

Rigor & Relevance

An Overview

“ As students move from class to class and progress to the next grade, they are exposed to isolated bits of content-specific knowledge, but they are not taught how what they learn in one class relates to another or its application in the world outside of school. . .What is important is that students enter the global economy with the ability to apply what they learned in school to a variety of ever-changing situations that they couldn't foresee before graduating. That is the mark of a quality education and a truer indication of academic excellence. ”

– Willard R. Daggett, Ed.D.

Rigor and Relevance Defined

Traditionally, **rigor** is measured by how demanding the instructional material is and how thoroughly the teacher covers it. Daggett shifts the focus of rigor from teacher to student and measures rigor by the **higher-order competencies** the students have mastered as result of the lesson.

Relevance extends the learning beyond the classroom by teaching students to **apply what they are learning** to real world situations.

Rigor/Relevance Framework

The Rigor/Relevance Framework is a tool developed by Willard Daggett and the staff of the International Center for Leadership in Education to examine curriculum, instruction, and assessment and based on two dimensions of higher standards and student achievement:

1. **Knowledge Taxonomy:** The increasingly complex ways in which we think. This moves from the acquisition of knowledge and being able to recall or locate that knowledge to more complex ways in which individuals take several pieces of knowledge and combine them in both logical and creative ways.
2. **Application Model:** Five levels which put knowledge to use. While the low end is knowledge acquired for its own sake, the high end signifies use of that knowledge to solve complex real-world problems and to create unique projects, designs, and other works for use in real-world situations.

The Rigor/Relevance Framework has four quadrants. It shifts from teacher-centered instruction to student-centered learning focusing less on the material the teacher covers and more on the competencies students have mastered as a result of the lesson:

Rigor & Relevance Quadrant Descriptions

<p>Quadrant C – Assimilation</p> <p>Students extend and refine their acquired knowledge to be able to use that knowledge automatically and routinely to analyze and solve problems and create solutions.</p>	<p>Quadrant D – Adaptation</p> <p>Students have the competence to think in complex ways and to apply their knowledge and skills. Even when confronted with perplexing unknowns, students are able to use extensive knowledge and skill to create solutions and take action that further develops their skills and knowledge.</p>
<p>Quadrant A – Acquisition</p> <p>Students gather and store bits of knowledge and information. Students are primarily expected to remember or understand this knowledge.</p>	<p>Quadrant B – Application</p> <p>Students use acquired knowledge to solve problems, design solutions, and complete work. The highest level of application is to apply knowledge to new and unpredictable situations.</p>

Rigor/Relevance Framework

Knowledge Evaluation 6 Synthesis 5 Analysis 4 Application 3 Comprehension 2 Awareness 1	C – Assimilation	D – Adaptation			
	A – Acquisition	B – Application			
	1 Knowledge in one discipline	2 Apply knowledge in one discipline	3 Apply knowledge across disciplines	4 Apply knowledge to real-world predictable situations	5 Apply knowledge to real-world unpredictable situations
	Application				

Prentice Hall tools for rigor & relevance Key features include:

- An Inquiry-based approach supports the individual and active learning process
- The Integrated multi-discipline instruction connects learning experiences in a meaningful way
- Embedded practice and instant feedback gives students the opportunity to identify their strengths and weakness and actively participate in the learning process
- A variety of assessment options offered before, during, and after each lesson effectively measure student competencies
- Real-world connections apply acquired skills to help students become informed decision makers and active citizens
- Hands-on and technology activities encourage students to think and act beyond the classroom
- Pedagogy and content help students connect key concepts, identify patterns, and predict outcomes

Where can I find more information?

- <http://www.leaderead.com/rigor.shtml>
- http://www.summit-academy.com/InternetResources/parent_resources/Rigor_Relevance_intro.pdf
- <http://www.leaderead.com/PP/Rigorrelevance.ppt> (power point presentations)
- <http://www.daggett.com/RRRRResources.pdf> (catalog of publications and tool kits)