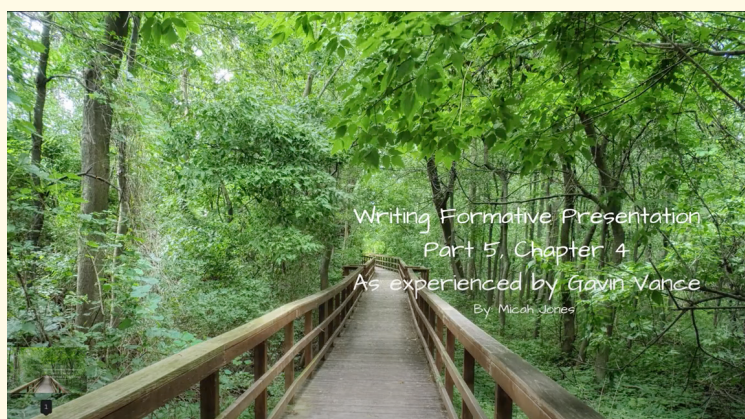
Students were asked to present their ideas by:

- Creating a video recording of their narrative.
- Including a dramatic or empathic reading of their narratives
- Incorporating visual components to help their audience better understand the content of their presentation.



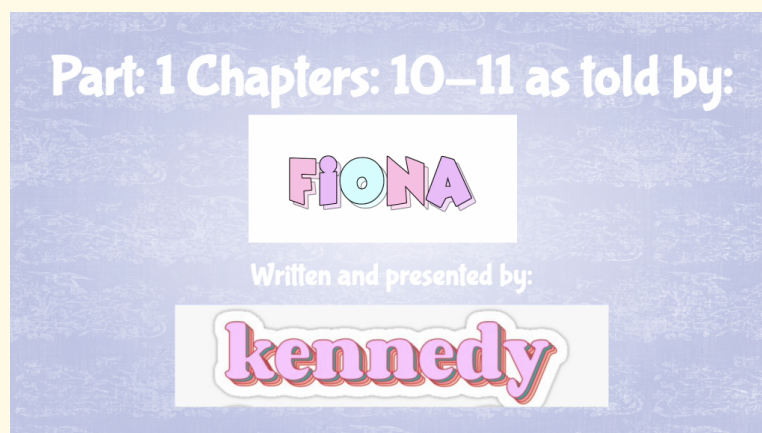
## STUDENT WORK

Those were the only requirements given to the students. While I gave the example of a read-aloud of a children's book on Youtube, the students were able to have complete creative freedom in how they chose to present their ideas. They were then tasked with researching best ways of communicating their ideas in a compelling and creative way while also putting what they learned into action. Students were able to do this within their groups, allowing them to consistently share their ideas and build their ideas with others. Below are just a few student samples of their visual narratives. Click on the images to view the student work.



## WHY CREATE VISUAL NARRATIVES?

Giving students the opportunity to create visual narratives promotes not only engagement, but also creativity. Students were able to use any platform they chose to create the visual aspect of their visual narrative presentations. This gave students the chance to show off their expertise in Canva, Google Slides, etc. One student even digitally animated his entire visual narrative presentation. In addition to this, because the projects were recorded digitally, students were able to present their ideas and creativity without the fear of giving a traditional presentation in front of the class. With that fear eliminated and without a checklist of what each visual presentation should include in a step-by-step list, students were able to take their creativity to new levels, taking risks that they would not have taken otherwise. Additionally, students were able to learn the same skills and standards while showcasing their learning in a way that they found engaging and meaningful.



# the podcast project

## project-based learning in English I

BY: JESSICA HUFFMAN  
ENGLISH TEACHER - RICHLAND HIGH SCHOOL



### Why Create a Podcast?

The goal of this project was to get students to expand on their research, writing, and storytelling skills while utilizing media technology. I wanted to give students the opportunity to express their ideas in a more contemporary way instead of the traditional essay format. With this being my first take at this type of project, I took a lighter approach, and students built upon their understanding of the standards.

