

## E-Newsletter

*This newsletter is written specifically for administrators and will include news and information to help you support implementation of the CSCOPE curriculum. In it you will find tools supporting teachers in your district, better understanding of CSCOPE documents and updated curriculum information critical to the success of all schools. We hope that you find this newsletter informative and helpful. When you see the ⚡ icon, it means that the article you are about to read also*

### In this issue:

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### Questions?

Your local service center contacts are listed on the last page.

Written and edited by ESC  
Region XIII Local CSCOPE  
Support Team

### Systematic Implementation: Planning for Next Year

As you first prepared to implement CSCOPE, you may have participated in professional development regarding how to effectively lead change. In that session, five building blocks for managing adaptive change were identified: Vision, Skills, Incentive, Resources and an Action Plan.

As the school year comes to a rapid close, take a few moments to reflect on your CSCOPE implementation. You may choose to consider the following questions, adding your own as you see fit, to assist you in reflecting on this year.

How has CSCOPE implementation gone?

- What were your goals going in to this process?
- To what degree have those goals been met?
- What successes have you experienced?
- What obstacles have you faced?

What strategies did you use to meet those goals?

- How did they work?
- What did you anticipate that actually did occur?
- What did you not anticipate that occurred?

What data did you collect along the way?

- What questions did the data generate?
- What other data would you like to have?

What have you learned this year about

- CSCOPE?

- your staff?
- Other?

How you might have done things differently ?

Based on what you've learned this year, how will you build your action plan for next year? Will it involve

- a different level of implementation (more courses or grade levels)?
- vertical alignment work?
- instructional strategies?
- communication with stakeholders?
- new staff?
- resources and materials?

What additional support, if any, do you need from your ESC?

The teacher newsletter includes reflective questions as well. That article also appears in this newsletter on the next page. With the answers to these and other reflective questions you may have come up with, you are ready to make an action plan for next year's CSCOPE implementation.



## Taking a Look Back: Reflecting on This Year of Instruction

It's hard to believe another school year is coming to a close. As summer swiftly approaches, it's time to take a moment to stop and think back on your year of instruction. Reflections can be used to make connections from the past experiences and, through this process, work towards new goals for next school year. The first step is to focus on questions that you can truly benefit and grow from - questions such as:

- What short- and long-term goals did I want to accomplish this year? What was the result of these goals?
- What resources did I use this year to support my goals?
- What areas went well this year? What accomplishments am I proud of?
- What were some obstacles that I encountered? What did I do to overcome these obstacles?

Start with one question and reflect on your experiences. You can continue to add questions of your own and generate ideas through this process. The key is to keep this process simple so that you can see the benefits; reflections can be as short as a five minute journal writing at the end of the day. A practice of reflection can help in the planning of next year's instruction, and this directly impacts and benefits students.

### Collaborative Team Reflection

Plan a time to schedule short, informal meetings and visits with your team members. If you do not work on a team, you might want to meet with other teachers who are teaching the same content area to share ideas and support. When you meet, discuss the effectiveness of teamwork and reflect on what

**"Follow effective action with quiet reflection. From the quiet reflection will come even more effective action."** -  
*Thomas F. Drucker*

has worked this year. Also, reflect on aspects such as teaching difficult concepts in the curriculum, strategies, or programs implemented this year. What impact did these have on student learning? Consider the following questions:

- How did we work together as a team (with collaboration, with shared planning responsibilities)?
- What are some considerations for working together next year? How can we strengthen our team?
- What are things we did well together? How can we continue to help support one another?
- What goals would the team like to work on for next year?
- How can we continue to support student learning?

Groups can also choose a focus question to consider. Team members can use this question to reflect on individually over a period of time, and then revisit at the next meeting to share and brainstorm ideas with one another. You may also want to consider participating in vertical discussions with other grade level teams. This is an extremely valuable process in determining how to support student conceptual development as well as allowing time for sharing resources.

### Student Reflections

If applicable, ask for student feedback. Learn when your students were most engaged and how you can strengthen strategies and content to support them.

