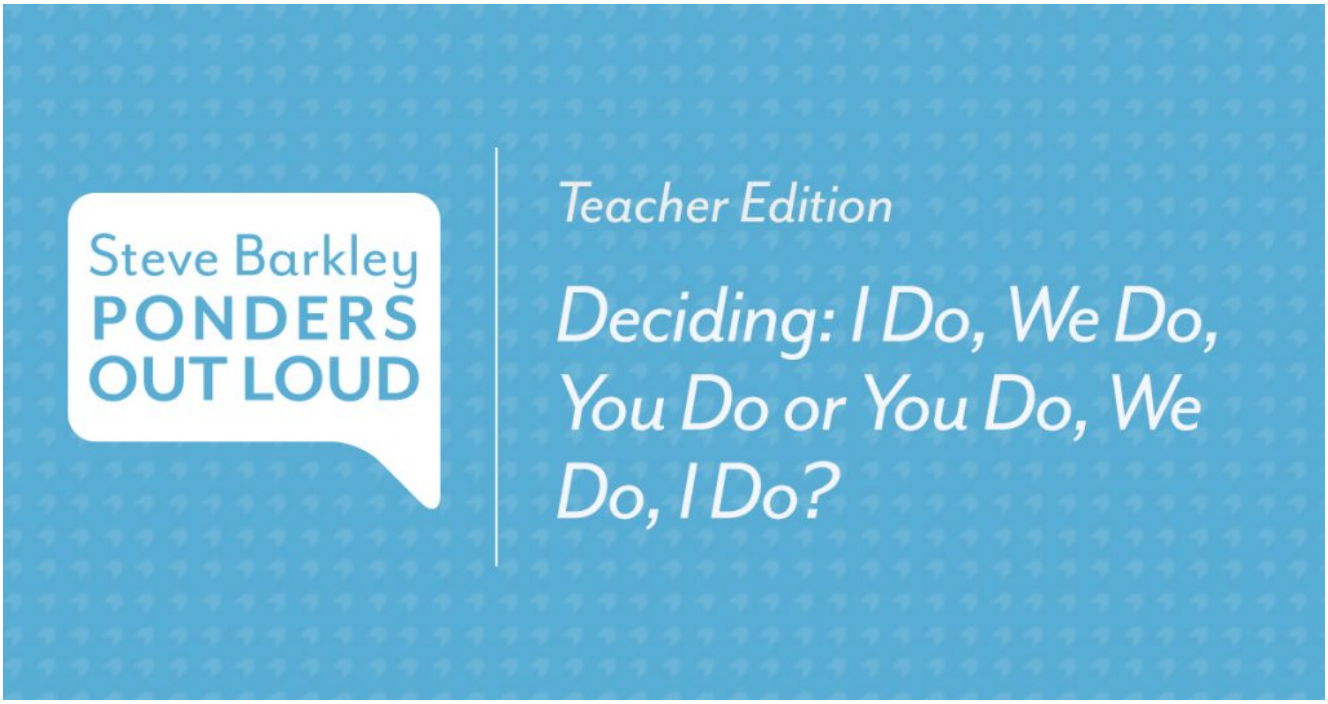
Podcast for Teachers – Deciding: I Do, We Do, You Do or You Do, We Do, I Do?



Why is the gradual release of responsibility model a strong instructional strategy at times for certain learning outcomes and particular students? How can the model negatively impact certain learning outcomes or particular students at other times? Instructionally agile teachers read their students engagement in learning adjusting to maximize learner outcomes.

Read Doug Fisher's article, *"Effective Use of the Gradual Release Model"*

Read the article, *"Why "I Do, We Do, You Do" is Not Always Best Practice for Teaching Math"*

Watch Mike Flynn's video, "Flipping The I Do, We Do, You Do"

Listen to Steve and Dr. Amanda Jensen's podcast episode, *"Rough Draft Math"*

PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

Steve [Intro]: 00:00 Hello, and welcome to the teacher edition of the Steve Barkley Ponders Out loud podcast. The complexity of teaching is both challenging and rewarding. And my curiosity is peaked whenever I explore with teachers the multiple pathways for facilitating student engagement in the exciting world of learning. This podcast looks to serve teachers as they motivate coach and support their learners.

