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Teachers' and Coaches' Perspectives on the Challenges in Implementing a Literacy Coaching Program

Lucia West
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Education

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Lucia West

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Review Committee

Dr. Katherine Callard, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty

Dr. Colleen Paepflow, Committee Member, Education Faculty

Dr. Tammy Hoffman, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost

Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2022

Abstract

Teachers' and Coaches' Perspectives on the Challenges in Implementing a Literacy

Coaching Program

by

Lucia West

MA, University of the Incarnate Word, 2005

BA, University of the Incarnate Word, 1998

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

February 2023

Abstract

The problem in a local school district in the Southwest region of the United States was the lack of improvement in reading achievement scores in Grades 3 through 5 despite the implementation of a literacy coaching program during the previous 3 years. This lack of improvement in reading achievement has an impact on students' subsequent academic performance and outcomes. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore the perspectives of teachers and literacy coaches in the local setting regarding the challenges in implementing the literacy coaching program. The conceptual framework of the study was Vygotsky's third space theory. The key research question concerned the perspectives of teachers and literacy coaches in the local setting regarding the challenges in implementing the literacy coaching program for students in Grades 3 through 5. Data were obtained through semistructured interviews with 12 literacy teachers and four literacy coaches in a single school district, and themes were determined through the use of inductive coding. Participants indicated a positive view of the coaching program but identified large caseloads and limited time as hindrances to the effectiveness of the coaching. The study may contribute to positive social change in the broader education profession by offering insights for improving the effectiveness of literacy coaching.

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Dedication

I dedicate my research study to my husband, Gary, for his support, patience, kindness, assistance, and unconditional love. I also dedicate this study to my two twin sons, Nathaniel and Joshua; my father, Santos; and my mother, Elisa.

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Section 1: The Problem

The Local Problem

The problem in a local school district in the Southwest region of the United States is that reading achievement scores in Grades 3 through 5 have not improved despite the implementation of a literacy coaching program during the past 3 years. Research shows that literacy coaching programs can be effective in improving students' reading achievement when coaching teachers involves certain activities (Killion et al., 2022). Effective literacy coaching programs include assessment and a clearly defined connection between the program and teaching needs and practice (Toll, 2018); collaborative planning and review of assessments (Sandlin, 2022); and a cycle of examining data, deciding on a plan of action, and executing the plan (Kraft et al., 2018). Also, to improve the reading instruction of teachers and the subsequent growth in students' reading achievement, literacy coaching programs should include job-embedded professional learning, classroom observations, and the creation of a supportive rather than evaluative atmosphere (Toll, 2018). Despite the implementation of literacy coaching programs that include collaborative planning, professional learning, and observation, literacy coaching programs may not always lead to improved student performance (Killion et al., 2022), as was the case at the study site. Given the research showing the overall effectiveness of reading coaching programs for improving student reading achievement, the lack of improvement in reading achievement in the local district reflects a potential gap in practice in the literacy coaching program (see Kraft et al., 2018; Toll, 2018).

Rationale

The problem in a local school district is that reading achievement scores in Grades 3 through 5 have not improved despite the implementation of a literacy coaching program. Passing rates in reading for third grade were 73% in 2016, the year before the implementation of elementary literacy coaching in the study district, and 73-75% each subsequent year; 69% for fourth grade the year before implementation and 68-73% each subsequent year; and 78% for fifth grade the year before implementation and 76-79% each subsequent year (Texas Education Agency, 2019). In a statement issued at a principal summit by the assistance superintendent of curriculum and instruction, the decision by the district to invest in an elementary literacy coaching program in 2016 was made because of administrator and district staff concerns about the reading achievement of students and research regarding the effectiveness of coaching programs in improving reading performance (Kraft et al., 2018).

As the implementation of an elementary literacy coaching program was the only major change in reading instruction and professional development during the past 3 years in the district, and as the demographics of the student population have not changed, it is important to explore the reasons student reading achievement has not improved including studying the literacy coaching program and its implementation in the local school district. The perspectives of teachers and literacy coaches about the challenges in implementing the literacy coaching program in the local setting are not known. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore the perspectives of teachers and literacy coaches in the local setting about the challenges in implementing the literacy coaching program. The

identification of aspects of the literacy coaching program that are challenging to implement may assist school leaders to make changes that could improve effectiveness in the local setting and broader educational settings.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions provide context and specificity regarding the terms used in this study of literacy coaching:

Literacy coach: An individual who collaborates with classroom literacy teachers to improve the reading and writing skills of students by providing job-embedded, ongoing, and learner-specific opportunities for growth (Pletcher et al., 2019). Often, a literacy coach provides individualized coaching, conversations, and staff development (Pletcher et al., 2019).

Literacy coaching program: An in-service program in which coaches or peers observe teachers and provide feedback for instructional improvement (Kraft et al., 2018).

Job-embedded professional development: In the context of this study, professional development that involves collaborative decision-making throughout the professional development process and targets the specific needs of teachers (Cavazos et al., 2018). Using data and observation, programmers identify participants' needs, which tend to be immediate and relevant (Lee & Smith, 2021).

Observation: In the context of this study, the process of witnessing a teacher's practice in the classroom, often as it relates to a specific protocol or coaching cycle (Qi et al., 2018).

Modeling: A demonstration of discrete skills or techniques for improved

instruction, often with new instructional practices (Stoiber et al., 2022; Ulenski et al., 2019). Modeling has been found to be effective at improving teacher use of evidence-based practices and instructional practices due to explicit interactions (Stoiber et al., 2022).

Significance of the Study

A gap in the literature exists regarding the perspectives of literacy teachers and literacy coaches involved in the implementation of literacy strategies during the coaching cycle (Ortmann et al., 2020). The study may add to the research by providing insight on the perspectives of literacy coaches and teachers. This investigation of the perspectives of teachers and literacy coaches about challenges concerning the features and implementation of the literacy coaching program in Grades 3 through 5 may offer the local school district opportunities to address areas where literacy coaching is not meeting expectations. Literacy coaching programs can be effective in improving students' reading achievement (Killion et al., 2022). Proficiency in reading is a building block to future academic success (Weatherholt et al., 2019). Therefore, the study offers the potential for social change in the broader education profession by offering insights for improving the effectiveness of literacy coaching programs so that potential issues can be identified and proactive means can be established.

Research Question

The problem in a local school district was a lack of improvement in reading achievement scores in Grades 3 through 5 despite the implementation of a literacy coaching program. In conducting the study, I wanted to explore the perspectives of

district teachers and literacy coaches regarding the difficulties associated with the implementation of the literacy coaching program. The study was framed by a single research question: What are the perspectives of teachers and literacy coaches in the local setting regarding the challenges in implementing the literacy coaching program for students in Grades 3 through 5?

Review of the Literature

I have organized the literature review into several parts. The section opens with literature pertaining to the conceptual framework of Vygotsky's third space theory. This discussion includes the topic of social constructivism. Instructional coaching—more specifically, literacy coaching, including effective instruction—is addressed. Finally, literature on coaching, literacy coaching, and the coaching cycle are reviewed.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the study, known as third space theory, is a lens whereby sociocultural learning is examined in the context of organizational learning. Vygotsky (1978) developed the theory. Briefly, the third space is a hybrid of social dimensions (Kelly, 2019). Rather than thinking of learning as the broadcasting of an idea from a teacher, third space refers to the area of compromise or interplay created between individuals or collectives and how development is achieved through participation in a social process (Vygotsky, 1978). In a social sense, a third space can be thought of as the compromise between two or more points of view, processes, or relations and can be part of social interactions, both physically and virtually (Boling et al., 2022; Jones, 2021; McIntosh & Nutt, 2022). In third space theory, new learning takes place at the border

between what was originally thought and the new thought with which the learner has come into contact (Church, 2021).

Third space has been applied to a variety of contexts including classroom learning (Church, 2021). In the classroom, learners may coconstruct meaning with the aid of a teacher, identified by Vygotsky as the more knowledgeable other (Vygotsky, 1978). Dialogue allows for opportunities for interactions between teacher and student and among students in unofficial discourse as learners make sense of new knowledge (Church, 2021). From this view, teachers can create opportunities for differentiated learner interactions among other learners in the same physical space.

Because it is applied to all learners in a variety of contexts where social interplay occurs (Jones, 2021), third space theory can be used to frame adult learning. Similar to their engagement with students, teachers can dialogue with the presenter or other teachers as new information is presented during training sessions (Church, 2021). The use of third space theory in the context of teacher professional development provides a framework for understanding (a) the challenges teachers face as new teaching practices are adopted and (b) the necessity of professional dialogue (Kelly, 2019). The framework of the third space has the potential to provide insight into the perspectives of literacy teachers and coaches about the coaching relationship and the challenges in implementing the literacy coaching program in the context of the local setting.

Social Constructivism

Vygotsky's (1978) theory of third space relies on what is known as the zone of proximal development. The zone of proximal development is a space in which new

meaning is created (Vygotsky, 1978). Instructing and coaching within a learner's zone allows for the optimal level between a level of frustration and a level of independence (Boling et al., 2022). A secondary area involves social constructivism (Vygotsky, 2017). The process of social constructivism helps explain how, in a social context, learners construct meaning, highlighting the need for dialogue between a coach and the individual who is coached (Stinnett & Oregon, 2018). Social constructivism is applicable within any pedagogical practice because the process is about the dialogue and the connection of older learning, schema, to newer learning (Boling et al., 2022; McIntosh & Nutt, 2022; Vygotsky, 2017). Considering literacy coaching through the lens of Vygotskian space, a pedagogical model whereby learners connect stimulus to previous experiences should be examined (McIntosh & Nutt, 2022).

Review of the Broader Problem

I reviewed literature from multiple databases. Databases included ERIC, EBSCOhost, and Proquest, which I accessed from the Walden University Library. Filters were applied to the search. Documents not meeting the criteria of being peer-reviewed and available in full-text and that fell outside the date range of 2018 to 2022 were excluded. Items found in the database searches were related to literature coaching and programs. I used the following keywords to search for the literature: *coaching, literature coaching, literature coach(es), balanced literacy, professional development, coaching practices, coaching programs, and literacy coaching sessions*. Each search revealed a modest number of qualified research studies. Based on the findings, I conducted additional searches in which I substituted "reading" for "literacy" (e.g., *reading strategy*

and *reading strategy implementation*). An initial search within ERIC for *literacy coaching* yielded 29 articles whereas the term *reading coaching* yielded just six articles, three of which were found in the initial search.

Literacy Instruction

Research-based literacy instruction in the United States has garnered much attention in the field of education (Puzio et al., 2020). Teacher preparation programmers have identified specific skill sets related to effective literacy instruction as a means to provide adequate training to preservice teachers (Raymond-West & Rangel, 2020). An issue in examining effective practices associated with literacy instruction is consensus concerning the amount of explicit direct instruction as compared to a more balanced approach that includes direct instruction as just one component of reading instruction (Raymond-West & Rangel, 2020; Smiley et al., 2020). The perception of instructional practices by teachers is another factor that complicates understanding. Rahman (2019) found significant differences between teacher self-perception of classroom practices and observational data. Researchers who focus on the science of reading have identified certain effective instructional reading practices that assist in achieving student gains and progress. Despite the research-based approaches, some teachers struggle to implement effective components such as comprehension (Adhikary, 2020).

The science of reading is based on research developed by scientists from cognitive science, developmental psychology, education experts, and neuroscience (Armes, 2020). Science of reading researchers have identified the need for explicit instruction in phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and reading

comprehension (Gillis & Moats, 2020). Although the science of reading has been available for decades, some teachers have limited confidence in their understanding of the theory (Hanford, 2019). Many teachers continue to find solace in the practices of balanced literacy approaches and methodologies that center on observation or holistic approaches. Unlike an educational program or current trend, the science of reading addresses the cognitive need for explicit and systematic reading instruction (Herron & Gillis, 2020). However, some teachers struggle to recognize the science of reading and continue to use popular practices, such as guided reading, sight word practices, and phonics practices, as reading frameworks (Adhikary, 2020; Hanford, 2019).

Effective Practices in Literacy Instruction

One pedagogical tactic considered an effective practice involves differentiated instruction (Puzio et al., 2020). In differentiated instruction, teachers respond to the diversity of student backgrounds and levels and tweak instruction to meet individual needs. Because students construct meaning in unique ways, they need instruction that is different from that of their peers (Malacapay, 2019). In line with Vygotskian (1978) views concerning instruction, teachers develop lessons based on either designed or interactional differentiation (Puzio et al., 2020). Designed differentiation refers to the planning of content, process, product, or environment and is often based on student knowledge, preference, or ability (Ismajli & Imami-Morina, 2018).

However, planning for potential differences can be different from what occurs in practice (Ismajli & Imami-Morina, 2018; Puzio et al., 2020). Interactional differentiation is different from designed differentiation due to the nature of interactions in the

classroom. Considered to be on-the-fly or adaptive instruction, interactional differentiation often happens during the lesson based on student feedback; as such, it would be difficult to proactively plan (Puzio et al., 2020). In addition, interactional differentiation requires teacher knowledge of both content and practice, as well as knowledge of a student's zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978). The zone is considered the optimal level from which to provide information to a student as the new content is neither too easy nor too difficult. Although a teacher might plan a designed differentiated lesson, factors such as a student's level or the appearance of a gap in understanding would require a teacher to adapt a lesson to meet individual needs.

Another effective practice to learning is social discursive activity (Murphy et al., 2019). As a social-constructivist practice, student dialogue is essential (Fierle, 2020). Interactions between students and between students and teachers foster an area of compromise known as third space (Vygotsky, 1978). Third space theory can be used to explain the uniqueness of learners and the need to teach in a differentiated manner, allowing for classroom discussion (Ortmann et al., 2020).

Literacy Coaching

Graduate reading specialist and reading coach programs such as Texas State University (2021) define literacy leaders as “professionals whose goal is to improve reading achievement in their assigned school or district positions. Their responsibilities and titles often differ based on the context in which they work and their teaching and educational experiences” (ILA Standards section). The depth of this definition supports the complexity and challenges that face future literacy leaders. The roles of literacy

leaders go beyond leadership qualities and embed skills that foster collaboration and develop effective literacy programs that support all learners and lead to positive social change (Sharp et al., 2018)

Literacy coaches require a balance between the tools of developing student reading proficiency and teacher instruction while not limiting aspiration (Stevens & Hinchman, 2020). However, blending literacy instruction coaching with teacher autonomy, especially in the area of open and communicative dialogue, can be difficult (Hunt, 2018; Stevens & Hinchman, 2020). Dialogue during literacy coaching can often move beyond the literacy instruction itself adding to the complicated nature of the process and adding to the difficulty in bringing a coaching model to scale (MacPhee & Hunt 2018; Ortmann et al., 2020). However, the consensus in educational research is that literacy coaches must be experts in the area of literacy and the area of coaching (Kraft et al., 2018; Smiley et al., 2020).

In addition to the development of multiple experts, the success of a literacy program depends on the support that the program receives from those who must implement it (Schachter et al., 2018). A literacy leader cannot implement a literacy program alone. Not only is the development of the teachers and support personnel essential in the execution of the literacy program, but the trust of the teachers is crucial. The role of a literacy coach must include consulting, model teaching, and coteaching (Pletcher et al., 2019; Schachter et al., 2018).

As coaching plans are implemented, it is vital to have alignment among teachers, coaches, and administrators. Frequent coaching strategies include technical feedback,

analysis of practice, generalization of skills, and reflection (Cutrer-Párraga et al., 2020). However, Shiveley (2022) determined that professional development and literacy coaches' expectations need to be aligned with administrator expectations and school goals. Key elements identified for successful coaching in the elementary academic setting include questioning, goal setting, demonstrating, and critiquing (Shiveley, 2022). Also, practices of validation and motivation are essential components of quality literacy coaching (Ashworth et al., 2018). Hence, it is imperative that the marriage of all strategies align within the coaching plan to generate growth.

