

Grading for
Learning...sooner rather
than later

What the Research Says...

“Traditional grading practices have been used for over one hundred years, and to date, there have been no meaningful research reports to support it (Marzano, 2000).”

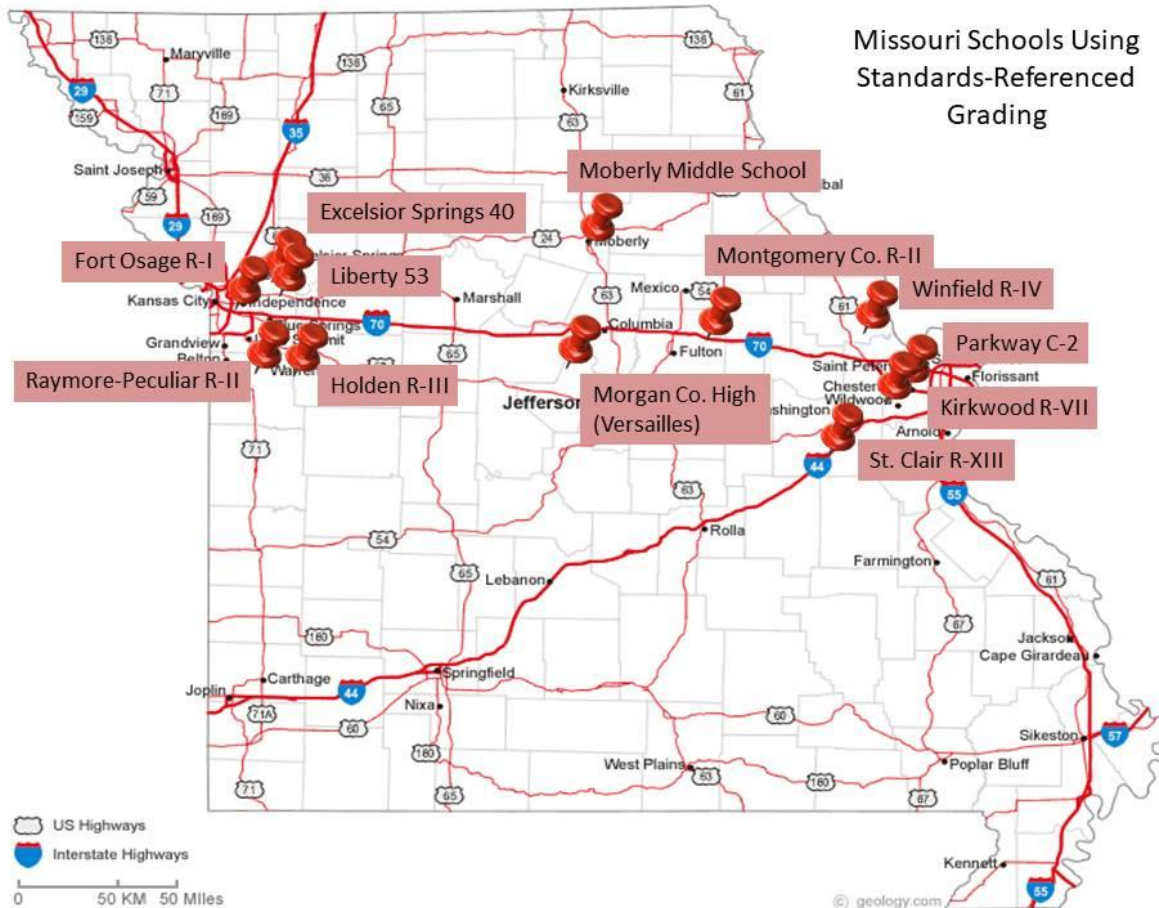
“Studies show standards-based teaching practices correlate to higher academic achievement (Craig, 2011; Schoen, Cebulla, Finn, & Fi, 2003).”

“...School leaders must now ensure their system’s purpose is to develop talent rather than merely sort it (Guskey, 2011).”

The Origin of Grades...

- The first grades ever assigned divided students into 4 categories. This might be the origin of the 4.0 scale.
- Majority of Valedictorian and Salutatorian students continued to be successful in school and career...but few went became “visionaries” because they were “generalists” not “specialists”.
- “Kids who are graded....lose interest in learning itself...avoid challenging tasks whenever possible, in order to maximize the chances of getting an A.” (Alfie Kohn)

Missouri Schools Using Standards-Referenced Grading



[CLICK HERE](#)
[to view an](#)
[example of a](#)
[Standards](#)
[Referenced](#)
[Grade Card](#)

How do we get started?

