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Collaborate and Communicate

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## Robyn Silbey Professional Development Raising Teacher Quality and Student Achievement in Mathematics

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### 12 Steps to Get Students Talking



When Lorraine Jacques taught secondary

mathematics in her high school Connecticut, she found that discourse raised the level of engagement and thinking in her classroom. In the ASCD Express article, 12 Steps to Get Students Talking, Jacques suggests that teachers consider themselves to be "experience-makers rather than knowledge-givers," and offers 12 steps that help teachers make their classrooms "centers of student discourse."

Among the dozen excellent suggestions offered, Jacques suggests that teachers

### Shout Out! Janney School



The staff at Janney Elementary School in Washington, DC is drilling deeply into math this year. Efforts are focused on two areas: The Common Core Standard for Mathematical Practice 3: Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others; as well as mathematical representations. Robyn has led the exploration in both areas, leading to a more comprehensive understanding of pure content and problem solving.

(a) encourage students to preface their ideas with statements such as "I think" or "In my opinion," so that they can safely participate in discussions and invite others to chime in with alternate ideas.

(b) observe colleagues in other content areas. Jacques says that each content area has its own strengths for promoting student talk. Observing those strengths in action allows you consider how to adapt new, creative, or stimulating techniques for mathematics discussion.

Jacques article strongly supports the spirit of the Common Core Standards for Mathematical Practice, particularly Standard 3: Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others. Her suggestions are concise, easy to understand, and can be easily implemented in K-12 classrooms.



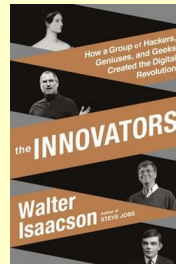
Workshops conclude with teachers constructing their own Action Plans for implementing the ideas presented. At the next session, staff members share ingenious tools and strategies that they have tried in their classrooms.

What is your focus for 2015? How is it studied and executed in every classroom?

## COACHES' CORNER: Standard 4 of the Mathematical Practices

## The Innovators, by Walter Isaacson

In The Innovators, Walter Isaacson chronicles the digital revolution, moving from Ada Lovelace and Charles Babbage in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century through the present day. Several recurring themes throughout the book underscore critical characteristics of innovation:



- Innovation resides where art and science connect. From Da Vinci to Steve Jobs, ingenious innovators define scientific efficiency through artistic elegance.
- Innovation occurs when ripe seeds fall on fertile ground. Time, place, and surrounding conditions create opportunity, drive, and urgency.
- Innovation involves persistent collaboration between people with an assortment of skill sets and talents. There is an overarching desire to share knowledge and continuously improve.

Isaacson's observations provide thought-provoking



In the December/January Coaches' Corner of Teaching Children Mathematics, Robyn takes a close look at Standard 4 of the Common Core Standards for Mathematical Practice: Model with Mathematics.

Robyn suggests strategies for teachers to help students "see the math" in their everyday lives:

1. Connect math with school life.

applications for educators. What are some ways you can inspire innovators in your schools or classrooms?



A thorough overview of Isaacson's book can be also obtained by viewing a stimulating [YouTube](#) interview with [Internet Hall of Fame Inductees Vint Cerf and Bob Kahn](#).

2. Use authentic graphics--TV guides, magazine ads, and weather pages--to make math relevant.
3. Draw on journals such as [Teaching Children Mathematics](#) and [Educational Leadership](#) for feature articles about math models.
4. Utilize rich opportunities online for real-world explorations.

For more detail, Robyn's article can be found on page 263.

## Quote of the Month

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." [Helen Keller](#)



## Collaborate and Communicate!



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