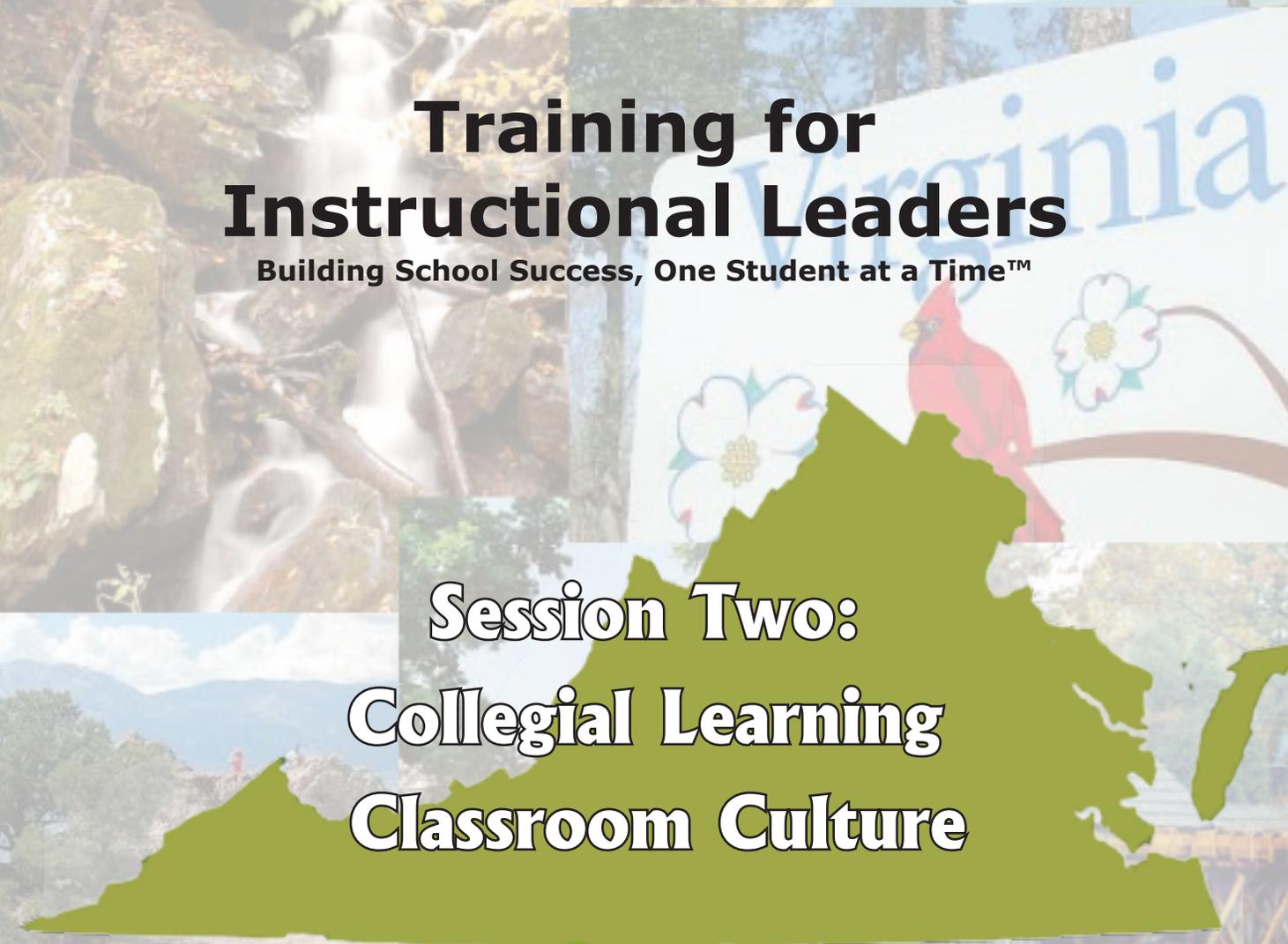


Virginia Support for School Improvement

Training for Instructional Leaders

Building School Success, One Student at a Time™



Session Two: Collegial Learning Classroom Culture

Effective Teaming
Collegial Learning
Instructional Planning
Classroom Culture
Instructional Delivery

Information Tools Training

Positive results for students will come from changes in the knowledge, skill, and behavior of their teachers and parents. State policies and programs must provide the opportunity, support, incentive, and expectation for adults close to the lives of children to make wise decisions.

The Center on Innovation & Improvement helps regional comprehensive centers in their work with states to provide districts, schools, and families with the opportunity, information, and skills to make wise decisions on behalf of students.

The Center on Innovation & Improvement is administered by the Academic Development Institute (Lincoln, IL) in partnership with the Temple University Institute for Schools and Society (Philadelphia, PA) and Little Planet Learning (Nashville, TN).

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*The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position of the supporting agencies,
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The Mega System: Deciding. Learning. Connecting.

A Handbook for Continuous Improvement Within a Community of the School

Suggested Readings

Session 2

Chapter 3, Assessment.....	Pgs. 83-88
Chapter 3, Mastery Learning & Student Support	Pgs. 90-91
Chapter 3, Modes of Instruction	Pgs. 92-93
Chapter 3, Work Time	Pgs. 106-112

Review of Session One

In session one, we discussed ways for Instructional Teams to be the most effective in designing units of instruction and monitoring student progress. Let's look at the Next Steps questions from the last session as a way to review what we covered and to report on each school's application of what was learned.

Next Steps

What do we do now? How can it be improved? What is our first step?

Effective Teaming

1. How are the instructional teams organized?
2. What is their purpose?
3. When do they meet?
4. How often do they meet?
5. Where do they meet?
6. What procedures (agendas, minutes, roles, etc.) do they follow?
7. What work do they produce?

Instructional Planning

1. Framework for developing unit plans. Review the Unit Plan format on page 77 in the Mega System Handbook. How does this compare with your current method for developing unit plans?
2. Editing Tools for developing units. Review the Unit Plan Editing Checklist found in your session folder. Is a tool like this helpful?
3. Consider the idea of "leveled objectives." How do you now approach different levels of student readiness for particular objectives?
4. Consider the Learning Plan Grid and Activity Instructions as ways an Instructional Team can prepare a toolbox of activities that each teacher can draw from to differentiate instruction.