According to, Project Based Learning: Real Questions, Real Answers, How to Unpack PBL and Inquiry, there should be a publishing component to the project. Initially I was going to have students create their own class newspaper, but I realized that was not culturally relevant for this generation; hence, the decision was made to do the podcast instead.





## Essential Questions

At the start of the school year, I had students complete a survey about their interests. Based on their interests, I curated possible essential questions they could research. I explained to students that even though I gave them questions, they had full autonomy to change the questions to meet their needs.

### Fashion/Cosmetology

- How has your fashion icon contributed to the industry?
- How can fashion change culture?
- What inspires fashion trends?
- What is the relationship between trends and fashion?
- How can cosmetics affect the environment?
- What, if any, are the ethical responsibilities of the fashion industry?
- How does ethnicity influence one's perception of or approach to fashion and/or cosmetology?

### Music

- What impact does music have on society/human beings?
- What makes good music?
- What is the relationship between music and motivation?
- How does ethnicity influence one's perception of or approach to music?

### Food/Culinary Arts

- How does food grown in our region impact what people eat?
- How can you use science to inspire people to eat healthier?
- How does ethnicity influence one's perception of or approach to culinary arts?

### Art

- What is the purpose and function of art in your culture?
- What is considered good art?
- What impact does art have on society?
- Is "art" a state of being or is it a concept beginning at the cusp of creation?
- How does ethnicity influence one's perception of or approach to art?

### Sports/Outdoor Activities

- What is the relationship between sports and culture?
- How can competition and/or participation in athletics influence identity?
- How does the continued evolution of gender identity affect the sport's culture/tradition to the viability of sports as an economic industry?
- How does ethnicity influence one's perception of or approach to sports and/or outdoor activities?

## Standards Covered

SL.9-10.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

SL.9-10.1d Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.

SL.9-10.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

SL.9-10.5 Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

L.9-10.3 Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

L.9-10.6 Acquire and use accurate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

W.9-10.8 Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.



## Introducing the Project

On the first day, I had students complete a Google Form choosing their research topic based on what they were most interested in and already had knowledge about. I had them choose their top three. Students were rearranged into groups based on their topics. From there I explained that even though they will be completing their podcast independently, they had group members to help with their research and to share ideas with. I also recognized that some students prefer to work and that it was okay to do that as well.

Next, we listened to two different podcasts. I had students analyze each one focusing on the elements that make up a podcast and how the speaker expressed their ideas and supported them with credible research. Then, we had a whole class discussion on which elements were needed to make the podcast. This introduced students to what they were going to have to do to create their own.

The work started with them either choosing one of the pre-made essential questions or creating their own and outlining their talking points on the question. From there they were to research information to support their thinking. I made it mandatory for them to submit three credible sources, but they did not have to utilize all the sources in their podcast. My rationale for this was to make sure students were more well-rounded with their information. After students completed their outline, they were able to create their podcast name, episode name, introduction, outro and fake advertisement/sponsorship.

## Producing the Podcast

Students' first task was to change their outline into their script. Even though they were not reading their script while recording, it was imperative that they write it out so they could visualize how their podcast was going to be organized.

There are many platforms to record podcasts on, but I chose to use GarageBand because it was an application that was already on their computer. After they completed their script, students spent time creating their intro and outro music, and choosing any extra sound effects to make their podcast unique. I had them record their information at home for the best quality.



