

# OFFICE OF INSTRUCTION NEWSLETTER

Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District  
February 2022

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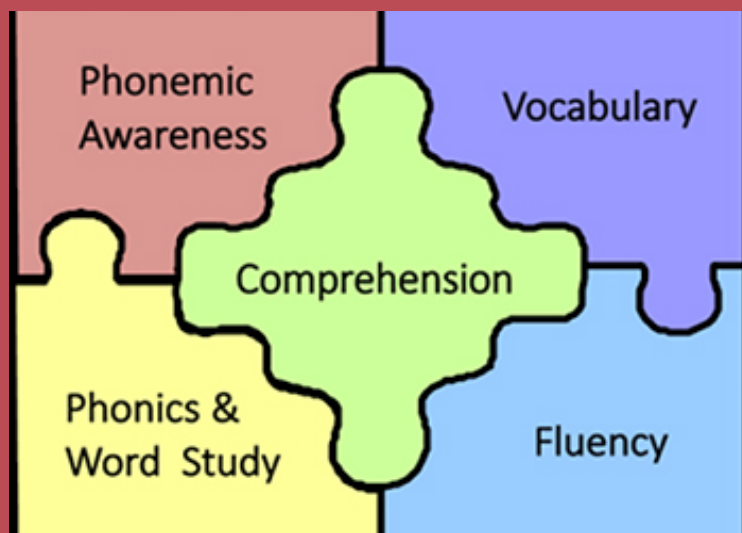
## Important Dates

February 1	Chinese New Year
February 1	K-7 Report Cards Sent Home
February 2	Groundhog Day
February 11	BAS and MAP Growth Testing Window CLOse
February 14	100th Day of School
February 14	Valentine's Day
February 21	President's Day
February 21-25	Winter Vacation

February (15 days)						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

# Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell on Systematic Phonics Instruction

[“Twelve Compelling Principles from the Research on Effective Phonics Instruction”](#) by Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell, 2020, Fountas and Pinnell Literacy; the authors can be reached at [ifountas@lesley.edu](mailto:ifountas@lesley.edu) and [gay@gsupllc.com](mailto:gay@gsupllc.com).



In this online article, literacy gurus Irene Fountas (Lesley University) and Gay Su Pinnell (Ohio State University) address the hot topic in early literacy: Do children need systematic phonics instruction? Absolutely, say Fountas and Pinnell: “Even children who ‘crack the code’ early and appear to have noticed letter-sound relationships and figured out how to use them will benefit from systematizing their knowledge and developing effective, efficient ways to use their knowledge not only of letters and sounds, but also of patterns involving larger chunks of words. At the bottom line, the more rapidly and efficiently children can decode words, the more accurate and fluent their reading will be, making it possible to give greater attention to comprehension and deeper thinking.”

Fountas and Pinnell summarize twelve research-based principles that should be put to work in a daily block of 30 minutes of phonics in the primary grades:

- Explicit phonics instruction is effective when taught in a cumulative sequence ranging from simple to more complex. Steps include how print works, hearing sounds in words, letter knowledge, letter-sound relationships, spelling patterns, high-frequency words, vocabulary, word structure, and a flexible range of word-solving strategies.
- In kindergarten and first grade, students need to be taught strong phonological awareness, including knowing individual phonemes. Much of this is developed through shared reading of poems, songs, and stories, taking advantage of the pleasure children get from rhyme, rhythm, assonance, alliteration, and fun words like pop.
- Children need to learn how to look at print, name the letters, and see the subtle differences between them – for example, distinguishing n from h, d from b, and u from n. They also need to learn left-to-right directionality, spacing between words, punctuation, and more.