Steve: 00:32 Deciding: I do, we do, you do or you do, we do, I do. The gradual release model of instruction has frequently been described with the phrase I do, we do, you do. Initially, the teacher holds responsibility, modeling her thinking and understanding for the students. In the I do, the teacher usually establishes the focus, purpose and standards being met in the learning activities to follow. As instruction moves into the we do, there is guided instruction where the teacher prompts questions, facilitates and leads students through tasks generally generating student success and an increased understanding of the content. Doug Fisher and Nancy Frey suggest extending the "we do" component to include a collaborative activity. Students can discuss and problem solve with peers, and this can consolidate their learning. The "you do" component of the gradual release model allows students to practice with applying their learning independently, thus synthesizing and solidifying their learning.

Steve: 02:03 Doug Fisher reinforces that the gradual release model isn't linear. Students can move back and forth between components as they master skill strategies and standards. A link to a article by Doug Fisher entitled, "The Effective Use of The Gradual Release Model" is in the podcast lead-in. I found a post titled, "Why I Do, We Do, You Do is Not Always Best Practice For Teaching Math." I found the post on the website called Math and Mix. And again, the link is in the lead-in on this podcast. The author suggests that deep mathematical understanding cannot be achieved when I do you do

we do is the basis for the majority of math instruction. I wanna make sure I'm clear on that message. The author wasn't suggesting a never use of it. She suggested the problem would arise if it was the basis for the majority of the math instruction students received. The post goes on to share three problems with gradual release being a majority of math instruction.

Steve: 03:29 First, starting with I do has the teacher holding all the knowledge and students might believe they don't have the ability to something that hasn't been taught. Second, gradual release may limit students opportunity to struggle and without struggling, students can't gain the long lasting understanding that is gained when they make sense of math themselves. And the third point, conceptual understanding cannot be modeled. It needs to be developed. Learners need to do some thinking. Students are empowered when they experience success from deep thinking and making connections to previously learned skills. I had an opportunity earlier to record a podcast with Dr. Amanda Jensen, the author of "Rough Draft Math." What follows is a short segment from that earlier recorded podcast. You can find the the whole podcast with the link in the lead-in. As you listen, consider how rough draft math provides a way to perhaps work with a you do, we do, I do format where the teacher works to build from students initial understanding.

Steve: 04:56 Well, I have to say the the title really nails it because as soon as I heard the title, I knew that it had to mean you aren't finished. And people, you know – math is finished, concept where you pretty much start that writing task knowing it's going to take a couple of drafts and a couple of rewrites and you might even change your mind halfway through it and come from a different direction. So I think the title speaks great.

Amanda: 05:38 So then it works well with kids too, right? So if you say to a student, I just want to hear your rough draft

about this, it does a lot of things. It sort of reduces – takes the air out of the pressure balloon, right? Like, oh, I just have to say whatever's on my mind? My rough draft is going to be okay here? Yeah. And you can talk with students about how do we learn anything? We make an attempt, we make sense out of what we tried, then we try again. This is how we learn a lot of things in life so why can't we learn math that way? And so asking students to share their initial drafts, talking with them about why that's a useful thing to do to share your drafts, it just creates this safer space where whatever you have to say, we're going to try to learn from it and it's going to have value and it's going to have merit and you're going to have a chance to then revise that idea. You're not going to be frozen in time by whatever you say right now, you're not going to be judged for being right or wrong. We're just trying to figure stuff out together.

Steve: 06:36 What impact are you looking at that having on student math performance?

Amanda: 06:41 Yeah. So it does a few things. For one thing, it helps students have a bigger view of the discipline of math. What is mathematics anyway? What does it mean to know and do math? Whenever I talk about rough draft math with mathematicians, they say, well, this is what we do when we are trying to solve a problem that we're not sure about. We try it, we think about what we've tried, we try again, because we don't know what the answer is going to be or what the solution's going to be, or what is the appropriate proof or argument. And so students rethink what math even is. So that's one really positive outcome. Another is that if students are asked to talk or write about why math makes sense, like explain why something is true or define a concept, it changes the learning goals from your you're doing more than trying to get an answer quickly, you're trying to understand a concept.

