

THE FAITHFUL READER

How Classroom Structures Maximize Learning and Student Engagement

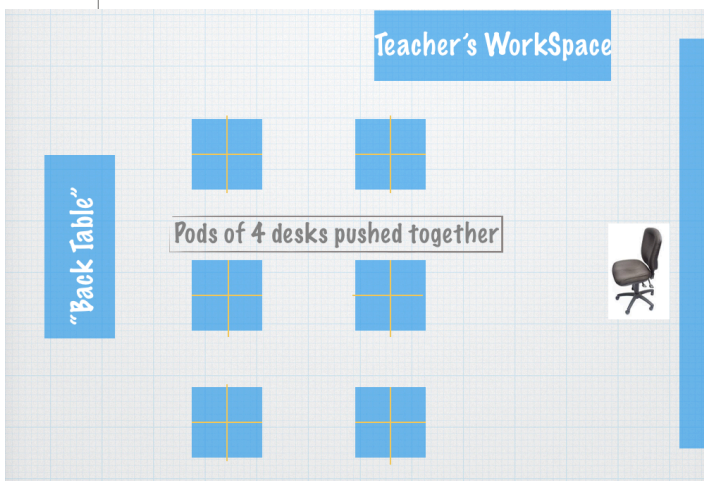
Each day, we consider - did the students learn what I wanted them to learn? This is challenging with the number of standards we are required to teach.

One way to maximize instruction is to plan with the end in mind, using a year-long plan or curriculum map (see the August 2018 newsletter for this). Another way to maximize instruction and student engagement is to use your classroom space more efficiently. Having students sit in straight rows isn't engaging, and it requires you to be the only expert. When students can work independently on meaningful work, you are freed up to work with small groups and individuals.

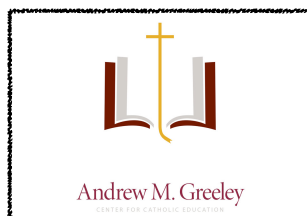
Below, you see two structures. The top structure is appropriate for grades 3 and up. It allows students to work "near" each other or with each other. It gives spaces for the teacher to work with small groups at tables, or using the wheeled chair she can wheel up to a pod of desks.

The "Fantastic Four" structure was created by seventh-grade teacher John Nickas, modeled after the Daily Five. Mr. Nickas noticed that his seventh graders were struggling to read their social studies textbook, so he created this structure which he used two days each week for 44 minutes (11 minutes at each station). See page 3 of this newsletter for more information.

Don't feel like you have to jump in with both feet and try the whole thing. Consider the first image - is there one way you can change your desk set-up to give you space and freedom to meet the needs of all students? Start small.



In October: what do students do in these structures? What does the teacher do?



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Text Sets

A text set is a set of texts that have the same topic or theme in common but may be told from a different perspective.

Use these text sets for literature circles/book clubs.

Historical Fiction - Vietnam War

Inside Out and Back Again by Thanhha Lai

All the Broken Pieces by Ann Burg

Cracker: The Best Dog in Vietnam by Cynthia Kadohata

The Wall written by Eve Bunting
illustrated by Ronald Himler

Patrol: An American Soldier in Vietnam written by Walter Dean Myers
illustrated by Ann Grifalconi

Realistic Fiction - Inclusion

Wonder by R. J. Palacio

Fish in a Tree by Lynda Mullaly Hunt

Out of My Mind by Sharon M. Draper

Close to Famous by Joan Bauer

Rules by Cynthia Lord

Book Recommendations

***The Most Magnificent Thing* written and illustrated by Ashley Spires**

A little girl with her best friend in the world (the dog) wants to build The Most Magnificent Thing. But when she can't get it right the first time, she gets frustrated and gives up. Best friend to the rescue!



Independent Reading Level Lexile 380 grades 1 and up

Most appropriate for age 7 and up

Genre realistic fiction picture book

***Inside Out and Back Again* by Thanhha Lai**

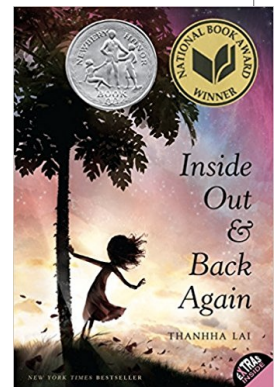
In 1975, Hà is living in Saigon with her family. The Vietnam War (or the American War if you are Vietnamese) is nearing the end. As Saigon falls, Hà must leave to live. She and her mother and brothers go to a refugee camp in Guam and then are sponsored by an American "cowboy." He sponsors them after they change their religion on paper to Christian. They move to Alabama, and then begins a new journey for all of them.

A great book to study perspective - both of a child refugee as well as a different perspective of the Vietnam War.

Reading Level Lexile 800

***Appropriate for** grades 4 and up

Genre historical fiction written in free verse



Greeley Center Mission

We are Catholic educators who challenge Catholic schools to be excellent because they are essential in preparing students for the future.

Fantastic Four

Done twice per week. Each station is 11 minutes long.

Stations:

1. read with the teacher
2. read to self
3. word work
4. work on writing

For #2, 3, & 4, students sit near others in the same station. Students are working at a volume of "0" unless they need to whisper to a group member to solve a problem.

1. For the read with the teacher station, the students sit facing the teacher. They have their texts (textbook, short article, photograph, primary source, etc.) in front of them. The teacher guides them through the text, doing think alouds, sharing how to read the headings, bold words, captions, defining words or ideas, etc. Students verbally summarize the section before they leave.
2. Read to Self: students reread the same passage that was read with the teacher. They complete a maze/cloze document from the textbook or write a summary. Students can also use a bookmark to guide them through a reading strategy. ("Note three places where you made an inference - what page and what is the inference? Be prepared to share during Read with the Teacher.")
3. Word Work: Students work independently to analyze 'big' vocabulary words that are essential for understanding unit. For example, in a study of the American Revolution, students would complete a Frayer Model/Four-Square Vocabulary for *patriot*, *loyalist*, and *blockade*.
4. Writing: Students work on a writing assignment (Type 3 or 4) that will not be published but will be shared with the class. For example, students may write about what the benefits are of being a loyalist one day, and then write about the benefits of being a patriot another day. Students are given a piece of paper with the prompt and grading criteria. This is a great time to practice short answer writing.

Notes:

1. Students who struggle the most should meet with the teacher first. They will complete the Read with the Teacher first, and then move to the Read to Self station.
2. Students who excel and need enrichment do the Read with the Teacher station last so they can sum up what they learned through the stations.
3. EXTENSIVE TRAINING will be needed for students to understand the routine. Anchor charts with "what the students are doing" and "what the teacher is doing" should be created and then posted.
4. Don't feel like you need to do this every day.
5. This is VERY efficient - students are on task for 44 straight minutes! I think the reason that it is so efficient is that students can sustain attention on just about anything for 11 minutes (you can certainly alter the time, but I wouldn't go much more than 11 minutes).

*****This idea was adapted by John Nickas, Pope John Paul II School, Chicago, from The Daily Five.***

Name _____ Date _____

Five Square Vocabulary Chart

WORD and definition	Picture
What is it like? What is it NOT like?	A sentence from the text to show context.
Use the word in an original sentence. Be sure that the sentence proves that you know what the word means. ("I like patriotism." doesn't count...)	

Adapted from The Frayer Model

Sample "I" Charts (I = Independent; a.k.a. Anchor Charts)

