

# USING RIGOR AND REFLECTION TO TRANSFORM TEACHING AND LEARNING

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## *AN INTERACTIVE PRESENTATION*

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## **ABSTRACT**

Transformational teaching demands more than the delivery of content. The University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) is active in ensuring that teachers, those current and in training, pursue transformative learning in the classroom and beyond. With support from the Oklahoma State regents for higher education, UCO is in a second year of a professional development series aimed at providing higher order thinking (H.O.T.) development via new English Language Arts state standards training. Two key elements of transformative learning are reflection (Mezerio, 1997) and rigor (Hess et al., 2009). Mezerio (1998) in fact underscores how critical reflection can be an important trigger for transformative learning. Literature further supports reflective practice as a means to build teacher efficacy (Tavýl, 2014) and identity (Weldon & Bolf-Beliveau, 2015) while a working understanding of academic standards helps teachers refocus the curriculum to develop rigorous learning activities and assessments that can make students' learning visible (Hess, 2009).

Forty-Five 6th-12th-grade teachers from across Oklahoma participated in a five-day intensive summer institute facilitated by UCO faculty. By engaging in critical reflection and deep consideration of the cognitive rigor demanded by the standards they teach, Oklahoma educators developed their professional identities while also revisioning central units they teach. This modeling session will concentrate on deepening participant appreciation of reflection and rigor to transform and assess student learning. Participants will engage with experiential learning breaks designed to model promising practices for developing the higher order thinking (H.O.T.) skills of both teachers and students. Through practice and interaction attendees will deepen their understanding and use of Hess's cognitive rigor matrix as well as retrospective and prospective reflection techniques to bring learning to life. Current primary and secondary teachers who received related H.O.T. training in summer 2016 will share practical classroom applications and facilitate the learning breaks throughout this session.

## **SELECT REFERENCES**

Hess, K. K., Jones, B. S., Carlock, D., & Walkup, J. R. (2009). Cognitive Rigor: Blending the Strengths of Bloom's Taxonomy and Webb's Depth of Knowledge to Enhance Classroom-Level Processes. *Online Submission*

Mezirow, J. (1998). On Critical Reflection. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 48(3), 185-98.

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