As districts are confronted with demands on student performance by legislators, leaders often critically evaluate teacher performance and address it as one of the causes of the lack of student progress (Solari et al., 2020). In this situation, the role of literacy coaches is to identify areas of need and provide growth opportunities. For the teacher to be willing to hear the literacy coach's suggestions, a relationship must be established. Because of such teacher reflection, literacy coaches are confronted with providing mentorship (Martin et al., 2019; Schachter et al., 2018). Through mentorship, the literacy coach can not only develop a plan to increase teacher performance but can foster buy-in.

Teacher buy-in is a critical component of coaching success (March et al., 2020). Having regularly scheduled meetings between coaches and teachers, along with proper resources, fosters teacher independence, improved literacy teacher capacity, and increased productivity (Cutrer-Párraga, 2021; March et al., 2020). Additionally, consensus building between administration, the coach, and the teacher is critical in creating buy-in from all stakeholders (March, 2020). In that vein, conversations between

the coach and teacher need to facilitate teacher learning rather than simply be preset questions from a coaching protocol (Ortmann et al., 2020). Meaningful dialogue between the literacy coach and the teacher can advance teacher instruction and improve student outcomes (Hunt, 2018).

Coaching in Practice

A literacy coach must address standards that include foundational knowledge, curriculum and instruction, assessment and evaluation, diversity, environment, and professional development and leadership (Sharp et al., 2018). The standards not only provide characteristics of positive literacy leadership but also offer a blueprint for the development and establishment of effective teacher instruction and an increase in student performance. Literacy coaches must help teachers implement new state standards and district initiatives appropriately and in a myriad of ways (Hudson & Pletcher, 2020; Shiveley, 2022).

Bringing a coaching model to scale poses challenges and often leads to only marginally better effective programs (Kraft et al., 2018, Smiley et al., 2020). The interactions between the literacy coach and literacy teacher should lead to improved student performance (Cilliers et al., 2020; Cutrer-Párraga et al., 2021). However, the myriad of literacy coach responsibilities is often outside the realm of professional development (Selvaggi, 2018). Therefore, it is important to focus on sustainable classroom practices that improve student performance rather than fixing teacher practice (Shively, 2022).

Just as certain practices in teaching literacy are considered effective practices, so too are certain aspects of quality literacy coaching. At the forefront of literacy coaching are the relationships between teachers and coaches (Cutrer-Párraga, 2020). Without a positive relationship, the implementation of a plan is unlikely (Reichenberg & Boyd, 2019). The collaboration between the coach and teacher improves the coaching cycle and enhances student performance (Reichenberg & Boyd, 2019). The relationship between teacher and literacy coach provides the essential foundation to foster the trust necessary for the willingness to implement.

Although interactions between coach and teacher are an important factor, the perspective of the teacher toward coaching matters less than receiving the coaching (Hunt, 2018). In studies, student performance increased on standardized tests when literacy teachers were coached, especially when the focus was on student outcomes (Cilliers et al., 2020; Cutrer-Párraga et al., 2021). Part of the increase in student performance could be due to the increased confidence of coached teachers during instruction (Selvaggi, 2018). Coached teachers are more likely to have increased confidence and to attempt the implementation of new instructional strategies (Selvaggi, 2018).

Interactions between teachers and coaches are important, as well. Schachter et al. (2018) found evidence supporting the alignment of coaching with professional development and the necessity to differentiate based on teacher needs. The deviation from a professional development script could account for the number of duties associated with literacy coaching (Schachter et al., 2018; Ulenski et al., 2019). The frequency of

coaching sessions plays a role, too. In one study, when the number of coaching sessions increased, the teacher lessons were associated with student engagement; when fewer coaching sessions occurred, content tended to concern remediation (Martin et al., 2019). Interactions between teachers and coaches are important, as well.

In general, teachers who feel they are part of the literacy coaching program are more likely to make sustained changes in their practice (Bryant, 2019; Cutrer-Párraga et al., 2021). When teachers feel they are a part of the literacy coaching program and the program aligns with expectations from the district and campus levels, they are less likely to be resistant to implementing coaching strategies (Parsons et al., 2018). Additionally, literacy coaching that focuses on student data along with teacher practice tends to be more effective than teacher practice without data analysis (Killion, 2022). Teachers want to be able to analyze the output of students through the alignment of data and instruction. Literacy coaching that includes teacher buy-in provides the opportunity for discourse that bridges analysis of data, objective evaluation of instruction, and willingness to implement practice modifications (Cutrer-Párraga et al., 2021; Parsons et al., 2018).

Implications

Because reading practices are relevant for teachers to improve student achievement, studying the mechanism whereby teachers can hone the craft of reading instruction may offer local school district leaders opportunities to address areas where literacy coaching is not meeting expectations. The results of the study provide a better understanding of the literacy coaching program in the local setting, potentially benefitting literacy teachers and coaches as well as academic leaders in the school district. Analysis

of participant perspectives led to an understanding of impediments to the literacy coaching program. Overcoming these impediments may assist school leaders in improving student achievement on state-mandated reading tests.

Based on the study's findings, I developed a professional development plan as the project for this study. The plan serves as a guide for the local district's implementation of the literacy coaching program. It may aid administrators and coaches in how to make use of time for teachers and how to utilize coaching cycles. The 3-day professional development plan clarifies the roles and expectations of coaches and provides coaches with content knowledge such as explicit instruction and the science of reading (see Appendix A). An aim of the professional development plan is to ensure that participants have an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of literacy coaches.

Summary

In Section 1, I discussed the problem in the local setting and the education profession, provided a rationale for the problem, defined special terms associated with the problem, and presented the research question for the study. I also reviewed literature relevant to the study topic. In the literature review, I shared the conceptual framework of the study; discussed the broader problem; and examined literacy instruction, effective practices of literacy, and literacy coaching. Reading scores have not improved in Grades 3 through 5 during the past 3 years in a local school district in the Southwest region of the United States. The specific problem is that the district implemented a literacy coaching program with the expectation of growth in reading scores but has not obtained satisfactory performance as defined by the state accountability system. The purpose of

this qualitative study was to explore the perspectives of teachers and literacy coaches in the local setting regarding the challenges in implementing the literacy coaching program. The study may lead to the identification of the literacy coaching program attributes that are challenging to implement and offer possible changes that could increase effectiveness. In Section 2, I will describe the research design and approach; identify the number of participants and the criteria for selecting and gaining access to them; describe the data sources; and share data analysis results, the research design, and the approach for this study.

Section 2: The Methodology

Introduction

The problem in the local setting was that student reading performance had not changed despite the implementation of a literacy coaching program. Because the problem is complex and required a thorough investigation, I employed a basic qualitative design. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), researchers use a qualitative design to explore a central phenomenon. The nature of the design allows for in-depth exploration within a system, such as the local setting, of the thoughts of the participants (Almansour, 2019). The methodology was consistent with this study, which involved a detailed examination of the perspectives of teachers and literacy coaches regarding the challenges in implementing the literacy coaching program in the local setting.

I sought to answer the following research question: What are the perspectives of teachers and literacy coaches in the local setting regarding the challenges in implementing the literacy coaching program for students in Grades 3 through 5? To identify the perspectives of the participants, I conducted semistructured interviews and analyzed the responses. Section 2 contains a description of this basic qualitative study. I also justify the choice of a basic qualitative design. I explain the use of sampling and access to participants. Data collection tools are described along with data analysis and procedures.

Research Design and Approach

I conducted a basic qualitative study due to the complex nature of the problem (see Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The approach provided for the examination of a

complex problem and nuances associated with participant perspectives. The inductive coding of data revealed patterns not readily observable in quantitative data. I preferred the basic qualitative design over other designs such as grounded theory. The perspectives of literacy teachers and coaches as to the fidelity of the literacy coaching program were not known, and the use of a basic qualitative design allowed for understanding without attempting to derive a substantive, grounded theory.

To obtain data, I conducted semistructured interviews with 10 literacy teachers and four literacy coaches at the local school district. The teacher participants taught Grades 3 through 5 and were from three elementary schools with similar student demographics. They had access to literacy coaches in the district. The coach participants worked with teachers in Grades 3 through 5. The sample size was appropriate for the study. The 10 literacy teachers and four literacy coaches constituted a large and diverse enough sample to reach theoretical saturation, the point where little new information would be gained by an increase in participants (Guest et al., 2020).

The semistructured interviews allowed participants to discuss issues involving literacy coaching in general and the literacy coaching program in particular. The structure of the interviews allowed for a deep and thorough understanding of each participant's perspectives related to the literacy coaching program. By using purposeful sampling, I was able to examine trends in interview responses from different school locations, grade-level assignments, and years of service (see Yin, 2018). Interviews were conducted with reading teachers within the local school district and with literacy coaches within the curriculum and instruction department. The interview questions centered on the

perspectives of teachers and literacy coaches in the local setting regarding the challenges in implementing the literacy coaching program.

Participants

Teacher participants for the study included 10 literacy teachers from Grades 3 through 5 who were employed in the local school district during the 2019–2020 and 2020–2021 school years. By selecting this number of participants, I sought to strike a balance between the deep inquiry found with a limited number of participants and the diversity found with larger numbers of participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). To address potential limitations, I chose participants from multiple grade levels and among multiple campuses within the district. Although all teachers had taught literacy, some teachers were self-contained, teaching all subjects, whereas other teachers were departmentalized, teaching only reading. Along with campus and grade level, varying assignments of participants added to the diversity of the participants.

In addition to teachers, four participants were literacy coaches. The curriculum and instruction department in the local district is small, and only a limited number of coaches were employed at the time of the study. As with the teachers, participant coaches were employed during the 2019–2020 and 2020–2021 school years. All coaches were district employees at the time of the study and were trained in coaching techniques from the regional service center of the state and by private consulting firms contracted by the district.

I used judgment sampling, the selection of participants based on the researcher's knowledge and professional judgment (see Creswell & Creswell, 2018), to invite

participants of diverse ages and experiences. I had a working relationship with all participants because of my employment in the same district. I was not an evaluator or supervisor to any of the potential participants. I used email to invite teachers and coaches to participate in the study, and I obtained prospective participants' consent before the study. All information gained during the study remained in a password-protected file, and all identifiable information was removed prior to publication.

My relationship with the participants had the potential to affect the study. However, mutual trust and respect allowed for a deeper, more nuanced, understanding of the data (see Pinnegar & Quiles-Fernández, 2018). All participants were colleagues in the sense that I had worked with each in some capacity over the last several years. The information gathered did not affect any participant's job or standing in the district. Furthermore, I did not supervise any of the participants or play a role in the appraisal of their annual performance.

Protection of Participants' Rights

To ensure the protection of participants' rights, I took measures including confidentiality, informed consent, and securing data. After the research proposal was approved by Walden University's Institutional Review Board (approval no. 02-08-22-0599093), I sent participants an email inviting them into the study and explaining the study, along with the purpose and potential benefits and consequences. Participants agreed to the study and signed an informed consent form. At the beginning of each semistructured interview, all participants were told the number of questions that would be

asked and that they could skip any question. Additionally, permission was obtained to record each semistructured interview.

Demographic information obtained during the semistructured interview was limited to grade level and/or role on campus. I redacted any personally identifiable information that I obtained during the transcription process. Names of participants, schools, principals, and so forth were not included. The semistructured interviews took place over Zoom, and each participant's name was changed to a pseudonym before recording (i.e., Teacher, Coach). All information was kept on a password-protected laptop.

Data Collection

I obtained data by conducting semistructured interviews. Semistructured interviews were used as a means to limit bias yet probe deeper into areas pertinent to the study. Although I had predetermined the question content and sequence, I deviated from the interview protocol based on the flow of the interview or asked probing follow-up questions specific to the interview. The semistructured interview process allowed for the potential gathering of more pertinent data (see Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Deakin University, 2021). I took notes, although all interviews were recorded through Zoom videoconferencing software and transcribed using Studio.

Because information was acquired from both teachers and coaches, data were sufficient to answer the research question. Data such as video files and Microsoft Word documents were stored in password-protected electronic files. Additionally, notes and codes were stored in password-protected files. A judgment sampling of teachers ensured

diversity of teachers in terms of grade level and experience and ensured each participant had participated in the literacy coaching program. Participants were employed in the same district as the interviewer. A strength of the approach was the personal knowledge of the district, program, and teachers. However, as is the nature of case studies, the potential for bias existed. I have been employed in the same district for over 20 years and have established relationships with many of the district teachers and coaches. Additionally, I have found success in the classroom by utilizing small-group instruction in a workshop format. Certain preferences for teaching style and pedagogical choices exist. A log was kept outlining relationships between the interviewer and participants, as well as overarching themes derived from participant answers to identify any existing biases or preferences.

Data Analysis

Answers to the open-ended questions were analyzed qualitatively using an inductive approach so that codes emerged from the data. The steps for analyzing the qualitative data followed a general process including (a) data preparation and organization, (b) data exploration to get a sense of the data and coding, (c) data reduction, (d) development of description and themes, (e) validation of credibility of findings, and (f) interpretation of findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). As the interviews were transcribed, the written interviews were coded. Member checks which are opportunities for the participants to ensure the accuracy of the data interpretation were utilized to ensure accuracy and credibility (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Interviews were transcribed using Studio, a transcription program available to the researcher. During the first read of the transcripts, a sense of the data and any underlying meanings were obtained. In subsequent examinations of the interviews, words and phrases were examined for redundancy. Through content analysis, code words and phrases were categorized into themes, and those themes were examined for possible combinations. The researcher's log was used to bracket any potential bias, helping ensure reliability. Participants were asked to verify transcribed interviews and initial coding as means of accuracy and tone. No discrepancies were found between the interviews and the understanding of the participants.

During the first cycle of coding, interview questions and responses were moved to an Excel spreadsheet to allow for comparison across columns. The process allowed for easy identification of similar words and phrases. As specific words or phrases were recognized, important data were highlighted to help with consolidation. During the second cycle, I focused on similar words and phrases as a means to further consolidate the data. Each cycle was an iterative process as words and phrases were coded, moved, and themes emerged. Codes were then verified and determined if they were still representative of the emerging themes.

Limitations

The sample size, although appropriate for the study, limits the potential application of results to other districts (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The purposeful sample of participants, while meant to diversify the sample of participants, may not be reflective of other districts or future studies. Attempts to diversify participants may have

led to a smaller number of teachers in a given category, such as years of service, and may not be representative of populations of literacy teachers outside of the district being studied.

The current situation involving the COVID-19 pandemic limited the semi-structured interviews to teleconferencing. The shift from in-person interviews to only videoconferencing could have created unintended variations in the participants' responses or the understanding of the interviewer. Also, due to the pandemic, interviews contained discussions about coaching interactions between teachers and coaches in previous school years. Since I am an employee in the district where the study is being conducted, the potential for bias existed. To combat bias, I kept a field journal to bracket any potential bias and enhance objectivity. Potential biases are disclosed in the research study.

Results from the study have the potential to improve the literacy coaching program in the district. By identifying the complexities of the coaching program and the perceptions of literacy teachers and coaches, improvement of instruction and student scores on state tests should occur. One possible social change implication is the improvement in student reading could lead to greater chances of a student graduating, and therefore increasing earning potential. A graduate's annual income can potentially increase by \$11,000 with an aggregate increase of up to \$421 (Boser, 2020).

