

RSE-TASC REPORTER

LOWER HUDSON REGIONAL SPECIAL EDUCATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT CENTER

The Case for Videotaping Lessons

By Martha Trujillo-Torp, EdD, Special Education School Improvement Specialist



I often coach teachers as part of collaboratively developed Quality Improvement Process Plans designed to help them improve outcomes for the students with disabilities in their classrooms. Together, we learn about evidence-based instructional practices that have been proven to be effective with struggling students, and then the teachers and I agree on strategies they would like to try to implement. I observe in their classrooms as they try out these new strategies, give them feedback about what I see them doing, and then we engage in dialogues about what went well and what could be improved. I have always felt that this was a productive experience that helped teachers improve their craft, and the teachers I work with have reported that they feel the same.

Then I read Jim Knight's book,

Focus on Teaching: Using Video for High-Impact Instruction and it started me thinking. It did not make me question the effectiveness of this coaching model but it validated some concerns I had about it. Knight talks about factors that affect the clarity and accuracy of both teachers' reflections and coaches' observations of a lesson, suggesting that they often do not have a clear image of what the teaching really looked like during a lesson. I had often thought about three of these factors. One, classrooms are busy places and teaching consists of multiple and fleeting decisions and actions. It is challenging to accurately observe and recall all that happens. Two, both teachers and coaches have set habits and expectations that can affect the way they think about an observed event. Three, all people

experience "confirmation bias"; that is, in the face of lots of incoming data, people focus on those pieces of data that confirm what they believe to be true and often ignore those that conflict with pre-existing beliefs.

Knight makes the point that a video of a lesson allows teachers
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What's Coming Up in Fall 2015? Lower Hudson RSE-TASC Regional Trainings *What Works for Students with Disabilities*



Mark Your Calendar

School-Wide Systems Transition

October

- CAN*DO, 10/5
- Transition Assessment and Planning for Career-Bound Students, 10/16
- Commencement Credential Overview, 10/27
- Transition Institute, 10/29

November

- Work-Based Learning Series—Options for the CDOS Commencement Credential (1 of 3), 11/4
- Indicator 13 Self-Review, 11/9
- Graduation Options, 11/19
- Developing and Using the Student Exit Summary, 11/24

December

- Work-Based Learning Series—Options for the CDOS Commencement Credential (2 of 3), 12/2
- Transition Planning Tools and Resources, 12/3
- CAN*DO, 12/10

Behavior & Discipline Supports

October

- PBIS Coaches' Forum for Special Topics, 10/26
- PBIS Study Hall, 10/29

November

- Developing Behavior Support Plans for Preschoolers (2-Day workshop), 11/5 and 11/20
- Alternatives to Suspension, 11/18
- FBA/BIP Refresher, 11/30

December

- PBIS Coaches' Forum, 12/18

Individualized Educational Planning & the CSE Process

October

- Language Acquisition vs. Learning Disability, 10/2
- New CPSE/CSE Chairperson Training (3-Day workshop), 10/13, 10/27 and 11/5
- IEPs for English Language Learners, 10/19

November

- Language Acquisition vs. Learning Disability, 11/13
- Developing Quality IEPs that Improve Outcomes for Students with Disabilities, (2-Day workshop), 11/20 and 11/30

December

- Development and Measurement of Effective IEP Goals (2-Day workshop), 12/7 and 12/14
- IEPs for English Language Learners, 12/7
- Language Acquisition vs. Learning Disability, 12/9
- Testing Accommodations, 12/21

Instructional Practices

October

- Research Based Comprehension Strategies for Struggling Readers, 10/1
- Improving the Sentence: Research Based Writing Strategies for Struggling Students, 10/5
- Specially Designed Instruction for Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners—Co-Teaching, 10/14
- Explicit Direct Instruction (3-Day workshop), 10/26, 11/10 and TBD

