

What Should You See in an *Everyday Math* Classroom?

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*The goal of my presentation was to help administrators and teachers recognize those pieces essential to a good *Everyday Math* classroom. When I realized I would also have middle and high school teachers who may not be using the program, I did my best to highlight those pieces that would transfer to any math program. The session enabled teachers to reflect on those pieces they needed to improve. It also enabled administrators and mentors to see how to support teachers in improving mathematics instruction. For middle and high school teachers, it gave a peek at an *Everyday Math* classroom, so they could better understand what students are gaining in this environment.*

The agenda began with a list of the key points for the session: classroom management and structure, lesson and program components, instructional practices, assessment, and pervasive themes of the *Everyday Math* curriculum. Then we discussed each piece using examples from *Everyday Math* and also from a more general math classroom.

First, participants were introduced to the parts of an *Everyday Math* lesson:

- the Math Message and Mental Math Reflexes, which take 3-5 minutes each;
- Math Boxes, which provide a spiraling review;
- games, which are usually played two to three times per week; and
- options for individualizing each lesson, which include suggestions for reteaching, enrichment, extra practice, and working with English-as-a-new-language students.

Next we talked about the instructional practices given special attention in the program. Student engagement, the use of “real-world” situations, students writing about their understanding, and teachers asking key questions were all emphasized. We also discussed another important aspect of *Everyday Math*—the use of a variety of assessments that are focused on the program’s learning goals.

There are several pervasive themes in the program, and we discussed those. They include the use of number grids in the primary grades, the use of a variety of algorithms for computation, and the use of important vocabulary.

Lastly, we talked about the pacing of *Everyday Math* and that teachers need to keep in mind the goal level of each activity. There are generally three to four lessons per week, except in kindergarten, where they are four to five. Participants were told also about two online resources, the Pike Township district website and the IMI website. (See web address below.)

Each participant received the documents “Everyday Mathematics Program: What does it look like in a classroom?” (adapted from an *Everyday Math* consultant’s handout), which describes in more detail the classroom and curriculum management aspects of the program, and “Lesson Overview—Grades 1-6,” which lists the components of each day’s lesson plan. After this, the participants watched a video of Jane Cooney, an elementary teacher from Pike Township, teaching an *Everyday Math* lesson. They evaluated the lesson and looked for the evidence we had discussed, to see if the various components were present, using a handout that asked the following questions:

- What strengths did you observe?
- What would be areas for growth?
- What questions do you have about the lesson observed?
- What would be your next steps with this teacher?
- What, if anything, is unclear for you regarding the teaching of *Everyday Math* after conducting this observation?

We discussed what pieces of the *Everyday Math* program that the participants observed.

Websites:

<http://www.pike.k12.in.us/district/departments/progstaffdev/everydaymath/em.htm>

Here you will find a list on online resources on the Metropolitan School District of Pike Township website.

<http://www.indiana.edu/~iucme/resources/>.

Here you will find resources offered on the IMI website.