Math Workshop Model

Warm-up (5 minutes)

The teacher poses a brief question which requires students to think about how the problem might be solved during workshop. The purpose of this warm-up is to activate students' problem-solving and critical thinking skills. This is not meant as a time to work on finding a solution. This can be equated with the first step of a *Think-Pair-Share* activity which is commonly used as a reading strategy.

Mini-Lesson (10-15 minutes)

Through whole class direct instruction, the teacher provides students with a preview of what they will be working on during math workshop. This may be a new mathematical concept or problem-solving strategy, or it may be a review/re-teach of a prior concept. The teacher may decide to accomplish this in several different ways.

- Conduct a shared demonstration showcasing a specific strategy.
- Conduct a read and/or think aloud for a specific mathematical purpose.
- Teach a key mathematical concept.
- Provide instruction and/or clarification for a hands-on mathematical activity.

The teacher must be certain to discuss how to apply the content of what was just taught in the mini-lesson to students' work during the independent portion of the math workshop. Directions and expectations need to be clear and concise and should be given in multiple formats (e.g. orally and in writing).

Independent Work (30-40 minutes)

Students work independently, in pairs, or in small groups, as previously determined by the teacher. The teacher takes three to four minutes to walk around the classroom to ensure that all students are on-task and working on solving the task(s) which has/have been posed to them. Once the teacher determines that this is happening, s/he can do any of the following.

- Continue circulating and taking anecdotal notes.
- Confer with individual students in their groups, posing questions or instructions, in order to re-direct and guide their thinking.
- Using direct instruction, work with a small group to differentiate instruction.

It is important to note that the teacher can meet with several groups and/or individuals during this block of time. For example, s/he may decide that four students need further direct instruction while another four students require enrichment.

Sharing (5 minutes)

This is an essential component of math workshop which should not be skipped. The purpose of this component is to accomplish any of the following.

- Focus on the thought processes of one or two students who were able to apply what was taught during the mini-lesson.
- Discuss any problems and/or barriers students encountered during the math workshop and guide students to realize what mistakes were made, and where and why they occurred.
- Recap the key points of the lesson.
- Check for understanding.
- Preview homework assignment.