

CONTENTS

- 1 WIDE World Online
- 5 Online is More than an Add-on
- 7 The Educator's Guide to Copyright and Fair Use
- 8 The Copyright Quiz
- 9 The Job Detectives Connecting Curriculum and Community
- 13 Federal Funding Cut Again!
- 16 Copyright Quiz Answers
- 18 Classroom Copyright Chart
- 21 Becoming a Technoconstructivist

WIDE World Online at Harvard University Graduate School of Education: An Interview with Dr. Stone Wiske and Dr. David Perkins

~ by Dr. Reza Namin

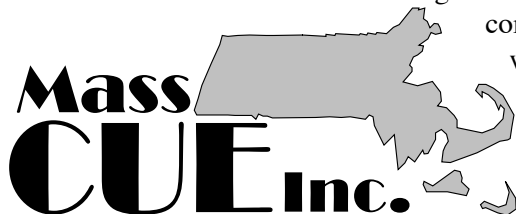
WIDE World is an innovative professional development program based at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. The program started as a pilot course for a few teachers and expanded into offering courses in the area of Mathematics, Reasoning, Technology Integration, and Differentiated Instruction. It was a joint project of Project Zero and the Education Technology Center at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. The Wide World can offer K-12 teachers and administrators a variety of opportunities such as Six-session Courses focused on differentiated instruction, math, reading, writing, technology integration, multiple intelligences and instructional strategies and Mini-Courses focused on differentiated instruction. They can also offer an Extensive Coaching Development Program for districts. The development of coaching and instructional leader will take place in many phases. They will identify the teachers with qualification to be an effective mentor; the mentors will take online professional development through Wide World and will go through extensive training. Upon completion of the training, mentors will work with about ten other participants in a study group.

Wide World's Co-Principal Investigators are Dr. David Perkins and Dr. Martha Stone Wiske. Dr. Perkins has a Ph.D.

from Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He conducts research on creativity in the arts and sciences, informal reasoning, problem solving, understanding, individual and organizational learning, and the teaching of thinking skills. He has participated in curriculum projects addressing thinking, understanding, and learning in Colombia, Israel, Venezuela, South Africa, and Sweden as well as in the United States. He is actively involved in school change. He is the author of numerous publications, including *The Eureka Effect* and his latest book, *King Arthur's Round Table*, about organizational intelligence and learning. His faculty profile on the Harvard Graduate School of Education Web site can be viewed at http://hugse9.harvard.edu/gse-data/resource_pkg.profile?vperson_id=4.

Dr. Wiske has a Ed.D from Harvard University. Her special interests include the integration of new technologies and the incorporation of learner-centered teaching for understanding into educational settings, including schools, universities, and other settings. Her recent work focuses on the creation and assessment of online learning environments and activities, and the development of networked communities of practice. She directs the Education with New Technologies Web site, a networked learning environment to support teaching

Continued on page 2.



Dr. Reza Namin is Executive Director of Educational Resources and Retraining, ERR, Inc. He is the Vice-President of MassCUE.

WIDE World

Continued from page 1.



Dr. David Perkins



Dr. Martha Stone Wiske

for understanding with new technologies. She has edited *Teaching for Understanding: Linking Research with Practice* and is coeditor and cofounder of *ECi* (Education, Communication, and Information), an international journal for dialogue about new developments in educational theory, practice, and technology.

Her faculty profile published on the Harvard Graduate School of Education's Web site can be viewed at http://hugse9.harvard.edu/gsedata/resource_pkg/profile?vperson_id=417.

REZA NAMIN: What is Teaching for Understanding?

STONE WISKE: Understanding is a really central goal of education. All teachers strive to build student understanding in their own way. Teaching for Understanding, TfU for short, is a way of organizing students' learning that puts understanding in the foreground. It was developed through a six-year project at Project Zero of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, in close collaboration with a number of teachers. Both of us were deeply involved in that work.

The big idea of TfU is to bring knowledge to life by engaging students in active learning. TfU emphasizes what we call a "performance view" of understanding: When students really understand something, they can put it through its paces. They can think about it flexibly and apply it flexibly. For instance, students might start to build their understanding of a historical event by learning the facts, yes, but they can develop genuine understanding by going beyond the facts to explain what happened, analyzing causes earlier in history, discussing the incident as different ethnic and national groups might see it from their own perspectives, and developing comparisons and contrasts with current events.

There are books and articles about TfU of course, but one of the best ways to get a practical sense of this framework in action is to take a WIDE World course. Most of our courses focus on TfU or combine TfU with other goals, like how to use technology in the classroom to strengthen students' understanding.

NAMIN: How does TfU work?

DAVID PERKINS: TfU helps teachers organize and focus their best experience and intuitions about how to make learning strong. It's organized around some big common-sense questions like what topics do you want the learners to understand? (We call these generative topics) and what will

they do to understand it? (These are the understanding performances) and how will they – and you – know whether they are understanding? (This is a matter of assessment for understanding early and often). Of course, there are a number of important details, but those big, top-level, focusing questions get teachers started.

