

**August/
September
2007**

• **Comprehension
Best Practices to Try**

1. **Anticipation Guides**
- (+ Why)
2. **KWL Charts**
3. **Think-Pair-Share with partners**
4. **Word Banks**
5. **Read-Aloud Think-Aloud**
6. **Reciprocal Teaching**
7. **Semantic Webbing**
8. **Quickwrites**
9. **Creating Story Maps**
10. **Question the Author**
11. **Jigsaw Summaries**

Be sure to check out the Southmont Curriculum Website. Click on administrative offices/curriculum connection/either all schools, junior high and high school or elementary.

There are many wonderful links that have assembled concerning a variety of topics and academics.

Curriculum Corner

Welcome Back All New and Returning Staff

A warm welcome back to all staff! Summer break goes too quickly and soon we find ourselves facing another school year.

We welcome several new teachers to the corporation as well as teaching assistants and support staff.

Custodians and secretaries have been working to ensure that all is ready for us-all from

seeing that buildings are clean and spotless to working out the kinks with Power School.

With so many new teachers at the buildings, be sure to stop in and introduce yourself. I know the new teachers would appreciate meeting you and learning the in's and out's of our corporation.

Welcome to all our new

teachers: Kathleen Schronce, Cassandra Hicks, Jon Sparks, Jeana Gilbert, Justin Hoard, Jeanna VonDielingen, Desson Hannum, Kevin Wilkinson, Jennifer Goodman, Laura Fry, Autumn Ramsey, Kara McCormick, Sharon Albertson, Cheryl Haulk, and Athletic Director, Jeff Irwin



ISTEP+ Preparations

As the ISTTEP+ window approaches (September 17-28, 2007, GQE only Sept. 18,19,20), now is the time to review test taking strategies with students.

The following are some strategies that could help kids get that extra point

they need:

*Show all their work when it asks for it on math problems-this sounds simple, but kids don't do it.

*Look for MC answers they can eliminate-reducing the answers to 2 gives them a

50/50 chance.

*Re-read if in doubt-they have lots of time so they need to take their time when possible

*Each problem is scored on a difficulty index so they need to ... cont. page 2



*The best gift
students can
receive is a year
with a teacher
who truly
believes in them.*



ISTEP+ Preparations continued..

complete the ones they know the answers to and leave the difficult ones to the end, but try to complete all of the questions.

*Have a good understanding of vocabulary that may be problematic. For example the word “evaluate” or “the author gives evidence”. *For

a response to literature question, students need to be sure to cite reasons from the passage-sounds easy but they don’t go back to the passage, they make it up.

*They have to write A LOT. They don’t want to, but encourage them to explain themselves and make meaningful sentences with

lots of details and descriptors.

*They need to take their time and think through the questions.

*For math problems, even if they have no idea of what to do (especially for the applied skills), they need to show something! They may

Curriculum Mapping

As per the School Board request that our schools develop a K-12 articulated curriculum, we recently completed the English/ Language Arts curriculum last year. Teachers worked very hard to produce the maps that are guiding our ELA curriculum in addition

to creating the assessments that determine mastery of the standards.

The assessments that were created will be used toward the end of the first six weeks. Results from these assessments will be shared with principals as well as

forwarded to me so that we can see how our core curriculum is addressing the needs of the students and where the gaps are in the core curriculum.

The next curriculum to be mapped is to be social studies. More information coming.

NWEA vs. Performance Series

Our district has been using NWEA for several years now. It has given us some useful data, but lacked the ability to let teachers know where students were having problems specifically related to our Indiana Academic Standards. The

alternative that will replace NWEA is the Performance Series test from Scantron Corporation.

Teachers will have the ability to see which Indiana standards kids did not pass, pull up a listing of up to 20

skills students did not pass or did pass, and create study guides and small tests on those standards.

If we are going to be spending time to test kids, we need to get enough out of it to substantiate the lost instructional time. It has to

August 2007

- Aug. to end of month DIBELS
- Aug. to Sept. 7 Writing Prompt window
- Aug. 31 Staff Development 1/2 day for students



Elementary schools-Writing the Simple 6 at New Market

Junior High and High School-School Safety

September 2007

- Sept. 3 No School-Labor Day
- Sept. 17-28 ISTEP window; GQE Sept. 18, 19, 20
- Sept. 28 End of 1st 6 Weeks (33 days)
- Sept. 28 (appx.) ELA Curriculum Mapping Assessments

Upcoming...

October 1-26 Performance Series testing window grades 2-9

**Montgomery County
Education Foundation
Grant Cycle**

Be on the lookout for grants coming your way soon from the Montgomery County Education Foundation. These tend to be \$500 grants that can be written for items needed in the classroom.

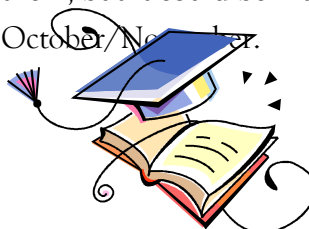
The Education

Foundation likes to see innovative projects that involve new and fresh ideas.

Some of the items funded in the past include Leap Pads for primary students, sending students on field trips, and special projects for clubs and academic meetings.

It is easier than you

think to apply and you may be surprised how simple and easy the application is. Your building principal should be passing these on to you when they receive them, but it could be into October/November.



*The best teachers
are students who
never stopped
learning.*

**Early Intervention of
K-2 Students**

We will continue to operate our Early Intervention program as previously done even without the Indiana Early Intervention Grant.

Elementary schools will continue to address the specific needs of students as indicated through DIBELS testing. Information from the testing is very valuable as it helps pinpoint areas in which students are not proficient.

Title 1 personnel will assume the responsibilities of reading interventionists and New Market will additionally have help with a primary

Research Websites

SOUTH MONTGOMERY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Cathy Rowe, Curriculum Director
www.southmont.k12.in.us



The South Montgomery Community Schools Dollars for Scholars offers scholarships for students each spring. Fundraising events help fund scholarships for our Southmont graduates so please take advantage of opportunities to give.



National High School Center www.highschools.org

Center on Innovation and Improvement www.centerii.org

The Center on Instruction www.centeroninstruction.org

What Works Clearinghouse www.w-w-c.org

Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement
www.csrclearinghouse.org

ERIC-Educational Resources Information Center www.eric.ed.gov

National Center on Student Progress Monitoring www.studentprogress.org

Council for Exceptional Children www.cec.sped.org

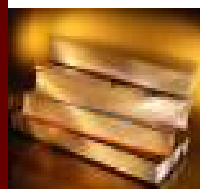
ISTEP Results Return Schedule

*All grades 3-9, GQE and GQE-Retest reports should be returned November 30th

*Image print delivered December 7th (rescore window Dec. 10-

From "Building Reading Comprehension Habits in Grades 6-12" by Jeff Zwiers

The following are some of the key instructional components of instruction that should become a natural part of teaching, especially the teaching of comprehension habits that will form a foundation for students' lifelong learning:



1. Connecting the New to the Existing-relate current learning to previous lessons, show similarities between thinking inside school and outside school and fill in necessary background knowledge before the lesson with pictures, stories, drama, etc
2. Model comprehension-example to read aloud and to think aloud
3. Scaffolding students' comprehension-teacher modeling and teacher assistance that diminishes
4. Giving mini-lessons-introduce, teacher model, student model and guided practice, finally independent practice
5. Building academic language-clarify content, provide wait time, ask questions that prompt critical thinking, require students to support their answers, opinions with evidence from text and real life.
6. Use graphic organizers and other visuals-students need to see how information correlates, relates
7. Building textbook reading habits-teach students who text is laid out and organized