**Reflections** help educators strengthen their teaching, deepen their knowledge, and adapt new ideas to help implement the district curriculum. Individual reflection centers your instructional practices and allows you to continue to strengthen knowledge and identify strategies that help support student learning. As you look back on this year of instruction, how did you make your district's curriculum your own? How will you continue to grow with your curriculum? Have those conversations with others, and look to those around you - your grade level team, department, or campus leaders - for support. Reflection is a continual process, a journey through which individuals and/or groups can seek paths to accomplish great things for student learning.

## An Update from Wade Labay, State CSCOPE Project Director

It has been an outstanding year for CSCOPE, and we are excited about the continued growth of our curriculum management system. Additionally, we now have approximately 400 districts/charter schools in the state using CSCOPE, and the collaborative has grown from 10 to now 12 supporting education service centers for CSCOPE.

We currently have all necessary curricular components available on the Developer site with a few exceptions at the lesson level for some Spanish-translated Math units and the final two units of Physics. We encourage users to check the Unit Status Reports under the "Main" tab of the Developer for the most updated listings for those units.

There are two questions that most of our districts ask at this time of the year. Below are the questions and a brief response for each based on our current status and likely progress.

### ***What is going to change for the next school year, AND when will we be able to access the 2009-2010 versions?***

With the new TEKS for ELA/Reading and SLA, we are working to provide all primary curriculum documents for these content areas for 09-10. At a minimum, we will provide the final versions of the VADs in late spring/early June for review and training, and we anticipate release of YAGs, TEKS Verification, and IFDs soon after. There will not be any new lessons provided in 09-10 with the new TEKS documents. We will only provide curriculum documents up to the IFD level. Exemplar Lessons will be available for 2010-2011. However, please note that CSCOPE will continue to provide all ELA and SLA components based on the current TEKS for 09-10 (including the current lessons used in 08-09). Essentially, CSCOPE will have two separate ELA and SLA systems operating for 2009-2010 - one based on the new TEKS, and the other based on the current TEKS. Each district will have the option to utilize either or both versions.

Math, Science, and Social Studies are being reviewed for any changes necessary based on state requirements, College Readiness Standards, and feedback from the field. There will be very few changes in the primary components up to the IFD level for any of these content areas. The 2009-2010 versions of these components will be available to districts in early June if not earlier. Assessments and Exemplar Lessons will not follow this same time table, as they must follow the finalized versions of the primary components. Districts will always be able to access the 2008-2009 versions of any component throughout the summer, and we will work to ensure that the final 2009-2010 assessments and lessons are provided in a timely manner for planning and use.

Final Spanish-translation versions of our content areas K-5, as well as much of Spanish Language Arts, follow the finalized English versions of each content area; therefore, there is always a lag on the timeline for releasing those documents. We will keep Unit Status Report postings up to date throughout the summer to keep everyone informed of progress.

There are also several other items to make note of regarding additional features and future events with CSCOPE.

New courses at the high school level will be available to districts for 2009-2010. Government, Economics, and Precalculus will be available up through the Exemplar Lesson level. Environmental Systems will have all primary components available, but we are holding on Exemplar Lesson production at this time based on the new TEKS adoption cycle for Science currently underway.

We are hosting the 2009 State CSCOPE Conference at the San Antonio Convention Center June 23-24.

There are currently over 900 people already registered, and we are looking forward to having teachers and leaders from across the state spend time learning, networking, and planning together during this time.

CSCOPE is working on enhancements to the Developer site based primarily on customer feedback. Various new features, such as those with the lesson planning tool, will be shared as they become available.

The CSCOPE general website at <http://www.cscope.us/> has been updated recently with new sample documents and information.

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Printed and bound CSCOPE scope and sequence documents are available for purchase through the Region XIII Products website, and we are planning to have the final 2009-2010 versions of these printed documents available in early June.

If there are any suggestions for new products that CSCOPE should consider offering to our clients, please let us know at [info@cscope.us](mailto:info@cscope.us)

As always, please contact your supporting ESC for additional information regarding support and training. The CSCOPE State Development Team is in constant communication with member ESCs regarding feedback from our districts and campuses, and we strive to make this curriculum management system as relevant and accommodating as possible for users. Thank you very much for your continued interest and support of CSCOPE.

