

An Introduction to: Focus on Instruction

Peter Pappas
High School Reinvention Symposium 2005



Define
Summarize
Compare

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Agenda



1. Introduction to the Rigor and Relevance Framework
2. Preview of tomorrow's session "Focus on Instruction"
3. DVD - teachers' talk about "Focus on Instruction" in a successful school

Focus on Instruction

Our essential questions:

"Has our school forged a common vision of teaching and learning?"

"How have we organized to accomplish this vision?"

It's more than new names, structures and programs - it's about quality instruction

- Consistent focus on common instructional strategies in a student-centered classroom
- Engage the entire school community in thinking critically about student achievement
- A professional development program that models rigorous and relevant instruction

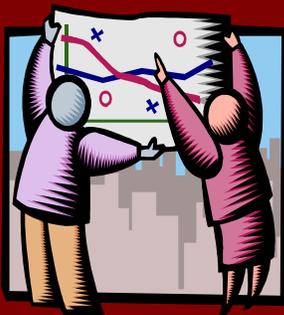
Focus on Instruction

Must first forge a common view of teaching and learning



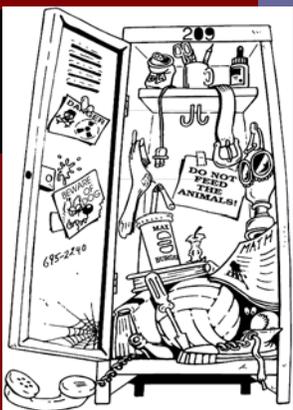
And then treat the organization as an instrument for accomplishing the vision

Rigor and Relevance in the 21st Century



Students must take on the challenge of intellectual workrather than just look for the right answer.

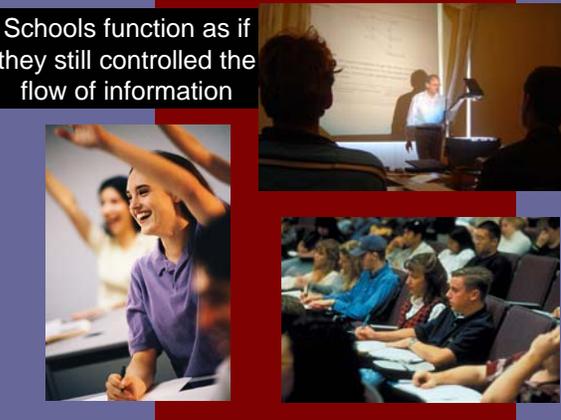
How we accessed **information** when we were students



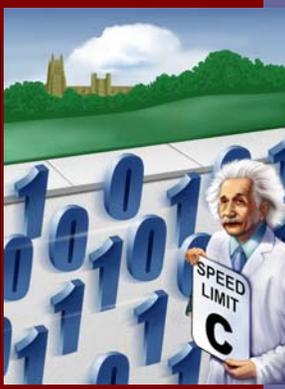
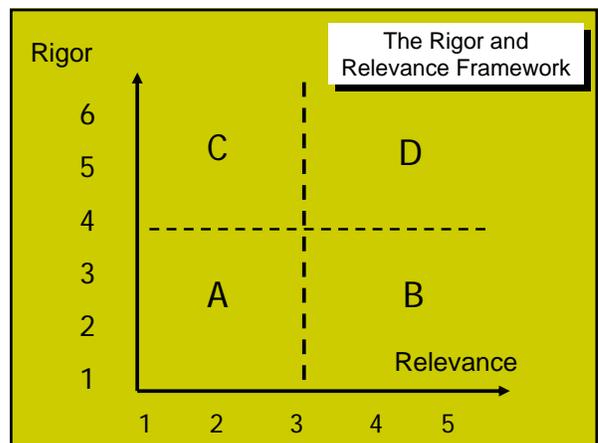
How students access **information** today



Schools function as if they still controlled the flow of information



But new technologies have put students in charge of the information they access, store, analyze and share.

Rigor: Bloom's taxonomy

Evaluation: appraise, defend, predict
Synthesis: compose, design, develop
Analysis: compare, contrast, categorize

----- Basic Skills -----

Application: demonstrate, illustrate, solve
Comprehension: describe, explain
Knowledge: memorize, name, recognize, recall

