

Lessons Learned from Grant Wiggins



1950 – 2015

Session Topics



- ❖ Grant's Formative Years
- ❖ The UbD Years
- ❖ The Later Years
- ❖ Lessons from Grant
- ❖ Personal Reflections



Twitter

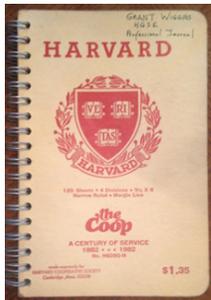


Tweet your comments

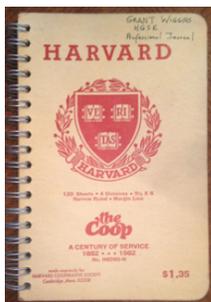
#ubdchat

And then there was Grant, making us call him by his first name, and his litany of urgings: the mutton chops, the laid back grin, the whip smart, won't treat you like a kid conversation, the attention to detail, the wanting us to get that we were not drones, not mummies, that we had to think, to pick it apart, to question.

- Sea Glassman



"TO MAINTAIN THE STATE OF DOUBT and to carry on the systemic inquiry- these are the essentials of thinking."



"Bright people are often quite stupid about the struggle to learn. It has always struck me that any of the great coaches and managers in baseball were poor players, ungifted-- and conversely. They, of course had the consciousness of the activity brought out in the struggle. Great minds have no idea how little their students know."

GRANT WIGGINS

The Futility of Trying to Teach Everything of Importance

Students cannot possibly learn everything of value by the time they leave school, but we can instill in them the desire to keep questioning throughout their lives.

The aim of pre-collegiate education is not to eliminate ignorance.

The view that everything of importance can be thoughtfully learned by 12th grade - notice I did not say "taught" - is a delusion.

In trying to "cover content" or in treating facts as equivalent fodder for some vague set of skills called "critical thinking," both sides ironically reduce essential knowledge to Trivial Pursuit.

Today's curriculum design should thus have as its motto... *Nullius in Verba*: trust nobody's word for it, see for yourself. Only by the apprenticing in the hands-on work of knowledge production can students learn to turn inchoate feeling and received opinions into unforgettable, vibrant, and systematized knowledge.

- ◆ clear goals
- ◆ priorities
- ◆ essential questions
- ◆ textbook as one resource among many
- ◆ teacher as coach
- ◆ authentic tasks
- ◆ rubrics and models

The Big Ideas of UbD

Teach & Assess for Understanding

Plan Curriculum "backward"
3 Stages of Design

Four categories of EQs

Philosophical

- What is justice?
- Is art a matter of taste or principles?
- Should we clone life?

Epistemological

- Is history inevitably biased?
- Is mathematics discovery or invention?

Meaning Making

- In what ways does light act wave-like?
- Does separation of powers lead to gridlock?
- What do good readers do?

Metacognitive/ Reflective

- What is working? What isn't?
- What adjustments do I need to make?
- What did I learn?



Standards are not curriculum.

Standards are *not* curriculum.



“Consider an analogy with home building and renovation: The standards are like the building code. Architects and builders must attend to them but they are not the purpose of their design...”



...The house to be built or renovated is designed to meet the needs of the client in a functional and pleasing manner - while also meeting the building code along the way."
-- Wiggins and McTighe



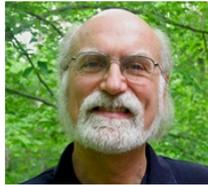
Never assume you are done.

Black and white / 3

Jerry, Elaine, and George have one black-and-white cookie. Each one wants an equal, but unbroken piece.

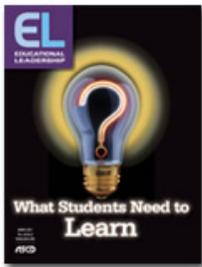
How can they divide the cookie evenly into three equal-sized pieces, each unbroken?

#ubdchat



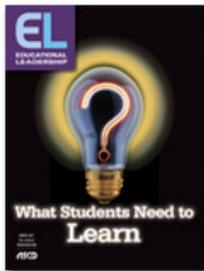
Sports and coaching analogies.

A Diploma Worth Having



I have a proposal to make: It's time we abolished the high school diploma as we know it. In a modern, unpredictable, and pluralistic world, it makes no sense to demand that every 18-year-old pass the same collection of traditional courses to graduate.

A Diploma Worth Having



- Child development
- Economics and business
- Oral communication
- Woodworking
- Multimedia
- Human physiology
- Civics

Inspiring...

*Wanted: real curriculum
leaders, not just managers*

*On assessing for creativity: yes
you can, and yes you should*

*A manifesto: stop
blaming others*

Provocative...

Hands on ≠ Minds on

*8 Reasons that today's high
school is poor preparation for
today's college*

*Technology snake-oil and
school reform*

Funny...

