



The TEACHER CENTER of Broome County
Teacher Study Group Grant Award
2003-2004

FINAL REPORT
DOCUMENT PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES

STUDY GROUP TOPIC: Strategies That Work: Teaching Comprehension to Enhance Understanding by Stephanie Harvey

GROUP MEMBERS: Sarah Evans, Kelly Waterman, Kelly Dennis, Sue Nunes, Christin Williams, Stephanie Lisio

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.

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

The initial goal of the group included addressing reading comprehension and how we, as teachers, can best support learning through the use of strategy instruction. As an adjustment and due to time constraints, we were unable to complete individual lesson plans based on the strategies recommended in this book. We intend to continue this planning when school resumes through the ELA Committee.

Describe the ACTION PLAN that the group followed.

The group followed an action plan where we pre-read chapters according to a schedule and met to discuss individual chapters with questions, insights, and ideas regarding the book's content. We also discussed how these strategies connected to our past instructional practices as well as how we can apply them to meet the individual needs of our students in the future. This discussion included how to create a continuum in our school by applying these strategies to appropriate grade levels and texts.

Describe how the action plan was implemented.

Our plan was implemented through meetings that included representation from primary and intermediate levels as well as a literacy specialist. For more detail about the meetings please see our response to the above question.

How has participating in this study group changed you as a teacher? Have any of your teaching practices changed?

As teachers, we have gained many valuable insights regarding reading comprehension as a result of this study group experience. Explicit instruction, common language across grade levels, scaffolding, extensive modeling, guided student practice, and the importance of powerful and appropriate text selection were some of the many ways we have learned to improve our teaching. We hope that this will help our students become more effective comprehenders of different genres. Much of this book reaffirmed what we already knew to be best teaching practices, but gave us many new ideas of how to implement these strategies.

What evidence is there that student achievement is improving as a result of participating in this study group? What kind of differences are you observing in your students?

At this time, we are unable to assess student performance. We plan to implement these strategies during the year and to continue to meet and assess our effectiveness.

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

Our study group had one primary goal: to help children become more competent comprehenders of text. Two secondary goals arose from this: to learn about effective strategies to teach children reading comprehension as well as instructional methods to teach these strategies. As we described in a previous section, we have learned a great deal about strategies to teach children comprehension and about our own instructional practices. We intend to apply the teaching philosophies and instructional strategies into our own teaching. Throughout the year we will assess our progress through student success with these strategies.

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

We found this study group to be an invaluable experience. The opportunity to engage in dialogue with colleagues from various grade levels about an important educational issue was extremely rewarding. We were able to gain more from the discussion of this text as a group than reading it independently. We learned a great deal from one another.

How can we make the study group program better?

We found that some of the questions on the form seemed repetitive and were confused about how to respond. We appreciate the opportunity this grant has given us to learn and grow as educators.

