

NCDPI
Teacher Spotlight American Renaissance School – Kym Smyth

Smyth: Kym Smyth
Molly: Molly Smyth

[MUSIC]

Smyth: Good afternoon, my name is Kym Smyth, and I teach at American Renaissance School in Statesville, North Carolina.

[MUSIC]

Smyth: I'd like to talk to you a little bit today about Home Base and how I use that in my classroom. Probably one of the biggest ways that I use Home Base in my classroom is to assess students, whether that's a pre-test or a post-test. I enjoy using it in math specifically because of the large test bank. I'm able to locate items in the test bank that could totally be a skills-based question versus a higher Bloom's Taxonomy question that involves a lot of reasoning.

I also like to use the assessment part in the classroom because it gives me immediate feedback on my test. This is valuable, extremely valuable information. It gives me an opportunity to reflect on my teaching immediately. It also gives me an opportunity to look at specific test questions like an item analysis to let me know exactly where my student—what my students were weak in, what they were strong in, and it gives me that opportunity to go back and reflect on my teaching, basically.

Which also offers me—rather than having to spend time grading the papers and such it offers me an opportunity to spend my energies in other ways

such as looking for research-based strategies to address the needs that the data has shown me.

[MUSIC]

Smyth: When I get my assessment data back it pretty much already groups them. It groups the students based on strengths and weaknesses as far—well, as an over all test score. So I kind of know a green group, they're good to go; they're on grade level or above. Blue group as well. And then when you get into your red, orange and yellow groups those are the groups that you might need to spend the—that time with.

[MUSIC]

Smyth: Once I've recognized the weaknesses that I have in my classroom I can go into my materials on Home Base and I'm able to locate materials that can help me with those groups.

[MUSIC]

Smyth: One of the most—my most important reasons for using Home Base in my classroom obviously is student-based and it has to do with my students. I enjoy using Home Base because not only am I able to see the immediate feedback but so are my students. The students are always so anxious to know how well they performed on an assessment immediately after they take it. In my classroom the students actually complete their paper and pencil test and then they go in themselves into their Home Base account and they key in their answers. And students are able to get their immediate test scores back, and they can go from there to see exactly what they missed.

I have a student with me today who will be talking to you about how she enjoys using Home Base.

[MUSIC]

Molly: Hi. I'm Molly Smyth, and I'm in the 5th grade at American Renaissance School. And I'm here today to talk about Home Base. We use Home Base for different reasons, but mostly we use it for keying in tests and getting it graded. We go back in our test and mark the ones we got wrong. And then we do test corrections with them.

Smyth: Now, Molly, after you've taken your test and you've seen the ones that you've missed and you made your corrections, what else is it about Home Base that you really like?

Molly: I like going back if I have a final exam or an EOG that's coming up. I like to go back into my review part of Home Base and look at the questions I've gotten wrong or the tests that I don't feel confident about, so—

Smyth: So the tests that you've already taken are still in your Home Base account and you can review that?

Molly: Yes.

Smyth: Okay. Now, at your school are your science tests given like that?

Molly: Yes.

Smyth: Okay.

Molly: Because—

Smyth: Mm-hmm.

Molly: —my science teacher believes that our EOGs will be on computers so we need to practice.

Smyth: Good. Molly, thanks for your time today.

[MUSIC]

[END RECORDING]