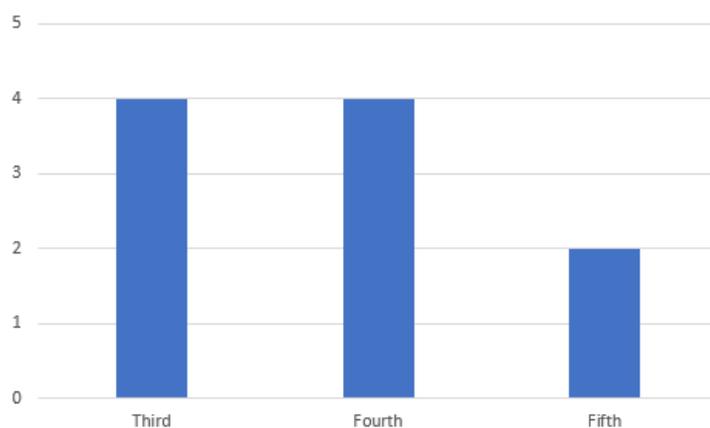
Data Analysis Results

The basic qualitative design was used to collect data to answer the research question. The qualitative design was chosen as the study question involved the perception of teachers and coaches related to the literacy program in the district. Nine different

campuses of the 20 elementary campuses in the district were represented by the 10 literacy teachers. All four literacy coaches worked at different campuses. The breakdown of teacher participants by grade level is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Number of Teacher Participants by Grade Level Taught



Literacy Teacher Interview Data

For the study, I sought to understand both literacy teachers' and literacy coaches' perspectives on the literacy program in the district. The opening question of the protocol asked teachers to describe their experiences with their literacy coach. Responses varied with some teachers identifying their coach as an additional resource while others mentioned the coach as someone to bounce ideas. Help with lesson planning and professional development were also mentioned. The data for the first question is represented in Table 1.

Table 1

Codes and Themes Related to Teacher Participants' Experiences With Coaches

Interview question	Code	Theme
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Describe your experience with your literacy coach.	Lesson planning	Facilitator
	Multiple coaches	Resource
	Bounce ideas	Friend
	Push me	
	Saw my potential	
	Professional development	
	Extra resource	

Two questions dealt with the positive aspects of the coaching experience: positive aspects and types of coaching activities. When asked about the possible benefits of having a literacy coach, literacy teachers' responses centered around the building of relationships, feedback, and the ability to help establish classroom routines such as implementing stations for small groups. All teachers mentioned modeling as a positive component of their coaching experience. Teachers valued the dialogue with the coach, the coach's expertise, and the ability to plan and collaborate. Data from the two questions are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Codes and Themes Related to Teacher Participants' Perspectives on the Positive Aspects of Having a Coach

Interview question	Code	Theme
Were there any positive aspects or benefits to having a literacy coach? If yes, please describe.	Build relationships	Facilitator
	Immediate feedback	Implementor
	New strategy	
	Help build small groups	
	Ask advice	
	Model	
	Expertise	
What specific types of coaching activities have been the most helpful?	Support	
	Modeling	Collaborator
	Collaboration	Resource
	Planning	
	Feedback	
	Conversations	

One question asked teachers to identify the least helpful aspects of coaching that the participants had received. Teacher responses included professional development and non-experiential items such as texts and PowerPoints. One participant went so far as to discuss how a coach read presentation slides to the teacher and that any teacher could read; what was needed was the experiences of modeling and co-teaching lessons. The data are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Codes and Themes Related to Teacher Participants' Perspectives on the Least Helpful Aspects of Coaching

Interview question	Code	Theme
What specific types of coaching activities have been the least helpful?	Professional development Reading presentation Time limited	Not hands-on

The final question for the teachers asked if there was anything additional to share. Some teacher participants mentioned how teachers needed to be open to coaching, as well as not judging either the coach or the process. Two participants discussed how their literacy coach made them better at their craft and became better teachers. Four teachers specifically mentioned how coaches need to be allowed to coach, implying that literacy coaches had duties outside the realm of coaching. Follow-up questions confirmed teacher perceptions that coaches often completed paperwork or worked with the behavior of students. The information addressing additional information that the participants wanted to share is included in Table 4.

Table 4

Codes and Themes Related to Additional Information Provided by Teacher Participants

Interview question	Code	Theme
Is there anything else you would like to share about literacy coaching and literacy practices in your classroom?	Teachers need to be open	Positive attitude
	No judgment	Coach allowed to perform duties
	Made me better	
	Coaches need to coach	

Literacy Coach Interview Data

The four literacy coaches were asked nine questions, several of which were similar to those asked of the literacy teacher participants. The first question asked the coach to describe their respective role on their campus. Responses varied and included descriptions concerning duties including helping teachers with strategies, modeling, and pedagogy, often through the use of the coaching cycle. However, another group of answers involved other duties such as working with student behaviors and working as a liaison between the teacher and the campus administration. Information concerning the first question that focused on the participant's role as a coach is included in Table 5.

Table 5

Codes and Themes Related to Coach Participants' Description of Their Role

Interview question	Code	Theme
How would you describe your role as a coach?	Other duties	Helping teacher
	Strategies	Other duties
	Pedagogy	
	Plan	
	Coaching cycle	
	Help teacher	
	Model	
	Liaison between principal/teacher	

Lots of paperwork
Behavior
Work with students

The second question asked of the literacy coaches was specific to each coach's perception regarding the necessary skill set needed to successfully work with teachers. Answers included areas requiring interpersonal skills such as serving the teacher and relationship building as well as intrapersonal skills such as patience and compassion. All coaches discussed either content knowledge or a wide range of proverbial tools in the toolbox. Codes and themes for this question are included in Table 6.

Table 6

Codes and Themes Related to Coach Participants' Perspectives on Necessary Coaching Skill Set

Interview question	Code	Theme
What knowledge and skills do you feel you need to work successfully with teachers (i.e. adult learners)?	Compassion	Patience
	Knowledge of standards	Compassion
	Content knowledge	Relationships
	Serve the teacher	Knowledge
	Build a relationship	
	Tools in belt	
	Knowing where students should be	

Literacy coaches were asked to describe some successes they had experienced with the teachers they coached. Common responses involved student movement in the form of stations and rotations. One coach went further to discuss how the coach knew they were successful when students grow. Specific codes and themes regarding coaches' successes are included in Table 7.

Table 7*Codes and Themes Related to Coach Participants' Perspectives on Their Successes*

Interview question	Code	Theme
What are some of the successes you have had as a literacy coach?	Implementation of stations Rotations Strategy of student movement When teacher is successful and it cycles down to students Helping teachers grow students	Student movement Helping teachers helps students

Two questions asked of coaches involved challenges associated with teacher resistance and barriers associated with their coaching. Jokingly, several coaches mentioned receiving at least some resistance from all their literacy teachers. Half of the coaches talked at length about how they had teachers unwilling to let go of test-preparation methods of instruction or other traditional strategies such as paper/pencil tasks for the students. Further, all four coaches discussed at least one teacher who, when the coach was not present in the room or when the teacher would find themselves in a new or difficult situation, would revert to previously used strategies rather than what was being addressed during coaching sessions. All coaches mentioned the difficulty in regularly completing the coaching cycle, either due to their caseload or because of other duties assigned to them. On at least one occasion, one coach had to work through a teacher who was offended by the presence of the coach in the room. Barriers included resistance to modeling and a lack of time due to other duties assigned to the coach. Also, coaches expressed that many teachers had not experienced some of the techniques being

modeled either as a student or as a teacher, adding to resistance. Information concerning the two questions focused on resistance and barriers is included in Table 8.

Table 8

Codes and Themes Related to Coach Participants' Perspectives on Coaching Challenges and Barriers

Interview question	Code	Theme
During your coaching experience have you experienced resistance from teachers?	Yes- from all Test prep Reverting to older strategy when no one is present/habit Move away from paper/pencil/what they know Teacher with experience offended to be coached- had a conversation	Teacher reliance on traditional methods
What are some of the challenges or barriers you have had as a literacy coach?	Not how I was taught Model Coaching cycle Teacher is not qualified, but eager Lots of other duties One more thing	Other duties Coaching different than how teacher experienced

Coaches were asked to generalize what works or does not work for them in terms of coaching literacy teachers. All coaches identified the positive aspects of this question rather than the negative. Coaches indicated that modeling as a coaching strategy works well. Three coaches also stated that not being an evaluator as essential to their coaching roles. One coach discussed read-aloud “stuff.” When asked, the coach referred to helping a teacher with strategies associated with a read-aloud portion of the lesson cycle. Codes and themes related to coaching activities are included in Table 9.

Table 9

Codes and Themes Related to Coach Participants' Perspectives on Effective and Ineffective Coaching Strategies

Interview question	Code	Theme
What types of coaching activities do you believe have been the most/least effective?	Modeling	Modeling
	Less paper	Collegial coaching
	Not evaluative	
	Read aloud stuff	

Coaches were asked about suggestions to improve the literacy coaching program. All coaches discussed the need for more coaches. Two coaches specifically mentioned there should be at least one dedicated literacy coach per campus. For context, many campuses employ a single coach for all content area teachers. One coach answered that a more streamlined process needed to be examined since teachers are overwhelmed and there is limited time. Another coach discussed the need to get “higher-ups” such as district personnel and senior staff into classrooms to get a sense of what occurs in the classroom. These responses are represented in Table 10.

Table 10

Codes and Themes Related to Coach Participants' Suggestions for Improving the Literacy Program

Interview question	Code	Theme
Do you have any suggestions on how the literacy coaching program could be improved?	More coaches	More coaches
	1 dedicated lit coach per campus	Streamline process
	Limited time	Time coaching
	Teachers are overwhelmed- something more streamlined	
	Get higher-ups into classroom to see what it is like	

When asked if there as anything additional they might share, the coaches responded with a few ideas. The first was a plea to continue with the literacy coaching program as it is impactful. Two additional ideas included having coaches see how coaching programs look outside of the current school district and getting professional development on specific skill sets needed based on the coach and campus. The codes and themes from the participants' comments are included in Table 11.

Table 11

Codes and Themes Related to Additional Information Provided by Coach Participants

Interview question	Code	Theme
Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with literacy coaching?	Don't ever take it away- too impactful Get out of district sometimes Get professional development	Professional development for coaches

Research Question

The research question that informed this study concerned the perspectives of teachers and literacy coaches in the local setting regarding the challenges in implementing the literacy coaching program for students in Grades 3 through 5. Data collected from the semi-structured interviews with literacy teachers and literacy coaches helped to answer that question. Teachers and coaches were asked specific questions regarding what worked and did not work as well as asked to make suggestions for improvement.

Overview of Themes

Themes emerged from the data for teachers and coaches. Themes associated with teacher responses included seeing the coach as a facilitator and a resource with modeling

and collaboration being of most help. Coach responses revolved around helping teachers, modeling, and utilizing some form of the coaching cycle. For both teachers and coaches, barriers included the time associated with following the coaching cycle in its entirety and coaching duties not related to classroom instruction such as paperwork and working with behavior students not associated with the literacy teachers being coached. All participants believed the coaching program to be of benefit. In the case of teachers, the consensus was that coaching had improved the literacy teacher's instructional practices. Coaches felt positive toward the program as well, believing that successes with teachers were leading to student improvement.

Discrepant Cases

Although examining data for commonalities is common, this process can lead to errors or assumptions being made. Although I looked for discrepant data, no discrepant cases were found. Additionally, no outliers or inconsistent data that would affect the study were found. The following section provides a summary of the data analysis.

Data Analysis Summary

The problem addressed in the study is that reading achievement scores in a local school district have not improved despite the implementation of a literacy coaching program during the past 3 years. As a response, this study sought to examine the program by interviewing teachers and coaches involved in the literacy program. Data from the semi-structured interviews allowed for the coding of information and the sorting of codes into themes. These themes helped bring a sense to the data obtained through the 14 interviews.

Ultimately, emerging themes indicated that both teachers and coaches valued the program. Literacy teacher participants discussed how coaching had positively influenced how they taught and how the learned practices had created lasting impacts on their classrooms. Perspectives from coaches were similar to those of teachers in that the belief individual coaching was benefitting teachers was common. In all 14 semi-structured interviews, participants viewed the coaching they had received in the program in a positive manner.

However, a common theme was also that coaches were pulled for other duties outside of their coaching roles, causing a limited caseload or limited time with teachers. The limitation of time led to discussions over not utilizing the coaching cycle in its entirety or somehow streamlining the process to make it shorter. Additionally, the misapplication of duties associated with literacy coaches led to some discussion concerning the importance of having at least one dedicated literacy coach per campus whose role would be to work only with literacy teachers and have no other duties.

It is important to note that while all participants believed the coaching program to be of value, the fact remains that student scores have remained stagnate in the district.

Project Description

The research study results were analyzed to determine ways of addressing the problem. Based on the data collected in the study, the perception of literacy teachers and literacy coaches is that the literacy coaching program is worthwhile. Teachers believed in the ability of coaches to affect change and coaches believed changes occurred in the classroom. These themes provide support for the continued use of the literacy coaching

program. However, despite these beliefs, data have remained stagnant in the district. Based on this dichotomy, several changes to the existing coaching program are warranted.

Summary

I developed the project to address the practice problem, which was the lack of improvement in reading achievement scores in Grades 3 through 5 despite the implementation of a literacy coaching program. Data obtained through semistructured interviews were the basis for the project. The literacy coaching program project plan focuses on what skills need to be addressed and how those skills should be delivered. In Section 3, I discuss recommended changes to the district's coaching program. The section includes an outline of the literacy coaching program as well as a detailed description of the project.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

The lack of improvement in reading achievement scores in Grades 3 through 5 is a problem in a local school district in the Southwest region of the United States. Study results indicated that although participants support the need for literacy coaches and believe that literacy coaches are needed to support teachers, they believe that the number of literacy coaches, the role of literacy coaches, and the time allowed for engagement in the coaching cycle need to be addressed. Study participants who were teachers indicated the need for access to the coaches as facilitators and support through modeling and full implementation of a coaching cycle. The participants who were coaches shared goals that provided ongoing support and opportunities to provide coaching cycles with fidelity along with clarity of the coaches' position to address and minimize other administrative expectations. All participants indicated that time constraints for the implementation of a coaching cycle were a concern.

The goal of the project study was to provide the local district's curriculum and instruction department staff with findings and steps to consider in their efforts to increase the utilization of the literacy coaches. I also wanted to provide staff items to review within the current coaches' job descriptions as related to the literacy coaching program. I based these recommendations on effective literacy coaching programs that embed assessment and connection between the coaching practices and teaching needs and foster supportive, nonevaluative atmospheres (Toll, 2018).

Section 3 contains a rationale for the recommendations and a literature review to substantiate the recommendations. The literature review includes research that supports the recommendations to enhance the literacy coaching program. A detailed description of the project including resources, potential barriers with workable solutions, and expectations of participants is provided. A project evaluation plan is also included. Finally, Section 3 includes discussion of the project study's potential implications for positive social change.

Rationale

Teacher participants in the local setting shared the belief that coaches provided opportunities for professional growth and development. Coach participants also reported that they experienced growth and progress not only with teacher performance but with student performance when components of the coaching cycle were performed with consistency. However, findings indicate that all participants were concerned with the lack of time to implement the coaching cycle with fidelity and experienced frustration with the demands and responsibilities that they perceived as outside the scope of coaching. Teacher participants expressed the need for more time with the coaches that included modeling and discussions that provided actionable feedback. Coach participants mentioned the need for more time devoted to the coaching cycle and less time on administrative tasks.