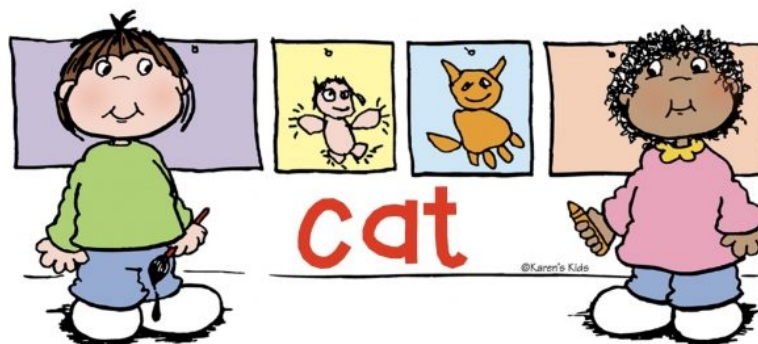
# Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell on Systematic Phonics Instruction (Cont.)

- Children need to internalize the alphabetic principle – that letters and sounds are connected in a systematic way: a graphic form (letter) is related to a specific sound (phoneme). This gets more complicated as students move through the grades and learn, for example, that the a sound can be represented as -a, -ai, -ay, -aigh, and -et.
- Effective phonics instruction teaches students to move through words sound by sound and/or letter by letter (synthetic approaches), and notice parts and patterns in words as they are taken apart (analytic approaches). They have to learn how to deal with silent letters and other irregularities.
- Another essential component is systematically building students' word-solving ability – being able to rapidly and efficiently notice and seek out word patterns and their relationships to sounds. There are 70-75 phonogram patterns in the English language. "Noticing and using these patterns," say Fountas and Pinnell, "gives children power over words."
- Children need to build knowledge about the structure of words (syllables, root words, prefixes, and suffixes) and use this knowledge flexibly to take words apart while reading (sounding them out) and writing (saying a multisyllabic word in parts and writing it that way). "This breaking down and building up process allows the reader/writer to use basic phonics principles," say the authors.
- Students need a repertoire of known words so that as they read and write, they solve problems against a background of accurate reading. After being exposed to tricky high-frequency words (like the and said) several times, children recognize them and have a leg up, freeing cognitive bandwidth for fluency and comprehension. Decodable texts are unnecessary, say Fountas and Pinnell, if the texts children read are carefully constructed and sequenced with many simple words that are easy to decode and linked to phonics instruction – and the stories are interesting and make sense.
- Children need a flexible range of in-the-head strategies to apply as they read and write – including the ability to solve words, read with fluency, and comprehend. "Without meaning, there is no purpose," say the authors. Reading and writing are not a mechanical process; readers and writers need to be flexible: "They try things out. They make hypotheses." They're not guessing, they're self-monitoring and problem-solving. And they gradually get better.

# Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell on Systematic Phonics Instruction (Cont.)

- Robust vocabulary and spelling instruction is essential across the grades. Incorrect phonetic spelling – which is natural in the early grades – needs to be quickly replaced with correct spelling as students learn more words, learn how to take words apart, master the irregularities, and draw on Latin and Greek roots to understand and spell more and more words.
- Teacher expertise is essential, including understanding the simple and complex relationships between graphic symbols and phonemic elements, base words, word roots, and etymology. “Being knowledgeable about the acquisition of decoding strategies, vocabulary expansion, and spelling techniques should help a teacher to be more strategic and efficient,” say Fountas and Pinnell. “It underlies the ability to observe closely and to be responsive to them rather than following a program in a rote or robotic way.”
- Explicit phonics instruction should be an integral part of a comprehensive literacy design that gives children ample opportunities to use what they understand in meaningful reading and writing. “Explicit phonics instruction without the opportunity to engage in purposeful and joyful reading and writing is a barren curriculum,” say the authors. Children need to be engaged in seeking connections and patterns and “hands-on” work with letters, sounds, word parts, and words, with explicit links to reading and writing in other contexts.

“Learning to read is complex and individual, especially for children who struggle,” conclude Fountas and Pinnell, noting the equity challenge of doing right by English language learners and children who enter schools with disadvantages; teachers need to draw on their funds of knowledge and individual strengths. “Becoming literate is an enormous achievement, and for most children, one that requires the assistance not only of a skillful and knowledgeable teacher, but the support of a literacy learning community in schools and classrooms.”