**Click on the  
microphone to listen to  
a few RHS student-  
produced podcast  
episodes.**



# chat gpt in the classroom



**A game-changing chatbot, ChatGPT, has been a hot topic of conversation (and debate) since it came out at the end of 2022. ChatGPT uses Artificial Intelligence or AI technology to engage in conversation with users. The chatbot was trained on huge amounts of data and designed to converse in a natural tone, so when you engage with it, you feel like you're talking to a human and not a computer.**

**As soon as educators had time to explore Chat GPT, the implications for teaching and learning were evident. Many are excited about its potential to save teachers valuable time, and to change the way students work, while others see challenges it may create.**

**Below, one teacher shares how she used Chat GPT to help design a history lesson.**

**We've also shared ways for you to learn more about Chat GPT and ideas for how to use this amazingly efficient tool.**





# LESSON PLAN

By: Grace Mercer

History Teacher - Northwest Rankin High School

## I asked Chat GPT to create a specific lesson plan for me



create an assignment for high school students. The students will be working in groups on three to compare and contrast india and china. Each student will be assigned a topic: pollution, population, or economy. The teacher will give them materials in class to research their topic. Each group member will be in charge of answering questions on their topic and then teaching their topic to the other two members of the group. At the end of the assignment, all three group members should have the answers for all three topics based on their research and presentations.



### Objective:

The objective of this assignment is to enable high school students to research and compare India and China's economic, population, and environmental challenges, and gain a comprehensive understanding of the factors that have contributed to their growth and development.

### Instructions:

1. Divide the students into groups of three and assign each student a topic: pollution, population, or economy.
2. Provide the students with the necessary resources, including books, articles, and websites, to conduct research on their assigned topic.
3. Each student must research and answer the following questions related to their assigned topic:

#### Pollution:

- a. What are the main sources of pollution in India and China?
- b. How is the government addressing the issue of pollution in both countries?
- c. What are the short-term and long-term effects of pollution on the environment and human health?

#### Population:

- a. What is the current population of India and China?
- b. What are the factors that have contributed to the growth of their population?
- c. How is the government managing the population growth, if at all?

#### Economy:

- a. What is the current state of the economy in India and China?
  - b. What are the main industries contributing to the growth of their economy?
  - c. How has globalization affected the economic growth of both countries?
1. Once the students have answered the questions, they should prepare a brief presentation to teach their topic to the other two members of the group.
  2. The other members of the group should take notes and ask questions to clarify any doubts or misunderstandings.
  3. At the end of the presentations, the group should discuss the similarities and differences between India and China regarding the three topics.
  4. Each group member should compile a report summarizing the findings and insights gained from the research and group discussion.

### Assessment:

The students will be assessed based on their ability to conduct research, answer the questions related to their assigned topic, prepare a presentation, engage in group discussion, and compile a report. The rubric for assessment will include the following criteria:

- Quality of research
- Clarity and coherence of presentation
- Participation in group discussion
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Quality of the report

Overall, this assignment is designed to encourage critical thinking, research skills, and teamwork while enabling the students to gain an understanding of the similarities and differences between two of the world's most populous nations.

In a matter of seconds, this is what Chat GPT gave me:



**I took what ChatGPT produced and then formatted it into the assignment I wanted for my students. I created slides based on the final assignment where students would research their topic. I added the pictures and videos, and then used Chat GPT to do the research for the information included. It was incredibly time efficient and helped me create a really great assignment for my students.**

**CLICK HERE**



**TO SEE THE ASSIGNMENT  
I CREATED AND AN  
EXAMPLE GOOGLE SLIDE**

**For more information about how to use Chat GPT in the classroom, click on any of the resources below.**

## 20 Ways Teachers Can Use ChatGPT to Make Their Lives Easier

Just consider it another tool in your toolbox.

 Jill Staake on March 13, 2023



 February 24, 2023

 Blogs [Marcee Harris](#) 5 Min

## 50 ChatGPT Prompts for Teachers

TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION

### Some Ideas for Using ChatGPT in Middle and High School Classes

Teachers can use tools like ChatGPT as one strategy in their efforts to teach students how to think critically and write effectively.

By [Geoff Richman](#)

February 16, 2023





# 20

## ways to use ChatGPT in the classroom



1

Use it as a more complex source of information than Google.



2

Use it to provide students access to lots of good examples.



3

Use it to remix student work.



4

Ask it for definitions (on a variety of levels).



