HET Classroom

Stages of Implementation

Assessing implementation of bodybrain-compatible learning

Formerly ITI (Integrated Thematic Instruction) Classroom Rubric

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FROM RESEARCH TO PRACTICE GROWING RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS
Highly Effective
TEACHING

HET Classroom Stages of Implementation
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Introduction

In a time of inflamed rhetoric about the shortcomings of public education and its reform efforts, of fundamental disagreement about the purpose and goal of our public schools, and of authentic assessment procedures and tools applied to the learning of unauthentic curriculum, it is important that we state clearly the desired results of our current efforts so that all may see what is intended, so that all may measure, in concrete ways, whether we are reaching our mark or not. This is particularly true for those engaged in the degree of significant, systemic change—classroom and schoolwide—inherent in the HET model.

The purpose of the *HET Classroom Stages of Implementation* is to provide clear pictures of what HET looks like, sounds like, and feels like (and, just as importantly, what it does *not* look like, sound like, or feel like) from the perspective of students and teachers and to do so before staff, parents, students, district office personnel, and school boards consider implementing the HET model. This allows for informed decision-making and solidification of personal as well as institutional commitment to a shared, and clear, set of pictures. In simple terms, this tool is designed to allow individuals, schools, and districts to answer these five questions:

- Do we want what the HET model, when fully implemented, will deliver?
- Do we want these results enough to make the necessary changes in policies and school/district culture ("the way we do things here")?
- How will we know if we are on track or merely caught up in change for the sake of change?
- How can we measure our progress?
- Are we preparing students for their future roles as citizens in a democractic society?

Why a Description of Classroom Implementation?

This description of stages in implementing HET in the classroom grew out of a need to assess the progress and results of implementating HET over long-term, intensive, large-scale efforts, particularly those funded by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation to improve science education in grades K-6 and middle schools. The questions were obvious enough:

- To what degree are teachers implementing what we know from recent brain research about how humans learn? How would we know and what happens when they do?
- Are there common patterns in implementation stages, results for students, and responses from staff and parents that can be predicted? If so, support could be better designed at all stages of implementation.
- Do the outcomes vary when implementation is schoolwide vs. limited to a few individuals or teams?

Because the degree of change and restructuring inherent in the HET model is so great, single-dimensional views of a classroom and school are not adequate. Many issues must be examined simultaneously

with full understanding of the rich webbing of one aspect to another. Thus, curriculum and instruction cannot be examined profitably in an isolated sense. What is needed is a simultaneous view of the interaction of curriculum, instruction, and brain biology. And the assessment tools to do so must speak of practicalities as well as theory, tools that are cast in down-to-earth language reflecting a common, shared vocabulary. This description can be used to assess program implementation at the classroom level on an individual or team basis. To assess implementation on a schoolwide basis, see *HET Schoolwide Stages of Implementation.*

USING THE STAGES OF IMPLEMENTATION

The stages provide a blueprint for action from which to start. There are step-by-step descriptions of how to achieve full implementation of the HET model, from its bodybrain-compatible roots to full integration of all basic skills and content areas. The stages are without time frames and deadlines—speed and quality of implementation are a function of levels of commitment reflected in district and school policies and resource allocation to support bodybrain-compatible education.

While the items in the "Expectations" column may seem unduly optimistic, they are the very real outcomes experienced in dozens of schools across the country where bodybrain-compatible learning through the HET model is implemented schoolwide and at the level of quality described at each of the stages of implementation.

Significant improvement of America's public education system and quantum jumps in student outcomes are possible and very doable. The necessary tools are within our grasp.

We invite you to join us on a journey into HET, a journey that will transform your world both professionally and personally.

Acknowledgments:

Our thanks to the pioneering work of Vickie Hogan, Jackie Muñoz, Dr. Victoria Bernhardt, and Jeanne Herrick. Their first draft of a rubric for Frank Paul School provided a springboard for discussions by the coaches and mentor teachers from other districts participating in the Mid-California Science Improvement Program (MCSIP): Diane DellaMaggiore, Julita Galleguillos, Vickie Hogan, and Cheryl Larison of Alisal School District and Ginger Anderson, Marsha Isaacson, Kris Kennedy, and Olga O'Brien from Santa Cruz Elementary School District. Special thanks also to Jeanne Herrick for sharing, her perspective of what's important for children and to associates of Susan Kovalik & Associates especially Pattie Mills, Ann Ross, and Karen D. Olsen for their national perspective on the issues that arise when implementing the HET model, . The final version of this tool, however, was written by Karen D. Olsen and Susan Kovalik.

