Fall Happenings for Teach to Learn

"When the leaves come falling down"

What's next for T2L? Your suggestions for the future?

As we near the end of the direct funding from the National Science Foundation for the Teach to Learn (T2L) project, we are looking towards the future and the exciting possibilities it may hold. Do you have ideas for the future of this work? How can we sustain the important work that's been accomplished in science education, and maybe even leverage these efforts? What are the most important facets of the work for you and your peers? All these questions (and more) are ones we're currently considering, and would be interested in hearing your unique perspective. Feel free to share your ideas with any of the T2L project team--we look forward to hearing from you.

~Nick and the T2L Team

It's one of the most important questions now facing those of us living in Western Mass: *How and Why do some leaves change color and fall in the fall.* In case this comes up in your classroom, or if you just need a refresher (I did!), here are some resources to help you explain the science behind this beautiful and amazing annual phenomena. It is something we all notice and wonder about, regardless of age or experience. This video from Scientific American speaks to an older audience while this one from Stay Curious is appropriate for a younger audience.

Science question of the season

How and Why do some leaves change color... and fall in the fall?

If you'd like to conduct a simple experiment on how leaves change color, you can try this activity in the classroom. Here's a video that does the same basic activity on camera with a step-by-step narrative that also "tells the story" of the phenomena.

For a transcendent musical accompaniment, listen to Van Morrison's When the Leaves Come Falling Down.

Recap on the orientation.

At our fall orientation on Sept 24, we had a wonderful gathering of new and returning Science Fellows and Classroom Teachers. We started with a review of essential roles and responsibilities. The essential takeaways were 1) come prepared and be prepared to fully engage; 2) let your team know ASAP if you're unable to make it, or if you need to cancel the class; 3) your feedback is essential to improving the curriculum; 4) you are valued and appreciated; 5) have fun because hands-on science *is* fun.

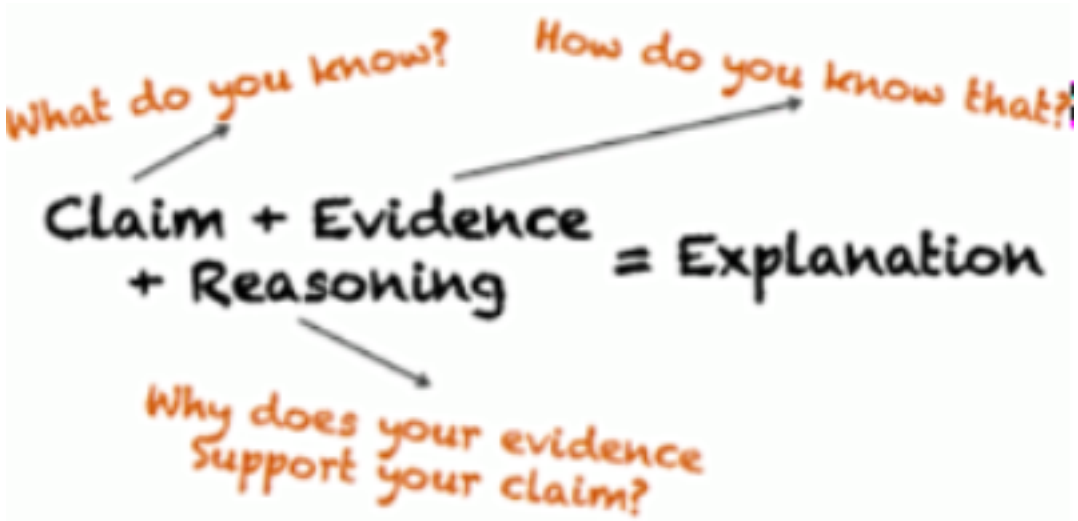
Dr. Kim Roberts-Morandi, Director of Curriculum and Instruction for North Adams Public Schools (NAPS), presented demographic information on NAPS students. She focused on helping us understand how to engage all learners especially those hardest hit by life. She explained that poverty has associated trauma, and trauma-induced behaviors often find form in the classroom. We learned that talking and discussing is one of the most successful strategies for helping all students engage with their learning.

As we broke out into our teaching teams to meet each other and to review the curriculum units, we noted that talk and discussion is also an important process in sense-making (making sense) of science

phenomena. "Talk Science" is one of our units' basic exemplar components and is woven throughout the all units. Look for the bright pink "talk bubble icon" for discussion starters and suggested prompts.

~Many thanks to CLiA for hosting our gathering at Williams College and providing refreshments.

Wondering how to start a "Science Talk" Discussion?



BioEYES at the Berkshire STEM Educators Conference

On Nov 6, Jen Swoap (CLiA), Jaana Mutka (Brayton Elementary School), and Martha Marvin (Williams zebrafish researcher,) will present the hands-on Project BioEYES to the larger Berkshire science educators community. Project BioEYES is a science education module in which students breed tropical fish and observe the development of their embryos. This professional development workshop is targeted for 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade teachers with the aspiration of bringing the week-long BioEYES program to their classrooms. For more information, contact Jen Swoap (jswoap@williams.edu).

Last year:

68 Science Fellows spent a combined 780 hours in the classroom teaching 312 science lessons to 390 K-5 students requiring 78 bins of materials and mentored by 17 amazing classroom teachers across all 3 elementary schools in 1 very lucky district.

Whew and Wow!

Teach To Learn

A collaboration between MCLA, Williams College, and North Adams Public Schools

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Teach to Learn Science Fellows

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