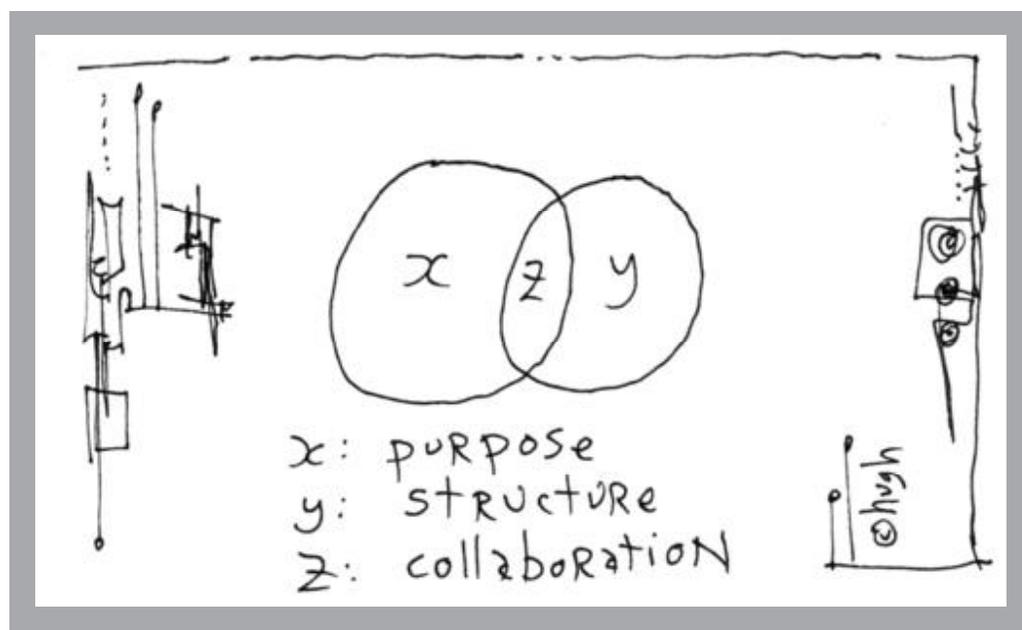
From the Instructional Team to the Classroom

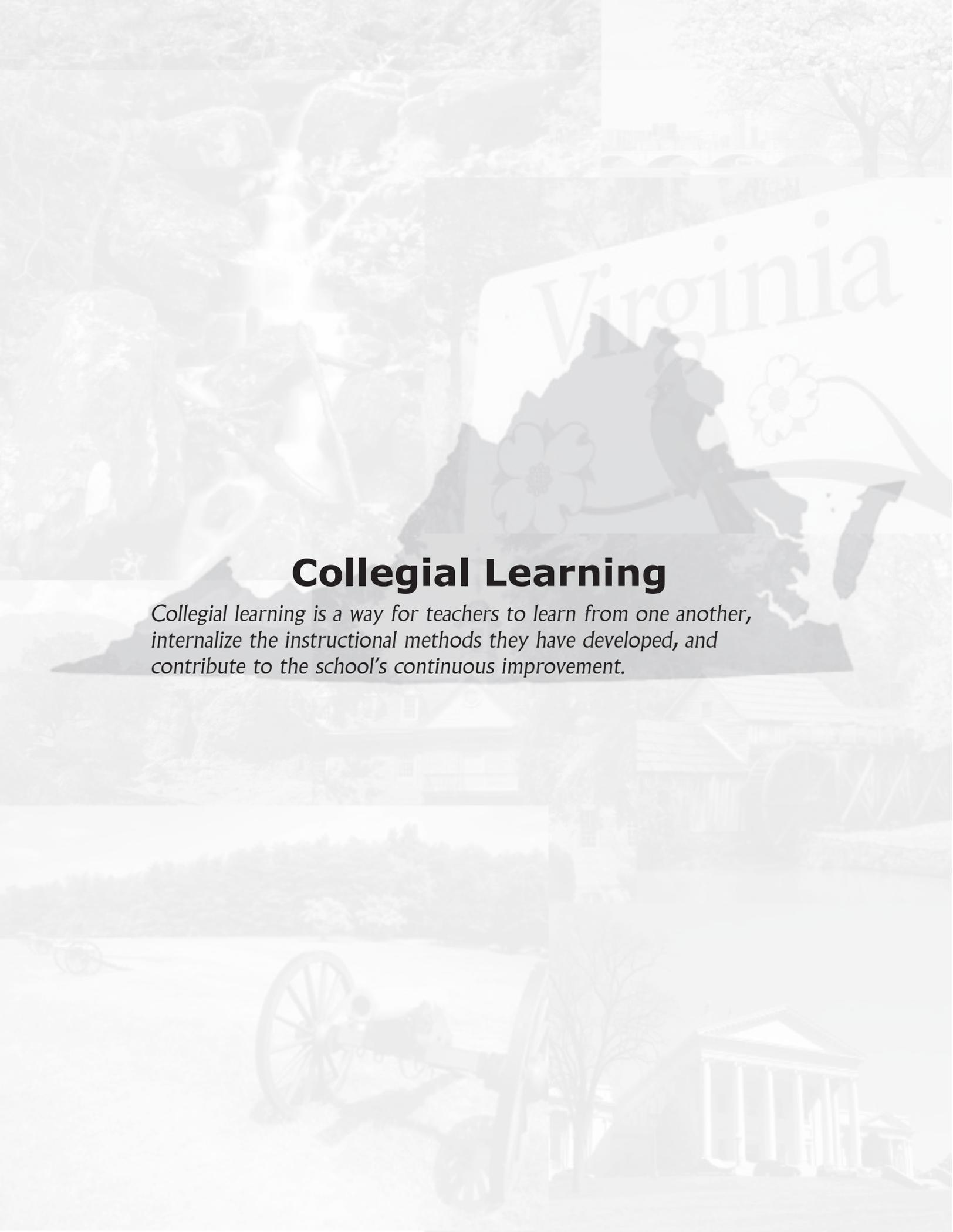
In sessions three and four, we will closely examine classroom teaching, but in this session we will build a bridge from the Instructional Team's instructional planning to the individual teacher's delivery of instruction. A well-orchestrated classroom, in which all students are engaged in standards-aligned learning activities targeted to their level of readiness and differentiated to heighten their interest, is the result of careful planning. Whole-class instruction—focused, interactive, and efficient—also depends upon preparation for each lesson delivered. Before we get to instructional delivery in sessions three and four, we will delve into the teacher's planning and preparation, building from the work of the Instructional Team.