Sincerely,

Wade N. Labay, Ed.D.  
CSCOPE State Project Director



## Differentiating Instruction

In order for educators to consider the most effective differentiation strategies that will really make a difference in student learning, we first must determine the definition and the purpose of the word. Differentiated instruction is not a “thing” that should be accomplished in the classroom, instead it is a way of thinking about the teaching and learning of students. A few questions must be asked first. What exactly is differentiation and how does it apply to me? Based on the truth that all students learn differently, what practice or strategy is necessary for these students to make sense of the information being given to them? More specifically, how differentiated is a CSCOPE lesson as it is written?

In differentiated instruction students are placed at the center of teaching and learning (Tomlinson, 2001). Because each learner comes to school with a different set of

learning needs, examples of which include differing educational, personal, and communal contexts (Taylor, 2003) and varying degrees of academic skill development (Levine, 2001), differentiated instruction advocates that the educator proactively plans a variety of instruction methods so as to best facilitate effective learning experiences which are suited to the various learning needs within the classroom (Tomlinson, 2001). Expecting the students to modify themselves to “fit” into the curriculum does not work. Research reminds us that students come to the classroom with different ability sets and also, a variety of gaps in their learning. CSCOPE along with some simply applied strategies can engage all of the students in your classroom.

CSCOPE lessons are written in accordance with the Five E model. Even the seemingly simple “engage” and “explore” activities should

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**CSCOPE State Conference for Teachers  
San Antonio, Texas  
June 23 and 24, 2009**



**For more details, go to  
<http://www5.esc13.net/cscope/cscopeconference/index.html>.**

**Hope to see you there!**

never be eliminated when teaching the lesson. These instructional procedures set up the lesson to tap into the student's readiness and interest level, thus preparing them to make sense of the information that is forthcoming. Lev Vygotsky, a Russian psychologist, proved that individuals learn best in accordance with their readiness to do so (Tomlinson, 2001). This theoretical influence provides a concrete foundation for differentiated instruction. The readiness of the individual should match what a student learns, how they learn it and how the student demonstrates what they learned when using differentiated instruction. One goal in teaching should be to assist in creating an autonomous or independent learner. A stepping stone in achieving this is to build on the intrinsic motivation of the student. What better way to accomplish this than developing the interest level?

Look carefully at the Performance Indicator of a CSCOPE lesson. Notice the verbs. What exactly is it asking you to have the students accomplish? Each Performance Indicator has two parts, the content and the performance. Here is an example. A third grade Performance Indicator (Unit 6) states:

*Create a visual display that illustrates the literary elements of narrative structure with a book that you have recently read. Explain how the application of these literary elements has helped you to understand and interpret literary texts.*

What is the content of this Performance Indicator? What is the performance required? Another way to look at it is that the content is the "what" and the performance is the "how". The content of this specific Performance Indicator is "literary elements of narrative structure" and how they help the student to "understand and interpret literary texts". The performance is to "create a visual display". After breaking the Performance Indicator apart into these two sections, remember that when differentiating for your class, the content must stay the same for all students. The variation would be included in the performance aspect of the Performance Indicator. The question to ask is how can the integrity of the original Performance Indicator remain intact while making alterations to meet the needs of my students? Each Performance Indicator should be evaluated in this manner prior to implementation to insure quality and effective learning to take place.

Another method of differentiating a CSCOPE lesson is to take a careful look at what is already imbedded. Again, think of the students that you will be working with. What is already there and what would be necessary to add according to the specific learning needs of your class.

Here is an example. In the second grade science lesson (Unit 02, Lesson 01) the title is *Change Occurs: What is Change?* Look specifically at the "engage" activity. First write the question "What is change?" on the board

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## TALA Stipends for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Teachers!

**Middle School Teachers!** T E X A S  
Learn successful academic literacy routines TALA  
as part of an effective RtI model! ADOLESCENT  
LITERACY  
ACADEMIES

<b>ELA Academy</b> for ELA and Reading teachers \$500 for 3-day session + online follow-up	<b>Content Area Academy</b> for Math, Science, & Social Studies teachers \$250 for 1½-day session + online follow-up
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Summer 2009  
Contact your regional education service center to register today!