# The Keys to Intrinsic Motivation in Classrooms

(Originally titled “6 Intrinsic Motivators to Power Up Your Teaching”)

[“6 Intrinsic Motivators to Power Up Your Teaching”](#)

by Mike Anderson in Educational Leadership,  
December 2021/January 2022 (Vol. 79, #4, pp. 20-25); Anderson can be reached at  
[mike@leadinggreatlearning.com](mailto:mike@leadinggreatlearning.com).



In this article in Educational Leadership, teacher/author/consultant Mike Anderson says that personal passions like running, mountain biking, singing, or gardening are fueled by intrinsic motivation, which often has six drivers: autonomy, belonging, competence, purpose, fun, and curiosity. Teachers who harness these elements greatly enhance their students’ learning. Here’s how:

- **Autonomy** – “The need for self-direction is vitally important if we want students to be self-motivated,” says Anderson. “Learners are more likely to be fired up and excited about their work when they have some power and control over what or how they’re learning.” One way to accomplish this is giving students more choice over the books they read, the writing they do, and how they show what they’ve learned.
- **Belonging** – Abraham Maslow believed that humans’ need for connection and affiliation is comparable to our need for food, water, shelter, and safety. Some ways this is naturally put to work in classrooms: think/pair/share, lab partners, book clubs, Socratic seminars, group projects. But simply assigning students to groups with a few ice-breakers and get-to-know-you exercises is not enough. Kids need direct instruction and guided practice to develop the social skills that make well-structured collaborative activities productive.
- **Competence** – “When learning is too hard, it’s frustrating. When it’s too easy, it’s boring,” says Anderson. “When challenges are within reach, and when students see themselves growing and getting better at something, they are more motivated.” This is the challenge of differentiation – finding the sweet spot of challenge for groups of students with different interests and levels of achievement. Anderson once observed a calculus teacher giving her students a worksheet with a variety of problems and saying, “See if you can find the problems that are hard enough to make you sweat a little, but you can do with some hard work and a little help.”

# The Keys to Intrinsic Motivation in Classrooms (Cont.)

- Purpose – Anderson likes to ask students the reason they are doing a piece of schoolwork. “They need to know the why before they can worry about the what or the how,” he says. An in-the-future purpose won’t work with many students; they need to know why it’s important for them in the moment. With service learning this is straightforward, and purpose can be built into projects and writing done for peers, families, or the community.
- Fun – There are some parts of the school day where this isn’t possible, but dice, dominoes, spinners, cards, and apps like Kahoot can make a range of activities more enjoyable. And then there are ways of getting students moving and interacting that turbocharge learning – for example, creating cards with matching pairs of math facts and solutions, words and definitions, or famous people and historical facts, taping them to students’ backs, and challenging the class to find the matches with no talking.
- Curiosity – Making connections to things students love and are curious about – chess, social justice, manga, music, soccer, skateboarding – will increase motivation, engagement, and joy. This can happen in independent research projects, literature circles, project-based learning, and more.

**We know that students crave a sense of belonging and connection with others, so let's make sure to meet that need through their academic work.**



**Mike Anderson**

# Getting the Most from Think/Pair/Share

(Originally titled “Getting the ‘Think-Pair-Share’ Technique Right”)

## “Getting the ‘Think-Pair-Share’ Technique Right”

by Kate Jones and Dylan Wiliam in Educational Leadership, December 2021/January 2022 (Vol. 79, #4); the authors can be reached at [katesofiajones@gmail.com](mailto:katesofiajones@gmail.com) and [dylanwiliam@mac.com](mailto:dylanwiliam@mac.com).