First let's look at classroom management, or, as we call it here, classroom culture. How is the classroom organized? What are the procedures and rules that underlie its operation? What is the relationship between the teacher and students? Among students? How does the teacher establish a classroom culture that allows for optimal use of the differentiated learning activities created by the Instructional Team and personalized for each student by the teacher?

The classroom culture is determined by many factors, not the least of which is the teacher's "with-itness," that intangible quality of being in touch with all that is going on and connecting positively with each student. The physical environment of the classroom is also important. Well-marked areas of the room and learning materials help students navigate their learning environment. Simple rules and procedures, posted strategically in friendly fashion help students know what is expected of them.

Classroom rituals, such as a word for the day, quote for the day, and daily trivia question enliven the routines of whole-class instruction. Well-planned whole-class instructional segments inspire students as well as instructing them. They cement the bonds of friendship among classmates. The teacher's interaction with each student—social as well as academic interaction—makes learning personal and stirs students' motivational fires.



A collage of Virginia-themed images including a mountain landscape, a water wheel, a cannon, and a classical building.

Virginia

Collegial Learning

Collegial learning is a way for teachers to learn from one another, internalize the instructional methods they have developed, and contribute to the school's continuous improvement.

Collegial Learning

The purpose of a learning community is realized when all its members are engaged in learning. Some of teachers' learning is called professional development, but that, of course, is only one avenue for learning; teachers also learn from each other, from the trials and errors of plying their craft, from each student's own story.

Collegial learning is a way for teachers to learn from one another, internalize the instructional methods they have developed, and contribute to the school's continuous improvement. We will view continuous professional learning—independent and collegial—as a way to incorporate research and best practices into teaching. The school community improves as each of its members develops greater skill and knowledge. A team structure provides a framework for collaboration; but structures alone will not guarantee professional learning.

In this collaborative learning approach of inquiry and renewal, the value in experiences of two, three or four people outweighs the isolation found in traditional instructional planning and teaching.

Collegial learning, as we address it in this training for instructional leaders, includes:

- * Instructional planning by Instructional Teams (session one);
- * Examination of student learning data by Instructional Teams (session two); and
- * Collegial coaching—teachers helping each other hone their instructional skills (session three).

“The business of schools is to invent tasks, activities, and assignments that the students find engaging and that bring them into profound interactions with content and processes they will need to master to be judged well educated” (Schlechty, 2001. Shaking Up the Schoolhouse: How to Support and Sustain Educational Innovation, p. 53).



Think, Write, Share

1. What types of collegial learning do you currently participate in?

2. What kind of collegial learning do you find personally/professionally beneficial? What kind is beneficial to the students you teach?

3. What other types of collegial learning would you like to participate in?

Student Profile

Gathering student learning data by an individual teacher helps to clarify the purpose of achievement through the scope of the whole child. Recording that data in a framework that encourages reflection and conversation within an Instructional Team builds a pathway for decision-making. A *Student Profile* is a suggested framework for an Instructional Team to begin a record of each of their students that concretely provides an on-going glimpse of the child's classroom achievement and supports their conversation of assessment data, behavior, and parents. That profile, or record, might include a concise comment from the child's previous teacher. An introductory letter sent by the new teacher at the beginning of the school year could request insightful and simple information by the parents and child. Ongoing data gleaned from classroom assessments, portfolios, and the student's effort at differentiated classroom activities found in the profile gives a quick, but broad, overview of a student's motivation and achievement. This record succinctly communicates a student's efficacy to those most closely connected and responsible for his/her achievement at a specific time (grade level/subject) in a lifetime pursuit of learning.

Note: It is a good idea to complete a summary form at each parent-teacher-student conference. These forms are maintained and passed from teacher to teacher, year to year, so that the teacher has a record of previous parent-teacher-student conferences. This "data" may be added to that described above.

A *Student Profile* can provide a variety of information (data) to the teacher that is reviewed on an on-going basis, and supplemented. While academic achievement is at the forefront of a school's concern, we also recognize the value of "knowing the whole person." The Student Profile can perform as that more complete description of the student.

