

## Module 4: Problem of Practice

At the beginning of this module I learned about Problems of Practice in Education. I was able to identify a problem of practice and discuss it with my group.

### Group Discussion

We had a great discussion via Skype, and I would like to thank my group for sharing their knowledge. It was very refreshing to be able to speak to others, in real time. This type of communication allowed me to relate to, and understand what my classmates are dealing with as we move through the course; it really allowed for more personalization with my classmates.

### The contexts in which group members teach

I am currently teaching grade 1 in Saudi Arabia. I teach at an US embassy school. I have students from all over the world.

Adam is starting in a new position in September. He will be teaching in a private school for the first time, and it caters to gifted children. He has learned the curriculum is very rigorous and quite rigid.

Carolynn is in the process of finding a new job. She has worked in early childhood education in both daycares and before and after school program with children preschool to school age.

### The perceived benefits of SRL in your various teaching contexts

For me, SRL promotes academic achievement, motivation, and life-long learning. Letting the grade 1 take control of their learning is scary, but exciting. I can't wait to start! I am curious to see the younger minds going through the SRL process and taking control of their learning. I explained that I have started letting the students take control. They designed the classroom (we cut off legs of our tables for floor seating).

For Adam, SRL facilitates proximal goal setting in a way that supports the students long-term goals. He knows that the students at his school set challenging life goals at a very early age in terms of university entrance and

careers, but those things can sometimes be too far off to be motivating at the level he will be teaching (grade 6).

Carolynn thought that SRL would help her be more flexible in her teaching and meet the needs of the children. It would allow her to be more reflective in her learning with children- The three components to SRL- self observation, self judgement and self reaction would assist- When she is doing an activity with the children she is going to observe their reactions to her and her reaction to them and their comments. This would help her change, move forward or expand on her activity. Self judgement- would motivate her towards her personal goals and how she needs to change in her teaching for next time in regards to what went well and what did not- in the process learning from my mistakes. Self reaction- would encourage her to be more happy and satisfied with her accomplishments and celebrate results in her teaching.

**The ease/difficulty with which you anticipate being able to apply SRL in your teaching context and why**

I shared with my group that I am a first grade teacher, and I am not sure that my little learners are ready for the independence of SRL. I shared with them that I think the excitement and engagement would be the easiest part but the hinder would be helping them monitor themselves.

We had a discussion about different levels of students and knowing where to start in encouraging and teaching self regulated learning in children and what opportunities that we need to provide. Especially when children develop and progress differently. We talked about what support to give.

We finally talked about what if our schools, admin, curriculum etc are too rigid and leave little to no room for SRL.

**Helpful suggestions for group members re SRL**

For my problem of practice, my group suggested that I also think inquiry learning. It is important for SRL which could be useful for grade one. We discussed that the grade 1 would certainly need more guidance and support than would older students. We talked about how observing a SRL classroom in the lower elementary would be helpful. We had a discussion on 20% projects or Genius hour. I thought I could start off with Genius Hour this year and then maybe try 20% projects.

I shared an article stating that "Spending a marginal amount of time each day demonstrating how specific self-regulation strategies can improve students' learning can go a long way, to helping them prepare for challenging learning tasks and assessments (Graham & Harris, 2005)."

We talked about maybe starting SRL as a club or afterschool activity. Another suggestion is makerspace .

### Any issues concerned with your individual inquiry projects and helpful suggestions

We talked about time management and when unexpected issues arrive. We also talked about keeping engaged and positive.

We shared the use of timers, checklists and to do lists. We shared the benefits of taking breaks reflected on what we learned and really see what our focus is. We talked about seeking help from other (e.g. talking to professor). It was suggested that doing a quick concept map can help make connections between readings and identify some key things to understand. Carilynn shared her blog and the The STop method she uses when she is frustrated (<https://sr2learn.wordpress.com/2011/12/06/thought-stopping/> )

### How are your SRL skills increasing?

I read Tobey and Goldsmith's article, "Developing Self-regulated Learners: The Critical Role of Feedback" The article discussed the importance of feedback.

#### Good feedback practice:

1. Helps clarify what good performance is (goals, criteria, expected standards) □
2. Facilitates the development of self-assessment (reflection) in learning
3. Delivers high quality information to students about their learning
4. Encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning □
5. Encourages positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem
6. Provides opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance
7. Provides information to teachers that can be used to help shape teaching

The group discussion was very useful. It was a great learning experience. I would love to be able to have a live discussion at least once per course.