Grades at FMS

- Objectives / Learning Targets / Standards are entered in SIS, with a description and the method of assessment.
- Every item entered into SIS should have a 5 point rubric, in which F = “No Evidence” and A = “Proficient”, with varying levels of growth represented by D, C, and B levels.
- Re-do / re-teaching time is essential and should be structured into a unit.
- As we “grade” student work, students can only earn one of 5 grades (A-F).

Essential Questions of a Professional Learning Community

1. What do we want our students to learn?



Priority Standards

Why Priority Standards?

To adequately learn all of the standards most states (and school districts) require, we would need to expand the student's time in school by “a minimum of 6,000 hours”.

Not all standards need to be taught, and not everything that's taught needs to be graded.

Not every standard needs graded

- Recognize that most plants and animals require food and oxygen (needed to release the energy from that food) (MLS, GR 8, Science).
- Formulate scenarios that will illustrate potential problems or difficult situations. (MLS, GR 7, Health).

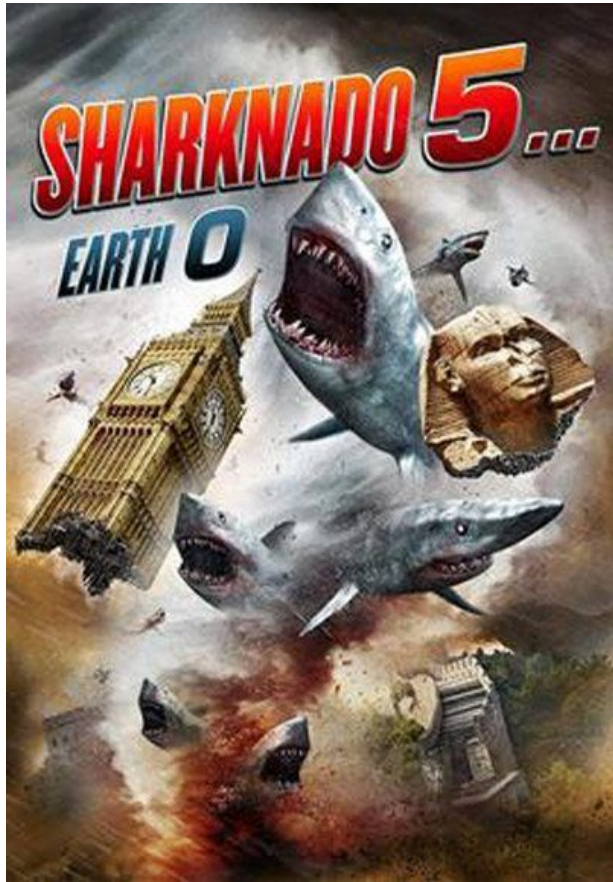
Identifying Priority Standards

- Endurance
 - Concepts & skills that last over time (life)
- Leverage
 - Crossover skills to other areas
- Readiness
 - For the next level of learning
 - State Testing (MAP / EOC)

Ainsworth, L. (2004). *Power standards: identifying the standards that matter the most*. Englewood, CO: Advanced Learning Press.

It's a priority...not a secret!

- We need to make students aware of what it is they're trying to learn!
- Shift questions from “What are you doing?” to “What are you trying to learn?”
- We can start by making them less painful. Make it a fun! Students should enter the room excited! “What are we learning about today?”




Let's Try It!




1. What's your standard?
2. What are the key terms?
3. How many different ways can you provide initial instruction?
4. What's the "hook"?






What's your hook?
Call one, warn one.



Any scoring rubric should answer the question “What does a grade of [x] mean the student knows (or can do)?”



The answer should be a specific piece of knowledge, specific skill, or set of skills / knowledge.

It should not be a percentage of test questions, because that just leads to ask more questions, ie, “Were all questions about same the topic / skill?”, “Were they asked the same way?” or “Were they worth the same percentage?” etc.

We should be able to ask our student to “show me how to.....” or “tell me about...” when discussing the specific items on our rubric.