5

Ask it for feedback for student work.



6

Ask it to do some teacher tasks for you.



7

Add it to the "think pair share" thinking routine.



8

Grade the bot.



9

Debate the bot.



10

Ask the bot for advice.



11

Use it to summarize texts.



12

Use it for insight into big, difficult-to-solve problems.



13

Ask ChatGPT to write your lesson plans.



14

Anticipate the response you'd expect from AI.



15

Take several responses and make a better product.



16

Create personalized learning experiences.



17

Provide tutoring or coaching.



18

Generate prompts and questions to facilitate discussions.



19

Provide information and answer questions.



20

Supplement in-person instruction.



**DITCH THAT  
TEXTBOOK**

Get an overview of ChatGPT in the classroom at [ditchthattextbook.com/ai](https://ditchthattextbook.com/ai).  
Infographic by Matt Miller (@jmattmiller / DitchThatTextbook.com)

For more information from Matt Miller at Ditch That Textbook, go to:  
<https://ditchthattextbook.com/ai/>

# Data-Driven Feedback Cycles for Success

By: Leah Ivey

ELA Teacher - Pisgah High School

Where?

How?

What's Next?

In the world of academia, it seems that we have been discussing feedback to such lengths and breadth that the word has lost some of its power. We know we should give feedback. We know we should give it often. We know we should make it actionable for our students. We probably know lots of information about feedback, but how can we know that it is actually working towards student success? In *The Success Criteria Playbook*, Dr. John Almarode and his colleagues establish that “Feedback is designed to close the gap between learners’ current location in the learning progression and the next level or place in the progression, which we call the success criteria” (177). For the purpose of this article, success criteria will be synonymous with our CCR standards, many of which I break down into even smaller strands of skill for use with my students. Almarode and his team continue this exploration of feedback and its relationship to success by establishing three questions (based on John Hattie’s research) and three understandings:

