

Notes and website from Harvey Daniel's presentation by Nelle.txt

Several people have requested the list of "best practices" by Harvey Daniels.

He is quite a comical and entertaining speaker. I fail to get his web site address where he told us not to bother and take notes since all his handouts were on line for us. So if anyone out there saw him in conference in Columbia, SC, Oct 17th. The sessions overlapped and I had to leave his about fifteen minutes early and missed the web address.

Here are some of his main points as interpreted by yours truly.

First he began with explaining that his new book on reading in the content area is at the publishers and will be out soon.

He has written *Methods That Matter, Best Practice*: and was truly concerned about how many resources write and title their methods as "Best Practices" yet they truly are not, so the term "Best Practice" had made what he termed has a "terminology drift".

Consequently, he felt the need to address what constitutes "Best Practice" as he tours and speaks and recapture this term to mean:

Best Practice is NOT:

worksheets: here he featured a short story about ML King and five questions beneath that a student could answer parroting the facts just read.

Literature circle handout was shown next where students were ask to answer from a ready make checklist how the character feels in the story. Just put a check by the feelings the character had. A real prescriptive, brief artifact used as a Literature Circle role sheet. He said this was a classroom management instrument, NOT invoking thinking.

Then he said, "Lets do what REAL readers do" Practices that are:

Student Centered

Experimental

Expressive in their own writing

Reflective

Authentic

Holistic

Cognitive based

Developmental

Constructivist

Challenging

He brought out that every discipline, National organizations for Science, Social Studies, Language Arts, etc had a list of National Standards, many

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books are published and titled "Meeting ...Standards" and so he and a group of colleagues sat down and compared and reviewed these standards and these terms above were the common threads in them all.

As I think about the overhead handouts just demonstrated by Debbie Miller in her talk the day before, the response type that invoke thinking, and show the teacher "tracks" of student thinking, as well as help students monitor their own thinking or lack of thinking, the differences in the "NOT" best practice handouts and her handouts were crystal clear.

He had the crowd work through one activity that he demonstrated as "Best Practice" methods:written conversations with a peer. I had tried this before and didn't think I would learn anything new, but the way he explained this was different. Instead of swapping the same paper back and forth between two people as they exchange written dialog, he had us watch a short segment of high school kids in Literature Circles and with a partner make a quick write response to what you saw [time keeping here is very important] no oral conversation, only writing. Then, swap papers and respond to your partners comments, and this was different then I'd tried before since no one is sitting waiting on the paper to come back to them, but both partner are reading and writing, yet in tune with others ideas and responding. Then of course, they're were opportunities for whole group to share some responses. This certainly requires Listening, Viewing, Thinking, Writing, and Speaking, holistic literacy. It seems to me that any activity that requires holistic Literacy practice like this can meet all of the criterion above for "Best Practice" and serve as tracks of thinking and evidence of content understanding.

One last point he made that I think is worth repeating. Nat'l Reading Panel says that Independent reading doesn't work to grow kids in reading and they site research on this as the reason for this conclusion. However, he said they are not excepting correlational research as a consideration at all. His strong point on this was the fact that it was correlational research used in the tobacco law suit that changed the law in our society recording smoking. That Non-believers in time on task, independently reading, don't accept correlational research, but it is clear that this society uses this research to make important decisions. He showed a graph where a group of kids who read for fun scored 20% higher on a national test, NAP, then those who did not.

This is the conclusion of my notes on his whole group presentation, entirely too long for a email, sorry. So I'll conclude here, but there are a few more points he made in a break out session on reading in the content areas if someone is interested, they can email me. In the meantime, I plan to contact someone in the Writing Improvement Network to see if I can get the web site for his handouts on this session.

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Nelle

and from Carolyn:

Nelle,

After reading your email I did a quick google search to find some information you requested. Although I could not find Harvey Daniel's website, I did find the handouts to which he referred from a previous conference.

You may find his handouts at this website:
http://www.walloon.com/conference_handouts.asp

Hope that helps!
Carolyn Booth