- Special Education 101 for English Language Learners, 10/29

November

- Specially Designed Instruction for Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners, 11/9
- Understanding Cultural and Linguistic Diversity, 11/12

December

- Explicit Direct Instruction (3-Day workshop), 12/3, 12/10 and 12/15
- Special Ed 101 for ENL Teachers, 12/10
- Understanding Cultural and Linguistic Diversity, 12/18
- Special Ed 101 for ENL Teachers, 12/21
- Research Based Comprehension Strategies for Struggling Readers, 12/21

Leadership

October

- CPSE Colloquium, 10/1
- Path to School Improvement: Research Based Strategies for Improving the Writing and Thinking of your Most Struggling Writers, 10/15

- PBIS Forum for Administrators, 10/2
- The Forum: NYS Alternative Assessment, 10/15
- CSE Roundtable, 10/29

December

- Special Education for Principals, 12/1
- CSE Roundtable, 12/3
- CPSE Colloquium, 12/17

To Register for our Regional Workshops

Please go to www.pnwbores.org/catalog to register online. Click on the down arrow next to the box that says "Click one or more options...", then select RSE-TASC and click "Search". Scroll down the webpage until you see the workshop in which you are interested and then click on its name to see details and enroll.

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Community Events

- **Foundations Level K**; 10/1/15, **Foundations Level 1**; 10/6/15, **Foundations Level 2**; 10/13/15, **Foundations Level 3**; 10/14/15, Hudson River Teacher Center, www.pnwbores.org/catalog
- **Regional ESL Study Group**; starts 10/2/15, Guidance & Child Study Center, www.pnwbores.org/catalog
- **Strategies for Working with Students with Emotional Disabilities**; starts 10/5/15, PNW BOCES—Hudson River Teacher Center, www.pnwbores.org/catalog
- **Co-Teaching: Two Heads are Better Than One to Implement the Common Core Learning Standards**; starts 10/6/15, SW BOCES, www.swbores.org/support.cfm
- **Introduction to Growth Mindset**; 10/7/15, PNW BOCES, www.pnwbores.org/catalog
- **Introduction to Mindfulness in the Classroom**; 10/15/15, PNW BOCES, www.pnwbores.org/catalog
- **Co-Teaching Basics-Practical Options for New Partnerships**; begins 10/15/15, Rockland BOCES, www.rocklandbores.org
- **Certification in the Needs of Students with Autism**; 10/19/15, Rockland BOCES, www.rocklandbores.org
- **ADHD Triumphs and Challenges**, 10/21, Mental Health Coalition of Rockland County, www.namirockland.org
- **Understanding NYS Diploma Options, Requirements and Commencement Credentials**, 10/21/15, Orange County Dept. of Mental Health, jbauer@orangecountygov.com
- **Prevention, De-escalate and Behavior Support Techniques: Stop the Power Struggle**; starts 10/22/15, Rockland BOCES, www.rocklandbores.org
- **HVRC for Autism Spectrum Disorders 3rd Annual Fall Conference**; 10/30/15, WIHD, (914)493-7373 or rcasd@wihd.org
- **Center for Autism and Related Disabilities 14th Annual Autism Conference**; 11/6/15, CARD Albany, Desmond Hotel, Albany, http://www.albany.edu/autism/conferences_annual.php
- **Addressing Disproportionate Suspension Rates: Cultural Responsiveness and Alternatives to Suspension**; begins 11/10/15, TAC-D / NYU, East Ramapo, tda246@nyu.edu



School Tool: High Impact Instructional Toolkit

Designed to complement Jim Knight's book *High Impact Instruction*, this webpage has a wealth of tools to help teachers, coaches and administrators. There are simple checklists for things like creating guiding questions and developing checks for understanding. There are video snippets from coaching sessions on topics like learning maps and assessing student engagement.

