



The TEACHER CENTER of Broome County
Teacher Study Group Grant Award
Summer 2009-2010
FINAL REPORT
DOCUMENT PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES

STUDY GROUP TOPIC: _____ **CRITICAL READERS** _____

List of group members: Kathryn (Kassie) Frech, Diana Simpson, Mindy Swails, Anna Wright

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

Our initial objectives were to motivate and encourage our students to be Critical Readers and Thinkers of test questions. We had to adjust that to just Critical Readers when we began our analysis and found a repeated failure to understand basic terminology. And we found that across our curriculums (two sciences and math) the basic terminology for the same procedure could vary. Examples of this were found in graphing, significant figures, units usage, and other topics.

Describe the ACTION PLAN that the group followed.

Our general action plan was to use books, videos and Regents Exam analysis to help us to focus on the needed Critical Reading ideas and ways to motivate and to 'hook' our students into doing what was needed to be successful.

Describe how the action plan was implemented.

DAY 1-got organized and ordered our books and video material, set our calendar and our group norms.

DAY 2-went over the Chemistry Regents analysis of most missed questions and discussed what we found.

DAY 3-went over the Math B Regents analysis of most missed questions and discussed what we found; filled out the 'How Are We Getting Along' sheet.

DAY 4-finished Math B; discussed the differences we found between Math and Science.

DAY 5-went over Earth Science Regents analysis and watched our video, "Motivating Students" and discussed it and how well we could incorporate the techniques shown into our classes.

DAY 6-finished going over the Earth Science Regents and discussed what we found; also discussed two of our books: *Comprehension Connections* (good) and *Tools for Teaching Content Literacy* (not so great).

DAY 7-continued book discussions with *Test Taking Strategies for the Utterly Confused* (not great), *Monsters* (not good), *Contemporary Breakthroughs to Critical Reading* (great!), and *Math Education for a Changing World* (good). Discussed how we would change our own teaching practices; started working with the Smart Board and its techniques for helping us to point out main ideas, etc.

DAY 8-Continued Smart board work and last book discussion; also research into online support resources.

DAY 9-more Smart Notebook work, planned out our Final Report; began integrating resource urls into the SCC Library website (Kassie).

Evaluate 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 had a HUGE impact on all of us. Specifically:

Diana-made me more aware of importance of vocabulary—yes my practices will change, I will include ‘hooks’ at start of every class.

Mindy-will now start each class with ‘Do Now’ questions & activities to get the students ‘focused’; also will tie more Science in with Math by using Science based problems, emphasizing significant figures and difference in answers between Science and Math.

Anna- Start class with her ‘Not Allowed to Get Wrong’ questions which are based on reading correctly the Earth Science Reference Tables, etc; checking more with Math teachers about how to apply Math answers in Science.

Kassie-Helped to inform me more on how to work with students, esp in test prep and test review and other ways to support the classroom teachers.

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

We all expect to see a 10% increase in mastery (85% & higher grades) on our students’ Midterms and Regents tests.

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

We have identified areas in our own curricula that need to be focused upon. We each have devised an individual plan to motivate our students to become Critical Readers.

Diana-vocabulary area to focus on—3 minutes questions at start of each class to ‘hook’ them into reading critically.

Mindy-do vocabulary throughout the year; Do Now questions and including more Science based questions that need to be solved mathematically.

Anna-concentrating more on the 'Not Allowed to Get Wrong' questions.

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

We thought the value was superb! The form to fill out at our third meeting, we thought was too soon for us; maybe we should fill it out after X number of hours instead of third meeting. This process worked for us-especially having one leader the entire time which made the process more stable and good for direction; defined our other roles better and allowed us to focus on our own responsibilities.

We plan to get together throughout the school year to talk about how things are going and what we may change.

How will the study group information be shared?

1—sharing at our faculty meeting—our administration can hardly wait for us to present on and start implementing what we have discovered and discussed.

2—willing to present as a workshop at the TC in groups of two presenters, if wanted..