Creating a Five Point Proficiency Scale (Secondary)

<u>E</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>A</u>

“Proficient” should be a task / skill / knowledge as close to what the standard says as possible.



Again, start with the “end” in mind, but notice its at the very end of this scale, not a “3” in traditional SRG. Begin by defining what “proficient” (or “mastery”) will look like.

Creating a Five Point Proficiency Scale (Secondary)

<u>E</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>A</u>



“F” should always represent “No evidence”. Remember, for grading purposes, we’re not concerned with “why” there’s no evidence. Cheating, non-compliance, failure, etc are reported the same. (Our actions are different!)

Creating a Five Point Proficiency Scale (Secondary)

<u>E</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>A</u>

“Lower” levels of DOK, basic recall, simpler “pieces” of the “proficient puzzle”.

This leaves us with three “levels” to convey “progressing”. To ensure reliability, we want to make these as specific as possible, aligned to DOK and/or order in which they’re taught. Think of these as “steps” on the road to “mastery”.

For right
going

“How a
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4”.

To Help or Not to Help?

One difference between the lowest level and the next lowest level could be the phrase “with help, the student can....”

“The student’s score should only be a reflection of what the student can do without any outside assistance.”

Time to work!

Quality Assessments - teacher designed and aligned to a proficiency scale

- “Obtrusive” assessments = learning stops to assess.
- “Unobtrusive” assessments = Students didn’t know.
- “Student generated” = Kids come up with ways to “prove” what they’ve learned.

Quality Assessments are....

- Are broken down by standard, or provide opportunity for multiple standards to be assessed.
- Reliable
- Valid
- Free of Bias
- Readable (developmentally appropriate)

The Problem with Multiple Choice, True-False, & Matching

There are three things you will ever need to do with a piece of information:

- Talk about it (Oral Defense or “Probing Conversation”)
- Write about it (Constructive Response)
- Build / do something (Performance Event)

Assessment Examples

1. Design the proficiency scale (rubric) for your standard.

2. Begin developing the common assessment for this standard.

Daddy,
do you like
my picture?



Honey,
if you'd like me
to be objective,
I'll have to create
a rubric.

freshspectrum.com



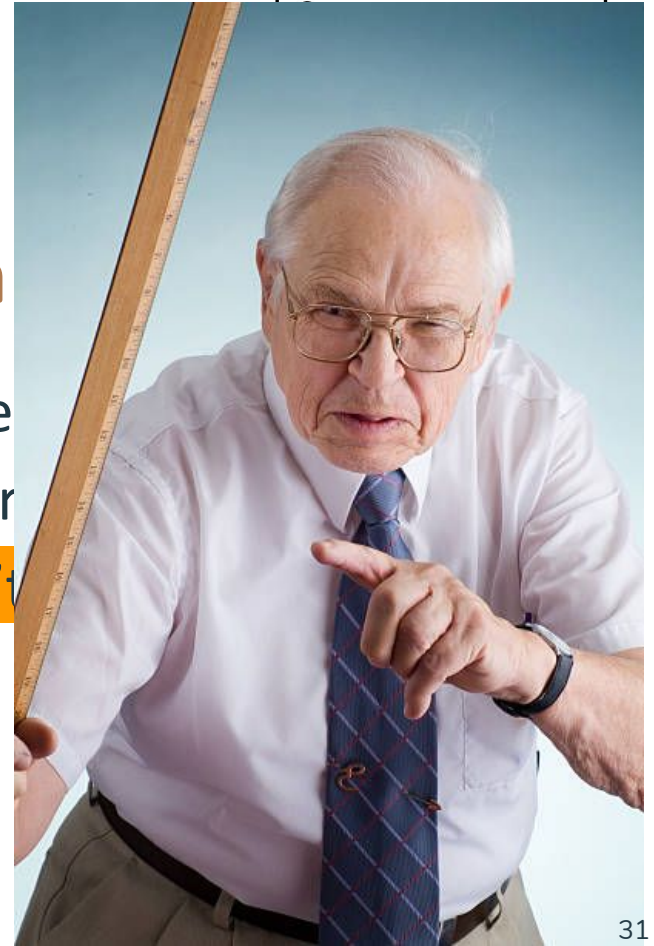
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3. What do v



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“Don’t tell me you believe all students can learn. Tell me what you do when they don’t.”