Stage 0

Traditional means and ends

Curriculum

- Subject areas and specific skills are taught in isolation.
- Curriculum is textbook-driven and teacher-centered.
- Social development and interaction is based on external rewards and consequences.

Instructional Strategies

- The classroom is textbook- and lecture-driven.
- Students sit in rows; there is little collaboration; students are unfocused and mental fibrillation is apparent.
- Environments are sterile and/or cluttered with competing colors/patterns and old materials.

Expectations

- Students are teacher-dependent.
- Students do not understand the interrelationships among concepts common to various subject areas.
- Students do not see connections between school and real life.

Indicators

- Standardized tests and other paper and pencil tests graded on the bell curve are the primary means of assessment.

Notes:

Stage 1

Entry level for making the learning environment bodybrain-compatible

Curriculum

- The bodybrain-compatible element of absence of threat and enhancing reflective thinking is taught as an important and on-going part of the curriculum. Such curriculum contains the Lifelong Guidelines, including the LIFESKILLS, the role of emotions in learning, and collaboration.

Instructional Strategies

- The teacher's classroom leadership and management is based upon modeling the Lifelong Guidelines and LIFESKILLS. The atmosphere is participatory rather than dictatorial. "Discipline" is based upon helping students develop the personal and social skills and behaviors needed to successfully practice the Lifelong Guidelines rather than upon a system of externally imposed rewards and punishments.
- The calmness of the teacher's voice contributes to a settled classroom environment.
- The classroom is healthful (clean, well lighted, and pleasant smelling), aesthetically pleasing (calming colors and music, living plants, and well laid out for multiple uses), and uncluttered yet reflects what is being learned.
- Written procedures and agendas provide consistency and security for students.
- Students sit in clusters with easy access to work tools; collaborative learning is a frequently used learning strategy.
- Teacher meets frequently with a professional or peer coach who supports the implementation of a bodybrain-compatible learning environment for students.

- The concept of multiple intelligences problem solving and product producing capabilities is taught early in the year and is often a topic for post-lesson processing of collaborative work.
- Time frames for activities and areas of study are no longer rigid and students are given adequate time to complete their work.

- Limited choices are introduced through student selection of supplies, time allocations, materials and processes used for completing projects, etc.
- Teacher includes real life experiences—being there, immersion, and hands-on experiences—to supplement classroom instruction; resource people are invited to the classroom.
- Teacher is developing a variety of instructional strategies to supplement direct instruction.

Stage 1 of implementating HET begins not with themes or integration but with the brain research relevant to creating a bodybrain-compatible environment in which learning can occur.

Implementors are advised to go slowly with curriculum development until significant strides toward maintaining a bodybrain-compatible learning environment are achieved. While a bodybrain-compatible learning environment cannot be fully realized until curriculum becomes bodybrain-compatible, curricular changes have little impact if the learning environment is not consistent with how the brain learns.

Stage 1, entry level into a bodybrain-compatible environment, is to be applied to the classroom 100 percent of the time. Note that this stage is broken into two parts in order to give teachers greater focus on where and how to begin.

Expectations

- Absence of threat has been established in the classroom. The culture of classroom nutures reflective thinking.
- Students are beginning to take responsibility for their own behavior through the use of LIFESKILLS.
- An atmosphere of mutual respect and genuine caring is obvious among and between students and adults. Students do not put each other down; their behaviors with each other support absence of threat.
- Students demonstrate collaborative skills, e.g., active listening, taking turns, and respect for others' opinions.
- Students focus their attention on learning as soon as they enter the classroom.
- Lack of self-directedness and responsibility for learning has been replaced by a student focus on school as a safe and pleasant place to learn and grow; there is a growing sense of calm and openness.
- Parents understand the purpose and research behind bodybrain-compatible education and are supportive of the teacher's efforts.
- Parents notice evidence of LIFESKILLS at home.
- Teacher confidence and enjoyment in teaching increases.