The research addresses the coaching cycle and coaches' roles within the development of teachers; however, perspectives on how coaches should find the time are varied as are job descriptions and expectations of coaches (Cutrer-Párraga et al.,

2021;Ortmann et al., 2020). These variations cause the effectiveness of coaches to be dependent on circumstances. Study participants, both teachers and coaches, confirmed this finding through their responses to the interview questions (see Appendices B and C). Participating teachers and coaches both indicated that time and additional responsibilities complicated the fidelity of the coaching cycle.

I designed a professional development plan to guide administration and coaches on how to provide time for teachers, engage in complete coaching cycles, reduce the ambiguity of coaches' roles and expectations, and provide coaches with the content knowledge needed to build literacy instructional capacity. The plan provides opportunities for the coaches to develop ways to spend more time with the teachers and implement the coaching cycle. It also provides clear, consistent expectations of the coaches and their roles. In addition, the plan includes professional development for coaches on the science of reading and explicit instruction strategies to enhance literacy instructional practices. The plan was designed for implementation at the elementary school level with a focus on using coaching and coaches to support and provide development opportunities for teachers.

Review of the Literature

Research shows that coaching is an effective form of professional development that improves both teacher efficacy and student outcomes (Morgan et al., 2020). In general, academic coaching is a job-embedded model of professional development that tends to engage teachers in active learning through modeling (Teemant & Sherman, 2022; Westmoreland & Swezey, 2019). However, academic coaching is more than just

professional development as the process builds on Vygotsky's sociocultural theories (Hui et al., 2020). The coach, determining the level of the teacher, provides scaffolding at or around the zone of proximal development (Hui et al., 2020). The zone of proximal development is a space in which new meaning is created (Vygotsky, 1978). From this lens, coaching is a process, and the process is referred to as the *coaching cycle*.

Coaching Cycle

Although there may be multiple names associated with the various stages in the coaching cycle, the cycle can generally be thought of as having three distinct stages: preconference, lesson observation, and postconference (Hui et al., 2020). In the first stage, the preconference, both the coach and the teacher meet to establish goals. Often, a teacher's lesson plan is utilized in the first stage and a discussion between the coach and teacher concerning the plan occurs before the teacher instructs the lesson (Hui et al., 2020). Discussions can surround the pedagogical, content, or management aspects of the lesson and can be enhanced with the addition of a peer (Teemant & Sherman, 2022). Although the process is often thought of as the more knowledgeable other sharing information (Vygotsky, 1978), Teemant and Sherman (2022) argued that coaching is often more heuristic and the coach is more of a guide. In this sense, radical change in a teacher's practice occurs in the third space between coach and teacher (Teemant & Sherman, 2022; Vygotsky, 1978). The process, beginning with the preconference, is as much about the relationship between coach and teacher as the theories driving the practice (Viesca & Teemant, 2019).

During the lesson observation, the second stage, the coach observes the teacher's lesson in the context of what was agreed upon during the preconference (Hui et al., 2020). The point of the process is for the coach to gain information to provide feedback during the post-conference (Hui et al., 2020). Because the observations are considered instructional, it is important that observations are not viewed as evaluative or have appraisal connotations (de Lima & Silva, 2018). In this context, the observation and postconference are dynamic and rely heavily on the relationship between the coach and teacher (Teemant & Sherman, 2022).

In the third stage of the coaching cycle, the postconference, the coach and teacher engage in a joint reflective discussion, which is often referred to as *reflection and feedback* (Hui et al., 2020). During the stage, the coach and teacher identify aspects of the lesson on which to improve, based on either criterion established in the pre-conference or based on student performance (Hui et al., 2020). The point of this stage is to expand awareness of the teacher's practice using critical reflection (Teemant & Sherman, 2022). The dialogue between the coach and teacher assists the teacher to enact the teacher's own beliefs (Haneda et al., 2019a).

Long-Term Impacts of Instructional Coaching

Although the hope is always to impact instruction and student performance in the immediate time frame, another goal of instructional coaching is to create a lasting effect (Morgan et al., 2020). Coaching is now viewed as an effective alternative to traditional professional development (Teemant & Sherman, 2022). Rather than simply helping teachers with prescribed curriculum, coaches can have lasting impacts by helping

teachers help students develop ownership of learning (Haneda et al., 2019a). This type of job-embedded professional development involves collaborative decision-making throughout the professional development process and targets the specific needs of teachers, thus creating lasting effects (Cavazos et al., 2018).

Part of the lasting impact of coaching may lie within the relationship between the coach and the teacher (Teemant & Sherman, 2022). Rather than relying on a set of binary pedagogical standards, Teemant and Sherman (2022) suggested that a greater impact occurs when a relationship is formed. Rather than coaching a teacher in a set of predetermined pedagogical strategies, the relationship between the coach and teacher creates a situation whereby the teacher can think critically about pedagogy, content, and relationships with students, thereby creating a lasting impact (Viesca & Teemant, 2019; Teemant & Sherman, 2022).

Coach–Teacher Relationship

The relationship between the coach and teacher is an important factor in the success of the coaching cycle (Hui et al., 2020; Morgan et al., 2020; Teemant & Sherman, 2022). The process of building a trusting relationship is a requirement for effective coaching (Bryant, 2019). In turn, these relationships tend to improve teacher-student relationships in the classroom thereby improving student performance (Hui et al., 2020; Viesca & Teemant, 2019). Additionally, the relationship established between the coach and teacher aids the teacher in the ability to self-assess teaching practice (Haneda et al., 2019a). However, despite the importance of dialectic relationships in both coaching and teaching, the research in this area is limited (Haneda et al., 2019a).

Part of the interaction between coach and teacher is based on shared beliefs (Haneda et al., 2019a), and as a result interactions and relationships between coaches and teachers being served vary (Haneda et al., 2019a). Since the relationship can be viewed within the socio-cultural framework (Vygotsky, 1978), the relationship can be seen as a collaboration, a kind of compromise between beliefs (Teemant & Sherman, 2022). The relationship between coach and teacher can also be seen as a caring relationship (Teemant & Sherman, 2022). In much the same way a teacher cares for students as a way to expand student identity, a coach builds a relationship with a teacher in a caring manner to expand the teacher's abilities and create identity, seeing each other as human (Hui et al., 2020; Hordvik et al., 2020; Teemant & Sherman, 2022; Viesca & Teemant, 2019).

Role of Coaching in Teacher Development

Teachers are often hired as content experts but learn how to coach on the job (Hui et al., 2020). However, providing content rather than pedagogy coaching is not equally effective for every teacher (Sherman & Teemant, 2021). Additionally, the role of a coach is often not well defined and must be agreed upon by all concerned individuals. (Shively, 2022; Sweeney & Mausbach, 2019). Also, there is no single model of coaching as mentoring, content, and cognitive coaching may all be utilized (Sandlin, 2022). It can be difficult for instructional coaches to provide effective performance feedback (Fierle, 2020). However, it is common for instructional coaches to work with groups of teachers at a time rather than one-on-one (Kane, 2019).

Much research exists concerning the positive impact coaching has on student performance (Kraft et al., 2018; Reed, 2021). Research indicates not only does

instructional coaching improve student performance, but coaching leads to stronger teacher efficacy and improved school climate (Shanahan, 2022). Haneda et al. (2019b), reported that the dynamics of the dialogue between teacher and coach, whether directive or facilitative, is critical. Further, the overall tenor of the coach, the underlying philosophy of the coach, is paramount (Haneda et al., 2019b). As the primary goal of instructional coaching is the improvement of student performance, coaching can be organized around collective efficacy and student-centered coaching (Sweeney & Mausbach, 2019).

It is also found that guided investigations, led by coaches, improve teacher understanding of disciplinary content (Gibbons et al., 2019). However, there may not be a single, identifiable set of best practices that would work in every situation (Smagorinsky, 2018). A teacher's experience as well as institutional expectations make the creation of institutional expectations difficult (Hordvik et al., 2020). Rather, the context in which the coaching takes place, the students, the campus, and the teacher, may alter what works best in a given classroom at a given moment in time (Smagorinsky, 2018). Moreover, the coach's role is optimized with a coherent understanding of how adults learn as well as the work environment (Zepeda, 2018).

Time Constraints for Teacher Literacy Coaching

Research indicates that literacy coaches associated with a school tend to devote more time to supporting teachers (Shanahan, 2022). Additional time is often devoted to building trusting relationships (Shanahan, 2022). Additionally, coaches often find themselves spending time completing tertiary tasks such as data analysis (Kane &

Rosenquist, 2019). Along with the building of relationships, adequate time to provide individualized coaching is required to provide effective coaching (Bryant, 2019).

Understanding the commitment to the time constraints is a necessary element of coaching. One criterion sets the time at 20 hours of coaching per teacher spread out over time (Sherman & Teemant, 2021). Other research indicated the time a coach should be in the classroom should be around 25 hours per week (Shively, 2022). However, this time must be consistent and ongoing (Kane & Rosenquist, 2019). Since instructional coaching is complex, the need to spend time building relationships must be a factor (Kane & Rosenquist, 2019; Kraft et al., 2018). The time for coaches to connect and to coach must be held sacred by administrators (Shively, 2022).

Professional Development of Teachers

Schools have increasingly looked for ways to improve professional development opportunities (Fierle, 2020). In general terms, professional development such as instructional coaching assists teachers in implementing new strategies (Bryant, 2019). Teachers receiving instructional coaching are more likely to implement new strategies than teachers who receive more traditional forms of professional development (Sandlin, 2022). The same is true for coaches who need to be able to connect and learn from one another (Shively, 2022). With the complexity of the job associated with instructional coaching, coaches also require professional development (Neibling, 2022).

Strategy for Searching the Literature

The process for searching for literature as it applied to this section was similar to that of the process in the earlier sections of this study. Databases including ERIC,

EBSCOhost, and Proquest, along with the Walden University Library, were searched. Along with a specific date range from 2018 to 2022, filters of peer-reviewed and full text were applied to the search. Documents not meeting the criteria were excluded. Items found in the database searches were related to literature coaching, coaching cycle, and literacy programs. Keywords were used to search for the literature and included coaching, literacy coaching, and literacy programs.

Coaching Framework

The coaching framework revolved around best practices associated with the coaching cycle rather than any one specific program. While acronyms such as GROW (Goal, Reality, Options, Will) are generally seen as scalable coaching frameworks, a cognitive coaching framework can help focus on building reflective routines (Wetzel et al., 2020). The coaching framework, similar to the coaching cycle, focuses on pre-conference, observation, and post-conference.

Project Description

The project is a professional development plan to address the roles of literacy coaches and provide information on how to ensure that literacy coaches are supporting teachers using components of the coaching cycle with a focus on literacy. The plan attributes are based on the findings from the teacher and literacy coaches' interviews and data collection. Teachers shared a want for more time engaging in the components of the coaching cycles with the literacy coaches. Literacy coaches also expressed the want to have more time to support and help teacher development via the implementation of

components of the coaching cycle. I designed the plan to address the current perspectives of the teachers and literacy coaches in the local setting.

Existing Supports

The plan was created to be shared with stakeholders in the local setting to establish clear, consistent expectations of the role of literacy coaches, and provide administration and coaches with the tools necessary to effectively support teachers and their desires to receive meaningful, authentic coaching. Potential supports include the scheduled beginning of the year professional development as well as the monthly administrator and academic leaders' meetings. The administration meetings provide an opportunity to implement professional development experiences that include understanding the roles and scheduling of the coaches. In addition to the administration meetings, the academic leaders' meetings offer a forum for professional development for understanding the components of the coaching cycle and the development of coaching skills. These supports already in place in the local setting serve as means to embed deeper understanding and implementation of the coaching position consequently assisting in addressing teachers' and coaches' interactions regarding providing time for the components of coaching and focusing the coach's role on the development of teachers.

Potential Barriers and Potential Solutions to Barriers

Although the beginning of the year and monthly administration and academic leader meetings are embedded in the local setting's schedule, attendance is not mandatory or prioritized. Also, outside occurrences may cause a redirection in agenda items or cancellation of the meetings. A possible solution for this would be to make attendance

mandatory and offer multiple sessions. For agenda items, the expectation can be that items may be added to, but items cannot be removed.

Another potential barrier is that discussion points shared within these meetings do not have implementation follow-ups or accountability measures. This is especially important regarding the finding that coaches are often used for duties other than coaching responsibilities. A possible solution for this concern is that the current job description could be used as a template to list job responsibilities and expectations that align with the components of coaching. The job description could be analyzed to determine which listed responsibilities should be reallocated to administrative personnel and which expectations require clarification that aligns with coaching. In addition, a system in place to document or track the coach's activities along with accountability meetings with the local setting's district department specialists to allow for the coaches' development in their craft.

Implementation Time Line

The professional development timeline varies based on the participants. The administration professional development will begin with a half-day session on the roles, expectations, and accountability of coaches during the beginning of the year administration summit, I will provide this session along with curriculum and instruction specialists. The administration will receive three follow-up professional development sessions ranging from 30 minutes to an hour throughout the year during administration monthly meetings. These sessions would be provided by the local setting's leadership and development department along with curriculum and instruction specialists.

The professional development for coaches will be integrated into the monthly meetings for academic coaches. Each month academic coaches will receive targeted professional development on components of the coaching cycle based on anecdotal notes and observations of coaches' needs. I will provide the initial beginning of the year professional development in conjunction with the local setting's leadership and development department and curriculum and instruction specialists.

Roles and Responsibilities

As the researcher, I identified the problem in a local school district in the Southwest region of the United States is reading achievement scores in Grades 3 through 5 have not improved despite the implementation of a literacy coaching program during the past 3 years. I also collected and analyzed data that established the need for a professional development plan to meet the needs shared by the teachers and coaches. The needs of the teachers included time and opportunity to engage with the coach on opportunities to strengthen instructional practices. The needs of the coaches reflected the lack of clarity on the coaches' expectations and responsibilities. Based on these findings, I designed a professional development plan that will define the coaches' roles and responsibilities and provide coaches with the development of effective coaching (see Appendices A and B for the presentation and participant packet, respectively).

I will assume responsibility for sharing the findings of the project study with the local setting's leadership and development department and curriculum and instruction department. I will also share findings with the teachers via a reading language arts newsletter. Once the information from the project study is communicated, I will take

responsibility for the initial development and delivery of the professional development sessions in the local setting. Following the initial professional development sessions, the local setting will be responsible for the implementation of the project. As part of the local setting, I will continue to be engaged in the project and be available for assistance and collaboration,

Project Evaluation Plan

The project evaluation plan includes a description of the evaluation format and the justification for the selected evaluations. The evaluation plan describes the key stakeholders. Finally, the evaluation plan addresses the implications of the project.

Evaluation Format

I designed this project to address the perspectives of teachers and coaches about the literacy coaching program. The teachers and coaches indicated a lack of opportunities for teachers and coaches to experience the components of the coaching cycle. It was also found that a contributing factor to the limited time and opportunity to implement the components of the coaching cycle was disparities in the expectations and responsibilities of the coaches. Using formative and summative evaluation measures is necessary to assess the professional development plan.

Justification for Selected Evaluations

An evaluation of the effectiveness of reading coaching programs for improving student reading achievement is most precisely measured through the increase of reading achievement scores in Grades 3 through 5. Therefore, the state assessment results provide a measure of the effectiveness of the implementation of the professional development

plan. In addition to the scores, an end-of-the-year survey will present findings of the perspectives of teachers and coaches about the literacy coaching program.