## Questions

1. Where are we going?
2. How are we going?
3. Where do we go next? (177)

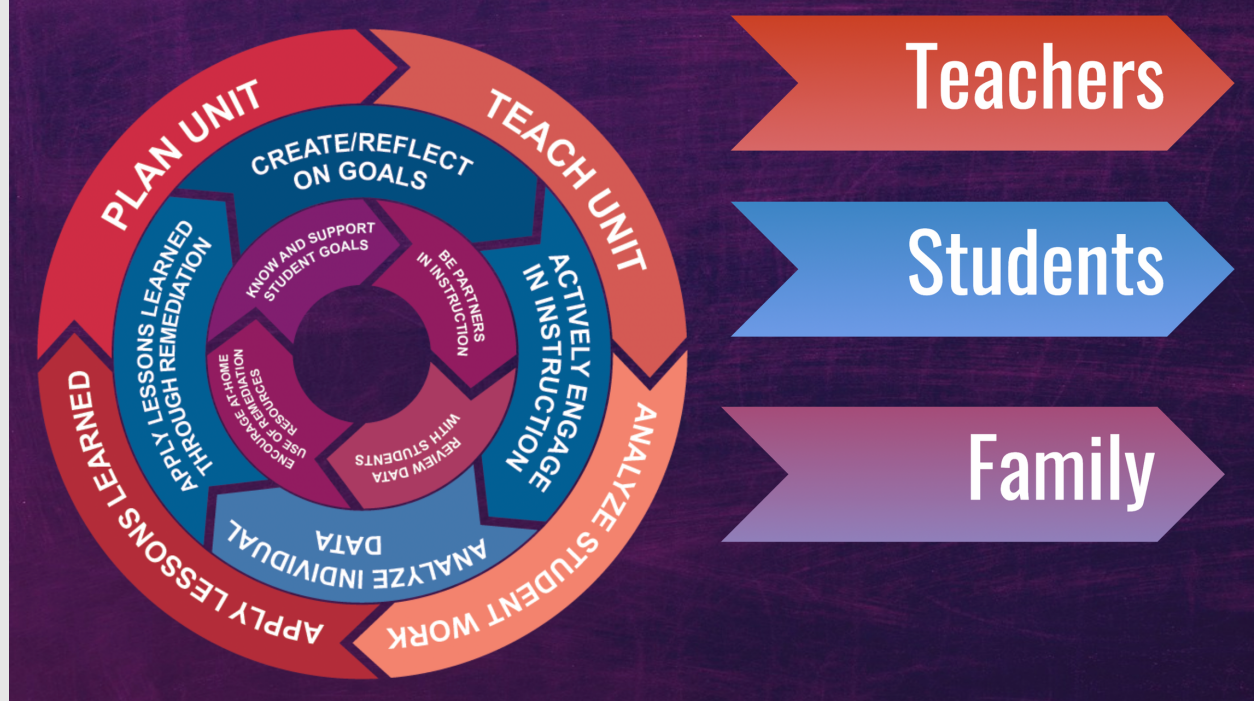
## Understandings

- Learners’ expected level of performance
- Learners’ current level of performance
- Actions teachers can take to close the gap (177)

While Almarode directs these questions and understandings primarily to teachers, my goal has been to elevate these statements so that not only teachers but also students and their families become partners and stakeholders in the feedback-success cycle (Figure 1).

To address the first two understandings, our first day of class sets the tone for both students and myself to become aware of their current level of performance (based on their previous year’s MAAP score) and their expected level of performance (based on a goal of achieving a passing PL3 level or higher in our class). We start this process by setting our goals using the district-created goal-setting worksheet on day one of class. I have introduced this process through different themes such as having a “New Year’s” party or even a space-themed “Mission Launch” as we reflect on our previous successes and set goals for the new school year together.





**Figure 1. The Feedback Success Cycle**

Students' goals are also communicated to families through a series of short videos I put together called "English at Home" by which I break down common procedures and expectations for our class. Students continually reflect on their goals by revisiting their goal sheets with every summative, periodically conferencing with me about goal progress, and composing written reflections on their goals with their families' input.

For the third and final understanding, we begin a cycle of actions to close the gap between the learner's current and expected level of performance. The most critical step has been having students individually track their mastery of each standard through color-coded data charts (Figure 2).

**Student Data Collection Chart for \_\_\_\_\_**  
**2nd 9 Weeks**

As we work on formative and summative assessments, use this chart to color-code standards that you get correct in **GREEN** and standards that you miss in **RED**. Simply click inside of a box in the chart and use the paint bucket tool in the top right to fill it with the appropriate color.

| Reading Literature Standards (fiction stories, poems)                     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| RL.7.1<br>Cite evidence   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| RL.7.2<br>Theme   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| RL.7.2<br>Central idea  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| RL.7.2<br>Summary   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| RL.7.3<br>Interactions<br>(cause/effect,<br>similarities/<br>differences) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| RL.7.4<br>Word meanings,<br>impact on text                                |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| RL.7.5*<br>Structure and<br>meaning                                       |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| RL.7.6*<br>Developing<br>and contrasting<br>POV                           |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| RL.7.7*<br>Written text<br>VS media                                       |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Figure 2. Student Collection Chart**

After each summative and many of our formative assessments, students color boxes in a simple chart to reflect whether they answered questions based on specific standards correct (green) or incorrect (red). As this data aggregates, we pause to look for patterns in our charts. What standards are consistently green and showcasing our strengths? What standards have a few to several red boxes indicating areas for improvement? This knowledge has been invaluable in determining a very direct and purposeful answer to the question of “Where do we go next?”

The data guides the way.

