



The TEACHER CENTER of Broome County
Teacher Study Group Grant Award
Summer 2008-2009
FINAL REPORT
DOCUMENT PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES

STUDY GROUP TOPIC: Differentiated Literacy Centers
List of group members: Mary Weyant and Kristin Lemon

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

- Our original goal of the study group was to examine our current literacy center practices and look at ways to differentiate the literacy centers in order to meet the needs of all learners, as well as, examine things that might need to change in order to maximize the learning of all students.

Describe the ACTION PLAN that the group followed.

- We began by reading the following books
 - Differentiated Literacy Centers by: Margo Southall
 - Time for Literacy Centers: How to Organize and Differentiate Instruction by: Gretchen Owocki
 - Literacy Work Stations: Making Centers Work by: Debbie Diller
 - Words Their Way by: Francine Johnston, Donald R. Bear, Marcia Invernizzi, & Shane Templeton

Then we decided to break our time up over the course of 2 meetings to discuss our findings and ways that we might want to implement activities or change practices that we are using now, as well as, discuss and share what works for us now in our own classrooms.

Describe how the action plan was implemented.

- Our first meeting focused on literacy activities, strategies for leveling activities, and the need for those activities to support whole group instruction.

- Our second meeting focused on the organization and management of differentiated literacy centers.

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?

- The study group has provided us with an opportunity to look at our current teaching practices in terms of the use of literacy centers and look for ways to improve them.
- We found activities for our literacy centers that we can modify to meet the needs of all learners. The use of picture cues/icons and color coding materials will be a valuable asset towards the implementation of differentiated literacy centers.
- We anticipate that our teaching practices will change because we will be able to create learning experiences for our students that will meet their learning needs. Students learning will be challenged, but not to the point of frustration.
- We are also anticipating the freedom to meet with different literacy groups without the disruptions from students who are constantly struggling with center work or who have finished early because the work was too easy for them. Hopefully now, the center activities that we have found will provide the appropriate level skill and strategy practice the students need.

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

We expect to see:

- Students on task
- Working independently
- Completing their work
- Literacy skills and strategies developing
- Quality of work improving

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

Through our readings, we have gathered ideas and reproducible materials that can be used for differentiating literacy centers. We have found suggestions for classroom layouts, organization of materials, implementation strategies, and monitoring students' progress.

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

The study group provided us with an opportunity to read about and discuss differentiated literacy centers. We were able to sit down without interruptions and talk about what we thought would work for us and what might not. We were able to look back at our past practices to see what was working for us and where we needed to find ways to improve our use of literacy centers.

How can we make this study group program better?

We feel that the study group would have been more beneficial if we had the time included to actually prepare materials for differentiated literacy centers. We now have some valuable resources and knowledge at our hands. Now, we need to find the time to prepare the materials necessary to make our differentiated literacy centers come to life.