Description of Key Stakeholders

Key stakeholders in this study are the teachers, literacy coaches, administrators, leadership and development personnel, and curriculum and instruction personnel in the local setting. The teachers play an essential role in the delivery of the content and in providing students with meaningful and effective instructional strategies. The literacy coaches will provide the teachers with support for the curriculum and instruction through the components of the coaching cycle. The literacy coaches will also provide the administrators with essential progress monitors and updates on teachers' growth and opportunities to build capacity. The literacy coaches will share necessary information regarding the need for resources, schedule adjustments, and any barriers that are interfering with the implementation of effective coaching. The administrators will be responsible for the evaluation of the teachers and coaches, including sharing opportunities for growth and areas of improvement. Furthermore, the administrators will ensure the any barriers impeding the coaches' ability to devote the appropriate time to coaching are addressed. The personnel from the leadership and development and the curriculum and instruction departments are essential stakeholders as they will take responsibility for the continued opportunities for professional development in the administration and coaching sessions.

Project Implications

In the local setting, the potential of influence could not only increase the effectiveness of coaching on teacher performance and development of instructional practices but also provide the foundation to increase student performance on state and district reading assessments. By addressing the findings of the project study, literacy coaches could provide effective support and help teachers enhance instructional practices, therefore, providing opportunities to address student deficits and reflect on understandings.

In a larger context, not only could this project provide all the potential opportunities that the local setting could experience, but it could also address the growing obstacle of teacher retention. Through effective coaching, teachers are provided the support they desire and that can prevent frustrations leading to feelings of lack of support. At this post-pandemic time, teacher retention and teacher mental well-being are at an all-time low. With literacy coaches who provide ongoing and meaningful support, teachers can experience potential solutions before reaching the exhaustion of perceived failure.

Summary

A problem in the local setting is that students' reading performance has not improved despite the implementation of literacy coaches. Section 3 included the description of the project and the chosen genre with the rationale of the genre supported by a review of the literature to support the appropriateness of the genre and project. Furthermore, the project description, the evaluation plan, and project implications were shared. In Section 4, reflections and conclusions are included along with a discussion of

the strengths and limitations of the project. In addition, recommendations for alternative approaches are included. Section 4 also contains a reflection on the significance of the overall research and project including implications for future research.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Introduction

In Section 4, I discuss the strengths and limitations of the project and offer recommendations for alternative approaches. This section also includes reflective analysis regarding my personal learning as a scholar, project developer, and leader. I also consider the importance of the work and its potential implications and recommendations for future research. The section ends with a conclusion to the study.

Project Strengths and Limitations

In 2017, the local setting's school board members approved the employment of literacy coaches to address the lack of progress in student scores on state reading assessments. The employment of literacy coaches was initiated based on research such as Killion et al.'s (2022), which indicated that implementation of literacy coaches will result in more effective instruction and hence increase student performance. A strength of this project study is the use of a basic qualitative study design as it enabled an in-depth look into the current needs and practices that teachers and coaches share that are vital for effective coaching. During their interviews, teachers and coaches were able to share their perspectives and expand on subjects that they felt needed emphasis.

Additionally, the conceptual framework of the study, Vygotsky's third space theory, supported the perspective that a potential disconnect existed between what was perceived and what was occurring within the coaching program. By using this framework, I was able to discern that each participant's reality was uniquely their own

and that the intent or the literacy coaching program was, in part, not met. The use of Vygotsky's third space theory was therefore appropriate and beneficial to the study.

The study has limitations, as well. Although use of the basic qualitative design allowed for in-depth conversations with participants, the time required for interviews may have limited the number of participants. It was difficult to find an appropriate number of teachers and coaches willing to devote the time needed for the study. To compound the issue, the study region was coming out of a difficult year due in part to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many teachers left the profession, changed roles within the district, or felt that the timing of the study in relation to their job was not conducive. As such, it took longer to find participants than expected.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

The time needed to complete the study increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was difficult to find qualified literacy teachers and literacy coaches willing to take the time needed to complete the interview, even through video communications software such as Zoom. An alternative option for the study would be to allow participants to submit responses through written communication. More people may be willing to complete survey questions on their own time as compared to scheduling a time to interview.

One alternative definition of the problem could be to focus more on specific implementation strategies. The problem defined in the study was that reading scores for Grades 3 through 5 have not changed despite the implementation of a literacy coaching program. However, a researcher could focus on the change in instruction brought about

by coaching. A researcher could interview teachers about the implementation of new instructional strategies as well as watch teachers utilize the strategy. Finally, the researcher could evaluate student understanding by including unit assessment and interim assessment data.

A change in how the problem is defined would allow for a change in participants. It was difficult to recruit participants due to several factors such as time constraints perceived by the participants and the timing of the study, which took place during the COVID-19 pandemic. By changing the data collection tool to a written form and focusing on specific strategies being addressed, a researcher could invite a larger pool of literacy teachers to participate. After each coaching cycle, both teachers and coaches could be invited to complete a short, written survey that would include the focus of the strategy, perceived success, and some basic demographic information such as the number of years in the position.

My views on education in general and on literacy instruction, in particular, have changed over the years. As a classroom teacher, I learned by trial and error what worked for my students and continued to refine my practice based on my experiences and on research as I worked toward my reading specialist state certification. As a coach, my perspective broadened to include how bringing an idea or strategy to someone in and of itself may not be enough. Coaching is nuanced and couched within a notion of trust. A teacher must believe the coach is going to help with instruction, thus helping the students in the room. To a certain extent, the coaching model relies on the personal connections between coach and teacher as well as the pedagogy being tried.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change

Just as becoming a literacy coach broadened my perspectives of literacy instruction, so too did completing this project study. I viewed the problem of stagnation of student reading scores through the eyes of a teacher and coach. As a researcher, I needed to widen my understanding of literacy instruction once again. I struggled with the long nature of the project study. However, as I reflect, I see changes in myself in scholarship, project development and evaluation, and leadership.

Scholarship

I feel as though I have been working toward this moment for most of my professional life, as the basic content knowledge, at least the knowledge I had concerning best practices for literacy instruction, was clear to me although much of the writing style and process was new to me. What was different for this study was finding peer-reviewed research published within a specified time that dealt with a focused content area, namely best practices associated with instructional coaching. The process of finding appropriate literature and incorporating it into the study posed a challenge for me because this was my first experience as a doctoral researcher. With each new problem came a solution, although at a cost of time. However, I am proud of my growth as a scholar-practitioner.

Project Development and Evaluation

In creating the professional development course, I envisioned how the session would be structured. Through the research and discussions with my chair, I knew what I needed to include. One challenge was the conflict between what I needed to include versus what I wanted to include. Through communication with my chair, I was guided on

how to balance what I would present in the project. Another challenge was that as I was transferring my thoughts to the Microsoft PowerPoint presentation, I found that my natural presentation style is personalized and conversational in delivery. I know what I want to say or include and how I want to do it. As I was developing the slides for this project study, I was confronted with the task of creating a stand-alone presentation that could be understood by someone reading it versus experiencing it. The benefit of creating the session this way is that it has the potential to be a template and even a trainer of trainers model. The implications of this could result in social change on an even larger level.

Leadership and Change

As a teacher and coach for many years, I still strive to learn and grow. I have worked to understand new concepts and incorporate them into my classroom and practice. The same is true for the process surrounding my study. I wanted to be sure that I came out on the other side of this journey with growth in my ability to effect positive change in others. It is important to me that I am making my profession stronger and building capacity in others. This journey was as much about me growing myself as helping me understand an issue in a local setting. Through this experience, I will continue to develop as a leader through the sharing of this project study and sharing my professional development session with others.

Reflection on the Importance of the Work

While the focus of the problem surrounding this study was the stagnation of student reading scores, the ultimate goal is to help teachers help students. At times,

governing powers make decisions, in this case to hire literacy coaches, to fix a problem that is really a result of a much more complicated concern. The perceived implications of hiring literacy coaches were that reading scores would increase. This study indicated that the hiring of literacy coaches was merely a first step in the correct direction. Beyond the personnel, the expectations of the position not only need to be discussed but the understanding of the position and the implementation of the expectations must be allowed to occur. Continuous training and professional development are needed along with support systems that include time and implementation strategies. This study provides insight and guidelines on how to use the employment of literacy coaches so that results can be achieved.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

Researchers conduct studies to better understand a phenomenon. In this project study, I wanted to understand why, despite the implementation of a literacy coaching program, student reading scores as measured on the state reading tests had failed to increase. I was hopeful that a flaw in the implementation or the program itself would be revealed and that a solution could be developed.

Implications and Applications

The professional development course was created to address the issues of misconceptions regarding the roles and responsibilities of literacy coaches and the time necessary to establish an effective coaching schedule that supports coaching program fidelity. The desired outcome is an understanding of the literacy coach position including its roles and responsibilities. Along with this clarity, the means and support of the

educational community will be fostered. This will allow for the needs of the teachers and literacy coaches to be met by the establishment of systems in place for identification, scheduling, and implementation. In addition, social change will result from stronger instruction and provide opportunities for growth in teacher and student performance. The implications will extend to the local community as the accountability ratings and growth will provide further funding opportunities, resources, and future contributing members of the community.

Future Research

While there are many ways to conduct future research in this area, two specific examples stand out. Further research could examine the effect of the professional development opportunity regarding the sustainability of the motivation of the participating coaches. The research could study the benefits of structured coaching professional development opportunities and how the time dedicated to preparing for coaching influenced the effectiveness and fidelity of the coaching cycle. In addition, researchers could explore the disparities between the perspectives of the teachers and the coaches in terms of what type of support is needed. Researchers could expand on what teachers define as support and what literacy coaches define as support.

Beyond the project created in conjunction with this study, a possibility for a future project would be the creation of a policy plan to provide teachers with specific instructional practices to close existing achievement gaps. Reading coaches, in conjunction with teachers, could develop a set of priority instructional practices specific to struggling readers such as text selection and differentiation (Davis et al., 2019). The

agreed-upon practices would then be utilized as a framework for the coaching cycle implemented district-wide. Although interest in the study's findings is important in the local district, the study may garner interest for any district struggling to understand its literacy coaching program. The results of this study may inform other districts of challenges in employing literacy coaches and the implementation of the literacy coaching program.

Conclusion

In a local setting, reading scores have not improved despite the hiring of literacy coaches. To study this problem a basic qualitative design was used to research the perspective of teachers and coaches on the challenges of implementing a literacy coaching program. Interviews were conducted with 10 teachers and four literacy coaches in a public school district. Data obtained indicated teachers' concern with the implementation of the coaching cycle in its entirety and literacy coaches' concerns about unclear roles and responsibilities and time dedicated to coaching. These observations led to the creation of a 3-day professional development program titled Coaching through our Journey. This project could impact social change at the local level by providing administration and literacy coaches with consistent and clear expectations that can be implemented with fidelity and support from members of the educational community. This could also impact the teachers by providing support measures that foster and strengthen instructional strategies. Effective coaching could also lead to social change as it could result in the retention of teachers as they may feel supported and valued. Furthermore,

students will be affected by exposure to strong instructional strategies and opportunities for better performance on assessments.

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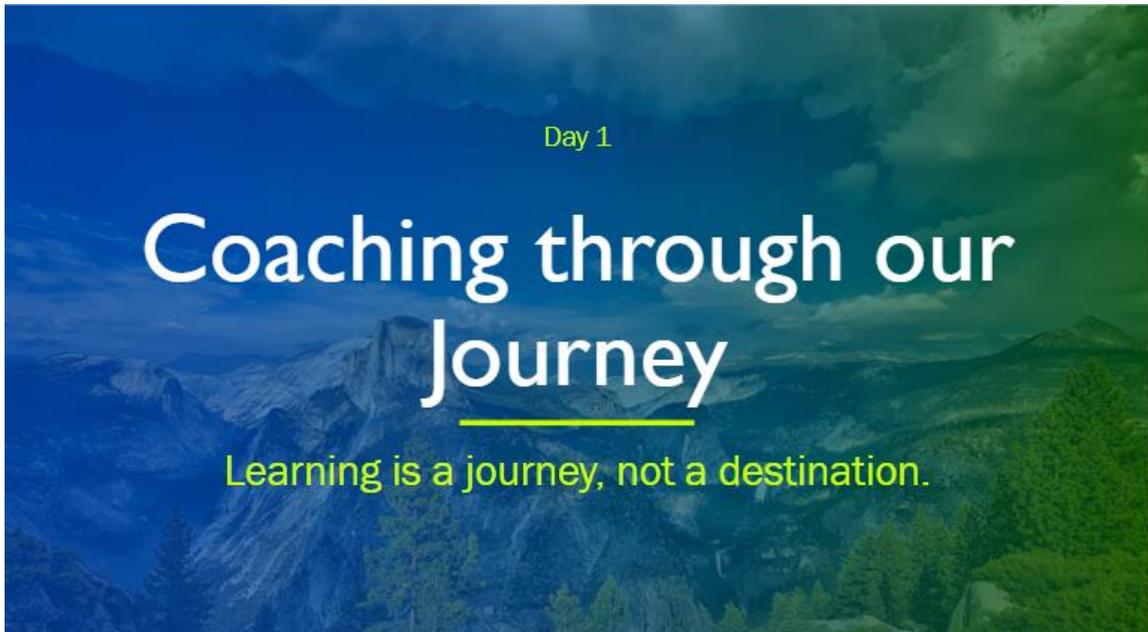
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Appendix A: Coaching Through Our Journey Professional Development Presentation



Participants will be checking in and picking up packages. Have music themed around travel, places, etc., playing.



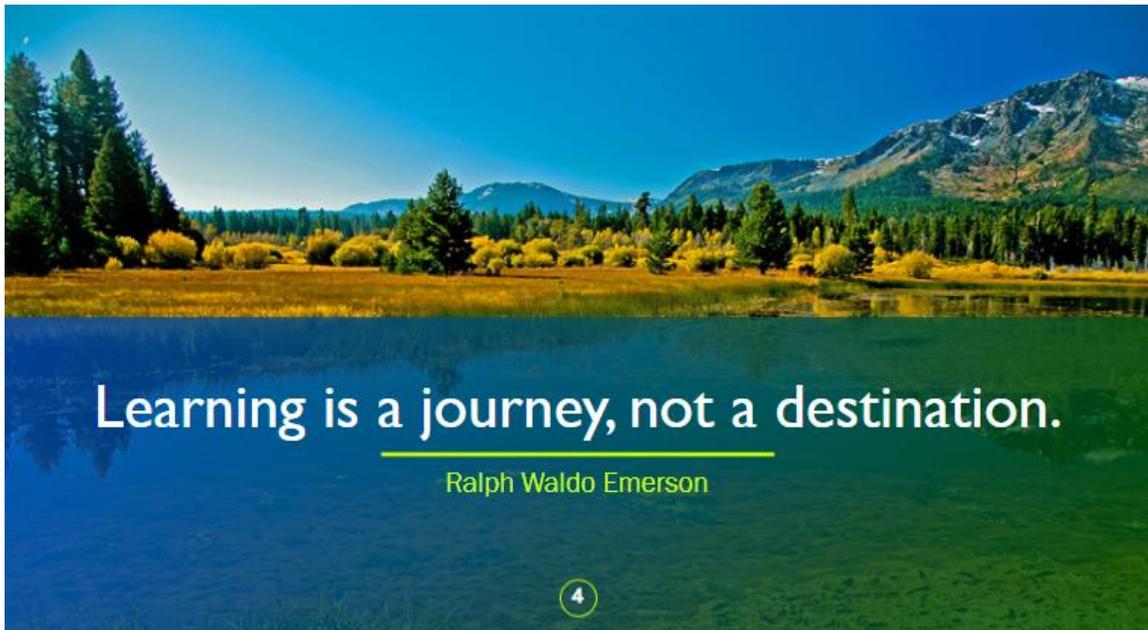
Introduce myself and the journey that I have experienced through my doctoral journey. Include how and why this topic is so important to me, this district, and the potential implications for others. Explain that for the next 3 sessions we will participate in this journey together to strengthen the role and implications of our campus coaches.