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and discuss with students. Next, show a piece of paper, cut the paper in half. Ask “What has changed?” Hold up a different piece of paper, ball it up, and ask the same question. This should prompt a discussion about permanent change.

When considering students in your class that are ELL, what is already in the lesson to meet their needs? The activity is concrete and visual, and students are asked to record their findings. To add to this, if needed for better understanding, the teacher could pre-teach vocabulary like “permanent” and “change”. Another method of differentiating might be to give the student paper so they could follow along with the demonstration. By making these minor adjustments, the teacher is insuring the information and concept acquisition. By allowing the gifted student to speculate about the questions and providing them an opportunity to share their ideas either orally or in writing can assist in engaging this student too.

Effective differentiation does not require the teacher to change all that they have always done in the classroom. We must remember that differentiation is a way of thinking about teaching and learning. Responding proactively to the needs of the students requires careful evaluation of the prepared CSCOPE lesson.

Sources:

1. Levine, Mel (2002). *A Mind at a Time*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
2. Taylor, Lorraine; Catharine Whittaker (2003). *Bridging Multiple Worlds: Case Studies of Diverse Educational Communities*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
3. Tomlinson, Carol (2001). *How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-Ability Classrooms* (2nd

### ***Tips for Designing and Managing Differentiated Instruction***

- Begin differentiating at your own pace. If you are new to differentiation, choose a couple of low-prep strategies to try out each semester.
- The time allotted for a task should be a little shorter than your students’ attention spans.
- Giving clear directions is essential when several activities are going on in the classroom.
- Be sure students have a plan for getting help when you are busy with another group. “Three before me” is a good motto.
- Group work can be noisy, but use strategies for minimizing the sound like teaching students to use their “6-inch” voices.
- Teach students what on-task behavior looks and sounds like.
- Have a plan for students or groups who finish quickly. Guide them to do higher quality work or have a game ready for when they finish. If they consistently have spare time, the work may be too easy for them.
- Observe student behaviors as a clue to the difficulty of the tasks. Students who give up quickly may not understand the directions or may think the work is too difficult. Plan to spend a little time at the beginning of the work session with those students to give them a head start.

Tomlinson, C.A. (2001). *How to differentiate instruction in mixed ability classrooms, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. Association for supervision and curriculum development: Alexandria, Virginia.

## Tips & Tools for Managing Cooperative Learning: ABCD Whispers

ABCD whispers is a way to conduct structured student to student conversations in your classroom. Students are assigned a letter (A through D). Each letter is given a different concept or term which students then illustrate on a sheet of paper. The term they are given should be written on this sheet of paper, no other words should be used but symbols are allowed. For example, during specific units the following terms might be given to the students:

Letter assigned to student	Unit of study and words for each student			
	Ecology	Research	Applications with Rational Numbers	Civil War
Student A	Food web	Primary Source	percent	resources
Student B	Producer	Secondary Source	proportion	tariffs
Student C	Heterotrophic	Perspective	Part	secession
Student D	Decomposer	Artifact	Whole	emancipation

Three to five minutes is usually adequate time for students to complete their drawings, but allow more time if students need to reference their notes or text for review before drawing. Once students have completed their drawings, they will stand as a group of four (one member representing each of the four letters A-D). Students complete three rounds of discussion as shown below. Students explain the drawing they did to another student, hear their explanation, and then exchange papers. In the second round they will be explaining someone else's paper, they will then exchange papers again. In the last round a student is hearing the explanation of their own paper. As students are having their discussions, the teacher will circulate through the room, listening for strengths and for follow up teaching that may need to be done.

### Round 1

Student A explains Paper A ↔ Student B explains Paper B

Student C explains Paper C ↔ Student D explains Paper D

### Round 2

Student A explains Paper B ↔ Student C explains Paper D

Student B explains Paper A ↔ Student D explains Paper C

### Round 3

Student A explains Paper D ↔ Student D explains Paper A

Student B explains Paper C ↔ Student C explains Paper B

*Adapted from a process demonstrated by Linda Hoyt (<http://www.lindahoyt.com>) which is based on a process from Longman Vocabulary.*

Have questions about the newsletter? Contact your Education Service Center.

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