STUDENT PROFILE

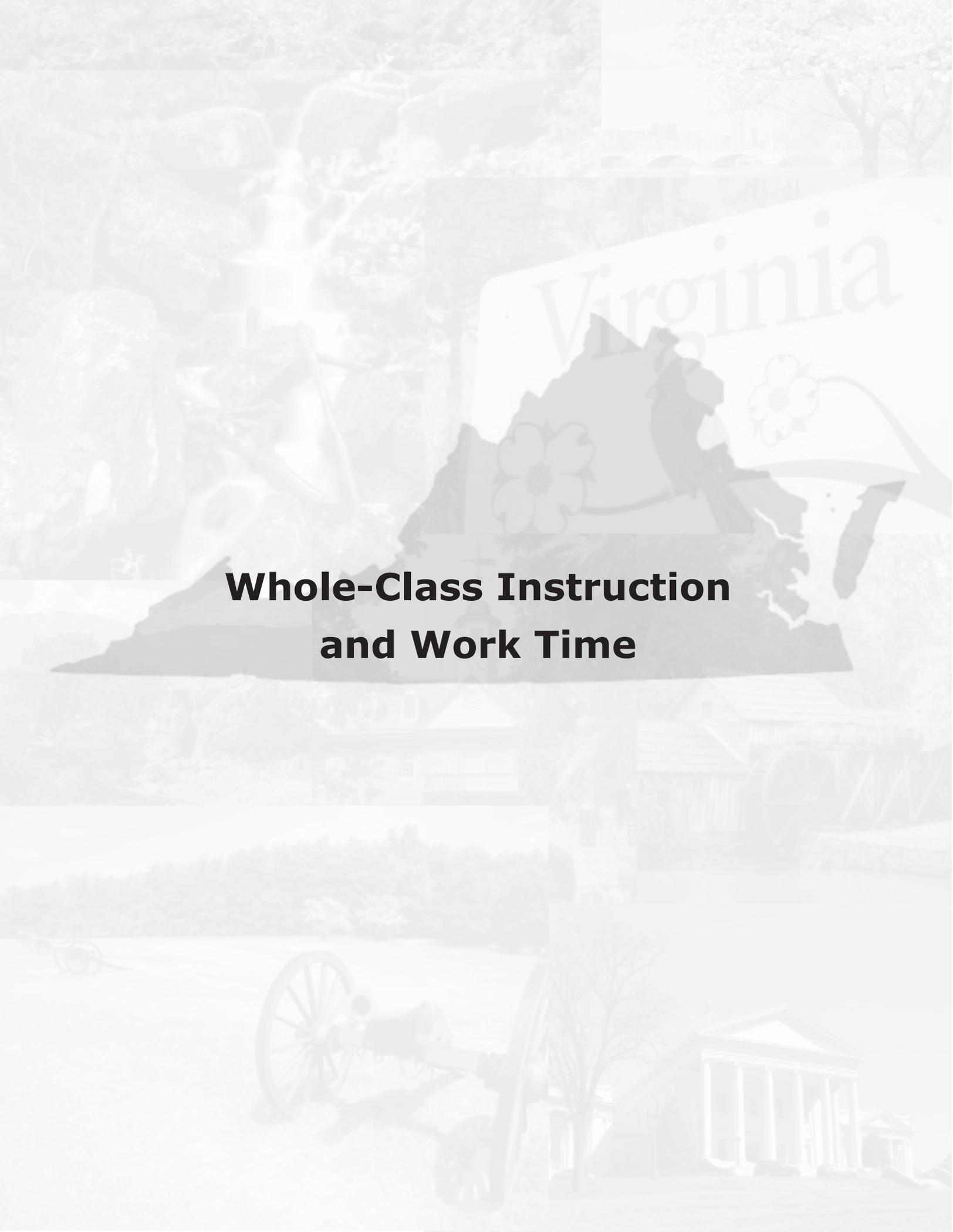
Student's Name _____ Grade _____
 Parents/Guardians _____ Teacher's Name _____
 Address _____ Subject: _____
 Phone Number _____ E-Mail: _____

Interests/Abilities	Classroom Diagnostic Data	Instructional Strategies/Monitoring
Previous Teacher Child Parent(s)	Unit Post-test Results 1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____ 4) _____ 5) _____ 6) _____ 7) _____ 8) _____ 9) _____ 10) _____ Student Work Portfolio Review dates: _____ Rating: _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ Complete (C) Incomplete (I)	Student's Strengths: Student's Difficulties: SLP activities Quarterly Ratings Independent _____ Cooperative _____ Activity _____ Homework _____ Very Good (VG), Good (G), Poor (P) _____ Classroom Support IEP Highlights Co-Teacher Other
What is the most important thing I need to know about this child? What do I need to know about you? Interests What do I need to know about your child? Clubs, Extracurricular		

Please attach additional pages to this as needed.

Examining Data to Support Student Learning
Next Steps

	What do we do now?	How can it be improved?	What is our first step?
Review the Student Profile on page 15 of the Session manual as if you were an Instructional Team.			
How would an individual teacher use the information that is included in the Student Profile?			
How would Instructional Teams use the information that is included in the Student Profile?			
Develop a Student Profile for your students by revising the sample or designing a prototype that could be useful in your school.			



Virginia

**Whole-Class Instruction
and Work Time**

Introduction to Whole-Class Instruction and Work Time

In session one, we discussed how an Instructional Team can develop learning activities aligned with standards-based objectives. The learning activities are also leveled to target instruction within each objective. The learning activities area also created across several instructional modes: independent work, teacher-directed groups, student-directed groups, computer-based learning, and homework. This differentiation of activities across instructional modes helps reach each student in a variety of ways for mastery of an objective.

But a teacher doesn't introduce new material by assigning differentiated and leveled learning activities. The teacher begins by directly teaching the new material through whole-class instruction. Whole-class instruction is also an instructional mode. It is the keystone instructional mode, from which the differentiated learning activities flow through the other modes.

Classroom time, then, consists of two categories:

- * Whole-class instruction, and

- * Work time

Work time is when students are engaged in learning through the instructional modes other than whole-class instruction. Work time allows for various modes of instruction to be in play simultaneously. Work time allows the teacher to give targeted assistance to individual students and groups of students.

Work Time

Time: Time allotted will vary according to teacher's plan, subject matter, grade level.

Purposes: (1) to give students time to practice and master concepts and skills (2) to encourage self-directed learning (3) to provide individualized learning activities (4) to make the best use of time and (5) to allow the teacher flexibility to work with individuals or small groups.

Methods: Will vary for each student, according to the specific activities assigned to the student, and will be derived from the learning plan grids and activity instructions.

Let's look at how a teacher's schedule for the week can plot whole-class time and work time. The example is for an elementary school teacher with several subjects to cover. But the concept of whole-class time vs. work time applies equally well in middle school and high school classrooms.