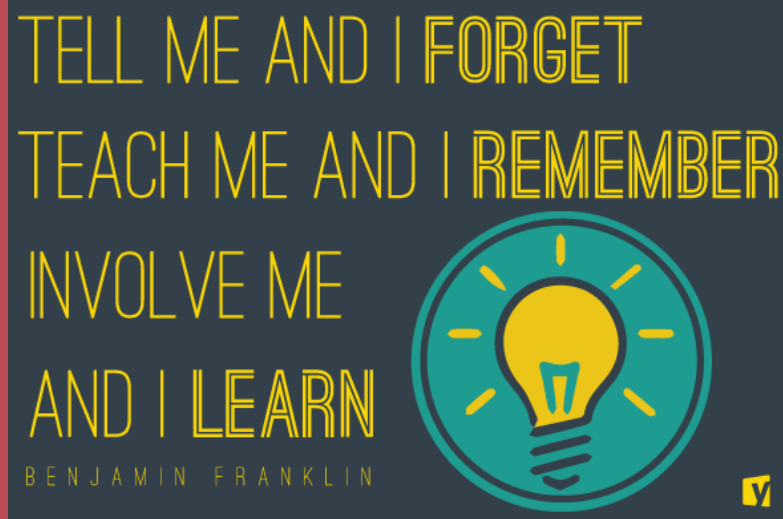
In this Educational Leadership article, teacher/author Kate Jones and assessment guru Dylan Wiliam say this time-honored protocol has great potential for improving engagement and learning – provided it’s used well. Their suggestions:

- Plan worthwhile questions. Think/Pair/Share takes extra time, so it’s vital that questions get students thinking at a deep level.
- Don’t skimp on think time. When a question is posed, students’ first impulse is to start chatting. They need to pause, reflect, retrieve prior knowledge, and jot initial thoughts. Retrieval is important to strengthening memories and recognizing knowledge gaps.
- Insist on listening. “Listening requires effort, attention, and time,” say Jones and Wiliam. Pairs are a safe space for students to test ideas, see other perspectives, and rehearse what they’ll say when the class reconvenes. Some teachers tell students they’ll be asked to share what their partner said or assign students an A or B letter and prompt the whole class when it’s time for each letter to be the listener.
- Pause and extend. After each share-out, the teacher builds in think time and asks ABC questions: Is there anything else that could be added? Can you build on that answer? Does anyone want to challenge the answer or provide an alternative response?
- Use individual dry-erase boards. Students write a few key words as they think, compare with their pair partner, and hold their boards up during sharing.

# Finding Our Way to Genuine Student Engagement

(Originally titled “The Engagement Illusion”)

“[The Engagement Illusion](#)” by Neil Gupta and Douglas Reeves in *Educational Leadership*, December 2021/January 2022 (Vol. 79, #4, pp. 58-62); the authors can be reached at [neil.gupta@creativeleadership.net](mailto:neil.gupta@creativeleadership.net) and [douglas.reeves@creativeleadership.net](mailto:douglas.reeves@creativeleadership.net).



In this *Educational Leadership* article, Ohio district leader Neil Gupta and Douglas Reeves (Creative Leadership Solutions) say that some educators settle for the appearance of student engagement, allowing students to play what amounts to a magic trick on teachers and administrators. “Many students know how to ‘play school,’” say the authors: “be quiet in class, take notes when anything is written on the board, smile, and nod now and then.” An administrator observing a class without this critical awareness might be fooled by a compliant pretender – or jump to the conclusion that an intermittently disruptive student is totally uninterested in school. Gupta and Reeves list four common misconceptions about student engagement:

