GET in the Learning ZONE!
Turn your Classroom into a Space for Fully Integrated, 21st Century Learning!

Presented by Molly Holiday, MAT

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Essential Questions:

• How can we give our students the tools, time and space to have meaningful EXPERIENCES that will enable them to gain the understandings necessary for true learning/mastery of the standards and 21st century skills?

• How can we instill a strong desire for our students to effectively COMMUNICATE their new understandings, both to us and to each other? (Thereby cementing the new knowledge and vocab.) In all 4 modes: Reading/Writing/Speaking/Listening

• How can we DIFFERENTIATE instruction so that each student is engaged, challenged, honored, and excited about their learning? Paradigm Shift - This is a new way of thinking about teaching!
Organizational shifts:
Planning:
Shift from a focus on “teaching” the standards to a focus on creating experiences that allow students to understand, use and share the standards. Ensure that standards and ideas are connected to each other, and that new knowledge, skills and information are built upon prior experience.

Classroom Design:
Shift from a focus on several whole group instructional spaces (floor/tables or desks) to a focus on creating Zones - each with materials ready for experiencing and encouraging the creative learning process. Students move around the room either rotating from Zone to Zone or self-guided.

Scheduling:
Shift to Whole group introduction/overview lessons and/or read-alouds, videos, etc... followed by ZONE time, followed by the debrief/reinforcement. My elementary day includes reading time, reading groups, whole group instruction for concepts, whole group instruction for math, writing time, English and ZONES. ZONES last 40-50 minutes, and happen 4 -5 days a week. Sometimes I need to squeeze 2 in a day. Monday is usually reserved for concept input.

Aren’t ZONES just a new name for Centers? NO... Here’s why...
When done correctly, ZONES incorporate ALL of the following:
Multi-sensory exploration
Meaningful vocabulary acquisition
Experiential, Hands-on learning and/or Play-based Learning
Constructive Conversations
Skill and Strategy Practice
Thematic, Integrated Curriculum
Meta-Cognition (Explaining your Thinking)
Integrated Arts Instruction
Inquiry-Based Learning and/or Project-Based Learning
Direct Instruction (EDI) (to introduce the Zones)
Writing Across the Curriculum - PURPOSEFUL!
Guidelines for effective, quality ZONEs:
• have a **written** goal, learning objective, or challenge to accomplish.
• have **materials** ready for children to use/choose from.
• can be finished in one session. (usually)
• should **connect** to all other Zones by theme, skill or unit of study.
• should be used to **practice/learn** multiple skills or standards.
• focus on **collaboration** and teamwork.
• can be **differentiated** and allow for extension.
• incorporate **reading, writing** and presenting whenever possible.
• should be **debriefed** afterward to connect and extend learning.
• could have **journal** prompt/writing activity.
• have **explicit vocabulary** taught/used.

**Elementary ZONE ideas: (Group Brainstorm)**
- *Science Zone*  Game Zone
- *Handwriting Zone*  Book/Library Zone
- *Art Zone*  Geometry Zone
- *Language Zone*  Biology Zone
- *Engineering Zone*  Meteorology Zone
- *Math Zone*  Geology Zone
- Reading Zone  Author Zone
- Writing Zone  Illustrator Zone
- Listening Zone  Music Zone
- Fluency Zone  Rhythm Zone
- Puzzle Zone  Puppet Zone
- Construction Zone  Drama Zone
- Poetry Zone  Song Zone
- iPad Zone  Plant Zone
- Computer Zone  Animal Zone
- Dance Zone  Letter/Spelling Zone
- Movement Zone

* = Zones I use in 1st almost every week.
Middle/Secondary ZONE ideas: (Group Brainstorm)
Focus on different aspects of a standard/story/concept/theme.

ENGLISH: Character Zone, Plot Zone, Innovation Zone, Summary Zone,
Debate Zone, Ethics Zone, Illustration Zone, Publicity Zone, Movie Script Zone,
Drama Zone, Costume Zone...(Always referring to details from the text!)