<http://www.corwin.com/highimpactinstruction/>

(cont. from pg. 1)

and coaches to share a much clearer and accurate image of the teaching and reduce the effect of these factors. Perhaps most important, the video allows teachers and coaches to see a full circle view of the classroom and focus not only on how the teacher taught but also on how and when the students learned. It allows them to capture fleeting actions and preserve them for deeper and more accurate observation. Because all data can be reviewed multiple times in a video, it also reduces the effect of confirmation bias.

As Jim Knight states, "... video is a powerful tool for growth and professional learning." So I decided to introduce this idea to the teachers with whom I work. Can you can imagine how that went? All the teachers agreed that video had potential to provide tremendous professional growth...in theory, but none of them was ready to try it in their classroom. One teacher still breaks out in hives every time we talk about it!

Knight addressed this issue in his book. He gives specific guidelines for creating the safety and trust needed for

video to be an effective support for teachers. These include ensuring psychologically safe environments where conversations are respectful and no one is humiliated; establishing boundaries that make it very clear that the video belongs to the person recorded, who decides if and how it can be shared; and walking the talk by showing that you are willing to be videotaped and to share reflections on your own teaching with them.

The process of viewing and reflecting on a video

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must be carefully crafted as well to ensure it incorporates not just teacher accountability for improving practice but also teacher autonomy. After viewing the lesson video, teachers should be given a choice on what they would like to improve or change. When teachers are included in the planning and implementation process they are more invested in improving their craft.

So I spent a year at one school building trust, developing a culture of professional respect, and collaboratively working with teachers to create a viewing process based on some tools in Jim Knight's book. We started by just

videotaping the students during the lesson; teachers learned a tremendous amount from observing students' reactions to their lessons and were more comfortable with the process when they were not "on screen". I also handed each teacher their video when we were done with it so they knew it wouldn't be used for any other purpose. This year, teachers are ready to be videotaped themselves and to watch and reflect on them with their peers.

Clayton M. Christensen, a Harvard researcher, labeled video as "disruptive technology" that can transform the educational observation and professional learning process. As

coaches develop trusting relationships and communicate the expectation for all staff to be committed to improving their practices so that students achieve the best outcomes possible, video will be a power tool to help accomplish this.

Watch for a Bright Spot in this newsletter later this year — I know the impact of this on student outcomes will be huge!

Resources

Knight, J. (2014). *Focus on teaching: Using video for high-impact instruction*. Thousand Oaks, California: Corwin.

Knight, J (May, 2014). *What you learn...When you see yourself teach*. Educational Leadership.

Bright Spot!

Sometimes a student's negative experience on the bus can set the tone for the whole day. This month's Bright Spot focuses on two situations where educators were able to change this experience for students.

At Lincoln Avenue Elementary School in Pearl River, PBIS Coach Kathleenann Cool reports that they were able to improve overall behavior on school buses, resulting in significant decreases in bus discipline referrals. How did they accomplish this improved student outcome? The school created a Bus Incentive Program (a BIP?) through which students on a bus could earn a Green Light for meeting the posted expectations for being Safe, Responsible and Respectful on the bus. For each Green Light a bus earns, it moves a cinderblock distance around the school, allowing student to visually track their positive progress. If the whole bus doesn't earn a Green Light, individual students on the bus can still earn Lion's Paws from the school-wide PBIS acknowledgement system for their individual behavior.

At Upper Nyack Elementary School, PBIS Coach Bret Sloane reports that an individual student who really struggled with appropriate behavior on the bus such that he was about to be permanently removed, has now become a model bus student! How was this achieved? Educators at the school involved the student in developing his own positive behavior plan for the bus. It included daily tangible rewards for appropriate behavior as well as daily adult contact for either praise and acknowledgement or support in rehearsing appropriate behaviors. As Bret says, "What a turnaround!"

What can the rest of us learn from these student successes? Students can successfully learn socially appropriate behaviors when desired behaviors have been explicitly taught to them and they receive frequent and visual acknowledgements for demonstrating those behaviors.

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