One good thing about these questions is that they make sense for just about any topic at any level. Whether you're talking about adding fractions or understanding democracy or studying Newton's laws, there's always a level of understanding you want learners to attain. There are always understanding performances that make sense for learners at any level. Indeed, one exciting thing we've seen since the original work that focused on middle and high school classes is TfU applied just about everywhere. We've seen college professors use it, we've seen teachers in first and second grade use it. It's been applied in science, math, foreign languages, the language arts, history and social studies, just about any place you can think of.

What's really gratifying is that this model makes sense to teachers. They usually recognize TfU as something they do a lot of already. They say the framework helps to deepen and sharpen their practice, and gives them a common language for exchanging ideas with their colleagues.

Of course, WIDE World isn't just about TfU. We use TfU a lot, but WIDE World courses include attention to multiple intelligences, the development of smart reading and writing skills, the use of technology in the classroom, differentiated instruction, and several other themes. TfU is always the underlying framework though.

Continued on page 3.

WIDE World*Continued from page 2.*

TfU is an approach to teaching and learning through five interacting elements used in planning and carrying out instruction when understanding is the goal: **generative topics, understanding goals, throughlines, performances of understanding, and ongoing assessment.**

- Generative topics are study selections that are both important in some discipline and engaging to students and teachers.
- Understanding of goals is reflected through explicit and public statements about what has been developed and achieved so that students can understand what they are expected to learn.
- Throughlines are indicated by course length understanding goals.
- Performances of understanding provide opportunities for students to use what they know actively and thoughtfully in new situations in ways that develop and demonstrate the understandings regarding the understanding goals.
- Ongoing assessment is accomplished through frequent checks by students and teachers of how understanding is developing throughout a sequence of instruction. It is formative and not merely summative.

NAMIN: How do you keep logs of the learners' activities?

WISKE: To answer that, we really ought to tell you a little bit more about how WIDE World works. Lots of online learning is pretty impersonal. It's just lectures in text with a few graphics to a big audience of learners.

WIDE World has online lectures too. But WIDE World aims to create a personalized learning process and

promote collegiality no matter how many people are enrolled in a course overall. People who join WIDE World online courses are grouped with a few others who share their interests and a coach knowledgeable about both course content and online collaboration. The bigger the course, the more coaching groups, but each individual participant joins a small community of colleagues. The coach helps members of a study group connect the course content to their own interests and develop collaborative relationships with other participants.

Now to the online logs. Each coaching group has its own little online forum. People get to know one another as they do assignments, post their answers to the forum, and receive feedback and exchange ideas not only with the coach but with their colleagues, too. The learning from colleagues is just as important as the learning from the coaches and the overall course content.

The online forums keep track of everything. Participants can always go back and recover the thread of a conversation, or a nice idea they posted, or a piece of feedback from a couple weeks ago, or from the very beginning of the course.

NAMIN: How can WIDE World and TfU help schools with their professional development goals?

PERKINS: One thing we've learned is that teachers and school leaders need programs uniquely tailored to local needs. So we try to do this in a number of ways. For one simple thing, the coaches always strive to help participants in groups (groups are typically made up of folks who teach the same subject matter) work on their individual problems.

More generally, we welcome in-

dividual enrollees, but we particularly reach out to schools and whole school systems to establish a rich collaborative working relationship. We try to listen carefully to a school's priorities, recommend WIDE World courses that speak to those needs, organize the participants into the kinds of groups that make sense for the setting, and guide the coaches in making adjustments to local needs.

Another thing we've learned is that schools and school systems very much want to build internal capacity for professional development. WIDE World is designed to help with this. We use a team-based learning model that organizes most enrollees into learning teams of three to four colleagues with whom they collaborate, to create a critical mass of practitioners savvy about TfU and other powerful teaching strategies. WIDE World creates local capacity by inviting some teachers from the system to train as online coaches. Schools are encouraged to enroll potential instructional leaders early, to prepare them to serve as locally-based coaches for later waves of teachers.

NAMIN: How does TfU help classroom teachers?

WISKE: Most straightforwardly, WIDE World's helps teachers learn how to plan and teach lessons that engage all students in active learning focused on important curricular goals and that integrate ongoing assessments to improve student performance. Participants in WIDE World's courses report that they learn how to improve their practice in ways they believe will lead to better achievement. For every semester over the past two years, more than ninety percent of our participants

Continued on page 24.

WIDE World

Continued from page 3.

Program of Study

WIDE offers two programs of study: **Differentiated Instruction Program of Study** provides the tools and strategies needed to differentiate instruction effectively for all students in your classroom through two courses: Strategies for Effective Classroom Practice and Strategies for Teaching English Language Learners. **Technology Integration Program of Study** prepares you to integrate new technologies into your teaching through two courses: Teaching to Standards with New Technologies and Practical Strategies for Integrating Technology to Improve Learning.

report consistently in our final course surveys that their teaching practices have improved as a result of taking WIDE courses. A number of teachers go on to note that they found their students more involved in the learning process and more focused and committed to their own learning.