Our Road Map

Day 1		Day 2	Day 3
8:00 – 8:15	Check-in	Welcome back	Welcome back
8:15 – 8:30	Introductions	Review	Review
8:30 – 8:45	Objectives	Objectives	Objectives
8:45 – 9:00	Learning is journey...	Explicit Instruction	Knowing Your Teachers
9:00 – 9:30	What does our data say about our coaching?	Lunch	Generating a Schedule
9:30 – 11:30	What is a Literacy Coach?	The Science of Reading	Lunch
Break 10:00 – 10:15		Thoughts and Questions	Generating a Plan
11:30 – 12:30	Lunch		Thoughts and Questions
12:30 – 3:30	The Coaching Cycle		
Break 1:45 – 2:00			
3:30 – 4:00	Thoughts and Questions		

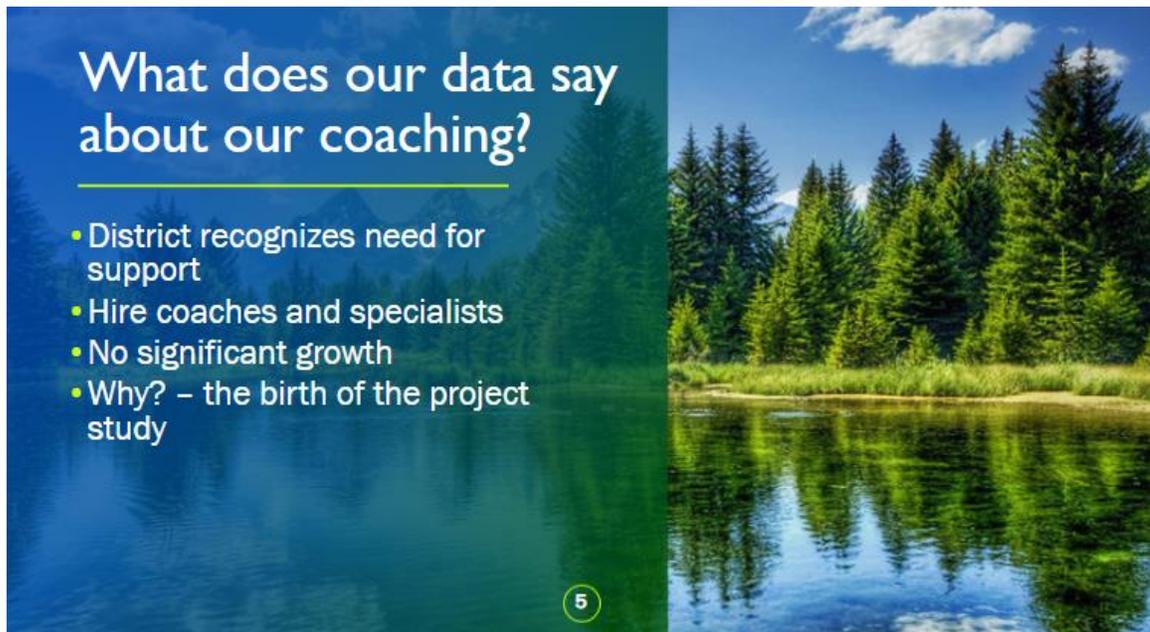
3

This is an overview of what the next 3 days will look like. Today, we will use our data and historical experiences to define what a literacy coach in our district is, determine the roles and responsibilities of a literacy coach, and discuss the coaching cycle.



Think about your understanding of the role of a coach. Now read this quote.

Without talking to anyone else, think about what parallelisms, if any, can you make between this quote and coaching. At this time, I want you to take 3 minutes to talk to your tablemates and share your thinking. Come back to me in 3-2-1...now does anyone want to start the sharing of their table's thoughts.



What does our data say about our coaching?

- District recognizes need for support
- Hire coaches and specialists
- No significant growth
- Why? – the birth of the project study

5

So why do we need to look at our coaches and specialists? When we – collectively we - reviewed our district data, we recognized that there is a need for more support. From those discussions, it was determined that based on research and what other districts were doing, hiring coaches and specialists should help increase our performance. Our district decides to hire coaches and specialists; however, after a few years of the existence of the positions, we still are not seeing the gains and progress we need. How is this possible? Why? Here is the birth of this project study. Discuss the project study questions, method, and some ahas.



One of the first things that the participants shared in their interviews was that how a literacy coach was defined was dependent on administration, campus, and performance. This inconsistency and often different understanding cause inefficiency. The first thing that needs to be done is to align the definition of a literacy coach among administration and coaches. What is a literacy coach? Use Think-Pair-Write-Share, to have groups define what is a literacy coach. Use gallery walk to share thoughts. Have groups combine to “redefine” a literacy coach and repeat until the group has a literacy coach definition.





Use the current HR job description and have participants highlight/note what stands out to them. Discuss – is this reflective of their perception or understanding of the position?

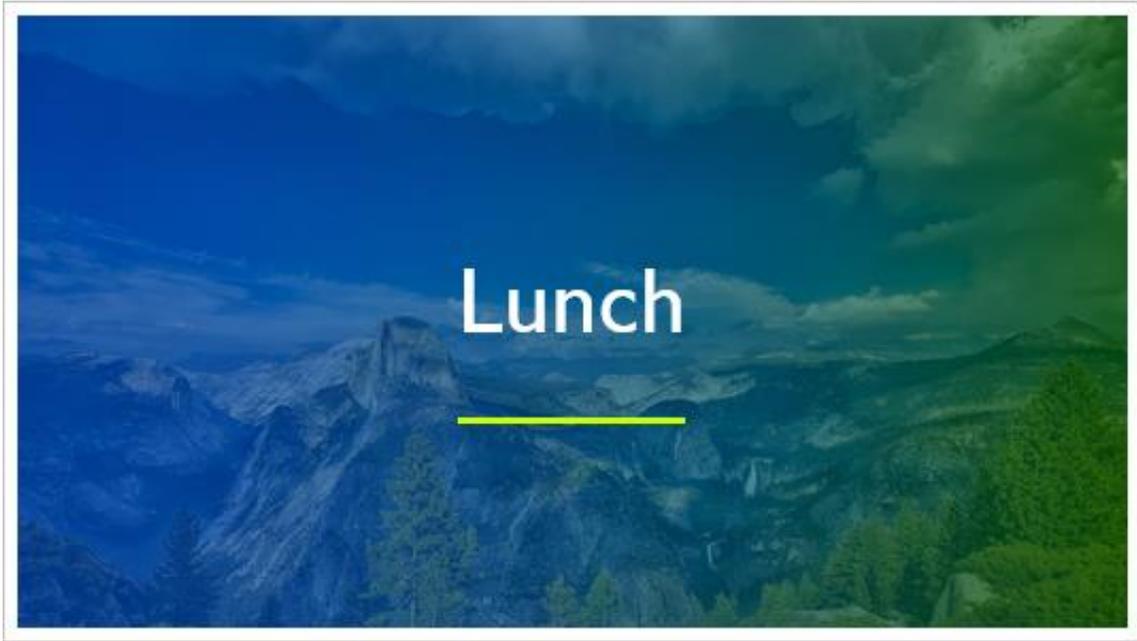
Using (article), determine the effective roles and responsibilities of a literacy coach.

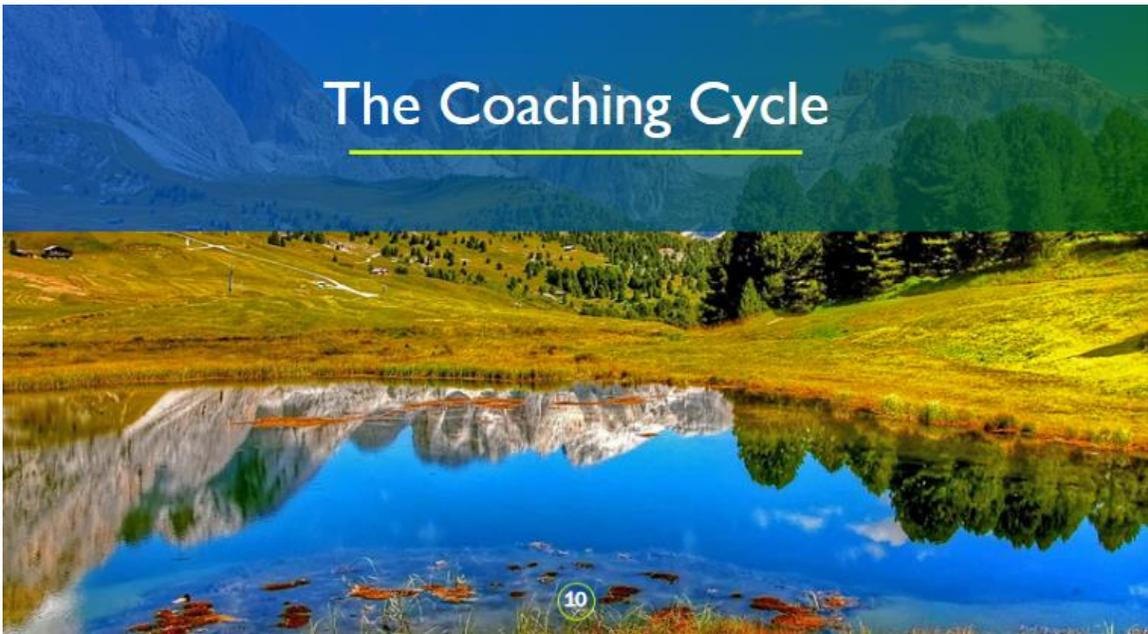
A Day in the Life of a Literacy Coach – using your experiences and your reality, generate a visual of a day for a literacy coach.

Compare the day to the roles and responsibilities

What are some of the things that align – what are some of the things that conflict?

What are possible adjustments that can be made to ensure that a literacy coach is coaching effectively?





Coaching has a structure, is explicit, and must be consistent.



As we know, our district is using Engage2Learn coaching model, eGrove. We will not stray from that as part of the challenges that participants voiced concern about how to implement best practices and research with what we are given. You have been provided with the steps and indicators in your packet.



Discuss the coaching cycle in chunks. After discussion of each component, provide opportunities for role play and sharing through experiences and scenarios that the participants create. Be sure to allow time for sharing.

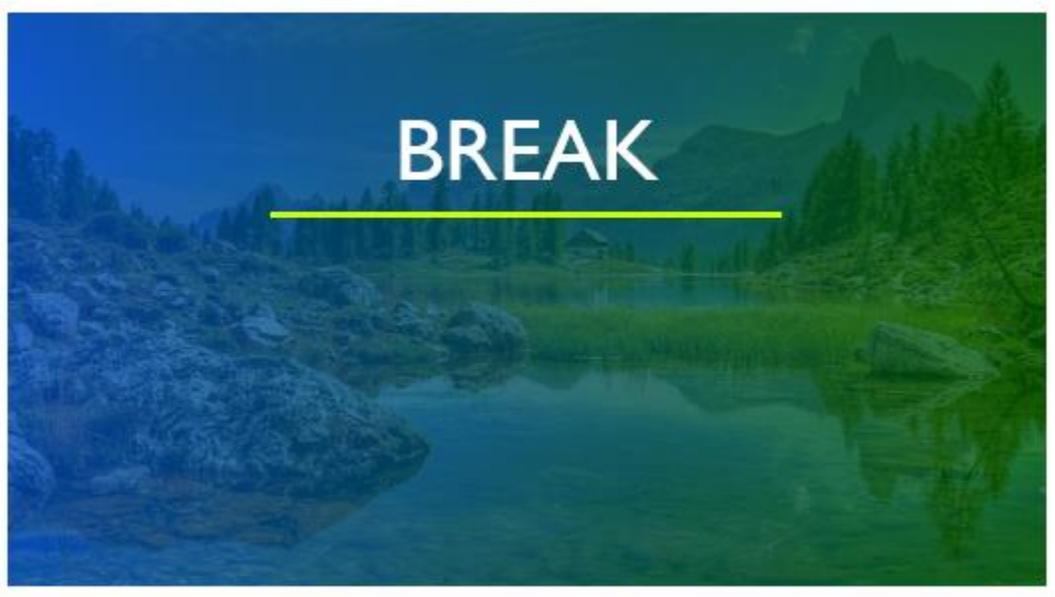
Importance reminder: The first evidence is the e in eGROWe that the district uses. Although there are specific outcomes of evidence you want. This is also where we will build a relationship and determine the WHY of what we are doing, where we want to do it, and the next steps.



After discussion of each component, provide opportunities for role play and sharing through experiences and scenarios that the participants create. Be sure to allow time for sharing.



After discussion of each component, provide opportunities for role play and sharing through experiences and scenarios that the participants create. Be sure to allow time for sharing.





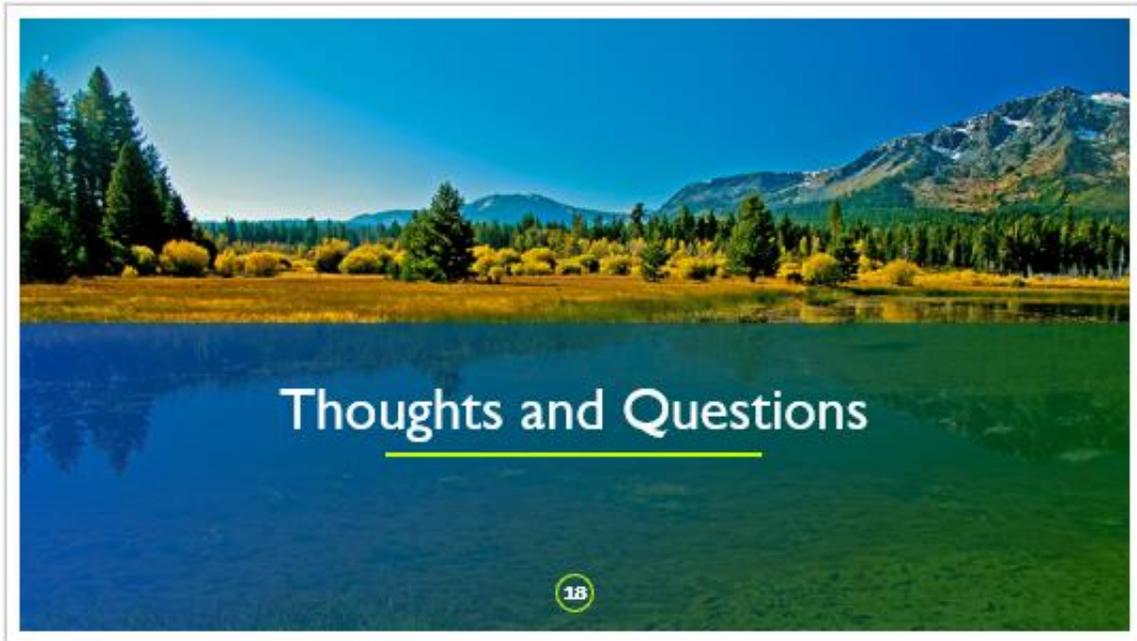
After discussion of each component, provide opportunities for role play and sharing through experiences and scenarios that the participants create. Be sure to allow time for sharing.



Discuss the coaching cycle in chunks. After discussion of each component, provide opportunities for role play and sharing through scenarios included in the day's packet.