Weekly Class Schedule (Example)

Week of: _____ Teacher's Name: _____

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00-8:30					
8:30-9:00	Reading WC				
9:00-9:30	Work Time				
9:30-10:00	Work Time				
10:00-10:30	Spelling/Writing WC				
10:30-11:00	Work Time				
11:00-11:30	Math WC				
11:30-12:00	Work Time				
12:00-12:30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:30-1:15	PE	Music	PE	Art	PE
1:15-1:30	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
1:30-2:00	Social Studies WC				
2:00-2:30	Work Time				
2:30-3:00	Science WC				
3:00-3:30	Work Time				
3:30-4:00					

Indicate in each cell: Whole Class (Subjects); Work Time (Subjects); Lunch; Recess; Specialist Teachers (e.g. Art, Music)

Guidelines for Work Time

1. Activities and assignments should be varied and interesting enough to motivate student engagement. What motivates the individual student is key to assigning particular activities for work time.
2. A sufficient portion of the tasks should be related to current instruction; another portion should provide systematic, cumulative review.
3. Work should be meaningful, not pointless busywork.
4. Work should be easy enough to allow students to achieve high rates of success if they give forth reasonable effort.
5. Teachers should explain the work and go over practice examples before releasing them to work independently; explanations should be clear and easy to follow.
6. Extra tasks should be available for students who need extra practice or finish early.
7. Response modes should feature sustained reading and writing (as opposed to circling, underlining, drawing arrows, etc.).
8. Cute, non-functional, space- and time-consuming tasks should be avoided.
9. Teachers should monitor performance for completion and provide timely and specific feedback.

Think and Share

How do teachers in your school differentiate between whole-class instruction and work time? How do practices vary across grade levels? Subject areas? From elementary, to middle, to high school in your district? Do your weekly schedules indicate whole-class vs. work time, as in the examples?

A Preview of Whole-Class Instruction

In session three, we will deal with whole-class instruction in depth. But because effective delivery of whole-class instruction begins with careful planning for whole-class instruction, we will hit a few high points in this session.

In building the foundation for effective instruction, we have covered the following steps:

1. The Unit Plan developed by the Instructional Team chunks the year into units with themes, aligns standards-based benchmarks with each unit, develops objectives for student mastery aligned with the benchmarks, establishes criteria for determining mastery of the objective, and includes items for pre-tests as one means for targeting learning activities for each student.
2. The Learning Plan Grid outlines leveled objectives and differentiated learning activities.
3. The Activity Instructions flesh out the activities in the Learning Plan Grid so that materials can be produced and students can be informed exactly what is expected of them.
4. The Weekly Class Schedule divides class time between whole-class instruction and work time.
5. Work time is when students engage with the differentiated learning activities as assigned them by a teacher who is attentive to each student's readiness for an objective, based on assessment of prior learning.

A lesson delivered through whole-class instruction may address one or more objectives. Work time follows the whole-class instruction, allowing each student a variety of ways to master the objectives introduced in the whole-class lesson.

The following page shows a template for planning whole-class instruction for a week in one subject. In session three, we will discuss the components of whole-class instruction in detail.

Whole-Class Instruction Weekly Outline

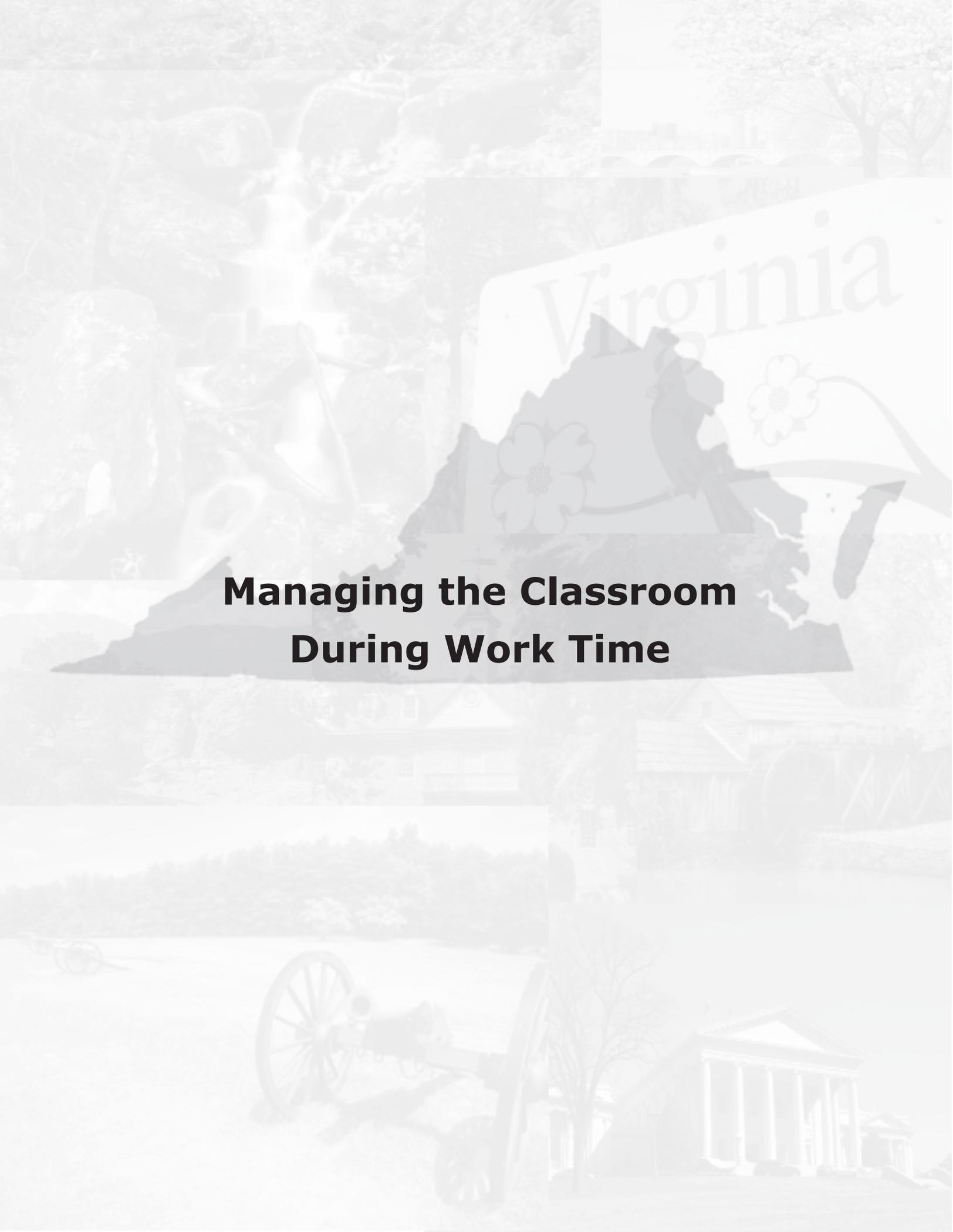
Week of: _____ Teacher: _____ Subject: _____