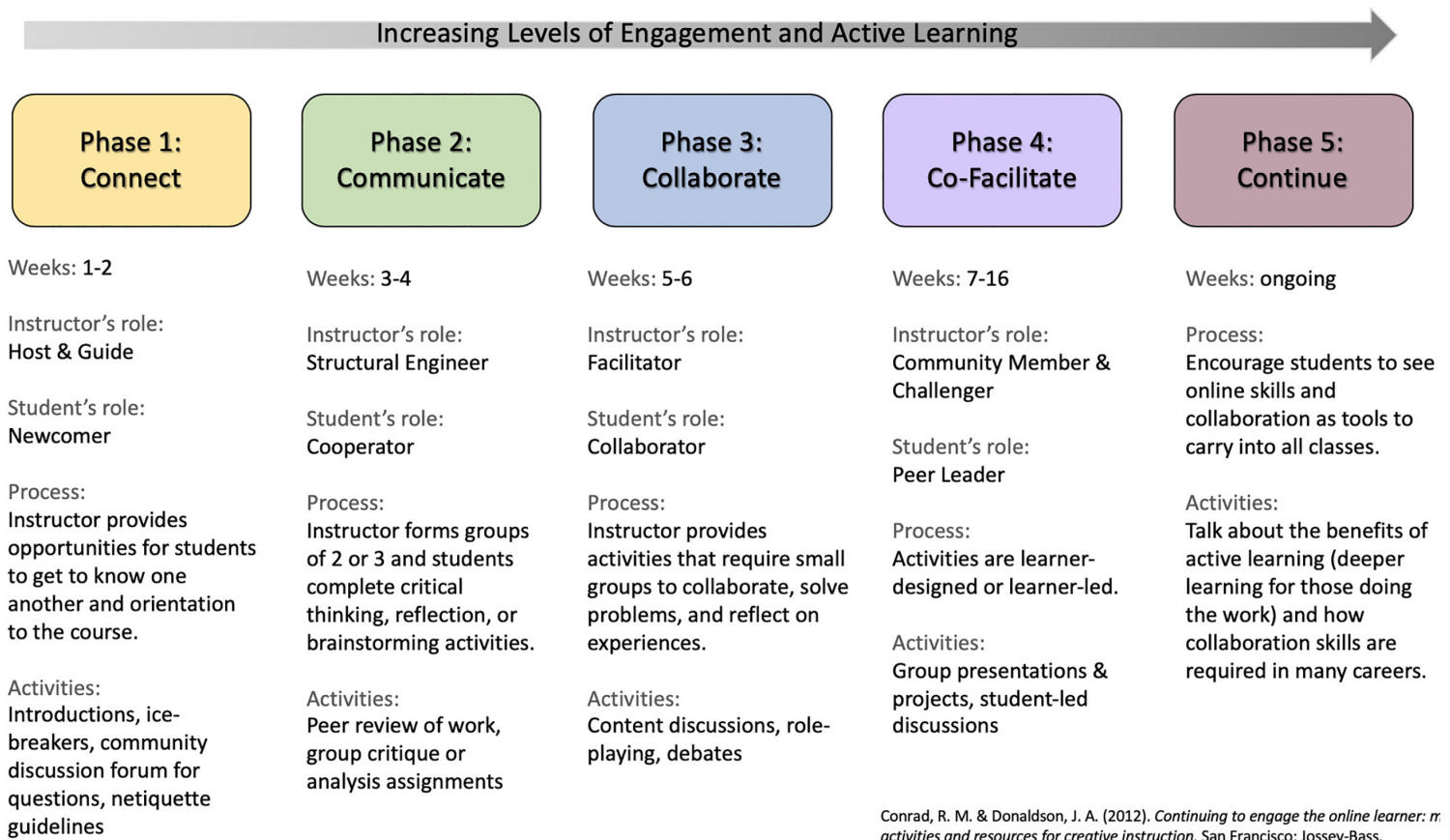
- Illusion #1: The teacher as maestro. “Teachers sometimes are led to believe that it is their job to perform for the class,” say the authors, “as well as for instructional coaches and administrators who drop into the classroom,” with the teacher’s expertise on full display. But a clear sign of low student engagement is if students are doing less talking than the teacher. A truly engaging lesson is often noisier and messier, with students not afraid to take risks and make mistakes.
- Illusion #2: What I’m interested in, they’ll be interested in. The authors each learned the hard way that students weren’t connecting with the sports, family vacation, and cultural references being deployed. But when Gupta discovered his science students’ interest in cars and racing, they eagerly used the distance = rate x time formula to record and analyze the speed of cars outside the classroom window, even persuading a police officer to share readings from his radar gun. “Both of us,” say Gupta and Reeves, “learned to listen to our students and let our genuine curiosity fuel an environment of mutual discovery in which we became fellow learners and explorers with our students.” Listening to kids’ playground, lunchroom, and hallway chatter can provide key entry points for teaching and learning.