The next question to address, of course, becomes “How do we get there?” In answer to this question, I spent last year building a series of remediation resources specifically targeted to each of our standards (Figure 3).

| Remediation Skill                                 | Video  | Notes | Practice Exercise  |
|---|--|-------|--|
| RL.7.1 or RI.7.1                                  | <a href="#">▶ Looking back at the text for ev...</a>   |       | Complete the exercise for the RL or RI skills below based on which area most needs remediation.                      |
| RL.7.2 Theme                                      | <a href="#">▶ Understanding theme   Readi...</a><br><a href="#">▶ Developing themes   Reading ...</a>  |       | <a href="#">Read the TEXT ONLY for "The Four Dragons" here.</a><br><a href="#">Complete the practice quiz here.</a>  |
| RL.7.2 Central Idea                               | <a href="#">▶ Finding the Main Idea: A How-...</a>   |       |  |
| RL.7.2 Summary (Fiction/Stories)                  | <a href="#">▶ Summarizing stories   Readin...</a><br><a href="#">▶ Making objective summaries o...</a>   |       |  |
| RL.7.3 Interactions in Stories and Story Elements | <a href="#">▶ Character actions in stories   ...</a><br><a href="#">▶ Character change   Reading   ...</a><br><a href="#">▶ Why is a story's setting import...</a>   |       |  |
| RL.7.4 Word Meanings, Impact on Text, Tone        | <a href="#">▶ Analyzing tone through word c...</a>   |       | See exercise for L.7.4 and L.7.5 below.  |
| RL.7.5 Structure and Its Effects on Meaning       | <a href="#">▶ The elements of a drama   Re...</a><br><a href="https://youtu.be/LO21tYrTD8Y">https://youtu.be/LO21tYrTD8Y</a>   |       | <a href="#">Read the TEXT ONLY for "The Listener" here.</a><br><a href="#">Click here to take the practice quiz.</a> |
| RL.7.6 Point of View, Differing Points of View    | <a href="#">▶ Characters' thoughts and feeli...</a><br><a href="#">▶ How POV affects readers   Re...</a><br><a href="#">▶ Changes in POV and dramatic...</a><br><small>*Dramatic irony is NOT a current standard, but the other info is great!</small> |       | <a href="#">Read the TEXT ONLY for "The Save" here.</a><br><a href="#">Complete the practice quiz here.</a>          |
| RI.7.2 Central Idea                               | <a href="#">▶ What is a main idea?   Readin...</a>   |       | <a href="#">Read the TEXT ONLY for "What is an Eclipse?" here.</a>   |

**Figure 3. Remediation Resources by Standard**

These remediation resources contain tutorial videos for each skill, consisting of a combination of self-made and found content; a space for taking notes on videos; and practice texts and quizzes to re-assess those standards once sufficient review has taken place.

While these are teacher-generated resources, it is very important to me that students take ownership of the use of these resources by choosing remediation tasks that directly align with the standards their data charts reveal as areas for growth. In addition, I continually remind my students' families of these resources and demonstrate how they can be used effectively for studying for upcoming tests and remediation by modeling their use in my “English at Home” short video series.

For students to achieve success and mastery, these steps must become routine and cyclical—a “one and done” approach isn’t true feedback nor a true predictor for success. Through the consistent application of this feedback model, we have indeed seen encouraging results and measurable growth! I have learned in my tenure that growth and not just performance is a very healthy and meaningful way to measure the success of an endeavor because all of our students have such varying levels of goals when it comes to meeting success criteria. As Almarode and his team state, “If the goal in each of our schools and classrooms is growth and achievement in learning, constructive feedback supports students as they progress in their learning.

Growth implies that not all of our students may be where they need to be today, but they are further along than they were yesterday” (185). To that end, about 51% consistently demonstrated measurable growth from one performance level to the next (or higher!) on our in-class summatives throughout the year. In addition, the number of students who passed their state test rose by 21%, and the number of students achieving proficiency rose by 22% when compared to the previous year. Lastly, the number of students who scored advanced doubled after consistently applying these data-tracking and feedback measures.

As these outcomes indicate, when feedback is grounded in success criteria, supported through data, and implemented in a routine and purposeful way that empowers learners, we can effectively close learning gaps.





