

## ***Math that Matters* MCTM Book Study #25**

### **How I Use What I Learned to Help Accomplish My Goals**

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This year, I have tried to structure my classroom around students being responsible for and gaining a sense of ownership around their education. I feel like I started the year off strong, but by November I was burnt out. I was spending all my time giving students individualized instructions on how to fix their work which was restricting their thinking and development of mathematics. After participating in the book study for *Math that Matters: Targeted Assessment and Feedback for Grades 3-8* I have learned new strategies to accomplish my goals.

**One of the main points discussed in the book was the type of feedback to give students.** It is extremely easy to make assumptions about student work or to tell students how to fix their mistakes. However, this takes away some responsibility from the students. Instead we should pose questions to students to either expand or clarify their thinking and allow time for them to respond. This is something I have focused on before but have never given the students time to respond to the questions I leave. Since beginning remote learning, a lot of students are responding to my questions. Their responses have shown me what they understand, and I see them valuing their learning more.

**Another suggestion was to give unit assessments with both skill and conceptual questions.** Often, I find myself teaching for students to develop a conceptual understanding of a topic but then only assess their skill. While skills are important to master, so are the concepts. By assessing skill and conceptual questions, students can demonstrate their understanding of the material and I can gain an insight to their progress in the Standards for Mathematical Practice. I have not had a chance to use this with my students yet, but I look forward to trying it when we are able to return to the classroom.

There are many more suggestions in *Math that Matters*, like **allowing students to help create rubrics** or **using observations in the final unit grade** that I would like to explore more and try in my classroom. Even though I would not have chosen to read this book on my own, I have learned many things from it and from the opportunity to discuss it with other math teachers. The conversations we had provided guidance and mentoring in developing strategies I can use in my classroom. I am looking forward to participating in future book studies.