# Finding Our Way to Genuine Student Engagement (Cont.)

• Illusion #3: Students learn for the sake of learning. Many students lack teachers' intrinsic motivation and demand an answer to the perennial question, When will I ever need to know this in life? Some teachers invest time at the beginning of a unit to uncover prior knowledge, misconceptions, viewpoints, questions, and interests, then create thought-provoking essential questions and search for the right teaching resources.

• Illusion #4: There's such a thing as a perfect lesson plan. Not so, say Gupta and Reeves; teachers must adapt nimbly throughout each day, continuously searching for the right blend of challenge and support, orchestrating productive struggle, trying to guide all students to success. No lesson plan survives contact with students, they say; by the end of the day, it's covered with "annotations, excisions, and marginal additions."



# A Lesson on Malcolm X Fails – and Then Succeeds

(Originally titled “The Code for Student Engagement”)

[“The Code for Student Engagement”](#) by Chad Prather in Educational Leadership, December 2021/January 2022 (Vol. 79, #4, pp. 52-57)



In this Educational Leadership article, Nashville educator Chad Prather describes his energetic attempts to get high-school history students engaged in a lesson on Malcolm X. “He’s one of the most misunderstood voices of American history,” said Prather, and asked students to list up to five facts or ideas and write three questions they wanted answered. Students ignored this warm-up activity, turning to their phones and chatting; one boy’s head was on his desk. “We were only minutes in,” says Prather, “but the lesson was already dead.”

Why? For students who didn’t already know something about Malcolm X or weren’t curious to learn more, there was no avenue for success. Another thing I don’t know, they might be thinking. Also, to a student living in the here and now, the lesson didn’t seem worthwhile. “Against Instagram, gossip, and sleep, all of which met very current needs, my prior-knowledge check felt inconsequential,” says Prather. “With no spark, I couldn’t ignite the rest of the lesson.”

That evening, watching a rerun of *The Wire*, he was struck by Omar Little’s statement, “A man’s got to have a code.” The next morning, he played a video of that scene and gave students this assignment: What’s your code? You have seven minutes to write (prose or poetry) or draw. You won’t have to share, and Prather won’t read anything without your invitation. You can listen to music if you have earbuds and pick your song quickly. Work silently.

Students buckled right down, says Prather, “Pens blazing, phones away, heads bowed.” Seven minutes later, they demanded more time. The boy whose head was down the day before wrote two full pages about the total lack of loyalty in his life. His code: Trust no one. Other students wrote deeply personal essays and some gave permission for him to read them aloud. This provided a segue to an assignment: Malcolm X was both loved and feared. Why? What was his code? You’ve identified yours. Can you identify his? Do you connect with his?

# A Lesson on Malcolm X Fails – and Then Succeeds (Cont.)

What would he say about yours? Students watched a short biographical video and then did a close reading of Malcolm's final 1965 speech.

With this prologue, students understood what Prather was asking, watched the video intently, and, with some modeling and scaffolding, began annotating the speech: inferences, questions, connections. Malcolm's code became clear: Think for yourself; don't believe everything you hear. Speak so others take you seriously. Stand up and defend yourself; don't get pushed around. By the end of the week, most students – not all, but most – had written a persuasive essay on what Malcolm would have thought of their school's motto.

Prather draws several lessons from this success. First, "students will invest more deeply when they feel present in the content or components of the lesson." Second, knowing and listening to students sparks changes in pedagogy; the head-on-desk student's statement about trust inspired Prather to look for ways to "have his back" for the remainder of the year. Third, think about how to make lessons relevant to students' lives; provocative essential questions are especially helpful. Fourth, differentiate assignments so all students can succeed: "If the hurdles are way too high," says Prather, "(or way too low, for that matter), then the race becomes disrespectful." Finally, stay tuned to how students are doing and constantly adapt.