And make it relevant with real-world application



Using skills and knowledge in school

Using skills and knowledge for myself in the real world

1 2 3 4 5

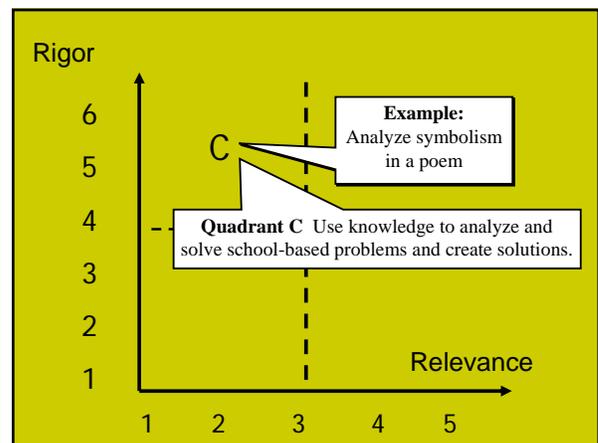
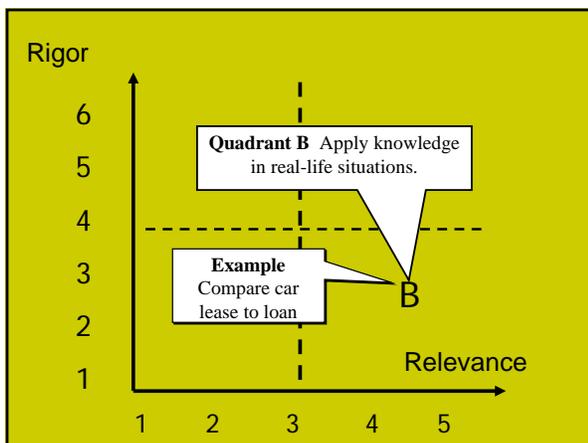
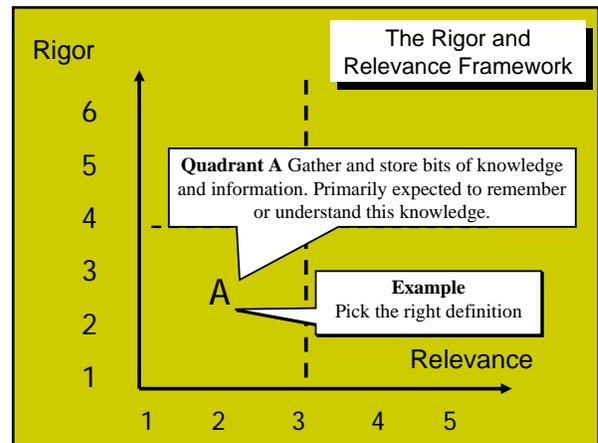
Higher-level thinking skills

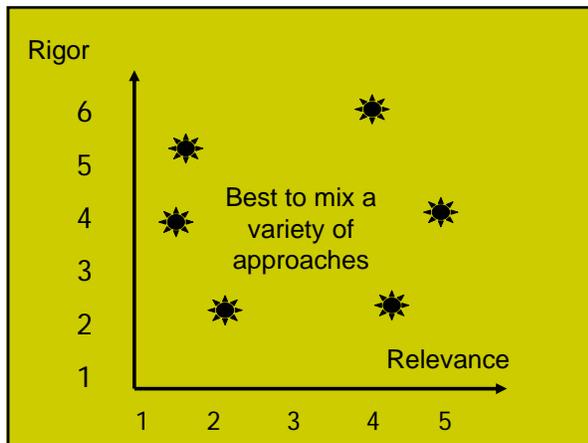
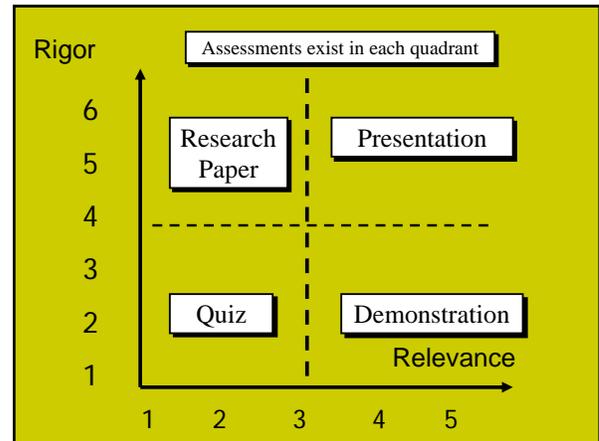
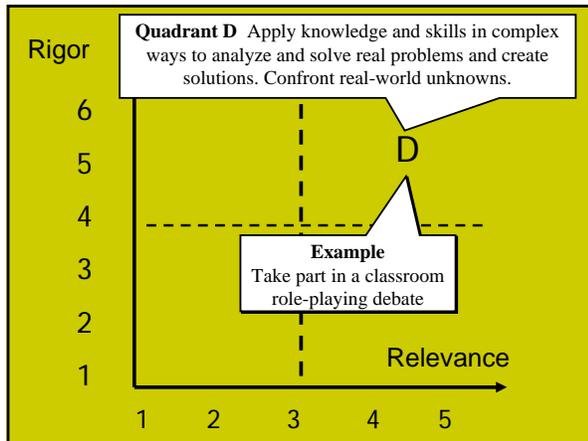
Complex use of knowledge

In School: Test scores, class credits, academic progress

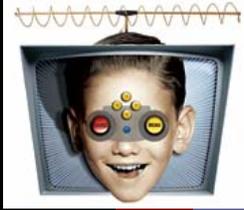
In life: Performance, ability to adapt to change

Recall of knowledge



Literacy in the 21st century will mean the ability to find information, decode it, critically evaluate it, organize it into personal digital libraries and find meaningful ways to share it with others.



