Teaching in Tandem: Media Specialist/Librarian & the Classroom Teacher

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The NCTE/AASL joint Committee on Learning Resources has been charged by both organizations with the responsibility of finding areas of cooperation and communication between media specialists/librarians and English teachers. Professionals in both fields have strong opinions about the nature and depth of experiences the student should have in a school media center. The questions upon which they are focusing their attention are:

> What skills are to be initially introduced, developed and rein-forced?
> At what grade level are these skills to be taught?
> Where will the teaching process occur: in the classroom, media center/library, or both?
> Will the teacher or the media specialist/librarian introduce, develop, and reinforce the skills to be taught?

Recognizing the significance of these questions, the media specialists/librarians in a southern New Jersey suburban school system that includes four elementary schools proceeded to find some answers. They sought a process that could be shared with all schools for the purpose of:

1) identifying necessary information and learning strategies for research skills;
2) determining who will teach these skills; when and where they will be introduced, developed and reinforced to ensure program continuity;
3) assuring media specialist/librarian and classroom teacher recognition of the need for joint cooperation in the teaching of the skills and mutual understanding of the role of each of the professionals involved.

The district's basic skills specialist acted as a resource person for the project. The interaction process, procedures and strategies were evolved and developed in conjunction with the district's curriculum guidelines.

Our first step was to identify the skills to be emphasized and in-corporated into a K-4 media center program. The media specialists/librarians identified the skills they felt should be included, while the basic skills specialist developed a chart extracting those prescribed in the district's curriculum guides for reading, language arts and media center experiences.

The results from each individual's outline were combined into a single skill bank.

To develop a scope and sequence chart, the media specialists/librarians made an analysis of the identified skills and after discussion and reaction to the headings and subheadings of the concepts listed in the skill bank they filled in the resulting scope and sequence of concepts and skills for each grade level from K-4 on blank display charts. An accurate interpretation of the chart required a code: for example, the person responsible for skill development was designated as T (teacher) or M (media specialist). The instructional cycle of a skill was shown as I (initial exposure to skill), D (development of skill), or R (reinforcement of skill). (See chart, Study and Research Skill Assessment – Media.) The code also served to identify the level of involvement by the media specialist/librarian in the teaching of media skills at each grade level.

The basic skills specialist gathered the scope and sequence charts from the district's basal reading and language arts programs to compare with the chart prepared by the media specialists/librarians and devised a color-coded system to distinguish between the basals and their respective levels on the media-developed chart.

It was time to get the professionals together, personally and philosophically. The classroom teachers received blank copies of the scope and sequence chart for their input. The media specialists/librarians set up individual or grade-level conferences within each building to explain the skills chart and interpret the color code. The teachers then reacted to the chart in terms of how they perceived their role with respect to the instructional cycle in their classrooms and within their curriculum, indicating where they felt the media specialist/librarian should be a) totally involved or b) supportive to their program.

At this stage of the project the teacher charts alongside the media specialist/librarian charts the value of tandem teaching was evident. Teachers and media personnel discovered the extent of each other's efforts and recognized omissions, out-of-sequence patterns and duplication of effort that created unnecessary repetition rather than reinforcement. Each had assumed they were reinforcing certain skills when, in fact, necessary groundwork had not been prepared. Naturally they also found areas in which they had been accomplishing their goals sequentially, although it had not been a direct result of joint planning.

The need for cooperation and joint planning thus became apparent in determining who would teach the skills, when and where they would introduce, develop and reinforce the skills to ensure program continuity.

An additional benefit of the project was realized when we decided to share the chart with the middle school media personnel and teachers so they in turn could visualize the foundation and building of skills taking place at the elementary level. This provided an opportunity for them to react, adjust and plan for the higher levels of learning at each conceptual strand in the middle school curriculum.

Although the media skills and professional involvement in the in-

STUDY & RESEARCH SKILL ASSESSMENT - MEDIA

Code: I = Initial Exposure
D = Develop
R = Reinforce
M = Media
T = Teacher

Grade	Sk111 — Introduction to Media Rules & Procedures	Care of Print & Non-print Materials	Instruction & Use of Audiovisual Hardware	Primer Picture Book	Older Fiction	Nonfiction	Autobiography - Biography	Reference	Cover	Spine Label	Title Page (Title,Author,Pub-lisher,Place,Copy-right,Illus.)	Table of Contents	Chapters	Graphs/Tables	Maps	Photographs	Index
K	I/D-M					I-M											
1	R-M					R-T											
2	R-M																
3	R-M																
4	R-M					D-M											

Media Center Orientation

Location & Identification of Materials

Location & Identification – Parts of a Book

Reference - - - Study Skills

Location of Material - Using the Card Catalog

Purpose - Arrangement Card Catalog

Column labels (rotated):
- Paraphrasing
- Outlining
- Notetaking
- Skimming/Scanning
- Previewing
- Use of: Entry words
- Use of: Guide words
- Alphabetizing
- Dictionary
- Cross Reference
- Type of Material
- Author/Title
- Subject Area
- Spine Label (Call Number, Address)
- Author/Title
- Types: Subject
- Types: Card Catalog
- Identification: Card Catalog
- Bibliography
- Glossary

Cell entries:

I - T/M
D - T/M

I - M
D - M
R - M
R - M

Literature Appreciation

- Author/Illustrator
- Individual Study
- Myths & Legends
- Fables
- Folktales/ Folklore
- Poetry
- Drama
- Newbery Award
- Caldecott Award

Non-Print Appre-ciation

- AV Production of Materials

Research - Reference Materials

- Thesaurus
- Fact Books, Almanacs, Atlases, Guinness
- General Encyclopedia
- Preyclopedia
- Special Subject Dictionary
- General Dictionary
- Pictionary
- Synthesizing
- Summarizing

I-M

M

D-

structional cycle will differ, we feel the process can be used at the intermediate and secondary levels to achieve the same goals as in the elementary schools. The final plan reached within each school community for teaching in tandem will differ to some extent, but the process we have described will develop and encourage stronger bonds of communication between media specialists/librarians and classroom teachers. The students will benefit from a variety of learning strategies for research and reference skills which should heighten competence and pleasure in books and non-print materials. In turn, the media center/library will become the hub of cooperation and interaction brought about by tandem teaching.