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TBL Certification Requirements

The Center for Teaching Thinking (CTT) offers workshops and classroom coaching for teachers on infusing instruction in thinking skills into content instruction worldwide.

Thinking-Based Learning is learning fostered by the infusion of instruction in skillful thinking into standard content instruction.

NCTT offers three options for teachers interested in school-based programs on Thinking-Based Learning:

1. A two to three hour awareness presentation that is an introduction to TBL; it does not count towards teacher certification nor requires follow-up coaching.
2. There are two different workshop programs where teachers train to teach TBL Lessons which count towards certifying teachers as TBL teachers.
 - a. We offer 3 base level workshops: Workshop I, Workshop II and Workshop III.
The full program of workshops involves three two-day workshops, which are paced throughout a school year.* A school can offer one, two or all three of these workshops to their teachers. Each of these focus on a different set of thinking skills covering skills of analysis, of synthesis, of evaluation, and of decision making/problem solving skills, all infused into regular classroom instruction. There are two options for a school if it chooses this option:
 - i. All of the teachers do the workshop(s). In this case, it is a requirement that at least 30% of the teachers participating also engage in follow-up coaching by a certified NCTT coach. (Coaching is described below).
 - ii. The school chooses a smaller number of teachers to attend the workshop(s) (minimum of 15) but all teachers who take the workshop receive coaching.
 - iii. Completed training and coaching in either option counts towards satisfying the requirements for teachers to become certified TBL teachers, the full requirements for TBL teacher certification are in Section I of this document.
 - b. The school elects a more extensive program in which teachers take TBL workshops and the school becomes a TBL school. This is achieved by creating a coordinated school-wide program of TBL instruction and assessment. In this case, all three TBL workshops are required, and 100% of the teachers are coached. This program involves the training of a team of teachers at the school as TBL coaches who themselves take over the coaching when this training is completed. The full requirements for a school becoming a TBL school are contained in Section II of this document.

As a specialized way of clustering these, together with a training of trainers program and a thinking-based learning curriculum revision program, NCTT offers various special *certification programs* for teachers and schools.

Certified Teachers: When NCTT certifies teachers this does not just mean that these teachers have accomplished various things with regard to thinking-based learning. It means that these teachers are models of committed TBL instructors who make TBL a regular practice in their classrooms.

Certified Coaches: Certified teachers but also can coach new teachers coming into their school after doing some additional training. Coaches can work in their schools as soon as they are certified to do so, so if it is a large school with say 3 or 4 groups and group 1 gets certified prior to group 3 doing coaching, their coaches can coach their own groups so they save money.

Certified Trainers/Presenters: This likewise true of those who NCTT certifies as classroom coaches, and as workshop presenters.

We do not offer certification to trainers/presenters unless the school is becoming a certified TBL school.

Certified Schools: Schools that achieve certification as TBL schools become models for other schools in how to change teaching school wide and across their whole curriculum to become a model thinking-based learning school.

*Schools may opt to take Workshop I only. If this is the case, coaching is not required. However, if after taking Workshop I the school would like to continue with Workshop II, coaching for Workshop I is required prior to moving on to Workshop II.

I CERTIFICATION FOR TEACHERS

1. TBL Teacher

A TBL Teacher is a teacher whose TBL lessons can be considered model TBL lessons by other teachers and administrators.

Requirements:

1. Workshop 1, Workshop 2, Workshop 3, each on a cluster of different thinking skills, and *being coached* on lessons based on each of the first two workshops.
Format: Workshops are 16 hours each usually done over 2 or three days.
Format: Coaching sessions is 2 hours per teacher, 3 teachers a day. Coaching involves a half-hour pre-conference, a one hour lesson observation in the classroom, and a half-hour post conference.
2. Makes a commitment to using TBL instructional methodology as part of his/her regular teaching.

3. Selects the best 5 full lessons taught, including: one W1 skill, two W2 skills (one critical thinking, one creative thinking), one W3 skill, and one additional skill of the teacher's choice, and documents these 5 lessons by filling out the TBL Teacher Requirements form, with supporting documents (completed graphic organizers, student writing, photos, etc.), and submits this to NCTT.
4. Receives approval for certification by a TBL Trainer in writing who reviews the submitted form.

Usually this can be accomplished within one school year.

