

## Chapter Key Points from *Grading Smarter Not Harder* by Myron Dueck

This is an excellent book that provides practical examples of why and how to address common concerns in regard to these basic elements of teaching.

Copies are available for check out from your building principals or CO. Please sign out a copy today.

### Chapter 1 Grading

- ❖ Separate behaviors from grading
- ❖ Don't use grades for punishment; students need to care about the consequence
- ❖ Use aims, reduction, and empowerment
- ❖ The power of zero
- ❖ Make it harder for students to not complete work than to complete it
- ❖ 2-tiered testing system, makeup test would provide less favorable conditions
- ❖ If you engage students, they will do the work
- ❖ Grades should affect true ability
- ❖ Match consequences to behavior
- ❖ Don't be afraid to use professional development based on evidence

### Chapter 2 – Homework

Eliminate “uniform” homework; homework should be assigned when needed and as needed

- ❖ Problems
  - Confuses completion with understanding
  - Busy work vs intrinsic motivation/authentic learning
  - Inflates grades
    - Are they doing their own work (cheating)?
    - Too much parent help

Problems

- ❖ Poverty – punish
- ❖ No grade –why do
- ❖ Homework first – then activity – incentive
- ❖ Poverty – less resources – tardy, etc.

Meaningful Homework (shift)

- ❖ More frequent in-class quizzes – increased learning
- ❖ Resources, answers
- ❖ Fewer questions
- ❖ Students know Learning Targets and if they “get it”

Who (students) need what (specific) – suggest meaningful homework to those that need it.

- ❖ Nine categories of students summarized
- ❖ No is correlation between homework performance and test performance

For students who clearly need homework to be successful – schools are obligated to support students

- ❖ Lunch, after school, in-school suspension (support)
- ❖ Promote flipped classrooms

## FAQ

- ❖ Share load to support
- ❖ Communicate with parents
- ❖ Stay away from busy work
- ❖ Students can still be responsible, successful without homework

## Chapter 3-Unit Plans

- ❖ Provide the big picture up front
  - ❖ How to:
  - ❖ Create and deliver (carefully) student friendly unit plan
    - Include “I can” statements about expected
      - Knowledge
      - Reasoning
      - Skills – target
      - Product – target
    - Make plans available to parents (electronically)
- 2) Use the plans throughout the learning process
- ❖ Carefully going over at the beginning will increase independent student use of the plan
- 3) Incorporate student examples and have students assess each other’s work on the plan

## Side notes:

- ❖ Works for any age –simplify as needed.
- ❖ Chunk or divide plan to keep from overwhelming some students
- ❖ Teacher tip – start small – one class/one subject or divide/conquer between teachers.

## Chapter 4 – Retesting

- ❖ Tests are a snapshot of time
- ❖ Retesting problems
  - Don’t need to retest on everything – only need to do on parts missed
  - May not reflect authentic learning
- ❖ Strategies
  - Reorganize the test
  - Retest focus on parts missed
  - Self-assess prior to the retest – tracking sheet
  - Retest can impact future learning
  - Track improvement
- ❖ Tests are a starting point to learning not an end point
- ❖ Form of test items on 1<sup>st</sup> test and retest change format
- ❖ Celebrate small successes
- ❖ Reduces cheating
- ❖ Double dip with a re-quiz system

## Chapter 5 –

- ❖ Creativity, motivation and engagement go hand in hand. Have/Have not and explain why
- ❖ Content driven with clear expectations
- ❖ A way to empower or engage kids – let them pick their assessment method – provide a test feedback sheet so that the teacher better understands rationale behind the student’s performance
- ❖ Multiple choice assessments and mixing in some reasoning opportunities to clarify thinking “I know I am close...”
- ❖ Modern technology can enhance creativity and lead to deeper understanding
  - Twitter – vocab example
  - Video
- ❖ Creativity can be uncomfortable for the teachers to embrace.