~Rick DuFour



The PLC Four Critical Questions
don't just need district level and
building level answers...they need
classroom answers, too.

ACADEMICS

INTENSIVE INTERVENTIONS

- Individual Students
- Diagnostic Assessments
- High Intensity

TIER III

5%

TIER III

BEHAVIOR

INTENSIVE INDIVIDUAL INTERVENTIONS

- Individual Students
- Assessment-Based
- Intense Durable Procedures

TIER II

15%

TIER II

TARGETED INTERVENTIONS

- Some Students (at risk)
- Rapid Response
- Frequent Progress Monitoring

TARGETED GROUP INTERVENTIONS

- Some Students (at risk)
- Rapid Response
- Frequent Progress Monitoring

RESEARCH-BASED CORE INSTRUCTION

- All Students
- Prevention
- Early Intervention

TIER I

80%

TIER I

UNIVERSAL INTERVENTIONS

- All Settings, All Students
- Preventive, Proactive
- Classroom Management

ALL 3 TIERS FOCUS ON ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIORAL STRATEGIES
IN THE GENERAL EDUCATION SETTING.

If 80% of your students aren't proficient in your objective, you don't need RTI. You need to reteach the lesson. It's not a Tier II problem. It's a Tier I problem.

Remember, you gave them your best ...now give them the rest!



- Begin lesson planning by thinking “How many different ways can I teach this?”. THEN, decide which ones best, and do that first.
- If (when?) that doesn’t work for ALL kids, your “other ideas” become re-teaching ideas.

Re-Teaching
does not mean
doing the same
thing,
LOUDER...

...or to
fewer kids.

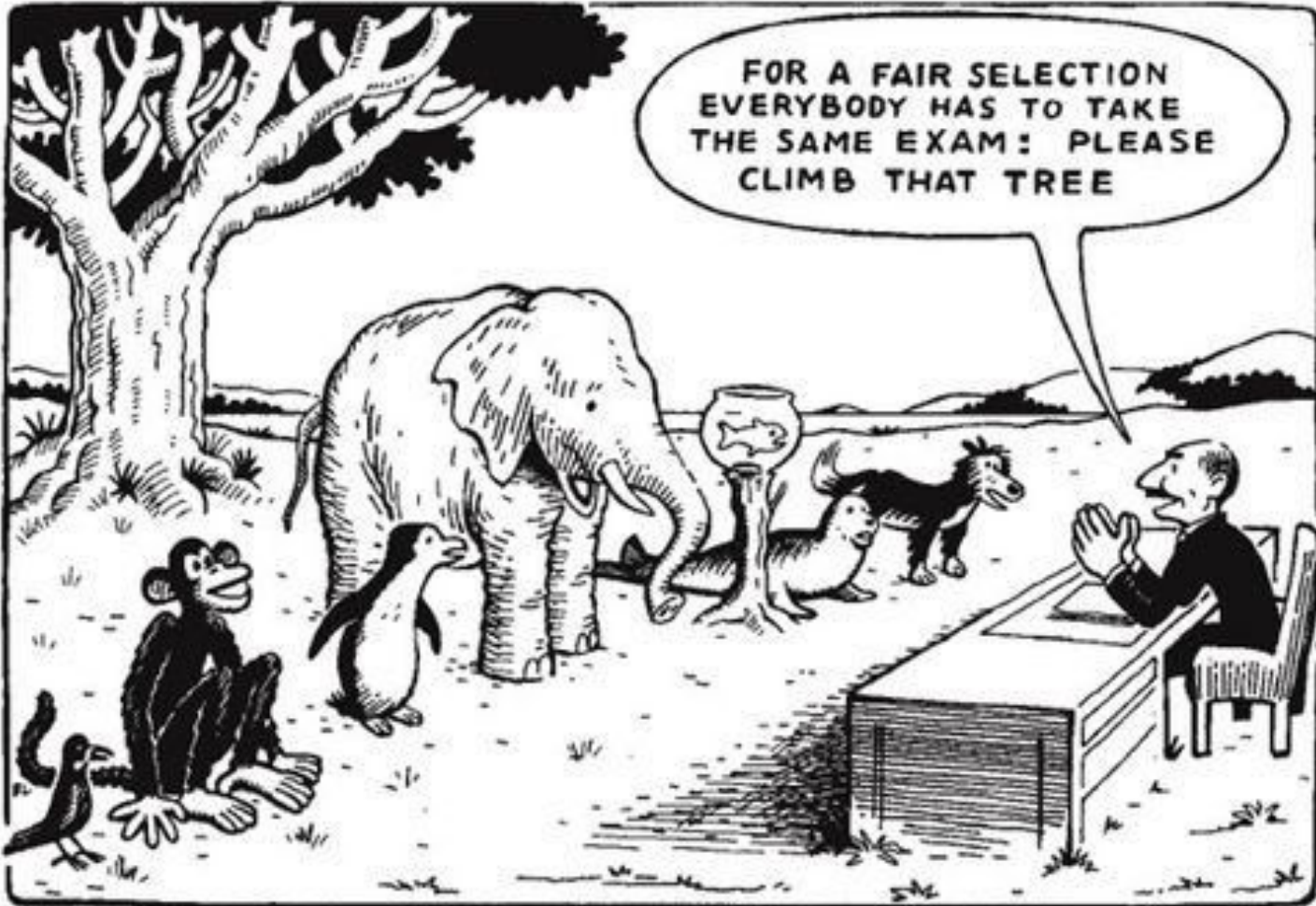
....Or
S..L..O..W..E..R..