But we think that work with WIDE World gives teachers a lot more than classroom techniques. It's often been remarked that teaching is a lonely profession. Teachers usually work separately in their classrooms and have few opportunities to learn from interaction with one another. WIDE World programs are specifically designed to overcome teachers' isolation, to engage them in deep conversations with one another about what's important, what works, and why.

More broadly, WIDE World aims to build relationships with school systems and other educational organizations so that their participants form an expanding network of support for educational improvement in their settings. We know that teachers are the key to students' successful learning, and that strong teachers are themselves continual learners. That's why WIDE World courses focus on helping teachers develop a common language and way of working together that enables them to support one another. WIDE World participants learn

how to share their concerns about teaching, analyze lesson plans, and offer constructive advice.

NAMIN: What are the benefits of teaching and learning from a distance? Why is distance learning through WIDE World more effective than traditional in-service workshops?

WISKE: Traditional in-service workshops tend to be hit-and-run events. In many cases teachers attend a one-day workshop on such-and-such and never see the presenter or hear about any of the ideas again. They have their handouts, and that's it. Maybe a few of them get something out of it, but research on teacher development shows that most of them do not.

Of course, some in-service programs certainly do better than this. They arrange for multiple contacts over time. But this is expensive and usually comes down only to two or three events.

What WIDE World offers more than anything else is sustained personalized attention. Because WIDE World works online, our instructors and coaches keep in touch with course participants over weeks and months. The coaching groups and other features provide collegiality and individual and group feedback. Over time, as a number of educators from a particular school participate, a critical mass of

expertise develops, with a strong sense of community due to shared experiences. All this is very hard to do with traditional in-service.

So is WIDE World better than an "ideal" face-to-face, in-service program? In all honesty, probably not. If you can find someone to show up every couple of weeks and work with teachers in small groups, get to know them, encourage them to interact with one another, and carry this on for a semester, two semesters, or two years, that would be just terrific. But the reality is such support can almost never happen. With WIDE World, it can happen—online, with occasional face-to-face elements. And teachers we work with have been excited to discover that online interaction is pretty good. A real intimacy develops in many of the coaching groups.

NAMIN: What evidence do you have about the effectiveness of WIDE World's online courses and the TfU framework?

PERKINS: Let's say something about TfU first since it's the foundation for a lot of the WIDE World work. TfU is a research-based framework. As mentioned earlier, it was developed over a number of years. We did a lot of close classroom observation and a lot of evaluation of student understanding. The bottom line is that TfU enhances learners' understanding. The evidence is summed up in *Teaching for Understanding: Linking Research with Practice* (edited by Stone Wiske, Jossey-Bass, 1998).

Besides that, in WIDE World we pay really close attention to teachers' experiences with their courses, what teachers do with what they learn, and

Continued on page 25.

WIDE World*Continued from page 24.*

what they report about their students. For instance, as mentioned earlier, over 90% of participants responding to a WIDE World survey report that their practice has improved as a result of taking our online courses.

Of course, in these days of high-stakes testing, the absolute bottom line is wide-scale impact on student test performance. WIDE World is a relatively young initiative, and this is a kind of data we just don't have yet. We think it's important, and we are getting going on research that eventually will yield such findings. Schools that participate in WIDE World have a chance to help! Meanwhile, all the research that we have completed points in the right direction!

—End of Interview—

Wide World is a comprehensive, online, and face-to-face professional development program supporting schools and districts by developing teachers as instructional leaders and their instructional skills. Wide World will also help districts to develop strong coaching and mentoring skills in order to build local coaching capacity within schools and districts.

Job Detectives*Continued from page 11.*

effects of this project. It's an idea that seems so simple. But the use of email as a classroom tool seems to be underused. In this project, the actual time dealing with technology is very little compared to the total time spent on the learning activities, including student discussion, planning, writing, and sharing. The technology is a catalyst for much of what happens in the classroom.

Hello, Room 22,

How is everyone in the Detectives Division today? While I am at work, it can be quite noisy. I often hear the fire engine/ ambulance sirens sounding off. I also hear house alarms buzzing loudly. Since I deal with citizens on a daily basis, conversations either on the phone or in person are always going on. The phone systems in the building I work in are constantly ringing off the hook with people who need directions or who just need help. . . . I

work in and outside, and both places seem to be busy and loud, sometimes hectic. Can you guess my job?

Overall, the use of email was a small but significant use of technology that encouraged communication between the worker and the students. Everything else in the activity was possible without the technology, but was enriched with that technology. Working together, Rebekah and I were able to keep our focus on the classroom and student needs, the demands of the state frameworks, and the desire to use only that technology that would bring value to our ideas of good teaching and learning.

Reprinted with permission from Learning & Leading with Technology, vol. 32 no. 1, copyright © 2004, ISTE® (International Society for Technology in Education), iste@iste.org, www.iste.org. All rights reserved.

