

AMLE Conference 2014
Nashville, TN

Notes from Rick Wormeli's Session: "Redo, Retake, Rationale"

***I'm just sharing my notes from this session. My notes are paraphrased, but I tried to capture the emotion behind his presentation. If you've ever seen Rick Wormeli present, you know that he is energetic and dynamic. The tone of this particular presentation was a bit more intense and bold, as if he was sharing the information out of pure frustration with teachers.

Formative assessments:

- teachers should focus & spend most of their time assessing formatively
- being a demanding teacher means you PUSH and MAKE them do & re-do until they learn ALL of it. To not allow a child to re-do is a cop-out and not pedagogically sound. To allow a child to give up means you're caving in to the child's laziness.

Giving a zero tells the student:

- this assignment had no legitimate value
- it's okay if you don't do this work
- it's okay if you don't learn this content or skill

*NONE of the above is acceptable to the highly accomplished, professional educator.

- Teachers who gives 0 or F with no retakes or re-dos: this is a sign of either a lazy teacher or an incompetent teacher who is not aware of the up-to-date research/studies.

Redo strategies:

****We all know that allowing students to re-take/redo ends up being more work for the teacher. His basic message was for teachers to understand WHY we should allow re-takes. If we understand why, then we can embrace this practice of making students redo their work until they achieve the goal/ mastery. Some of his suggestions are:

-student just needs to re-take or revise the section of the test they failed; "bank the rest of the assessment"

-for certain conditions, a whole redo is necessary: running the whole mile, play whole concerto, paper missing "theme" if the point of the paper was to discuss the theme of the story

-retakes/redos should ALWAYS be at teacher's discretion

-set a cut-off date at end of quarter: No retakes allowed after XXX date

-give a "cold" re-take: have the student see you while you're doing yard duty & make student answer questions verbally, right on the spot (like a pop quiz). He shared story of asking kids quiz-type questions when he sees them in the grocery store, etc. It does not have to be done in the classroom & it should not be making life harder for the teacher.

-Ask student to write a reflection as part of the re-take process & student must explain what he/she did differently this time to prepare or ??? (other ideas)

-If you require a parent signature, then the child will NOT be allowed to retake on the same day because parent needs to see and sign the original test/work

-students with a pattern of not studying, not turning in work, etc. should NOT be allowed to re-take. He suggests that in this case, there are probably other issues with the student that need attention (learning disability, emotional, home/family problems, access to materials, etc.)

Rationale:

Just as a baby learns to walk or a child learns to ride a bike, we expect that the baby or child will fall. It's incomprehensible for a parent or teacher to tell that child, "Oh well, too bad, we have to move on. Everyone has to be somewhere (get through the curriculum) by a certain time, so we need to move on without you." We encourage, support, and provide the baby or child opportunities to try again. When they perform the skill independently, we celebrate and praise. Are we doing this in our classrooms?

FAIL = "First Attempt In Learning"

Thomas Edison invented the lightbulb after failing 1,000 times.

Recovery from failure builds character and maturation.

As educators, we must develop their skills & talents, which means we need to give them many opportunities to practice.

English class example of giving students multiple opportunities to practice:

1-Repeated assignment: repeat but not the same thing over and over again

*Read the same text, but for different purposes:

- look for text features
- find main idea and supporting details
- practice making inferences
- oral reading fluency

2-Space out the practice sessions

3-As students have more opportunities to practice, increase complexity & rigor of tasks

***check out: www.brainology.us

Take-aways from video in session:

Watch TedX video: Eastside Prep video of professor's skateboarding skills

*Real time, MEANINGFUL feedback is more helpful than a score or an average of scores

*Nobody knows ahead of time how long it will take anyone to learn anything, yet schools expect students to learn X amount of skills and content knowledge by the end of the quarter or school year.

*Failure is NORMAL and expected-change our attitudes/perceptions of failure, then our students will see it as a step in making progress

*When there are no grades, there is no cheating!

To learn more about this topic, you can read his online article, "Redos & Retakes Done Right." Another article is "Late Work: A Constructed Response" by Wormeli.

www.stenhouse.com/fiae (fair isn't always equal)

www.rickwormeli.net

-go to "recommended reading" section to find articles to read on this topic

-see Rick Galepsy's article on this site