



The TEACHER CENTER of Broome County
Teacher Study Group Grant Award
Winter/Spring 2006
FINAL REPORT
DOCUMENT PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES

STUDY GROUP TOPIC: Guided Comprehension

List of group members: Courtney Jablonski, Denise Liberty, Corey Peters, Margaret Dein, and Sarah Evans

The final report must be word-processed and submitted both in print and on disk using this form. Include information under each of the following headings.

The Teacher Center of Broome County is requesting that two members of each study group funded as of June 2005 share the information gained through their study with other consortium members by presenting a workshop during the 2005 -2006 school year. Please indicate on your final report who we should contact to make arrangements for your presentation.

| Name | School/District | Phone | E-Mail Address |
|--------------------|------------------------|--------------|--|
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Describe the initial goal of the group noting any adjustments that had to be made as time passed.

The initial goal of the group was to strive to use this study group as our vehicle to improving our current reading and/or literacy instruction. The theory, knowledge, and practical experience fostered by this study group was supposed to allow each member to adjust/change their current practices for the better.

In addition, each of us believed that the close examination of the model would give us a strong common foundation on which to discuss future practical experiences with guided comprehension. With our current positions in the district our intent was to share our successes and effective material with others in the district in hopes of improving reading/literacy instruction at a more broad level.

As time passed, our initial goals were held constant and fit the process at hand.

Describe the ACTION PLAN that the group followed.

The members of our group met regularly to discuss the assigned material and self-reflections and/or practical applications of the material. In between meeting, members of the study group thoroughly read and reflected upon assigned chapters. In addition, members implemented new strategies and/or instruction along the way. Although our roles in the district vary, each of us was able to manipulate and utilize the information gained from our readings, reflections, and discussions.

Describe how the action plan was implemented.

The first few times our group met, we focused on building a common language, understanding, and framework from which we could support our future thinking, discussing, planning, and instruction. Through discussion and analysis of our own philosophies and experience, in addition to analyzing the 10 research-based tenants underpinning the model, we were able to successfully do this.

From there, each meeting was structured as a place to examine and investigate the three main stages of the Guided Comprehension Model. Members came to each meeting with questions, comments, and reflections at each stage. Lessons and sample instruction were experimented with between meetings and then shared with the study group.

Our common investment in striving to make our students more engaged readers and learners helped unite the unique perspectives, knowledge, and/or experiences each of us brought to the group. Each of us felt as though we left this experience with new insights and respect for each other's outlooks.

In conclusion, our group looked back upon the week summaries, our personal reflections, and the Guided Comprehension Model in totality. We were able to pinpoint areas of deeper understanding, areas of current success, as well as areas in need of further analysis and questioning.

Evaluation of the impact of the study group effort on teacher/student performance.

- How has this study group changed you as a teacher? Do you anticipate that any of your teaching practices will have changed?

This study group helped to validate many of our current practices and philosophies. The theory and beliefs that this Guided Comprehension Model are built upon are very similar to the theory and beliefs already in place in our district and classrooms.

Throughout this study group comments were made by all group members noting the similarities between this model and the Balanced Literacy Model our district endorses. Different reading strategies and instruction are applied for the K-2 and 3-5 programs. Students of all ages are immersed in a variety of genres, integrating many core subjects.

Participants did take instructional examples from this book and the internet resource to implement in their classrooms. Minor adjustments were made for feasibility purposes and teacher/student comfort levels. Although none of us have completely restructured our reading program, we now have a great resource to use when looking for strategies to put in place when teaching reading comprehension. Many of us had eluded to the fact that the time and energy needed to create centers on a daily or weakly basis was not realistic, but those same people also found ways to incorporate a modified version of the suggested centers into their current instruction.

- What evidence do you **expect** to see of student achievement improving as a result of your participating in this study group?

We expect that our students will not only be able to literally interpret and discuss future literature, but that they will also have a stronger comprehension of the deeper meanings and connections as well. Students who are working within the Guided Comprehension Model should also walk away being more successful with content information due to the variety of genres they are introduced to.

In addition, our group members noted that this model fosters student discussion of the text with each other and adults. This skill is invaluable and will help deepen their comprehension and interest for any text being read.

- What evidence is there that the goals of the study group has/has not been met?

All group members believe that we have met our original goal of analyzing and experimenting with the current beliefs and best practices associated with reading comprehension.

The pre-assessment survey that was in place for this study group helped us create a baseline from which to measure our learning and success. We were able to define our previous knowledge and misconceptions or questions about guided comprehension and literacy instruction.

The on-going assessment of discussion, reflection, and questioning helped us to summarize our experiences, successes, flaws, drawbacks, and remaining questions/goals. The constructive growth and learning involved became evident.

The post assessment questionnaire helped each member to analyze their reading/literacy instruction at this time, purposefully noting any changes that were made as a result of this group. We noted things that we found most useful, helpful and realistic in McLaughlin and Allen. We also noted areas that we felt needed modification in order to be successfully implemented in the future.

Comment on the value of the study group process? Did it work for you?

They study group process was very valuable to each of us involved. The collegial discussions were not only interesting, but supportive and comforting as well. We were each able to validate many of our current practices while finding ways to experiment with new structures as well. The theory and belief structure of this new comprehension model fit very well into our current school districts' beliefs which made this experience even more beneficial. We were able to pull new ideas into our classrooms and to adjust some of our current practices in hopes of improving the quality of our instruction.

How can we make this study group program better?

We were very pleased with the structure and logistics of this program. Thank you for the opportunity.