



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

Improving Comprehension
STUDY GROUP TOPIC: _____

List of group members: Debbie Mansfield, Susan McGowan, Sally Miller, Nicole Palombi, Mary Jo Vanderbles, Michelle Zaverton _____

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

The goal of the book study group was to find new research-based activities to help students master the strategies needed to understand and to think about the stories they read. The texts we chose were wonderful, inspiring, and practical. Reading with Meaning: Teaching Comprehension in the Primary Grades and Reciprocal Teaching at Work: Strategies for Improving Reading Comprehension gave us the basis for an in-depth discussion of the elements of comprehension.

Describe the ACTION PLAN that the group followed.

Each member of the group read one or both of the books before we met. We discussed each book in depth. We considered the principles and the foundations for the activities each author recommended. Our plan to discuss each book and then to compare them worked well. The books helped us focus on the elements of reading comprehension.

We listed the principles and the activities which we plan to implement in our classrooms this fall. We were delighted to find similarities to the principles in Teaching with Love and Logic, a book most of us had recently read.

Describe how the action plan was implemented.

The action plan formed the agenda for our time together. We read the books and discussed them in detail. Each member of the group contributed “favorite” ideas and activities. We found the activities for improving comprehension to be practical and research based.

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 is a dynamic group of teachers – professional and dedicated. It makes me want to elevate my teaching to their level.

The impact on student performance will be interesting. The characters used in the instruction of reading strategies in Reciprocal Teaching at Work will be motivational and concrete for the students. We will be adding these characters to our second and third grade classrooms.

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

Using these strategies in second and third grade will provide an element of continuity and a dash of fun. The specific focus on predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing will help students improve their comprehension of text.

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

One of the main goals of a study group is to network and share information. We really did this well. Each member of the group gained understanding and support for the task of teaching comprehension strategies. And, we found and developed several specific activities for helping students with this important learning.

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

This was a worthwhile and valuable experience. The teachers involved are serious about teaching, supportive of one another, and very willing to think and work hard to help students. A super group!!

How can we make this study group program better?

This program worked well for us. Six is the ideal number of participants. Reading and discussing the work of experts is a good springboard for planning a classroom curriculum. We are all excited to “try out” the new ideas we learned.