Target Objective Code(s): _____

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Central Purpose of Lesson					
Behavior Check: To set the psychological climate in the classroom; cue students to focus in; reinforce attentive behaviors.					
Review: To provide students with clear evaluations of their progress in attaining learning goals; detect areas that need further teaching or practice; connect prior learning with new learning.					
Think: To introduce new lesson; continue activating prior knowledge; stimulate student cognition relative to the topic through cues, advance organizers, question sprinkling.					
Know: To directly teach the new skills or concepts through lecture, demonstration, modeling.					
Show: To find out what students have learned and rehearse their learning through verbal drills, recitations, discussion, quiz games.					

Next Steps: Whole-Class Instruction and Work Time

	What do we do now?	How can it be improved?	What is our first step?
Do teachers use simultaneous groupings of students during something like “work time” to differentiate learning activities?			
Do teachers use a common planning template (like Purpose, Behavior Check, Review, Think, Know, Show) for planning their whole-class lessons? (Refer to pg. 26.)			
Do teachers prepare weekly lesson plans and schedules? Do the plans and schedules differentiate between whole-class instruction and work time? (Refer to pg. 23.)			
Do teachers share their successful whole-class lessons with other teachers? Is this done in Instructional Teams?			



Managing the Classroom During Work Time

Introduction to Managing the Classroom During Work Time

When a classroom is furnished and arranged only for whole-class instruction, the teacher's instructional options are very limited. We have discussed the following instructional modes, and each has its own classroom arrangement requirements:

Independent work: This can be easily accommodated with the same arrangement as whole-class instruction—each student at his or her desk.

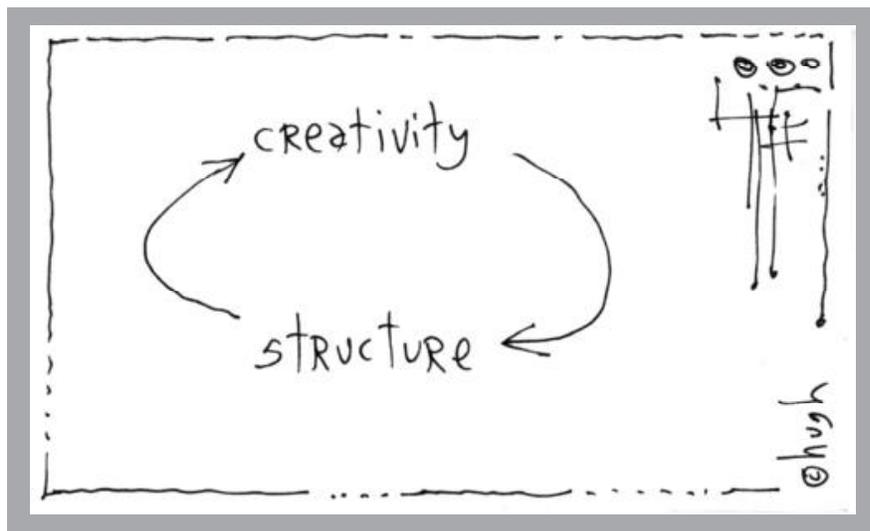
Computer-based learning: Where are the computers? In a computer lab down the hall? In a row at the back of the room? At a center?

Teacher-directed small group: Is the place designated and permanent? Desks or tables and chairs arranged for a small group near the teacher's desk, perhaps. Does the location allow the teacher to also scan the room to supervise students not in the group. If a teaching assistant also works with students in groups, is this a separate location? Or do the teacher and assistant take turns using the group area?

