



The TEACHER CENTER of Broome County
Teacher Study Group Grant Award
2002-2003

FINAL REPORT
DOCUMENT PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES

Understanding the “Three-Block Framework”

Group Members: Chenango Bridge-Kara Beattie, Richard Gulbin, Theo Moomey, Diane Maloney, Ira Simpson, & Mary Lou Zanot

Describe the initial goal of the group noting any adjustments that had to be made as time passed.

The goal of our group was to develop an understanding of the “three-block framework” discussed throughout Guiding Readers and Writers Grades 3-6 by Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell. We were eager to explore and implement new instructional approaches to both reading and writing. All five of the classroom teachers participating in the grant had similar whole group, traditional methods of teaching reading and writing. An anticipated outcome of our study group was for the classrooms involved to go from a teacher-centered approach to reading and writing to a student –centered approach.

Describe how the action plan was implemented.

The three-block literacy framework encompasses language and word study, reading and writing. Our first task was to discuss current practices in these areas. Based on this discussion we decided that our biggest frustration was in the area of reading. Teachers found themselves dissatisfied with the traditional whole group teacher-directed approach. We found the needs of several students weren’t being met in a capacity that was most beneficial to their learning. With this in mind we allotted a majority of our meetings to slowly bring about change in our reading programs. Using the book as our “bible” we explored independent reading, guided reading, and literature study. Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell truly opened our eyes to a whole new world of reading! To prepare students for proper independent reading, teachers went through a series of mini-lessons with their class, and then using anecdotal notes and observations acted as a guide. The students are now in control of their independent reading. Once teacher and student independent reading roles were established, teachers slowly began meeting with small homogenous-guided reading groups. Finally literature study groups started to evolve based on students interests. Once again the students are in control of their learning and the classroom teacher is the guide.

What methods were used to evaluate your original intended results?

--

1. We first gave student an informal reading survey to discover their beliefs/attitudes, likes/dislikes about reading.

Based on observations and instruction teachers realized students weren't given choice in the area of reading.

2. Each student was given a reading test which involved comprehension, word attack and vocabulary.
3. Once we began "READING WORKSHOP" we were able to conference with each student, thus creating individual anecdotal notes on each child's progress.
4. Reading Response Journals allowed teachers to evaluate students progress in independent reading.
5. When meeting with guided reading groups teachers feel they are meeting the needs of all reading abilities.
6. Teachers have noticed a "buzz" among the students during reading, rather than teacher-directed instruction.
7. Not all students are reading the same material!
8. In the literature study students have choice and are in control of their discussion.
9. After five months students were given the reading survey once again, we've seen a positive change in attitudes toward reading!

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

- What evidence is there that the goals of the study group has/has not been met?
- What evidence is there that teaching practices have changed?
- What evidence is there that student achievement is improving?

The changes in the five classrooms that have participated in this grant group in amazing! We now have students who are excited about reading! We can't believe the transformation in the students independent work habits. The classroom involved can now be working on up to five novels at once, whereas before that seemed impossible. Teachers are now able to meet with students to conference independently or work with a small-guided reading group based on ability. The whole physical structure of these rooms has changes to accommodate the guided reading program. Teachers have a new role as guide. Based on the various assessment we have used we have been able to document significant improvements in attitudes towards reading as well as performance.

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

We truly have learned an amazing amount of information to improve our current practices in reading. Our grant group found it refreshing to get together and share similar problems and brainstorm solutions. Each classroom that was involved in this grant group has changed significantly, for the better! 😊