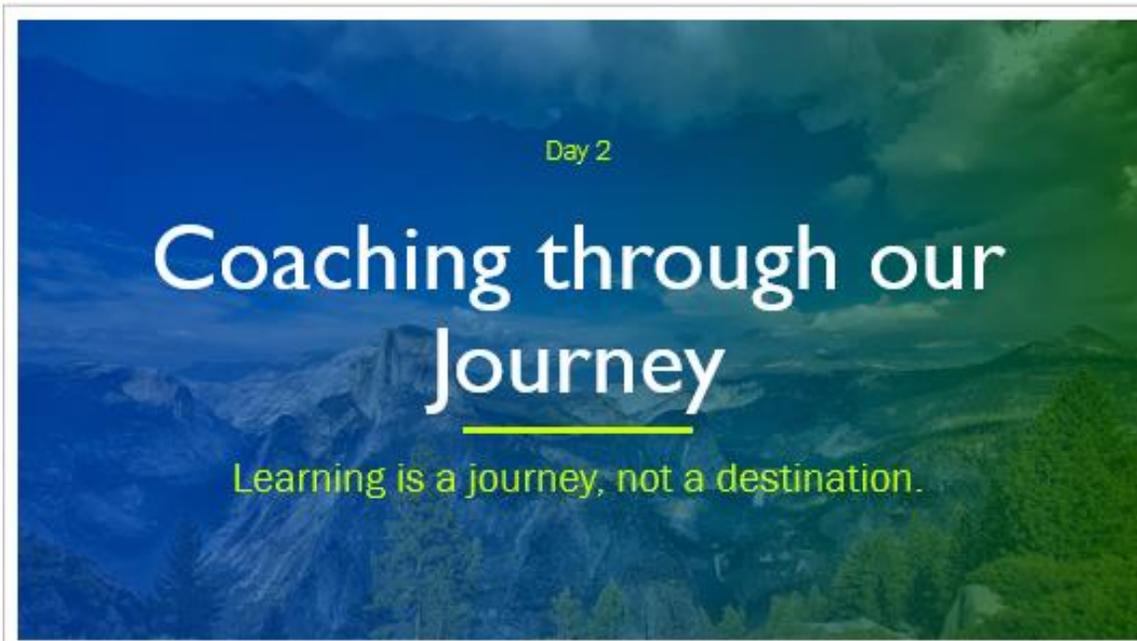


After discussion of each component, provide opportunities for role play and sharing through experiences and scenarios that the participants create. Be sure to allow time for sharing.



Today was a lot of information, new and reviewed. Does anyone have any thoughts or questions? Can we say that we have clarified some of the misconceptions about our roles and responsibilities and the coaching cycle? If not, please leave me a post so we can be sure we revisit and/or research.





Participants will be checking in and picking up packages. Have music themed around travel, places, etc., playing.



Welcome back. Recap Day 1. If there were any questions or thoughts that need to be addressed from the previous day, take the time to value them. Remind participants this is Day 2.

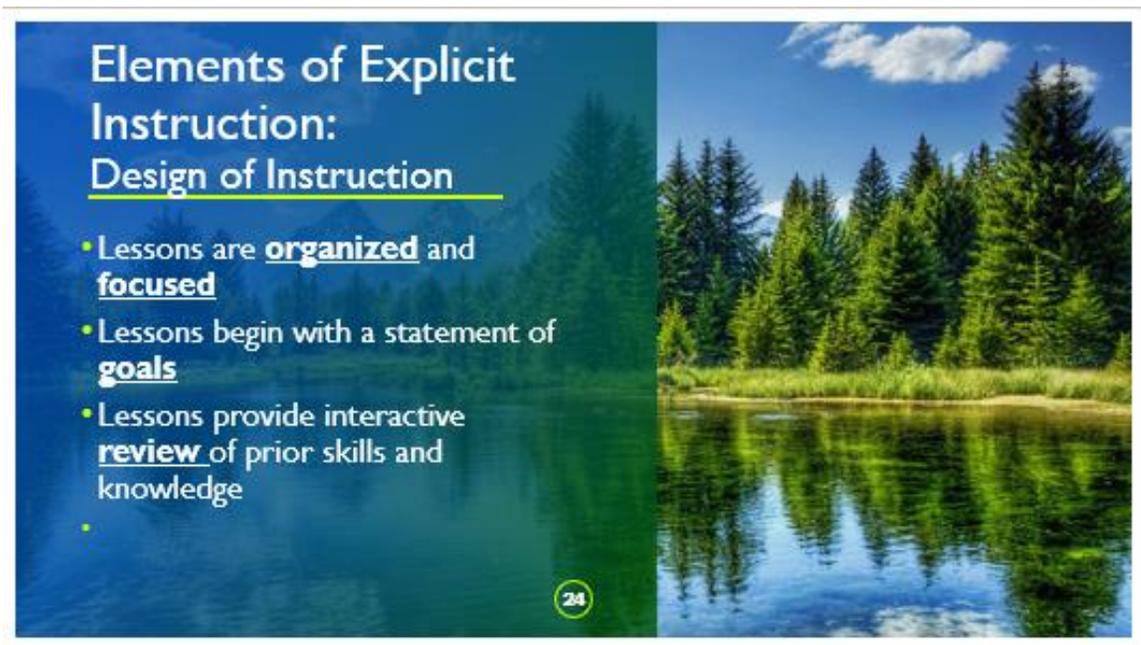
Our Road Map

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Check-in	8:00 – 8:15 Welcome back	Welcome back
Introductions	8:15 – 8:30 Review	Review
Objectives	8:30 – 8:45 Objectives	Objectives
Learning is journey...	8:45 – 11:30 Explicit Instruction	Knowing Your Teachers
What does our data say about our coaching?	Break 10:00-10:15	Generating a Schedule
What is a Literacy Coach?	11:30 – 12:30 Lunch	Lunch
Lunch	12:30 – 3:30 The Science of Reading	Generating a Plan
The Coaching Cycle	Break 1:45-2:00	Thoughts and Questions
Thoughts and Questions	3:30 – 4:00 Thoughts and Questions	

Day 2 Today, we will focus on two of the most important instructional understandings that you will need to address for progress and growth. As a literacy coach, you must understand these two concepts and be comfortable knowing how they can help you move teachers forward. These understandings are what explicit is and the Science of Reading



Explicit instruction could be a week's long training as you know since coaches' have participated in this training. However, as indicated by the project study, there is still not consistency in the implementation. Therefore, we are going to go through the expectations of lesson design components of explicit instruction as this will be the majority of your coaching conversations.



Elements of Explicit Instruction:
Design of Instruction

- Lessons are **organized** and **focused**
- Lessons begin with a statement of **goals**
- Lessons provide interactive **review** of prior skills and knowledge
-

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We all, teachers and coaches, agree to these expectations, so why is it hard to find evidence of these components? What can we agree upon today that we want to put in place that will help teachers implement these components? How will we coach the teachers through this? Use your groups to help answer these questions.





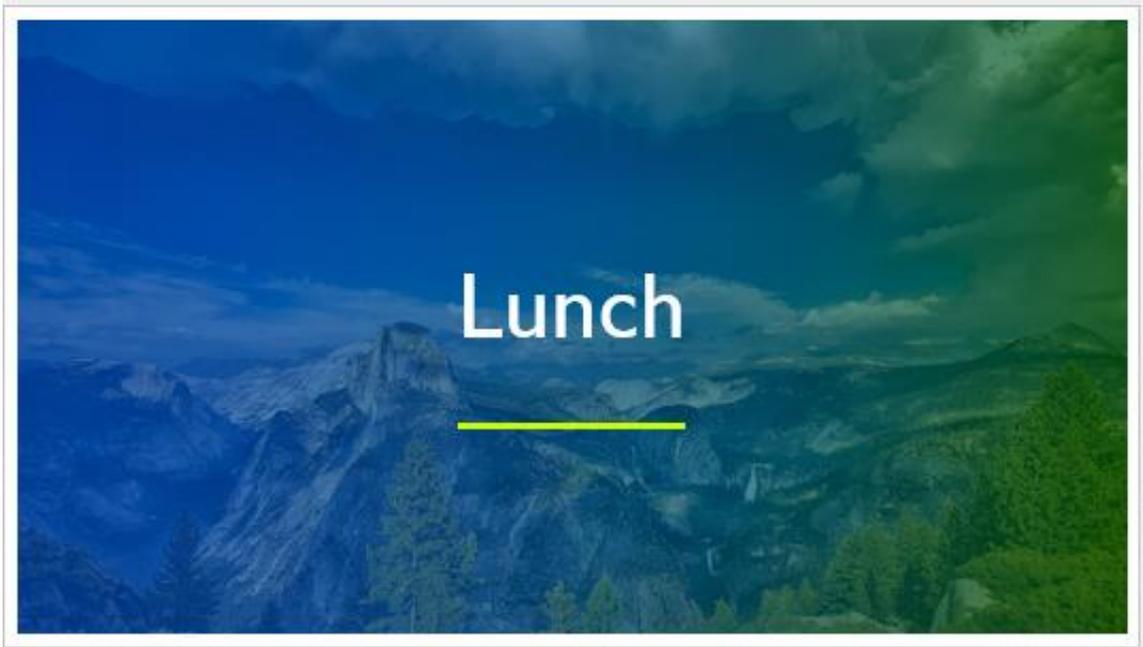
Elements of Explicit Instruction:
Design of Instruction

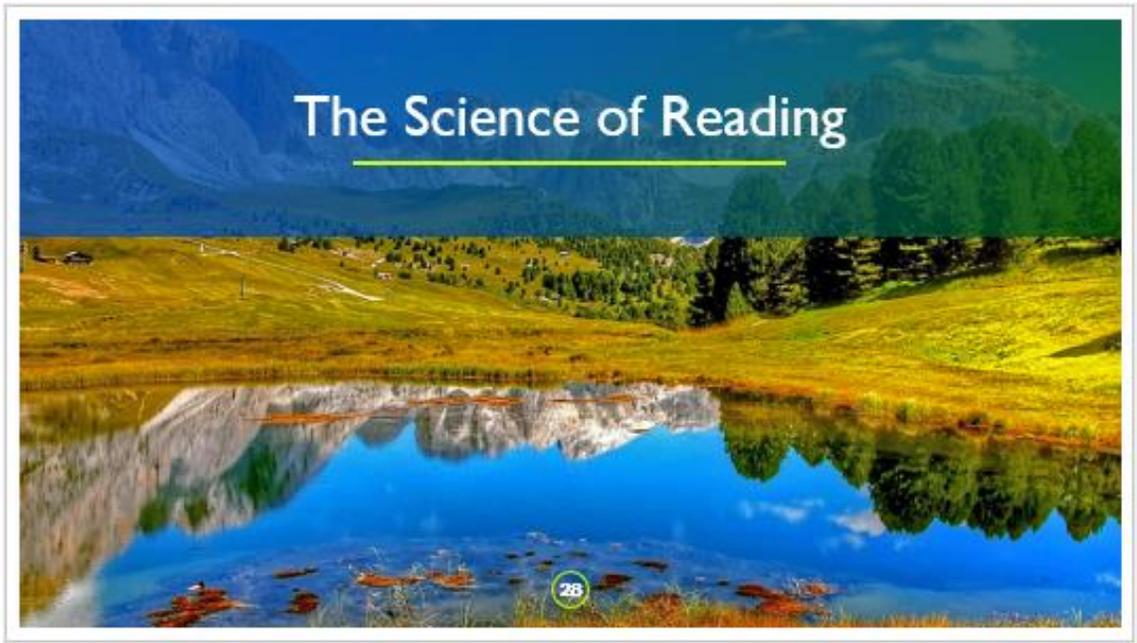
- Lessons provide **step-by-step demonstrations**
- Lessons use **clear** and **concise** language
- Lessons provide a range of **examples** and **non-examples**
- Lessons provide **guided** and **supported** practice

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What should a lesson contain and look like? As a coach, what is my evidence for these expectations? In your groups, please discuss an exemplar experience you have had with any of these components. If you have not experienced any exemplars, what would an exemplar scenario look like?

I have also included a resource that I compiled to share with teachers. Feel free to adjust, share, and reference. These references used for this “ring resource” came from the training that we received as a district, so you do not need to worry about district alignment.





With the district's move to embracing the Science of Reading, coaches must understand the meaning and shift in thinking. The Science of Reading is an area that is new to many of our teachers. You must understand this area well enough to positively and accurately share with teachers.

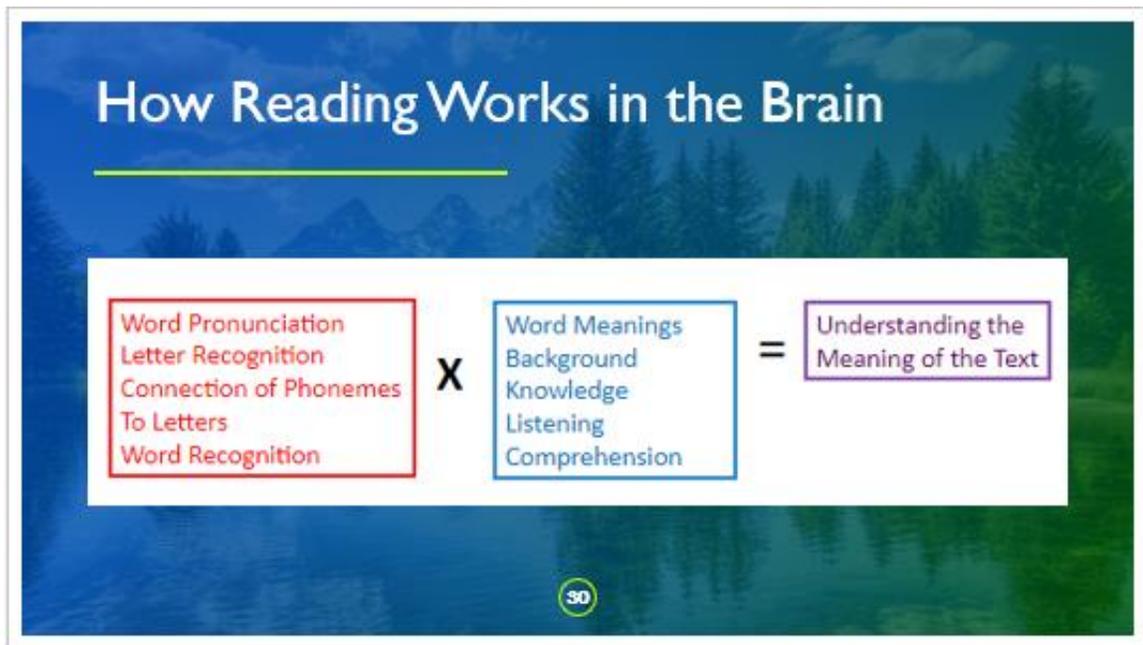
Reflect

“The body of work referred to as the “science of reading” is not an ideology, a philosophy, a political agenda, a one-size-fits-all approach, a program of instruction, nor a specific component of instruction. It is the emerging consensus from many related disciplines, based on literally thousands of studies, supported by hundreds of millions of research dollars, conducted across the world in many languages. “

