

Dear Editor,

I am a second grade teacher who recently switched school systems in the Northern-Virginia/Washington D.C. area. I did my graduate studies with Dr. Constance Kamii at UAB in Birmingham, AL, where I fell in love with constructivist theory. Since then I have been applying my knowledge to my instruction. My last school system did a great job at supporting constructivist teaching in my classroom. In fact after seeing activities based on constructivist learning opportunities, my administrators encouraged it. This year I am faced with an administrator who is unfamiliar with constructivism and is strongly encouraging the use of ability grouping throughout our building for math and reading. All of this is driven by the school system's plan to leave "No Child Behind." Fortunately, I had videos of past mathematics lessons and I showed them to her. I also gave her the many articles and books in my collection. She has agreed to let me teach with a mixed ability group, and use my constructivist techniques with the caveat that my students would be benchmark tested every 9 weeks to show that they are indeed progressing. She also asked me to see if I could locate a constructivist workshop or a presenter in our area. Do you know of anyone in Northern VA that does this sort of thing?

I would appreciate any help that you can offer.

Sincerely,

Mark Carpenter

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