MATH: Algorithm Zone, Real-World Problem Zone, Computation Zone,
Graphing Zone, Art Zone (tessellations, patterns, etc.), Musical Zone,
Patterning Zone, Function Zone, Wave Zone, Geometry Zone, Proof Zone,
Measurement Zone...

SOCIAL SCIENCE/HISTORY: Perspective Zone, Research Zone, Battle Zone,
Leaders/Important People Zone, Art Zone, Music Zone, Map Zone, Fashion
and Design Zone, Debate Zone...

SCIENCE: Vocab Zone, Illustration Zone, Experiment Zone, Data Zone,
Comparison Zone, Classification Zone...

••If you have many ways for students to demonstrate learning and practice
the same skills, they won’t need to go to every ZONE, they can choose and
present out information learned in different ways!

How will you use ZONES in your classroom? Your ideas here:
ZONES FAQ’s:

What do the students DO at the ZONEs?
• ZONE activities come straight from the standards or student prerequisite skills/understandings for the standards. Students have an essential question or instructions to refer to, they DO the activity and then WRITE about their experience, new understandings, or record data in their ZONE Journals or using technology.

How do I know students are doing what they’re supposed to? (Accountability)
During ZONEs, you are monitoring and helping students to complete the ZONES and asking questions so they will think more deeply. Most ZONEs should have a product or way to record data or write about it. When you gather for the debrief after ZONE time, have students share out their work samples and critique them so the next group can learn more clearly what the expectation is and students can learn from and guide each other. You may assign a proficiency scale to the ZONE, so students know exactly what they are required to learn/show.

When do you do whole group work?
When I do need all kids working at the same time they can either all be at assigned tables (if your students need more structure) or they use either a clipboard or a lap whiteboard and work on the floor, or at tables. I find that I have many less behavior problems when I am not always directing where they sit, or how they work.
I do Writing, Spelling, Math and Number Talks in whole group as well as read-alouds, interactive writing, and concept discussions. All practice, project and hands-on learning I make into a ZONE. Giving the ZONE objectives and modeling is done whole group on Mondays and then reiterated during debriefing and kick-off for the rest of the week.

How do I start?
• Take a standard and think about how the students could use it or come to understand it through an activity. What would they be doing? How would they show mastery or growth? What books/tools/writing could help them
on their way? What vocabulary would they need? How could they share their new understandings?

For example:
4th grade standard:
4 RL 5. Explain the major differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems (e.g., verse, rhythm, meter) and drama (e.g., casts of characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) when writing or speaking about a text.

Brainstorm in your group about how you could turn this standard into several ZONES rather than lectures or whole class activities. What other standards could you incorporate? What Science and Social Studies theme would this best be taught with?

Planning Walk Through:
How do I put it all together to integrate Math, Science, Language, and Social Studies?
(Or, to tie in your grades’/courses’ Language components with the Content components) It is helpful to use a standards checklist to make sure that you are incorporating as many standards as possible- I find that I teach many standards in each ZONE due to the reading and writing that is incorporated in all the ZONES. ••Don’t forget to think of technology - how can students record their ideas - a photo - Seesaw- app to photograph and write/talk about it - publish - type and print to make a book…” Skitch, Educreations, Blog...

First Grade example:
•Pick your standards:
Math: Relationship between addition and subtraction,
Science: Plants and their offspring - How young plants are like adult plants...
Language: Write using complete sentences, use of descriptive adjectives and details in writing.

Science ZONE: We would plant seeds in a cup or in trays - labeling types of seeds, how many each group planted, and the date. I would have the adult plant available in a picture or real one to compare as it grows - great writing activities come from this!
Math ZONE: Students make and solve each other’s word problems related to plants and growth- “If a sunflower grew 4” this week and 7” the next week, how many inches did it grow in all? How could you make this a subtraction problem?... Then maybe they play a math game making number families given 2 parts. OR draw flowers with leaves and petals matching a # family.