# Reaching Success Criteria Through A Standards-Based Design

*By: Jordan Savell*

***Math Teacher - Puckett High School***

According to the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy, standards are created "in order to help ensure that all students are college and career ready in literacy no later than the end of high school," and the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics were written so that, "the mathematics curriculum in the United States [is] substantially more focused and coherent in order to improve mathematics achievement..."

Standards are intended to give teachers an accurate understanding of what their students should accomplish. If teachers are not creating their lessons based on the course standards, their students will never meet a true success criteria. Students must be taught a deep enough understanding of the concept in order to reach the success criteria.

**One way to ensure that students are reaching success criteria is to use learning targets in daily classroom activities.**



Students should know the learning objectives that they are expected to master. In my classroom, we use a learning target checklist, which requires students to complete a self assessment at the end of each lesson. **Students are given a list of learning targets at the beginning of each unit, and place a check mark in the appropriate level of understanding at the conclusion of each lesson.** Students are expected to reflect on their understanding of the lesson and accurately assess their own individual level of mastery (not yet, almost there, got it!). I use my students' self assessment as a way to informally assess their confidence levels and understanding. In addition students can refer back to their checklists to determine what topics need to be addressed before assessments are given.



**To use learning targets successfully, teachers must prepare lesson plans and unit plans to correlate with the specified learning targets for each lesson, and the learning targets must align with a specific standard.** This ensures that students are aware of the expectations set for them and that teachers are creating lessons that are standards-based. In order to ensure that the lessons I am teaching are consistent with the standards, I create a unit overview for each unit, that displays the lesson name, corresponding standard, and student learning target. The unit overviews are then compiled together into a course overview which ensures that each lesson taught is connected to a standard and that each standard is covered by the end of the course.

To create a unit overview, I first list the lesson names. [Note: In my classroom, I follow the district-provided textbook, and use the lessons that are outlined for the course. I supplement resources as needed but follow the pacing/layout from the textbook.] Next, I connect each lesson to a standard. Some standards are taught over two or three lessons while others are taught in one lesson. Some lessons correspond to two standards while others are matched with exactly one standard. Regardless, each standard must be taught by the end of the course, so it is important to be sure that all lessons are related to a specific standard. [Note: this also ensures that teachers are focusing their teaching on what is covered by the course standards. For example, lesson 8-1 in my course textbook is titled "Find Surface Area of Three-Dimensional Figures." My course's standards do not include finding surface area (this is a sixth and seventh grade standard), so I do not focus heavily on this lesson.] After connecting each lesson to a standard, it is time to create learning objectives or learning targets for each lesson. **Learning targets should be written in student friendly language so that students know what they are expected to learn and accomplish by the completion of the lesson, unit, and course.** Learning targets are often found in course textbooks or can be found on the MDE scaffolding document for ELA and mathematics courses.







Finally, **I combine all of this information to create a student handout and unit overview.** The student handout lists learning targets for each lesson and is organized by unit. Students receive this handout at the beginning of each unit and keep the handout in their notebook. The unit overviews are compiled together for a course overview that is kept handy at my desk. This allows me to see what is taught at a quick glance. I create unit and lesson plans that detail what is taught during each lesson.

It is also important to analyze lessons compared to standards when creating the unit overview. Oftentimes the student learning target will not include the entire standard, but it is important to be sure that the teacher is teaching the entire standard. For example, one of the standards for my course requires students to give examples of a mathematical concept. The learning target that correlates with the lesson asks students to analyze the concept but does not specifically say that students should be able to give examples of that concept. As the teacher, I know that my lesson should include having students create examples even though the learning target does not list that specifically. **If I had not analyzed the standard and lesson plan at the same time, I could have easily missed that part of the standard; therefore, my lesson would not be standards based and students would not be meeting the success criteria.**



**By ensuring that each lesson taught is related to a course standard, and ensuring that students are aware of what they should be learning and accomplishing, teachers are ensuring that their students are meeting success criteria.**