SPECIAL NOTE ON THE TBL WORKSHOPS: Each workshop focuses on both the instructional methodology of thinking-based learning, but also focuses on ways to help students do a group of about four types of skillful thinking.

2. TBL Coach

A certified TBL coach can coach other teachers teaching TBL lessons and the coaching count towards those teachers becoming certified TBL Teachers.

Requirements:

1. Being a TBL Teacher.
2. Attending a one-day Coaches Training Seminar run by a TBL Master Trainer.
3. Documented teaching of TBL lessons on all W1, W2, and W3 thinking skills, and on Argument.
4. 5 documented practice coaching sessions in which the candidate coaches other coach-trainees on 5 different thinking skills.
5. One-day coaching apprenticeship with a TBL Master Trainer (includes a one-hour post conference).
6. Written approval by the TBL Master Trainer.

This is usually accomplished in the second year of a TBL program at a school.

3. TBL Workshop Trainer

A TBL Workshop Trainer can offer W1, W2, and W3 and these offerings count towards the teachers participating becoming TBL Teachers.

Requirements:*

1. Being a TBL Coach.
2. Preparing slides for one segment of each W1, W2, AND W3.
3. Reviewing each of these segments with a TBL Master Trainer.
Format: ½ day each.
4. Approval of each offering by the Master Trainer.
5. A one-day apprenticeship with a TBL Master Trainer on each of W1, W2, and W3.

6. A Post-Conference after each of these apprenticeships led by the TBL Master Trainer.

Format: 30 minutes each.

7. Written approval of the TBL Master Trainer.

*Prior to offering their first workshop all trainers will be asked to observe one full offering of either W1, W2, or W3 by one of the regular training staff and submit a report to their master trainer.

Usually happens in the third/fourth year.

Important note about certified TBL coaches and trainers: When TBL coaches and trainers are certified they sign a non-competition agreement that they will only coach or train other teachers through NCTT.

II CERTIFICATION AS A TBL SCHOOL

A TBL School is considered a model TBL school when it has a written TBL Curriculum where TBL lessons are infused throughout the regular content curriculum and when TBL lessons are taught by all of the teachers on a regular schedule. When no TBL lessons are being taught, TBL teaching techniques are used on a regular basis in the classroom. Anyone visiting the school can consider it a model TBL School.

Requirements:

1. **TBL Certification of Teachers, Coaches, Trainers:**

- a. All teachers have attended W1, W2, and W3.
- b. At least 60% of the teachers are certified as TBL Teachers.
- c. Approximately 10% of the teachers are TBL Coaches.

Two of the teachers are at least in the process of becoming TBL Trainers (this need not be accomplished prior to the school becoming fully certified as a TBL School).

2. **TBL Curriculum Mapping**

- a. Department heads and at least one teacher from each department attend a series of TBL Curriculum Mapping Workshops.
Format: Series of workshops throughout the year, Week 2 of the TBL Summer Institute usually satisfies this requirement.
- b. The written content curriculum is transformed into a complete TBL curriculum with written TBL lessons infused throughout.
- c. Approval of a TBL Master Trainer is required.

3. **Advanced TBL Workshops:**

- a. All teachers have attended one Advanced TBL Workshop on Argument Skills.
Format: 16-hour workshop.
- b. All teachers have attended one "TBL Instruction, Stage 2" workshop offered after the curriculum has been mapped into a TBL curriculum.
Format: 16-hour workshop.

4. School-Wide TBL Coaching:
 - a. A school-wide Peer Coaching system is established based on a two-hour meeting with department heads.

5. Assessing Thinking Program:
 - a. All teachers have attended one workshop on Assessing TBL Skills.
Format: 1-day workshop.
 - b. Rubrics for all of the thinking skills at each grade level are developed and these guide the assessment of TBL skills and are mapped into the TBL curriculum by each department.
 - c. A TBL assessment system has been set up in each classroom and in the school based on the assessment rubrics developed.

6. Final Approval:
 - a. A TBL Master Trainer approves the school as a TBL School.

Usually this takes two additional years beyond the year in which TBL Teachers have been Certified.

Important note about TBL Schools: Certification as a TBL School is for provisional for an initial 3 years, and renewable on a permanent basis after a site visit and approval by a team of two senior TBL staff.