“Different” Ideas for re-teaching students

- Make it more novel
- Make it icky / gross / edible
- Tie in physical actions
- Incorporate movement
- Create simulations
- Scaffold with something they already know (anything!)
- If it was quiet, make it loud.
- If it was loud, make it quiet.
- Similes & Metaphors
- Draw / Write / Act
- Songs & Raps
- Manipulatives / Tactile
- CALL HOME!!!!

Why do we wait for kids to fail before providing them an intervention? You already know which students are going to fail...get them to “preview” material...it’s free and easy!



Assessments can be differentiated too.

How do we differentiate assessments?

- ELA - What are they reading / writing about?
- Math - Change the relevance of the problem / Oral Defense
- Science & Social Studies - Oral Defense / Written Exams

[The Case for Oral Defense Grading](#)

ReDo

Return to your Objective Sheets...what are some ways you can challenge your successful learners who already know the content?



NOW we can talk about Level 4!



One of the key benefits of a full transition to Standards Referenced Grading is it provides all stakeholders with a way to communicate when a student is achieving “beyond proficient” (PLC Question #4).

The Debate Regarding “Level 4”

“Many standards have deeper levels of understanding beyond what the curriculum requires. Including a “Level 4” labeled “excels” creates a way to continue to challenge our best students and communicate their achievements with stakeholders.”

“Whatever we establish as the “top” of the scale is what parents & students will expect, thus becoming the new “proficient” and leading to disappointment and frustration...This also implies that additional learning is ‘linear’ and can’t be outside the standard.”

The Debate Regarding “Level 4”

“In order to provide accurate feedback and clearly define for stakeholders what constitutes “excelling” at a standard, specific tasks should be required to demonstrate a student's “excellence” in that standard.”

“Requiring additional tasks beyond the standard doesn’t show that a student “excels” in the standard, it shows that they are (maybe) proficient in a whole new standard.”

Simply moving kids to the next standard actually *increases* the achievement gap. True “experts” know a topic deeper. Provide top students opportunities to *enrich* not just more “surface level” learning.

In a perfect world....

- We'd have a separate section on the report card with "bonus" standards for kids who "already know it".
 - Sometimes "move to the next standard" makes sense (Letter Identification), sometimes it doesn't (science, social studies).
- We'd provide room to explore / pursue passions as well as deepen learning on specific objectives.
 - These are easier with more mature students.

Generic Ways to Increase Rigor and Reach Kids Who “Already Get It”

- History = “What can we learn from [x] that applies to today?” or research, support with primary sources.
- Math = “Create a scenario (number story) when you might need to use [x].”
- ELA = “Write an alternative ending to...” or “re-tell the story from [x]’s perspective”.
- Science = “Identify a problem with [x] and form a hypothesis that could be tested.”

Every teacher
needs to improve,
not because they
are not good
enough, but
because they can
be **EVEN BETTER.**
Dylan William

Teaching is not my job,
it's my passion;
getting better at it
-that's my job.

"I did the best I could at the time and when I knew better, I did better."

— Maya Angelou