"Students get to decide when and how to invite us in," Prather concludes. "We need to accept the invitations. Embracing kids – understanding and accepting them – makes possible a more-compassionate pedagogy, one that nourishes and guards more authentically. Embrace. Nourish. Guard. That's my code."



Children have a lesson adults should learn, to not be ashamed of failing, but to get up and try again. Most of us adults are so afraid, so cautious, so 'safe,' and therefore so shrinking and rigid and afraid that it is why so many humans fail. Most middle-aged adults have resigned themselves to failure.

— *Malcolm X* —

AZ QUOTES


**MATH IS \_\_ VIDEO CONTEST**



Watch our MATH IS \_\_ video.  
See how people complete the sentence.  
Make your own community MATH IS \_\_ video and win classroom and club supplies!

[globalmathproject.org/events](https://globalmathproject.org/events) Details Here

Competition ends: March 15, 2022.



**GLOBAL MATH PROJECT**

Have you seen our MATH IS \_\_ video? It gives each of us at GMP goosebumps of joy each time we view it. [Check out the video here.](#)

We invite you to work with your students to create your own version of a MATH IS \_\_ video, asking the same question of community members and recording and collating reactions.

Submit your video by March 15, 2022 and possibly win \$400 (USD) of school supplies for your classroom or club!

Contest instructions, conditions, rules, and such.

Discovery Education's February Highlight's

<https://www-media.discoveryeducation.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/DE-IS-February-Newsletter.pdf>



CLICK HERE



This PDF has timely and relevant resources including, Celebrating Black History Month, The Lunar New year, and so much more!



# LifTS Course: The Impact of Trauma on Learning: An Overview (course 1 of 4)

**Please read this notice in its entirety**, as it contains important details and deadlines for your spring 2022 course. Note, your courses may appear out of order on Blackboard.

The cost of this course is \$500 but the district has arranged to pay for half so the cost to anyone interested is **\$250**. Teachers may use their course reimbursement funds and must complete the course approval form in DYPD prior to the start of the class. You must also register for the course through Elevate- please see the detailed directions below. **Additionally, please register for the course in DYPD so that we can monitor class numbers.**

**When: April 7, April 14\*, April 28, May 5\*, May 12, May 19\*, May 26, June 2**  
**(\*asynchronous) 4:00-6:00pm**

**Where: DYH Library**

Attached you will find instructions for our online registration and payment system, Elevate. These instructions also contain the Blackboard link. Important: If you attended Lesley with a maiden name, and did not update your name with Lesley once married (had since graduated, etc.), Lesley still has your maiden name on the official record. **If so, please include your maiden name with your Elevate registration**, as we are trying our best to avoid duplicate entries in our system. Help Lesley to expedite your registration by logging into Elevate only when you're ready to complete the registration and payment process.

**The registration link is specific to your course section and should not be forwarded or shared.**

- **Registration deadline: March 1, 2022**
- **Registration link: Spring 22 LEDUC 5256 05YAR**  
(please use a browser other than Internet Explorer)
- **Full course dates: Thursday, April 7th through June 2nd (4/7/22 - 6/2/22)**
- **IN PERSON sessions: Thursdays, 4/7, 4/28, 5/12, 5/26, 6/2, 4pm-6pm**

Please contact your instructor Donna DesRosiers ([ddesrosi@lesley.edu](mailto:ddesrosi@lesley.edu)) with any questions or concerns.

**Need to drop the course? Please contact Merlyn Mayhew**

**([mmayhew3@lesley.edu](mailto:mmayhew3@lesley.edu)) before Monday, April 4, 2022.** No refunds are provided after a course begins.

If you have any questions or issues around registration, please contact Merlyn Mayhew at [mmayhew3@lesley.edu](mailto:mmayhew3@lesley.edu)