Information is a raw material – students will need to learn to build with it

Literacy is **Constructing Meaning**

1. **Reading is thinking.** Well-written materials model good thinking.
2. Foundation for **expressive writing.**
3. Thoughtful readers become **thoughtful problem solvers** and better students.

Goal – students who can function in an **academic or real-world setting** that is **unpredictable and vital**

Learn to research, think, problem-solve and write like a **scientist, engineer, coach, artist, historian, mathematician, writer, musician,**

Put students in charge of their learning



- **What** am I learning today?
- **Why** am I learning it?
- **How** can I use this knowledge and these skills to make a difference in my life?
- How can I **work** with teachers and other students to **improve my learning**?

Tomorrow we'll focus on three strategies

1. **Defining:** negotiating meaning
2. **Summarizing:** synthesis and judgment
3. **Comparing:** assessing similarities and differences

We'll use the Rigor and Relevance Model as the framework

Each strategy can be viewed from four perspectives

1. Reading
2. Comprehension
3. Writing
4. Critical thinking

Reading is more than "getting the words right."
It's about thinking!



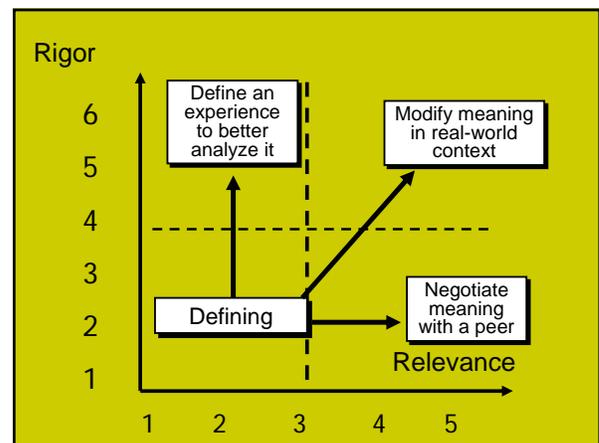
Strategy #1 : Defining negotiating meaning



Focus on Instruction

The relationship between vocabulary and academic achievement is well established ~ Marzano, *What Works in Schools*

- Students with **large vocabularies** have **more background knowledge**
- Some students come to us from **home environments that are not academically rich**
- Vocabulary can be taught:
 - **Wide reading:** more engaging, but may lack sufficient word exposure
 - **Direct instruction:** should be student-centered rather than rote-memorization



Strategy #2:
Summarizing
synthesis and judgment

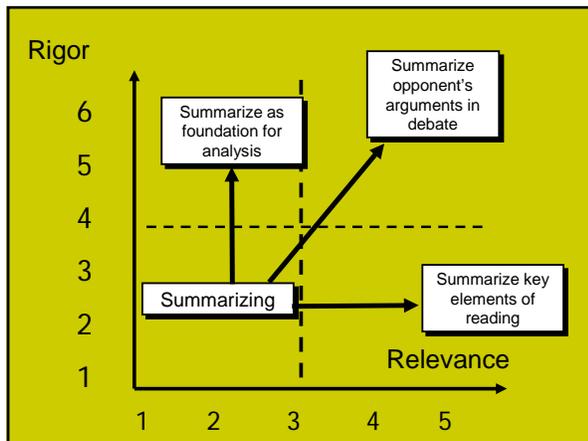
Focus on Instruction

Research shows student use of summarizing skills results in a 34-percentile gain in student performance.
Classroom Instruction that Works, ASCD, 2001

Case 1:
Teacher lectures on the essential characteristics of mammals

Case 2:
Teacher lectures and then students do a summarizing exercise on the essential characteristics of mammals

+ 34% gain in content mastery



Strategy #3 :
Comparing
assessing similarities and differences

Focus on Instruction

Research shows student use of comparison skills results in a 45 - percentile gain in student performance.
Classroom Instruction that Works, ASCD, 2001

Case 1:
Teacher lectures on the essential characteristics of mammals

Case 2:
Teacher lectures and then students do exercise comparing the essential characteristics of mammals to birds

+ 45% gain in content mastery

Mastery of comparison skills is **critical to academic achievement**

- Central construct in academia
- Critical to comprehension

We need to prepare students to **effectively address comparative tasks** and generate their own models.