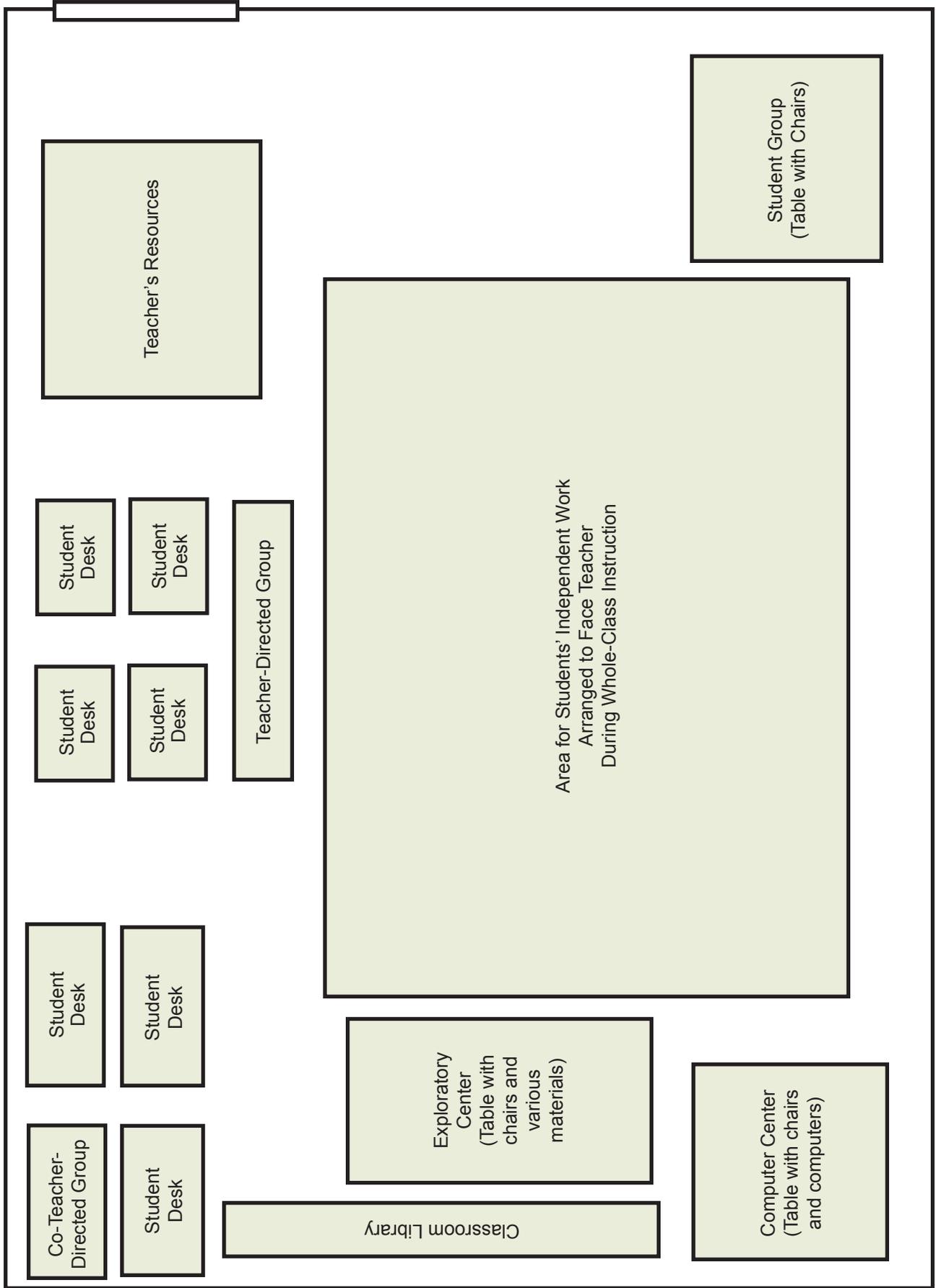
Student-directed small group: Similar to an arrangement for a teacher-directed small group, this may be a cluster of desks or table and chairs.

These are the basic classroom formations. A teacher may have more than one group area, including an exploratory center, for example, where students are able to pursue high-interest, curriculum-related materials including videos, games, and library books.

The next page shows how a classroom might be arranged to accommodate several instructional modes during work time.



Classroom Configuration



Think and Share

In what other ways might a classroom be arranged to allow for convenient application of various instructional modes, simultaneously? Maybe your own classroom is a good example.

Individualizing Student Assignments During Work Time

You have planned your whole-class instruction for the week, and you have gathered up the activity instructions for a variety of aligned activities that your Instructional Team has developed. You have conducted a quick pre-test to see where each student is positioned for mastering the new objectives.

Now you need to determine which learning activities you will assign to each student. You also need a way to let each student know which activities he or she is to complete during work time.

In session four, we will discuss the use of Student Learning Plans, individual plans for students, typically for a two-week period, that include the teacher's assignments for work time. But let's now consider other ways to efficiently assign each student differentiated learning activities so that the students know what to do and when.

Independent Work

For independent work, each student can easily progress through his or her own individual array of activities, as assigned by the teacher. The teacher may signal movement from independent work to group work or computer work so that various modes are in operation simultaneously within the classroom.

Fluid Grouping with Teacher-Directed Rotation

Targeting instruction for each student does not mean putting students into static groups. Rather, the teacher is attentive to each student's progress relative to each objective. So groupings are fluid, and a student does not get the sense of being a permanent "sparrow" or "bluebird."

For student-directed group work, it is best to use activities from the target objective level, thus allowing for heterogeneous groupings. But for teacher-directed groups, the teacher wants to focus on teaching, re-teaching, or rehearsing material for a group of students with something in common. The "something in common" may be that they all need more help with a concept or skill. Or it may be that they are all ready for more challenging, enhanced activities. Teacher-directed groups, then, are typically homogeneous.

Students can be asked to rotate among activities in the classroom by groups, as the teacher signals the time for the change. This is "teacher-directed rotation."

Classroom Management Techniques for Work Time

Student Folders

A student folder is a convenient way for the student to maintain assignments in one pocket and wait-time activities in the other. Wait-time activities are curriculum-relevant activities that students can do while they are awaiting teacher assistance. The student folder can travel home once each week for a parent's review, signature, and date.

Wait-Time Activities

Guidelines for Developing Wait-Time Activities

- * * Wait-time activities are objectives-based.
- * * Students are given a choice of a variety of activities.
- * * Not all activities should be paper-and-pencil activities.
- * * When possible, the wait-time activities should be targeted to the individual student.
- * * The activities should be for practice and reinforcement and not for introducing new concepts.
- * * Activities should be useful additions to the existing curriculum, and not busy work.

Teacher Calls

Purpose: To manage student requests for individual assistance

Teacher Calls:

- * * Reduce demands on teacher time for management purposes
- * * Promote student responsibility
- * * Increase efficiency of instructional delivery
- * * Ease the flow of activities in the classroom
- * * Enable students to request assistance without interrupting the teacher and to continue working while waiting for help (students should NOT hold up teacher calls)
- * * Can signal the maximum number of students the area can accommodate (to manage overcrowding)
- * * Are not practical for whole-group instruction
- * * Are great while teacher is working with small groups
- * * Are great while students are working in centers or on Student Learning Plan tasks

Examples of Teacher Calls

- * * Colored wooden blocks
- * * Oak tag paper stands or table tents
- * * Index card stands (folded in half)
- * * Cups (bottoms glued together)
- * * Laminated question mark or flag

Posted Procedures

Example of Posted Procedures for Use of Teacher Calls

Need Help?

1. Use your teacher call when you are unable to continue with your work.
2. Take out your Wait Time Activity, and work on it until help arrives.

Remember: Ask three before me!

Thank you!