Language ZONE: Write about plants using descriptive sentences, or poetry, or expository writing... Perhaps they are writing an expository piece about the growth of their plant, or a poem about growth comparing themselves to a plant... I would first pull all the literature related to plants, growth and spring before starting the theme and then use those books to help give me ZONE ideas as well. I place those books close to the Language ZONE so students refer to them to get language and ideas.

Art ZONE: Paint flowers in the style of O'Keefe using images shown on iPads.

Construction ZONE: make a plant from parts of different plants and then tell how its’ parts would help it grow in its’ habitat- then they label the parts and record in their journals or use Seesaw...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tips for Setting Up Your Classroom for Zones: ELEMENTARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visual Space:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is really nothing quite as important as the layout/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environment of your space. It can make everything easier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for the students and teacher, and it can literally set the</td>
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<tr>
<td>tone for the learning in your room.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Don’t have a lot of clutter - it distracts both you and</td>
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<tr>
<td>the students, and make sure that each piece of writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>or art on the walls has a purpose. No cute posters that</td>
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<tr>
<td>don’t fill a need, or that the kids won’t use to find a</td>
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<tr>
<td>word or remember a concept. Even then, keep it to a</td>
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<tr>
<td>minimum. It’s OK to have some blank space. Many children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get overstimulated. Look at the visual space with an eye</td>
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<tr>
<td>toward purpose and focus.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• It is best to try to have a place for the vocabulary/</td>
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<tr>
<td>word banks/input charts or a pocket chart right near the</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zone where they will use it. I placed my language Zone</td>
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<tr>
<td>Where students can use the whole word wall and a sentence</td>
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<tr>
<td>structure board while sitting at it. The Art Zone has a</td>
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<tr>
<td>cabinet near it where I post a visual instruction sheet,</td>
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<tr>
<td>some art vocabulary, input charts, and examples. I found</td>
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<tr>
<td>little pocket charts online and put one at each Zone</td>
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<tr>
<td>that can have specific words that they need each week. I</td>
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<tr>
<td>also put mini white boards on a wooden stand (Lakeshore</td>
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<tr>
<td>again!) where I write the Learning Objective or the</td>
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<td>challenge question for EACH ZONE.</td>
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<td><strong>Furniture:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Furniture set up is always going to be unique to your</td>
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<tr>
<td>room and the furniture available, but I do have some</td>
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<tr>
<td>tips:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Start by thinking about purpose -</td>
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<tr>
<td>How do you want your students to interact with the room?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What will they be doing?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How will they be most comfortable doing the activity?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What materials will they need?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Which things need to be permanently displayed and which</td>
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<tr>
<td>can you change based on theme/weekly focus?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Where can you place the vocabulary/communication tools</td>
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<tr>
<td>they will need? (sentence frames - word banks/input</td>
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<tr>
<td>charts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>How will they communicate new understandings?</td>
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<tr>
<td>journal/chart/graph/blog/photo/video/SEESAW app?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Where will you store those supplies?</td>
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<tr>
<td>The MORE easy the flow - the less time kids are</td>
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<tr>
<td>gathering supplies or looking for information. Make kids</td>
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<tr>
<td>do the heavy lifting!</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Layout:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start with a map of your classroom. Draw your room</td>
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<tr>
<td>outline and place the door, sink, windows etc. Note</td>
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<tr>
<td>where the outlets are. Place the mandatory ZONE locations</td>
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<tr>
<td>first - put the Tech Zone near the</td>
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</table>
outlets - Art Zone by the sink etc. Then look at your gathering space (circle)- what are you going to do there - sing? put room for chart stand - read? - put big book stand - this is where I put my screen for watching videos or viewing projector. Then place the other Zones you want to be permanent - the Science Zone (near the window for plants and animals) - Reading Zone, Construction Zone with floor space/storage nearby - Listening Zone where you have an outlet or floor space- Writing Zone with shelves for writing supplies- Language Zone with a board to post language charts for easy referral, Math Zone, with math manipulatives nearby, etc. A Zone doesn’t always need a table - sometimes it’s just a gathering materials spot or a bin. My Listening Zone is that way - kids grab a CD player or iPod and the book and move out on the floor. Some Zones don’t even need chairs - my Science and Construction ZONES are low tables with mats. Think creatively!

