

# Contents

Acknowledgments . . . . .	vii
Introduction . . . . .	ix

## **Section I: Designing Learning Strategies**

Introduction . . . . .	1
<i>Selection 1</i>	
DEFINING BRAIN-COMPATIBLE CLASSROOMS by Robin Fogarty . . . . .	7
from <i>Brain-Compatible Classrooms</i> , 2nd edition	
<i>Selection 2</i>	
INTEGRATED INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN by Jan Skowron . . . . .	35
from <i>Powerful Lesson Planning Models: The Art of 1,000 Decisions</i>	
<i>Selection 3</i>	
THEMES by Robin Fogarty and Judy Stoehr. . . . .	65
from <i>Integrating Curricula with Multiple Intelligences:     Teams, Themes, and Threads</i>	
<i>Selection 4</i>	
THE BLUEPRINTS APPROACH TO COOPERATIVE GROUPS by James Bellanca and Robin Fogarty. . . . .	89
from <i>Blueprints for Achievement in the Cooperative Classroom</i> , 3rd edition	

## **Section II: Assessing Student Work**

Introduction . . . . .	117
<i>Selection 5</i>	
TEACHER-MADE TESTS by Kay Burke . . . . .	123
from <i>How to Assess Authentic Learning</i> , 3rd edition	

<i>Selection 6</i>	
PORTFOLIOS <i>by Kay Burke</i> . . . . .	141
from <i>How to Assess Authentic Learning</i> , 3rd edition	
<b>Section III: Establishing Learning Communities</b>	
Introduction . . . . .	161
<i>Selection 7</i>	
WORKING WITH PARAPROFESSIONALS <i>by Julie Sausen</i> . . . . .	165
<i>Selection 8</i>	
ESTABLISHING THE LEARNING COMMUNITY <i>by Julie Sausen</i> . . . . .	195
<b>Section IV: Reflecting on Professional Growth</b>	
Introduction . . . . .	225
<i>Selection 9</i>	
PHILOSOPHY OF PROFESSIONAL GROWTH FOR TEACHERS	
<i>by Kay Burke</i> . . . . .	229
from <i>Designing Professional Portfolios for Change</i>	
<i>Selection 10</i>	
THE REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONER <i>by Kay Burke</i> . . . . .	241
from <i>Designing Professional Portfolios for Change</i>	
Conclusion . . . . .	261
Appendix: Resources <i>by Barry Sweeny</i> . . . . .	265
from <i>Leading the Teacher Induction and Mentoring Program</i>	
Bibliography . . . . .	279
Index . . . . .	289

# Introduction

*Educators have known or suspected all along—and research and experience have proven them to be right—that support of new teachers in the form of mentoring by seasoned peers not only contributes to the induction and retention of novices into the profession, but also provides a positive professional experience for the veteran teachers who do the mentoring.*

—Portner, 2001



One of the goals of any mentoring program is to enable both novice teachers and veteran teachers to experience a positive professional experience. If the educational climate promotes a culture of collaboration, commitment to students, and a belief in lifelong learning, both mentors and protégés grow professionally. *Mentoring Guidebook Level 1: Starting the Journey*, the first volume in SkyLight's mentoring series, introduces the basic components necessary for a positive and professional educational climate. I selected excerpts from books written by leading educational experts that define the characteristics of a mentoring program and the attributes of effective mentors and protégés. The selections describe how mentors use appropriate communication skills to help gain the trust of novice teachers in order to establish a solid mentoring relationship. One selection demonstrates tools for developing lesson plan designs and unit plans correlated to curriculum goals and learning standards that address the students' multiple intelligences. *Starting the Journey* also reviews strategies to help teachers create a positive classroom environment by setting expectations, rules, and consequences in the first few days of school so that students accept responsibility not only for their own learning, but also for their own

**I**f the educational climate promotes a culture of collaboration, commitment to students, and a belief in lifelong learning, both mentors, and protégés grow professionally.

behavior. Mentors and protégés can teach students how to develop and practice social skills related to communication, team building, and conflict resolution in order to interact appropriately with all the members of their classroom community. The final selection reviews a variety of problem-solving strategies all teachers can implement in order to deal with behavior problems that could disrupt the classroom and detract from the learning process. In summary, *Mentoring Guidebook Level 1: Starting the Journey*, outlines the basic tools mentors and protégés need to develop a successful mentoring relationship and to develop practical strategies new teachers need to organize their classrooms and plan their instruction.

