



Newsletter Features

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Important Dates

- **April 6:** 4-5pm Field Advisory #2
- **April 19:** 3rd Mentoring Contact completed
- **April 27:** Mentor Paperwork due
- **April 29:** Instruction ends
- **May 2-6, M-F :** UIC Final examinations.
- **July 15:** Application deadline for STEP=UP Project
- **July/Aug:** Mentor Institute TBA

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Special Teachers and Exceptional Pupils = Urban Promise

Mentoring with Artifacts

The interactions that you have with mentees serve purposes much greater than helping students to move forward through a graduate program. Your mentoring, undoubtedly, provides students with authentic classroom understanding, through the sharing of real accounts as well as through opportunities to observe and work with children. These mentoring relationships present students with distinct learning experiences, outside of those managed by the graduate program.

The knowledge that you share with mentees is without doubt unique and incomparable. Therefore, we feel that any period of time that you spend with mentees is precious. This is why we have been continuously pushing for you to use artifacts as a means by which to share your thoughts and understandings

during interactions with your mentees.

Artifacts can be used to immediately engage mentees in those conversations that are valuable to their learning. Mentees want to be exposed to the learning that takes place in real classrooms. They have told us how much they appreciate learning about instructional and behavior management strategies from practicing teachers. They see you as sources of insight, guidance, and support. Therefore, we want to ensure that we optimize their learning, however limited time may be.

As with classroom practice, we believe that artifacts can be used in mentoring to effectively engage students, communicate important information and inspire valuable discussions. Thus, we would like to provide you with a few thoughts on how to integrate artifacts into your mentoring.

Choosing an artifact

1. Select an artifact that your students have recently worked with because it will be much easier for you to recall the details of its development and specifics about students' learning.
2. Make sure that the artifact coincides with the ideas that you are interested in conveying to mentees.
3. Spend some time thinking about what artifact would elicit the most conversation from students. You want students to be active participants not passive listeners.

Planning

1. Plan to talk or write about specific students in your classroom.
2. Create some questions that you can ask mentees to consider.
3. Think about how you will make connections between the artifact and what students are learning in their classes.

Sharing

1. Give students back-

ground information on the lesson or unit from which the artifact came i.e. How was it planned? What were the goals, learning objectives, learning outcomes, etc.

2. Discuss how students were engaged in the lesson. What did students struggle with? What did you struggle with? Were accommodations or modifications made?
3. Encourage mentees to ask question, make suggestions, or contemplate certain scenarios.

These guidelines should help you when you are preparing to share artifacts with mentees. Remember, you can use these suggestions whether you will be talking with mentees, in person or over the phone, if you'll be writing an email to the group, or even posting a message on the listserv.

Using Artifacts: An Excellent Example

On the day of the Mentor Connection, Rose Sharon brought in several items from a literacy unit, on quilts, she had worked on with her students. Among the artifacts she shared with mentees were different samples of student work, a book related to quilts, and an actual quilt. She used the items to detail how she had planned and implemented the unit.

Rose began by talking about how she had used a family quilt to get students interested. She told mentees about some of the questions she had used to involve the class in a discussion. Examples of the types of comments students had made were also shared with mentees.

Along with the quilt, Rose also shared a book with her mentees. She read excerpts from the book, as she had done with her class, and modeled strategies she had used. She asked mentees to think about the different ways the book could have been used with the lesson.

Finally, Rose used the students' work samples to start a discussion on what students had been able to do and what she had done to support their success. She involved mentees in talk about their thoughts, understandings, and experiences, with this type of lesson and other literacy activities.

DIGITAL CORNER

Websites

There are many great mentor references on the web. One such site is:

<http://www.wizzlewolf.com/mentoring.html>

The website was established by Sheree Rense, an experienced mentor. On this website you will find many helpful tips and articles on mentoring as well as links to other great websites. It is an impressive website and we encourage you to explore it.

The Listserv

Have you used the listserv to share artifacts with STEP=UP students yet? This is a wonderful way to initiate conversation amongst students. It is convenient and just as valuable as a phone call.

In a short period of time, Rose managed to get her mentees involved in several discussions. She talked about her artifacts in such a way that mentees were engaged in conversation and encouraged to ask questions. Thus, this is an excellent example of how to use artifacts to begin conversations in person, over the phone, via email or through the listserv.

A Teacher Resource

We consistently encourage all of you to talk to your mentees about resources that you find to be valuable. So, we would also like to share some information on a resource that may be of value to you.

The World Vision Storehouse has a resource center where teachers working within qualifying Chicago Public Schools can attain a variety of donated materials for their classrooms. The process for registering with the Storehouse Teacher Resource Center is simple and speedy. So we encourage you to take advantage. For more information visit

http://www.worldvision.org/worldvision/wvusufso.nsf/stable/metro_chicago_storehouse

or

call 773-921-3900 x27.