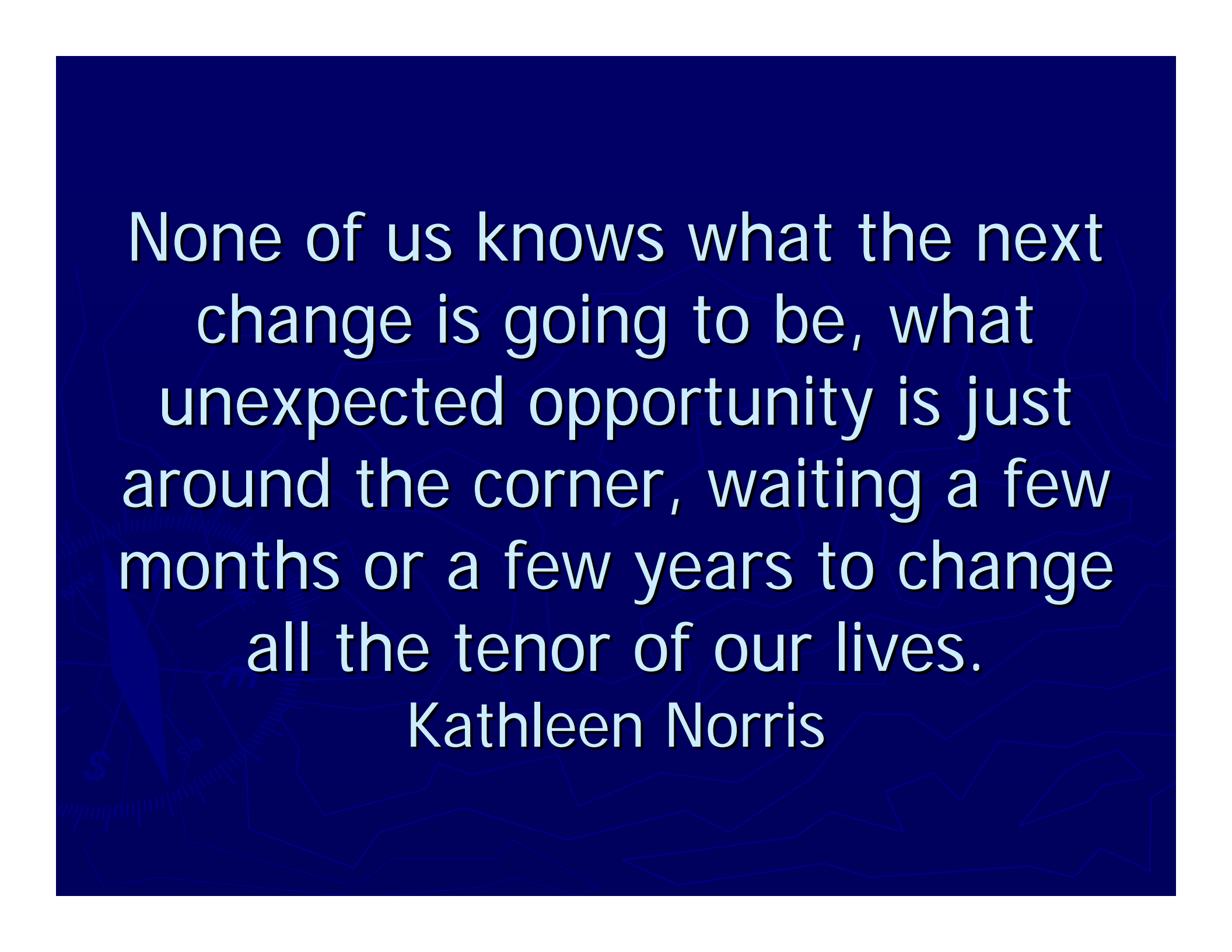


Non-Negotiables in the Four Blocks Framework

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None of us knows what the next
change is going to be, what
unexpected opportunity is just
around the corner, waiting a few
months or a few years to change
all the tenor of our lives.

Kathleen Norris

How has your instruction changed?

▶ What is the same?

▶ What is different?



We're implementing the Four
Blocks, BUT . . .



It is not the Four Blocks, if
you are not doing ALL four
blocks every single day.

(Well, to be honest, almost every
single day!)

The Administrator's Guide to the Four Blocks
Hall & Cunningham

Self-Selected Reading Goals

- ▶ Introduce children to all types of literature
- ▶ Encourage children's own reading interests
- ▶ Provide instructional-level reading
- ▶ Build intrinsic motivation for reading

Self-Selected Reading

- ▶ Teacher read-aloud
- ▶ Weekly one-on-one conference
- ▶ Conferences as conversations NOT interrogations
- ▶ Student choice of books
- ▶ Devoted daily block of time

Guided Reading Goals

- ▶ Teach comprehension skills and strategies
- ▶ Develop background knowledge, meaning vocabulary and oral language
- ▶ Teach students how to read a variety of literature
- ▶ Provide as much instructional-level reading as possible (“Drop back days”)
- ▶ Support struggling readers

Guided Reading

- ▶ Heterogeneous grouping (NOT grouped according to reading level)
- ▶ Comprehension, comprehension, comprehension
- ▶ DAILY before-, during-, and after-reading activities
- ▶ Round-robin reading is NOT used
 - Shared, echo, or partner reading
 - Three Ring Circus
 - Book Club Groups or Literature Circles
 - ERT

Writing Goals

- ▶ Writing as telling
- ▶ Fluency
- ▶ Application of grammar and mechanics
- ▶ Learn particular writing forms
- ▶ Learn to read through writing
- ▶ Support struggling writers

Writing

- ▶ DAILY mini-lesson with modeling
- ▶ DAILY sharing time
- ▶ Writing, writing, writing NOT publishing, publishing, publishing
- ▶ First draft “freedoms”
- ▶ Student choice of writing topics
 - Focused writing
 - Writing Workshop

Working with Words Goals

- ▶ Learn to read and spell high frequency words
- ▶ Learn to decode and spell many other words using patterns from known words
- ▶ Automatic, fluent use of phonics and spelling patterns while reading and writing

Working with Words


- ▶ High-frequency words
- ▶ Words with important patterns
- ▶ Theme boards or charts for topic-related words
- ▶ Words stay on the Word Wall ALL YEAR
- ▶ DO the Word Wall
- ▶ Three parts to Making Words: make, sort, transfer
- ▶ Fast-paced
- ▶ Transfer to reading and writing

Much education today is monumentally ineffective. All too often we are giving young people cut flowers when we should be teaching them to grow their own plants.

John W. Gardner

Essential materials

- ▶ *The Teacher's Guide to the Four Blocks*
- ▶ *Month by Month Phonics*
- ▶ Classroom library
- ▶ Multiple copies of texts, anthologies, big books, book sets
- ▶ Pocket chart
- ▶ Word Wall
- ▶ Editor's checklist
- ▶ Individual letter cards
- ▶ Index cards
- ▶ Sentence strips



The object of education is to
prepare the young to educate
themselves throughout their
lives.

Robert M. Hutchins

The background is a dark blue gradient. On the left side, there is a faint, light blue compass rose with a needle pointing towards the top-left. The compass rose has letters 'N', 'E', 'S', and 'W' indicating the cardinal directions. Overlaid on the entire background are faint, light blue topographic map contour lines, which are irregular, jagged shapes representing elevation changes.

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