



The Teacher Center of Broome County
Teacher Study Group Grant Award
2014
FINAL REPORT DUE BY APRIL 7, 2014
DOCUMENT PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES

STUDY GROUP TOPIC: *Common Core Reading Strategies*

List of group members: *Josh Buczek, Rick Dutko, Steve Moschack, Kim Rusnak*

The final report must be word-processed and submitted both in print and through e-mail using this form. Send print copy Teacher Center @ WSKG, BOCES Mail Drop #22 and e-mail file to btc@btboces.org. This report will be posted on the Teacher Center web page at <http://teachercenter.info>.

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

Our original goal was to incorporate strategies from *Texts and Lessons for Content-Area Reading* by Harvey Daniels and Nancy Steineke to help students grapple and engage with text more closely. Many students were performing below 65% on quarterly assessments and essays. As we began reading and reviewing the strategies in our central book, we realized that many of the one-page wonders included in the book would be valuable for our colleagues in other content areas. Rather than looking at the book as a direct source of texts to use in our classrooms, we had to shift our thinking and make modifications. We began looking for additional appropriate one-page wonders that would also work well using some of our favorite strategies from the book.

Describe the ACTION PLAN that the group followed.

Our action plan was to meet weekly to discuss selected reading and lesson plan ideas. In addition, we planned to review the alignment between the strategies in our book and the Common Core Learning Standards and the Framework for 21st Century Learning. By discussing the strategies in the book and our lesson planning, we planned to improve learning for our students and share instructional strategies with colleagues in our respective departments.

Describe how the action plan was implemented.

At our first meeting, we set our group norms of having a weekly agenda, building consensus, and setting a long-range objective of preparing materials to share at future faculty meetings or department meetings. During our initial meetings, we centered our discussion on assigned readings from our book. As we finished reading, we centered our meetings around researching additional articles for various content areas that represented additional one-page wonders and that would easily match with the strategies we had discussed. Then, we developed a Power Point presentation to use to introduce the strategies to colleagues in addition to handouts and copies of the articles.

How has this study group changed you as a teacher? Do you anticipate that any of your teaching practices will have changed?

Working with the study group has helped to invigorate my teaching and to make me feel more confident about making a transition to the Common Core Standards. In the past, I was more concerned with helping students access longer pieces of text. After reviewing *Texts and Lessons for Content-Area Reading*, it is clear that excerpts and short one-page texts can be very powerful instructionally.

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

Student achievement on the thematic essays, quarterly assessments, final exams, and Regents Exams should be improved by incorporating the one-page wonders and additional close-reading into our curriculum.

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

Our goals were to learn additional close-reading strategies and ways to incorporate non-fiction texts in the classroom. We also hoped to be able to share these strategies with colleagues in our departments. Some of the evidence that we've met these goals is that we have built a library of additional one-page wonders and developed a summary handout to share with our colleagues. We also have a Power Point which can be used as a tool for sharing out what we've learned. As we move towards final exam season, we will be able to collect additional data about the impact of these strategies.

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

The study group process was valuable because it made our discussions about close-reading strategies and texts more formal. It was often difficult to carve out the time to meet, but the process helped us to work more closely together than we might normally have.

How can we make this study group program better?

Some improvements might be to include options for study groups that would foster collaboration between teachers in different districts, or to allow subscriptions to services as a component or support material of future study groups.

A final report is due two weeks after the last meeting or by **April 7, 2014**, whichever date is first. The report must be typed and double-spaced using the provided form. One copy must be submitted in print and the file must be submitted through e-mail to btc@btboces.org. Return to the Teacher Center (Mail Drop #22), 601 Gates Rd., Vestal, NY.