- Comparative literature
- Comparative religion
- Comparative anatomy
- “Contrast the function of pores in humans and stomata in plants.”
- “Compare the nautical elements in the fiction of London and Conrad”

Tomorrow's Lesson from a Model School



kennesaw mountain high school
a tradition of excellence

Focus on Instruction



Ninth Grade Academy
East Irondequoit CSD
Rochester NY

Case study - how a team of teachers and an administrator focused on instruction

East Irondequoit CSD – Rochester NY

- 3,500 students
- Two K-2, Two 3-5, One 6-8, One 9-12
- 33% free and reduced lunch
- 24% Black and Hispanic

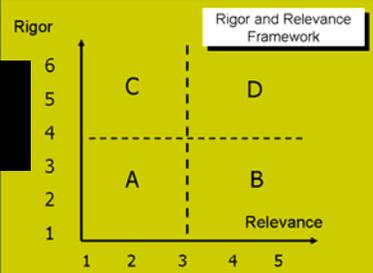


Matt Laniak - Associate Principal and Founding Ninth Grade Academy Director



Ninth Grade Academy teacher:
“Two years ago we got together. Matt assigned the **teaching roles** and helped us work through the **policy development**.
We didn't set this up in one day - we all put in many extra unpaid hours.
It's not about debating ideas. It's been about **collaboration**.”

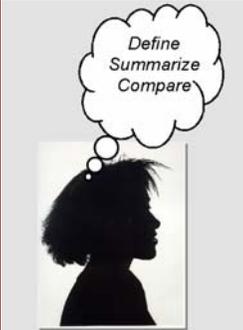
Focus on Instruction



We've trained our teachers in Rigor and Relevance Learning and Content Reading Strategies (also trained our school board and parents)

A shared vision of teaching and learning

NGA teacher:
“Our students are **successful** because we use **learning strategies** that put students in charge of their own learning.”



Freshman only: 13 core area classrooms on two halls plus freshman gym



The key: high expectations create results

NGA teacher:
“At the start of the year I had many students who came to class **unprepared**. I made it clear that it **was unacceptable**. **When students are unprepared, we all get pulled down**. I set **high expectations** – there was no tolerance for students that did not have their homework done.”

Target instruction with effective assessments

Use **pre-tests** to guide instruction.



Use the NGA as *change agent* to launch high school initiative to foster a more academic climate

- **Increase graduation requirement** - from 21 hours to 24 hours beginning with class of 2007
- Shift performance targets **from passing to mastery level**
- **New attendance policy** - Students denied credit after missing more than 15% of class time for any reason
- **New code of conduct and dress code**

Intensive tracking of student progress toward graduation with NYS Regents diploma

Bi-annual review of each student 9 - 12
Principal, counselor and ASI

Identify gatekeeper course that are impeding progress

Now have the 3rd highest graduation rate in county

Target: *Algebra, the Gatekeeper*

“After pregnancy, Algebra I is the leading indicator of high school dropout.

The leading indicator of success in Algebra I is English 8.

The Algebra I test is a reading test with numbers”

~ Doug Reeves, District Administrator April '05

Final Course Grade Cohort Group - Math 8 (2004) to Algebra I (2005)

Math 8: 45%

Algebra I: 83%

Percent Passing

Final Exam Cohort Group - Math 8 (2004) to Math 9 (2005)

Number of students

0-54%

More than half now scoring better than 70%

0-54%

Legend: 90-100, 80-89, 70-79, 65-69, 55-64, 0-54

Eighth Ninth

Enlist parents as partners

- Academic pledge of support
- Presentation to 8th graders
- Summer orientation
- Parent university

Share responsibility for success – student, parent, teacher, and principal

NGA teacher:
The **parents backed me up** on our expectations. Before long, students came to class, **fully prepared to learn** with their books, supplies and completed homework.
Now the students are making great progress. The Academy has allowed **me to be a better teacher.**

Since launch of NGA we've seen a 67% drop in freshman suspensions

NGA teacher:
"We're no different than most teachers, but **because of the support we're outstanding teachers.**"
I'm so grateful for the opportunity I've had to teach in the Academy for the last two years. I'm seeing that **it can happen.**
This is the **best experience I could have hoped for.**"

Hear more about the Ninth Grade Academy



For resources and information on workshops and presentations contact ICLE



The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the website for Peter Pappas, titled "Peter Pappas DESIGNS FOR LEARNING". The page includes a navigation menu with links for SHOWCASE, RESUME, CLIENTS, REVIEWS, and PUBLICATIONS. A central profile picture of Peter Pappas is shown. Below the photo, it lists his address: 73 Washington Drive, Richmond, BC V4V2Z5, 604.285.4334, and an email icon. A "Keynote Address" section mentions "Literacy in a Copy / Paste World" at the Learning Through Literacy Summer Institute in Toronto, Canada, on August 11, 2005. A "Podcast" section indicates an mp3 file of 27.7 MB, 30 minutes long.