Example of Procedures for Work Time

Work Time

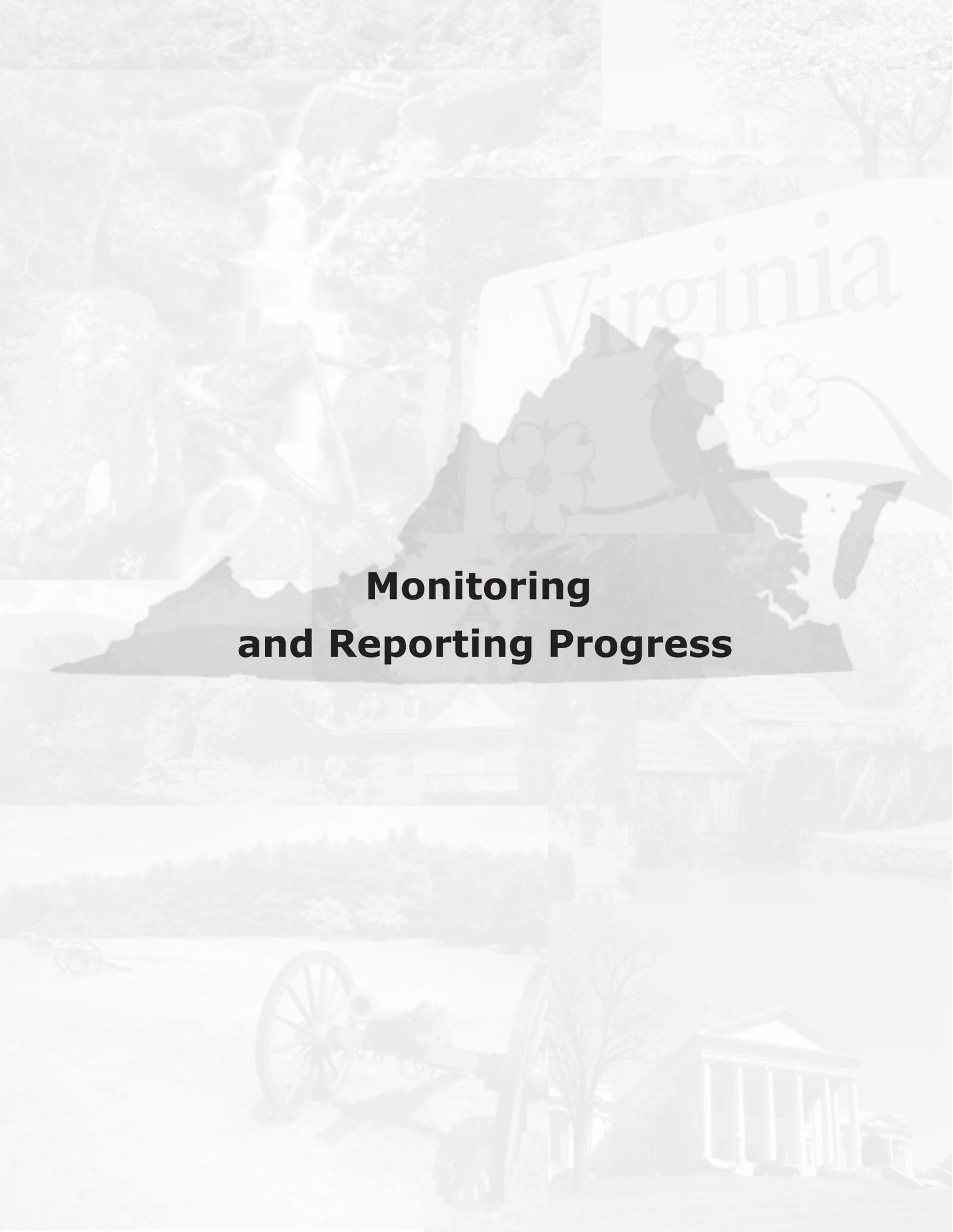
1. Correct number of students only.
2. Work quietly (6 inch voices).
3. When you are finished, put all materials away in their storage area.

Group Leader: Please check to make sure area is in order at the end of work time.

Thank you!

Next Steps: Classroom Management During Work Time

	What do we do now?	How can it be improved?	What is our first step?
How are classrooms configured in your school? (Refer to pg. 32.)			
How do teachers individualize assignments for students? How does each student know what to do?			
How do teachers manage the flow of students during work time? Do teachers use groups? Are they homogeneous, heterogeneous, fluid?			
What classroom management techniques do teachers use? Are the techniques used by all teachers?			



**Monitoring
and Reporting Progress**

Monitoring and Reporting Progress

The unit pre-test gives the teacher a basis for individualizing work time assignments. Then the teacher adjusts the assignments in response to the student's demonstrated mastery of objectives in the assigned learning activities.

The class progress chart helps the teacher keep track of how everyone is progressing in meeting the objectives of the unit. Scanning the chart also helps the teacher know where to re-teach, alter whole-class instruction, or focus instruction at the teacher center. At the end of a unit of instruction (or the end of a grading period), the student learning report is sent home to parents to report the student's progress toward learning objectives.

Think and Share

How do teachers in your school keep track of each student's mastery of specific objectives? Do they use this information to adjust individual assignments? To re-teach? How do teachers report to parents about their children's mastery of standards-based objectives?



Student Learning Report

Teacher: _____ Unit of Instruction Code: _____
 Grade Level: _____ Unit of Instruction: _____
 Subject: _____ Reporting Period: _____ Pre-Test Date: _____ Post-Test Date: _____

TARGET OBJECTIVES (code and descriptor)												
Student's Name												



Pre-Test Mastered



Mastered in Activity



Post-Test Mastered



Pre- and Post-Test Mastered

Teacher comments:

Next Steps: Monitoring and Reporting Progress

	What do we do now?	How can it be improved?	What is our first step?
<p>How do teachers maintain a daily tracking of each student's progress in mastering objectives?</p>			
<p>How do teachers adjust students' assignments as they note progress toward mastery of objectives? Is this adjustment typically done daily? Weekly?</p>			
<p>How do teachers systematically report to parents their children's progress in mastering specific, standards-based objectives?</p>			

For resources on School Improvement and other topics see:

www.centerii.org

Virginia