Avoiding stupidification

*A minor rant on a recent article on
question-based teaching - this
is new?????*

*My 100th post. So why not
bash algebra?*

Tweeting on Education...

GA Dept of Ed wins prize for worst Essential Question ever

Schools increasingly collect big data (to what good end, unclear)

Utterly wacko: new regs in NY prohibit evaluation of teacher artifacts; e.g., unit & lesson plans; just behavior and test scores. INSANE!

And other things...

I had one! Creator of pet rock dies

Sign of the Apocalypse: more vineyards in China than France

C'mon people, just 34 more followers to break 30,000...

American Pie lyrics meanings, revealed (I thought we already knew; hated song anyway - Chevy to the levee, indeed)



“If we expect students to do excellent work, they have to know what excellent work looks like.”

Models of Excellence 

“If we expect students to do excellent work, they have to know what excellent work looks like.”

Grant Wiggins – *Educative Assessment*

Thoughts on standardized testing.

something to think about... 

“High-stakes testing has radically altered the kind of instruction that is offered in American schools, to the point that ‘teaching to the test’ has become a prominent part of the nation’s educational landscape.”

Alfie Kohn



The importance of action research.



Grant surveyed more than 10,000 secondary school students over several years. Here's one question:

What was the most interesting assignment/task/project that you had in school this year?

Student Surveys



Part 1. Individually, review the student survey responses.

Part 2. Categorize responses; e.g., what patterns emerged?

Part 3. Meet *in groups*. Share your observations. What do the patterns suggest for our work?

Student Responses



Today in history we got to talk with a WWII veteran about his experiences and I thought it was really cool to hear his personal stories.

Student Responses



We dissected a pig. Very interesting. Learning different parts of the pigs body was exhilarating. It was hands-on experience and really intyresting to see all the systems and organs.

Student Responses



In English last year, We came in and the teacher given us a situation that we had crashed off a plane and needed to make camp and survive with anything in the class as an island and that he would then be sitting and taking notes on our actions. And he wouldnt intervene. So a WHOLE class period he recorded us arguing, building camp, "finding food", electing a leader or leaders, splitting up, and people pretending to be dead and gave up on the activity. All in preperation for Lord of the Flies.

Student Responses



- in metals, building chopper bikes
- testing the PH levels of water of the pond at our school
- build a boat in math class for surface area and volume

Student Responses



In chemistry, we had to mix gasses to make a pipette shoot across the room. It was interesting because the if the ratio of gasses are different, the shooting will be different.

Student Responses



The english Facebook project for Romeo and Juliet. It was fun to imagine what they would say, do and like if they actually had that technology.

Student Responses



In art we are making a mural for the school. It's so interesting because it will be in the school even after we're gone and everyone can see it.

Student Responses



- calculate the speed of cars driving on Rte 83 with a speed gun and then calculating the speed with formulas*
- Teaching the class*

Student Responses



The baby project. We got to take home stimulations of babies, and take care of them to determine what a real child would be like at our age. i really learned that im never ever ever going to have a child until im fully ready.

In Summary... 

"The generalizations are straightforward: the most interesting work is meaningful, hands-on, thought-provoking, helps make the abstract concrete, linked to wider-world, etc.

Consider: *How often do you provide students with experiences such as these - that meet the criteria just mentioned?"*

Grant Wiggins Blog Post 11/30/11

**ASSESSING PERFORMANCE IN SEMINAR:
A SET OF RUBRICS**
1997

Rubric Traits

- Conduct
- Leadership
- Reasoning
- Listening
- Reading

Conduct
Demonstrates **respect, enthusiasm, and skill** for the purpose of learning: namely, **insight** into important ideas, gained through the interplay of collaborative and personal **inquiry**.

Deepens and broadens the conversation.

Is open to new ideas (and to **being wrong**).

Leadership

Takes **responsibility for the progress of learning**, or lack of it. **Refocuses** conversation and causes others to **rethink** previous statements. Offers apt **feedback** and **guidance** to others.

Provides **perspective**.

Takes initiative in **bringing others into the conversation**.

Reasoning

Arguments are so **reasonable**, **apt**, and **grounded** as to consistently move the conversation forward and deepen the inquiry.

Cites **evidence** and asks others to do so

Makes **logical connections** among previously discussed ideas, resolves **seemingly contradictory ideas**, and points out **unexamined or tacit assumptions**.

Reading

Has **considered** ideas carefully, can offer **insightful** interpretations and evaluations of them

Shows a constant **willingness** to see the ideas of others as **meaningful** and worthy of study.

Listening

Listens unusually well. Takes steps routinely to **comprehend** what is said, is consistently **attentive** and later responses indicate accurate and **perceptive** listening.
