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A Leader's Guide to Excellence in Every Classroom: Creating Support Systems for Teacher Success

By John R. Wink

Study Guide

This study guide is a companion to the book *A Leader's Guide to Excellence in Every Classroom: Creating Support Systems for Teacher Success* by John R. Wink. *A Leader's Guide to Excellence in Every Classroom* provides guidance for establishing instruction and classroom routines that will promote learning for all students and teachers.

This guide is arranged by chapter, enabling readers to either work their way through the entire book or focus on the specific topics addressed in a particular chapter. It can be used by individuals, small groups, or an entire team to identify key points, raise questions for consideration, assess conditions in a particular school or district, and suggest steps that might be taken to promote a healthy school culture and support teacher development.

We thank you for your interest in this book, and we hope this guide is a useful tool in your efforts to create a healthy culture in your school or district.

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Chapter 1

Every Teacher Counts

1. What does Robert Marzano's two-year study reveal about the primary role of teacher effectiveness in student learning gains?
2. According to C. Emily Feistritzer, as of 2011, what do new teachers feel most prepared and least prepared to deal with? Also, what does Feistritzer's study tell us about how teachers prefer to learn through professional development?
3. What do the levels of the Hierarchy of Instructional Excellence represent? How do these levels relate to the levels of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs? What is each of these hierarchies' most basic need for learners?
4. Briefly describe and contrast the purposes of the three levels of engagement that the Excellence Support System offers.
5. In schools that have the goal of *learning for all*, how should school leaders rephrase the four critical PLC questions for their purposes?

Chapter 2

Leading for Excellence: Learning Resources

1. What struggle did the new teacher named Emma face when she first started her teaching job, and what support system did she ultimately find? How does this situation compare to what you experienced in your first few days on the job?
2. Which of the schoolwide and teacher team supports described in this chapter do you currently utilize? Which ones do you think you would most benefit from adopting, and why?
3. What kinds of questions should teachers take into consideration before they introduce a new learning resource?
4. For which instructional resources do you think individuals on your teacher team should become experts so they can train other team members in their use? What resource do you feel you are best suited to gaining expertise in, and why is this the case?
5. List the three steps that coaches and mentors can take to help teachers improve how they use learning resources.

Chapter 3

Leading for Excellence: Classroom Routines and Procedures

1. What are the characteristics of a well-managed classroom? Which of these characteristics do you best foster in your classroom, and in which area do you require the most work?
2. Describe a situation in which you witnessed a new teacher struggling to keep order in his or her classroom. What must school leaders do to retain promising teachers who face struggles?
3. Briefly detail what the acronym CHAMPS represents and what questions teachers can ask themselves as they plan how to instill the CHAMPS concept in their classroom.
4. How do you engage students in classroom routines and procedures? When and how do you introduce these routines to students as the school year starts and unfolds, and how do you think you could improve these tactics based on this chapter's suggestions?
5. What purpose should a student code of conduct serve?

Chapter 4

Leading for Excellence: Relationships for Learning

1. What does the story about Jack, a new teacher, reveal about the impact that teachers fostering relationships with students can have on classroom discipline problems?
2. How can a teacher create a balance of dominance and cooperation with students?
3. What impact can how you speak, as opposed to what you say, to students have on their interest in learning? Describe a situation in which how you spoke to a student impacted his or her interest in learning.
4. Which of the strategies listed on pages 78–79 that teachers in schools of excellence use to form meaningful relationships with students do you employ? Which of the listed strategies do you think you should start to use, and why?
5. What questions should teachers ask as they try to strengthen their relationships with students' families?

Chapter 5

Leading for Excellence: Student Engagement

1. How is compliant learning different from excellent learning? Describe a classroom situation in which you saw a student engage in excellent learning. What proved the student had gone beyond compliant learning?
2. What does it mean for students to learn “from bell to bell”?
3. When you walk into a classroom in which students are engaged, what behaviors do you expect them to exhibit?
4. According to Adena M. Klem and James P. Connell, what three sets of psychological variables connect students’ learning experiences to their level of engagement?
5. What two pieces of information should a teacher know before preparing a lesson, and why is this information helpful?

Chapter 6

Leading for Excellence: Rigor and Mastery

1. What can students accomplish when they *know* content, and how does this differ from what students who *understand* content are capable of doing?
2. In your own words, define *rigor* and *rigorous learning*.
3. What purposes do individual formative assessments, common formative assessments, and summative assessments serve for teachers? Provide one example each of an individual formative assessment, a common formative assessment, and a summative assessment you have used with students.
4. To determine if an instructional activity is rigorous enough for their purposes, what factors and questions should teachers consider?
5. Consider the five team types that this chapter outlines, and compare these team types and how the people on each team are connected to one another.

Chapter 7

Leading for Excellence: Creative Strategies for Individual Students

1. How should a teacher's role change for students who have achieved at higher levels of learning than other students? What do you or your fellow educators do to fulfill this role and address these higher-achieving students' needs?
2. Define *individualized learning*.
3. What two assumptions should teacher teams share as they design effective interventions?
4. Describe the three steps of the 1-2-3 process and the purpose that this process serves for collaborative teacher teams.
5. How has having independent intervention environments for at-risk or struggling students created unproductive disconnects between these classrooms and regular classrooms in your school? What can schools do to avoid these disconnects?

Chapter 8

Leading for Excellence: Teacher Leadership

1. According to Robert Marzano's research, when do the most successful leaders become transformational?
2. Think of a teacher who taught you about the nature of teacher leadership, and describe the influence that this teacher had on your professional growth.
3. At what four levels should an excellent teacher leader embrace leadership purpose?
4. When do fixed-minded people seek improvement, and when do growth-minded people seek improvement?
5. What negative connotations have surrounded the concept of teacher leadership at your school or in your district?