Indicators

- Post-lesson processing about academic or collaborative experiences occurs daily.
- Classroom and schoolwide discipline problems have declined significantly.
- Differences in student engagement when real life experiences are provided are obvious to teacher and parents.
- Teacher includes student input when selecting work for the student's portfolio folder.

Notes:

Stage 2

Entry level for making curriculum bodybrain-compatible

Curriculum

- Teacher provides for real-life experiences by basing the integrated curriculum upon a physical location, event, or situation that students can and do frequently experience through "being there." Science is either the core for or a prominent part of curriculum integration.
- Teacher has identified the concepts and skills that will be taught to the levels of mastery and application. Key points focus on critical concepts rather than on isolated facts.
- Inquiries for each key point provide students with choices and multiple opportunities for real world application; they also allow multiple ways of problem solving and producing products. Some inquiries are designed specifically to provide realistic opportunities for students to practice citizenship, e.g., social/political action activities and collaborative grouping practices.
- The curriculum includes most of the elements that appear as a natural part or extension of the being-there focus, e.g., science, math, technology, history/social studies, fine arts, as well as mathematics, reading, writing, and oral expression. Integration of content is natural, not contrived.
- Content is age-appropriate.

Instructional Strategies

- Immersion and hands-on-of-the-real-thing are the primary input used to supplement and extend being-there experiences.
- Instructional strategies are varied and provide the most effective methods for the particular content at hand. For example, direct instruction and HET discovery processes, collaboration and personal study time, mindmapping organizing materials, and cross-age/multi-age interaction.
- Resources to support the theme are multiple, varied, and rich. Resource people and experts are regular visitors to the classroom. Visits to off-campus learning sites are frequent and serve as the organizers for the curriculum being studied.
- Choices are regularly provided through inquiries and other means.
- Adequate time is allowed to let students complete their work.
- There are sufficient inquiries for students to complete to ensure mastery and development of mental programs for using the knowledge and skills of the key points.
- Collaboration is effectively used and enhances learning for academic and social growth.

The beginning steps in making curriculum bodybrain-compatible assume that significant progress has been made implementing Stage 1, making the learning environment bodybrain-compatible.

Whereas Stage 1 applied to the classroom 100 percent of the time, Stage 2 is applied only to that portion of the day, week, or year for which teachers have developed bodybrain-compatible curriculum using the HET model. The time frames and content that teachers may select to begin implementation of their bodybrain-compatible curriculum vary widely. Typically teachers begin where they feel they will be most successful and stretch from there. Whatever the starting point, however modest or bold, these descriptors at this stage apply only during the time when a teacher is implementing his/her bodybrain-compatible curriculum.

Expectations

- Students participate actively by initiating ideas, responding to the teacher's questions, staying on task with minimal guidance from the teacher, etc.
- Students see the connections between the classroom and real life.
- Mental fibrillation has been replaced by a sense of calm, relaxed alertness, confidence in success in learning, and purposefulness.
- School as a place to learn and exercise one's personal best is the accepted norm.
- Absentee rates are dropping, library check-out rates are increasing.
- Students engage in problem solving in a collaborative manner at least once a day.

Indicators

- Post-lesson processing about academic and social experiences is a part of each collaborative activity.
- On-going assessment of student progress is evaluated using selected inquiries to determine mastery of key points, e.g., projects, presentations, and some traditional tests.
- Both teacher and student select work for the student's portfolio folder.
- Assessment of mastery is based upon the 3 C's of Assessment in the HET model.

Notes:

Stage 3

Curriculum

- A yearlong theme, prominently displayed on the wall for both students and teacher, serves as the framework for content development. On average, more than 25 percent of instruction during the school year is based upon bodybrain-compatible curriculum developed for this theme.
- Curriculum content, as expressed in the key points, enhances pattern-seeking, making it easier for students to perceive and understand the most important ideas and concepts in the curriculum. Inquiries are designed to help students make connections to the real world and to develop mental programs for long-term memory. Inquiries that provide experiences in citizenship, such as social/political action activities and collaborative grouping practices, occur weekly.
- Most of the time, the curriculum includes almost all of the elements that appear as a natural part or extension of the "being there" focus, e.g., science, math, technology, history/social studies, and fine arts, as well as mathematics, reading, writing, and oral expression, including second language acquisition.
- The content of the theme is consistently used as a high interest area for applying the skills/knowledge currently being taught in at least one basic skill area (e.g., math, reading, writing).
- Curriculum for collaborative assignments is specifically designed for group work.