| Student Supplies: | • I use Lakeshore colored carriers that travel with each group (or can stay at each Zone) They hold the materials that scholars use most: pencils, glue, erasers, scissors, and markers.  
• I have matching colored paper trays where I put any recording sheets, paper, and other supplies for the Zone that week.  
• Everything else they might use/need is accessible in shelf areas close to/at the Zone.  
• Paper box tops covered in colored paper and wrapped in clear packaging tape worked great for me in the past! Students also each will need a magazine box or other place to store any packets, workbooks, their journals, and ongoing work. |
| Other: | Your ideas here: |
### Layout:
- How are the students going to need to use the space?
- How many in each group/ what are the learning targets?
- What materials will they need close by?
- Do you have furniture that will fit your needs? Could you buy/locate a small shelf/ bin/ drawers?
- What do you have in your room that will support students during ZONE time already?
- How could you rearrange the room so that ZONES are created for different needs and so that flow will be easy between ZONES and from ZONE to whole group?

### Materials:
- How can you set up your ZONES so that collaboration is easy? • Can you make a chart or use a shared document with headings already placed? A graph? A website/blog? Google classroom?
- Can students use clipboards/journals/tablets and/or computers to record observations/share data/write?
- Scholars should be focused on doing the heavy lifting - THINKING! - and not gathering materials, so make it as easy for them as possible.
- How can you put everything they will need within easy reach? ie, move cabinets, bins, charts on wall, etc.
- How can you support 2nd language learners, and support new vocabulary for all? input charts, conversation helpers, word banks

### Directions:
- How can you communicate the learning targets for each ZONE quickly and efficiently without wasting class time giving directions?
- Could you use a Chart? Small Whiteboard? Chromebook? email to students beforehand? EdMODO, Google Classroom, etc.?
- How can you facilitate scholars looking to each other for help/advice rather than always the teacher? grouping (see below), buddies, constructive conversations lessons, class protocols, chart with ideas for asking for help...
- Can you used flipped/blended classroom techniques to model a ZONE if needed? Video yourself once, students watch repeatedly.

### Grouping:
- Which type of groups will help facilitate more collaboration and communication during ZONES? Heterogenous or Homogenous?
- Can you pair students for a period of time to assist with understanding?
- Can you call one student from each group up to you for clarification/instruction, rather than stopping/instructing everyone?
- Would having assigned roles for each team member help...
you achieve better teamwork and coordination as well as push each member out of their comfortable roles?

| Technology: | Technology is your friend! Invite students to come up with ways to use technology/apps/sites/video/blog... to enhance their idea gathering, production, information, or sharing. I'm sure you already have class sites set up for this - don't be afraid to ask the students how they think a tech tool could help achieve the target objective. |
| Other: | Your ideas here: |

**ZONE presentation links:**

Mind/Shift - How to Design A Classroom based on Inquiry Openness and Trust

Mind/Shift When Educators make Space for Play and Passion- Students Develop Purpose
http://ww2.kqed.org/mindshift/2015/08/25/when-educators-make-space-for-play-and-passion-students-develop-purpose/

Mindset Toolkit for Teachers
https://www.mindsetkit.org/

How to Normalize Mistake Making and Struggle in the Classroom

5 Ways to make your classroom Student-Centered - Education Week TEACHER
http://www.edweek.org/tm/articles/2013/12/24/ctq_powell_strengths.html

Edutopia: How Student-Centered is your Classroom?
http://www.edutopia.org/blog/how-student-centered-your-classroom-rebecca-alber

Edutopia: Creating Space for Risk
http://www.edutopia.org/blog/creating-space-for-risk-michael-thornton-cheryl-harris