This second volume of SkyLight’s mentoring series, *Mentoring Guidebook Level 2: Exploring Teaching Strategies*, uses the foundation of a positive mentoring relationship based on trust to help improve beginning teachers’ teaching skills and to help them grow as professionals. In order to support and guide new teachers, mentors need not only to know the best practices in teaching and learning, but also to be able to model them for their protégés. *Mentoring Guidebook Level 2: Exploring Teaching Strategies* expands the teaching strategies introduced in *Starting the Journey* and presents additional instructional strategies teachers can explore to meet the diverse needs of their students. The selections review a repertoire of instructional methodologies to implement integrated and cooperative learning, develop authentic assessment techniques, and establish a powerful learning community within the classroom. The final section defines the term *reflective practitioner* and provides opportunities for novice teachers to grow professionally by creating a philosophy of teaching and using journals to reflect on their own growth and development. Since many first-year teachers are required to develop a professional growth plan or a portfolio, mentors can help facilitate the process by taking the time to discuss and analyze progress toward meeting goals.

## Section I—Designing Learning Strategies

Studies in cognitive psychology, strategic instruction, and teaching for transfer offer a new definition of how students learn. Lipton and Wellman (1998) explain how the most significant change has been the shift from the focus on the teacher-centered classroom to the learner-focused classroom. “This is not an easy shift. Like the learning process itself, this shift can be uncomfortable and fraught with uncertainty. The comfort of presenting the content and covering the material needs to be expanded so that the learners experience meaningful interactions working with concepts, skills, and ideas” (3). Mentors can help beginning teachers motivate students by discussing and modeling explicit instructional strategies that engage the students in discovering meaning for themselves. Effective teachers may use the direct instruction method to introduce concepts or content, but they also use additional teaching strategies to encourage the students to take ownership of their own learning.

Some teachers believe they “vary” their teaching whenever they introduce new subject matter. Although the subject matter may change, the instructional strategies of direct instruction, silent reading, and answering the questions at the end of the chapter remain the same. Effective teachers utilize pedagogical techniques that include learning that is cooperative, inquiry-based, brain-compatible, project-based, and performance-based in order to challenge students and escape the mindset of “one-size-fits-all” teaching. “Most teachers do not demonstrate this range, not because they don’t want to, but because they have limited images of good teaching. The ways in which they were taught and the isolation in which they work have limited their range” (Wasley 1999, 7). Mentors, however, can help new teachers expand the repertoire of techniques learned during their preservice preparation and student teaching experience by supplementing their “tool box” through the modeling of a variety of instructional strategies. Often, the mentor invites the new teacher into his or her classroom to observe the mentor’s use of these techniques. The conversations that follow help novices understand how an explicit instructional strategy works and how it can be modified to adapt to the needs of different students.

**M**entors can guide the new teachers in establishing a harmonious working relationship with members of the classroom and the school community.

## Section II—Assessing Student Work

In addition to helping beginning teachers expand their range of instructional techniques, mentors can also share and model ways to assess and evaluate students. With the increased emphasis on accountability, beginning teachers need practice in developing effective teacher-made tests that measure student understanding of important concepts. Too often novice teachers rely on commercially made tests that do not always meet the needs of their students. Also, new teachers may be overwhelmed by the idea of having students keep portfolios of their work, even though many districts are now requiring them. Mentors, therefore, can share their secrets and organizational tips for making a portfolio system manageable. Instruction is, of course, very important, but effective assessments provide concrete evidence that the students are learning. Moreover, assessments show new teachers how they need to change their instruction in order to make sure all students are meeting the standards and their curriculum goals.

## Section III—Establishing Learning Communities

Teaching and learning extend beyond the classroom. Teachers need to work with a learning community that combines the roles of parents, paraprofessionals, community members, and other school personnel with whom teachers interact on a regular basis. Communicating with parents and collaborating with other educational professionals requires a level of interpersonal skills that may not seem important to a new teacher—until he or she makes a mistake that causes problems. An effective mentor guides the protégé through the critical and precarious steps of developing a collaborative relationship with all the stakeholders in each child's education. Dealing with administrators, counselors, substitutes, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, cafeteria staff, and others requires expert communication skills and finesse. The mentors can guide the new teachers in establishing a harmonious working relationship with members of the classroom, school, and community.