Instructional Strategies

- Immersion and hands-on-of-the-real-thing are the primary input used to supplement and extend being there experiences.
- All instructional time during the theme and for a growing portion of time during the remainder of the day is based upon the progression of

Being there ➔ *concept* ➔ *language* ➔ *application to the real world*

rather than the traditional progression of

Language ➔ *concept … application.*

- Collaboration is used daily whenever it will enhance pattern seeking and program building.
- Time is allocated in accordance with the nature of the tasks and student and teacher need for adequate time; such time allocations are made in recognition of the need to develop programs for using knowledge and skills in real world contexts.
- Peers and cross-age tutors substantially increase teaching and practice time for students in areas of individual need.

Stage 3 assumes that a bodybrain-compatible learning environment has been well established and is consistently nurtured and maintained throughout the day (Stage 1) and that the tools for developing bodybrain-compatible curriculum are consistently and effectively used during the time targeted for HET curriculum (Stage 2). Stage 3 represents a refinement of implementing a bodybrain-compatible curriculum for students. Targeted time for HET curriculum increases to approximately 25 percent of the year in Stage 3.

If either Stage 1 or 2 is not fully in place at this time, do not attempt to apply this stage regardless of the amount of teacher-developed curriculum being implemented. It is the quality, not the quantity, of HET curriculum that is key. The power of the HET model lies with its bodybrain-compatible underpinnings.

Expectations

- Students demonstrate the Lifelong Guidelines and LIFESKILLS throughout the day (in and out of the classroom); students are self-directed.
- Students as well as the teacher use the HET 3 C's of Assessment as a means of assessing learning.
- Students exercise more shared leadership while doing collaborative activities and they actively seek connections to and applications in the real world.
- Student absentee rates drop to less than 3 percent; visits to the school nurse due to emotional, upset-based problems drop significantly. Library circulation rates increase by 50 percent.
- Parents report student levels of interest in school and learning are higher than ever before. Parents' support levels are higher than ever before; volunteerism has doubled.

Indicators

- Celebrations of learning and social/political action are key assessment tools for each component; they are designed to allow students to demonstrate mastery and application of the key points in the curriculum and to learn the skills and knowledge necessary for effective citizenship.
- Selections, for the portfolio folder, of work completed as part of the theme are made primarily by the student.

Notes:

Stage 4

Curriculum

- Curriculum is based predominantly on visitable locations that provide being there experiences and connections with the real world.
- The yearlong theme includes a compelling rationale statement for the conceptual idea and provides an unforgettable pattern-shaper for students. On average, more than two-thirds of instructional time during the school year is based upon bodybrain-compatible curriculum developed for this yearlong theme.
- The content of the theme is used daily as meaningful content for teaching at least *two* areas of basic skills (e.g., math, reading, writing, oral expression, second and primary language acquisition) and is used for applying *all* the basic skills.
- The development and practice of citizenship continues to be a central focus of curriculum.

Instructional Strategies

- Learning experiences are predominantly based on real life, immersion, and hands-on-of-the-real-thing; the teacher regularly utilizes on-site explorations and discovery processes to make learning real for students.
- All instructional time during the theme and for a growing portion of time during the remainder of the day is based upon the progression of

Being there ➔ *concept* ➔ *language* ➔ *application to the real world*

rather than the traditional progression of

Language ➔ *concept … application.*

- Basic skills taught within the theme are taught as a means to an end, not as an end in themselves. Thus, while the teacher utilizes specific techniques for teaching the basic skills on a daily basis, student's primary focus is on the meaningful content which the basic skills help unlock.
- The teacher takes advantage of the power of "incidental learning" (as defined by Frank Smith) to build mental programs applying the basic skills.
- Choices, to allow for individual students' ways of learning, interests, and needs, are consistently provided.
- Students use technology as a natural extension of their senses to explore and learn.