Amanda: 07:30 So students have opportunities to develop more of sense-making and conceptual understanding if they're being

pushed to draft and revise their thinking. So the nature of knowledge opens up to be more than procedures. You definitely want students to calculate correctly, but you want them to understand why it's working. And so rough drafting allows to get into that space of why something is true. And then ultimately, students are developing more positive identities because they start to see the merit and value in their emerging ideas that their thinking has potential and that people can learn from their emerging, imperfect, unfinished ideas. And so they feel more valued as a thinker and learner, and then they're more persistent and they're more willing to put in effort because they realize that their thinking has merit and has strengths in it. And people are not used to that in math. People are used to feeling like they're either a math person or they're not, and that's not true. Everyone is a mathematical thinker. So we want to create environments where they can recognize that they can think mathematically.

Steve: 08:37 So how does this lay out, looking at moving from the primary age students working with this through upper elementary, middle, and then the higher levels of mathematics in high school?

Amanda: 08:51 So this idea was initially targeted more for adolescents because it's an age where students start to get very concerned about what other people think about them. And so it's creating a more emotionally safe environment where everyone's drafts are valued, but I've seen kindergarten teachers work on this with students. And so the main principles would be eliciting someone's initial thinking, treating it as an idea that's worth understanding, trying to understand it before you evaluate it, recognizing that you can learn from each other's drafts and then going back to revise. So you can do that at any age, but it looks different at particular grades. So the elementary teachers have talked with would do things like maybe there's an idea that's an anchoring idea in that unit, like what is a fraction? And they might

have a class definition that they post and as they continue to work throughout the unit, they would revise and refine that class definition for instance.

Amanda: 09:48 You might have a situation where at the beginning of the lesson, I've seen an elementary teacher have, like a problem that they use to launch the lesson. Then they work on the lesson for awhile. Then they go back, okay, take that paper of the problem that we were doing at the beginning, take a different writing utensil, like a pen or a marker and now put your new thinking on that page. So there's different things that I've worked with elementary, but as you move into middle school and high school, you can get more mathematically sophisticated in different ways. I've seen middle school teachers have students make conjectures about what do you think is true about this situation? Like, a seventh grade students saying, well, how do you find a similar figure? Maybe you add the same number to every side. And in what cases is that correct?

Amanda: 10:36 And in what cases is it not correct? And so the class would take that claim and try to prove it or disprove it. So that's more of an argumentation idea. As students get older, I've seen teachers do what they call a round of rough draft sharing. Give the students a challenging problem, they work on it, stop the groups before they're done, bring your rough drafts up to share your thinking in progress. Like where are you all at? And then go back and now that you've heard from each other and just tried to understand each other, keep working and revise. So that's some things that I've seen middle school teachers do, but an important thing with the middle school, well, with every grade, but with middle school, you're trying to create that environment where they're not judging each other, but they're trying to understand each other. So setting up norms. An eighth grade teacher that I've worked with really likes this phrase, "be brave, be kind" as the anchoring norms in the class. So be brave enough to share

your thinking when it’s not finished or you’re not sure. And be kind enough to try to orient yourself to learn from each other. So the norms that you set up are important at different age levels.

Steve: 11:47 The blog from Mix and Math led me to a three minute video from Mike Flynn titled, “Flipping The I Do, We Do, You Do.” He describes a process that he labels as “launch, release and return.” In the launch, he provides a challenge or a problem for students to make sense of. In the release, students go off, often collaborating to explore possibilities. The teacher can listen in, perhaps guide some students who are stuck, collect student thinking and ideas for the last element, which is the return. In the return, the teacher guides the students’ connections, their understandings, and maybe questions for future exploration. When planning for learning, consider the options you have for engaging students in the most productive student learning production behaviors. Knowing options increases your instructional agility. Just in time movement among the I do, we do, few do you do possibilities, can personalize learning options for maximizing student learning payoff. Plan, observe, adjust. Good luck. Thanks for listening.

Steve [Outro]: 13:30 Thanks for listening in folks. I’d love to hear what you’re pondering. You can find me on Twitter @stevebarkley, or send me your questions and find my videos and blogs at barkleypd.com.