Stage 4 assumes that a bodybrain-compatible learning environment has been established (Stage 1) and that the tools for developing bodybrain-compatible curriculum as described in Stages 2 and 3 are fully in place. Stage 4 represents a further refinement and extension of those tools and a consistent implementation of bodybrain-compatible curriculum for students for at least 50 percent of the time during the school year. If Stages 1, 2, and 3 are not fully in place, do not attempt to apply this stage regardless of the amount of time teacher-developed curriculum is being implemented. Again, the power of the HET model lies with its bodybrain-compatible underpinnings.

Expectations

- All students master the key points in all content and basic skill areas.
- Students demonstrate responsibility for their learning and act in a self-directed, self-initiating manner throughout the day; they have internalized the Lifelong Guidelines, including LIFESKILLS, and use them as the basis for interacting with others off campus as well as in the classroom and throughout the school campus.
- Students use what they learn in school to creatively solve real-life problems.
- Student absentee rates drop to less than 1.5 percent; visits to the school nurse are for serious physical illness, not for emotional upset.
- Library circulation rates are double those before the implementation of bodybrain-compatible/HET learning.
- *All* students who have experienced a bodybrain-compatible program implemented at Stage 3 or higher for at least three years perform at or above grade level; the *average* for the classroom is one grade level or more above national norms.

Indicators

- Except for district-required assessments, grading on the bell curve has been replaced with assessment of mastery and program-building demonstrated by culminating performances chosen by the teacher (using selected inquiries and the HET 3 C's of Assessment).
- Students' yearlong research projects reflect high interest and understanding.
- Guest resource people acknowledge the high degree of student understanding.
- The class newspaper or magazine, published at least twice a year, reflects writing skills at least one year above grade level.
- Students, having learned to assess their own learning, participate in parent-teacher conferences, describing how selections of their work demonstrate their progress (academic, personal, and social); they set goals for learning during the next component of the yearlong theme.

Notes:

Stage 5

Curriculum

- The yearlong theme serves as the framework for content development and implementation for all basic skills and content 90 percent of the day/year. Key points and inquiries effectively enhance pattern seeking and program building.
- The curriculum of the district, provides each teacher with pattern-enhancing tools for curriculum planning.
- Bodybrain-compatible curriculum is implemented schoolwide, providing consistency for students as they move through the school.

Instructional Strategies

- All instructional strategies identified in Levels 1 through 4 are in place 90 percent of the year.
- Students have the same teacher for two or more consecutive years (due either to multiaging or the teacher moving with the students).
- The teacher utilizes the power of incidental learning during both planned instructional strategies and unplanned teachable moments.
- Technology in the classroom allows teacher and students full access to databases and communications systems throughout the country and world. Being there experiences near the school are used as a starting point from which to examine similar, age-appropriate situations around the world.

Like Stages 3 and 4, Stage 5 assumes that a bodybrain-compatible learning environment has been established (Stage 1) and is being maintained at a high level and that the tools for developing bodybrain-compatible curriculum, described in Stages 3 and 4, are in place and are highly refined as. Stage 5 represents an extension of those tools and a consistent implementation of bodybrain-compatible curriculum for students 90 percent of the time during the school year. If either Stage 1 or 2 is not fully in place and consistently nurtured and maintained or if Stages 3 and 4 are not in place, do not attempt to apply this stage. Again, the power of the HET model lies in the quality of the implementation of its bodybrain-compatible underpinnings.

Expectations

- Self-responsibility for and self-initiated engagement in learning are valued schoolwide and clearly evident. Students display a love of learning and keen curiosity; they are mastering the skills and attitudes that make lifelong learning a reality.
- Students direct their own learning by assisting in the development of inquiries and the refinement of key points. They can identify and know how to pursue lifelong interests and career options; in focusing on these efforts, they can apply what they know to real world situations.
- Students have learned the personal and social skills for solving problems. They recognize the need for everyone's participation when making decisions that affect all. The classroom is a model of effective citizenship in action.

Indicators

- Parent-teacher conferences have become student-parent-teacher conferences that, in the upper grades, are led by the student.
- Students initiate and engage in a wide range of community volunteer tasks, social and political action projects, and other means of contributing to society.

Notes:

Notes:

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