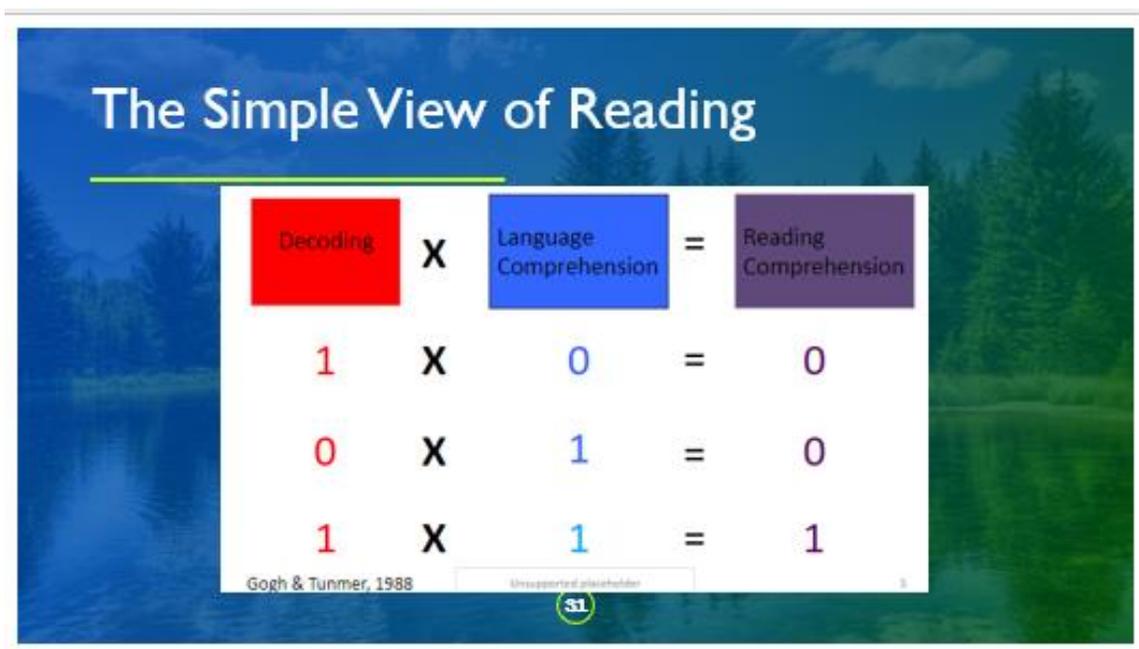
– Dr. Louisa Moats

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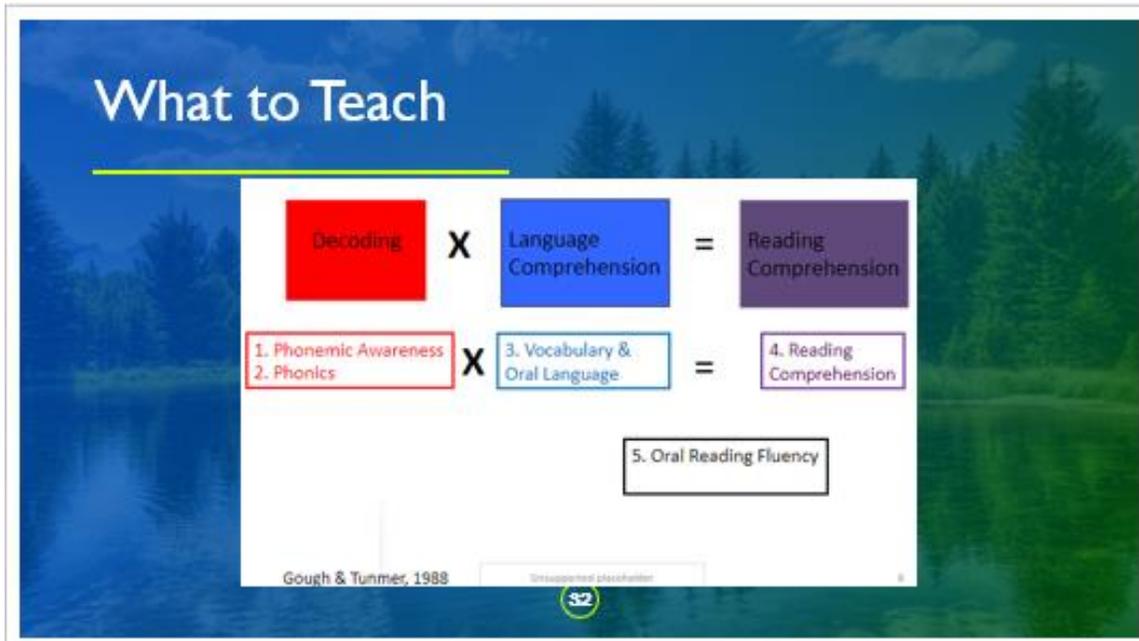
Think – Write – Pair – Share



Describe the simple view of reading – without one, comprehension cannot exist.



Describe the simple view of reading – without one comprehension cannot exist.



The five components of effective reading instruction align in the following areas of the simple view of reading.

Assign components to groups: What should you see in the classroom? Where can you find supports for this component in the curriculum? What does that mean in terms of instruction?



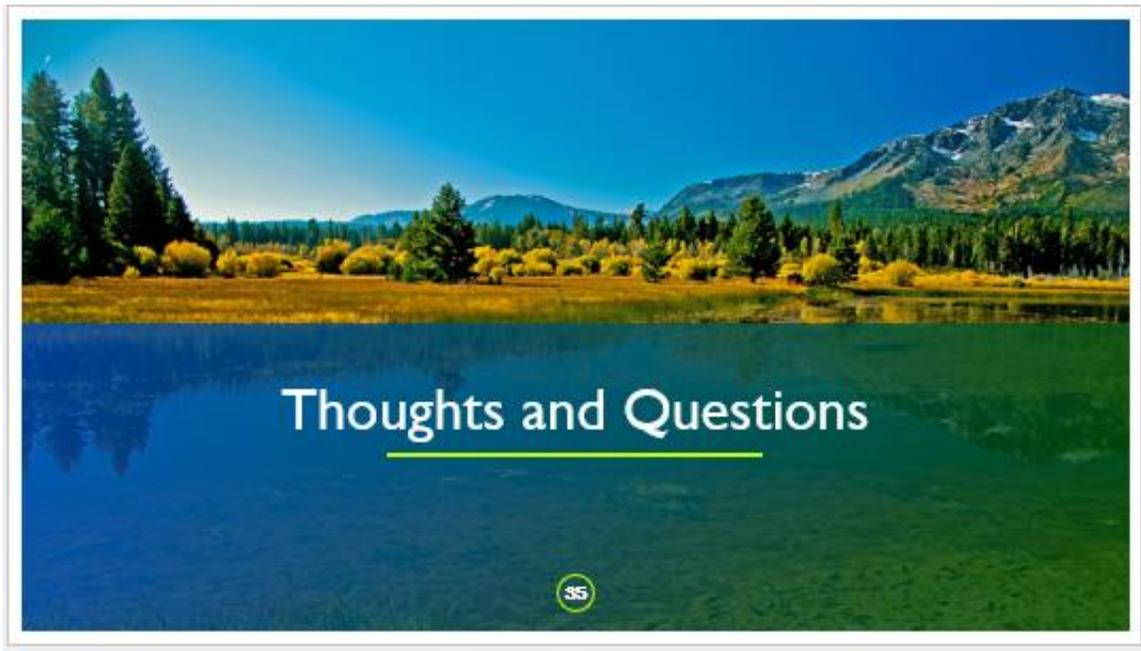
How to Teach

Explicit	Systematic	Sequential
New skills are directly modeled	Consistent instructional routines are used to guide students to correct responses	Skills are taught in order from easier to harder; Pre-requisites are taught first
Students are guided to the correct response	Instructional time is carefully allocated to maximize time on task	Component or foundational skills are taught directly to support higher-order skills
Error response includes immediate corrective feedback	Cumulative review	Intentional sequence within and across lessons; within and across grades
Skills are practiced to mastery and automaticity		

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The science of reading also provides direction for how to teach. The instruction should be explicit, systematic, and sequential. How does our district support the clarity and implementation of these three areas? Think about what teachers receive from the district, campus, and you. What components are we supporting? How?

Coaching pieces: What does that mean in terms of instruction? What should you see in the classroom? What does this look like? As a coach, how do you use this information to inform your coaching? In groups, generate look fors and create at least 3 instructional strategies that will be added with other groups' strategies for a shared instructional playbook for reference.



Use a 3-2-1 summary to reflect the day's learning. Share your summary with your group. Place learning on the flip chart provided to capture thoughts. Place questions or areas for further learning on the flip chart for me to study and provide information tomorrow.

Reminder for the next session: be sure you have access to your teacher rosters, master schedules, and data.





Participants will be checking in and making sure they have access to their campus data, rosters, and master schedules. Have music themed around travel, places, etc., playing.



Welcome. Ask participants to share Day 1 and Day 2 learnings.

Our Road Map

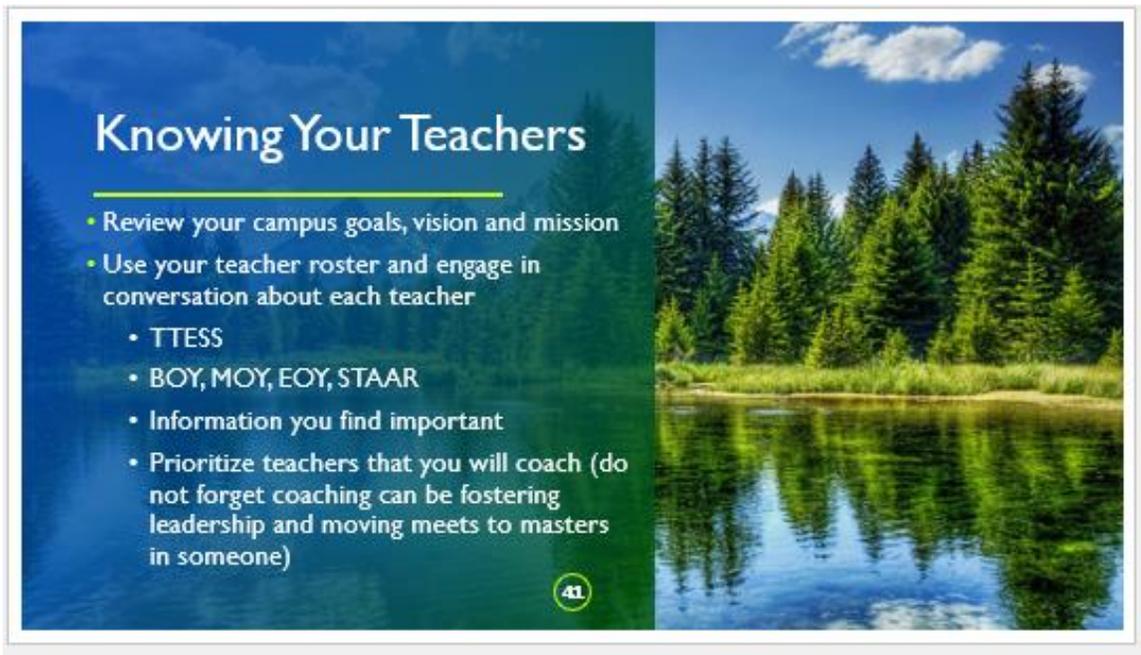
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	
Check-in	Welcome back	8:00 – 8:15	Welcome back
Introductions	Review	8:15 – 8:30	Review
Objectives	Objectives	8:30 – 8:45	Objectives
Learning is journey...	Explicit Instruction	8:45 – 11:30	Knowing Your Teachers
What does our data say about our coaching?	Lunch	Break 10:00-10:15	Generating a Schedule
What is a Literacy Coach?	The Science of Reading	11:30 – 12:30	Lunch
Lunch	Thoughts and Questions	12:30 – 3:30	Generating a Plan
The Coaching Cycle		Break 1:45-2:00	Thoughts and Questions
Thoughts and Questions		3:30 – 4:00	

30

Today, we will use our time to study our own campuses and begin the development of a plan to help provide strategic, systematic support. Of course, there will be things that come up and change our projections; however, tweaking a plan is better than not having a plan to tweak. This will also help address the project study concerns that tasks other than coaching dictate performance. These pieces will provide an opportunity for administration and coaches to collaboratively address the needs of teachers and honor coaches' roles and responsibilities. Today will be very hands-on and require a great amount of discipline to time on tasks. Today is about what you put into it – you can leave with a plan to move forward and know that your coaching will take precedence as agreed upon and supported by your administration.



Coaching can be targeted by several different means. It can be scores, walkthrough data, TTESS performance, etc. BUT it will all start with you knowing who your teachers are and what your (and the admin's) goals are. We are going to spend time here for you and your team to discuss your campus goals and your teachers.



Knowing Your Teachers

- Review your campus goals, vision and mission
- Use your teacher roster and engage in conversation about each teacher
 - TTESS
 - BOY, MOY, EOY, STAAR
 - Information you find important
 - Prioritize teachers that you will coach (do not forget coaching can be fostering leadership and moving meets to masters in someone)

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For this activity, you and your team will look at your roster and talk about each teacher. This can be a dangerous task. Be sure you are talking about coaching opportunities and areas of growth. Stay away from talking about the person in a way that cannot be addressed through coaching and is respectful. Look at the whole teacher – data, instructional proficiency, coachability, etc. Then prioritize the teachers who should be coached first – generate a priority list. Do not forget that teachers who are ready for the next steps in leadership and growth also need coaching and may find their way to your list. Given the opportunity, consider having at least one of these teachers on your list.





Another observation that came from the project study was scheduling. Two concerns were referenced more than once. 1 – time to even generate a schedule. 2 – time spent on coaching because of other tasks. With the work that we did on Day 1, we have come to a consensus on what roles and responsibilities a coach has. At the top was working with teachers. By having your administration team together, we have fostered a common language and understanding. We now know the amount of time and importance our coaching will involve. So, we can address #2 effectively. Here, we will start to address #1 by using your teachers and creating at least a skeleton schedule of your coaching days. We know that things come up and flexibility is a common vocabulary word in our jobs; however, generating a schedule with the information we currently have, will allow tweaks instead of complete upheaval.

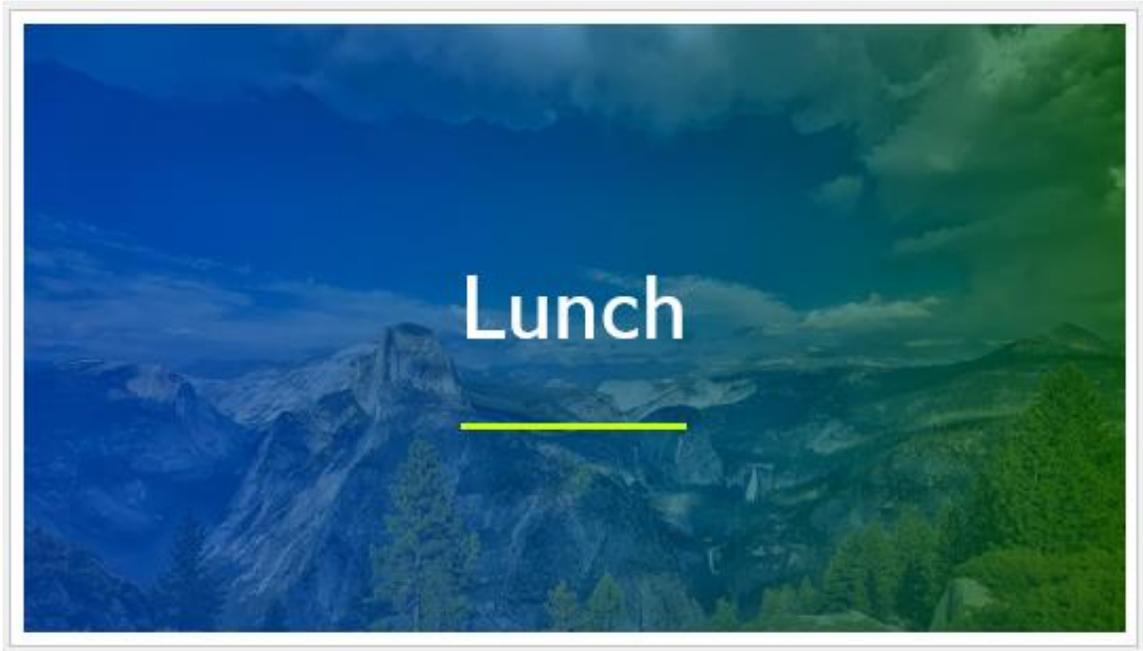


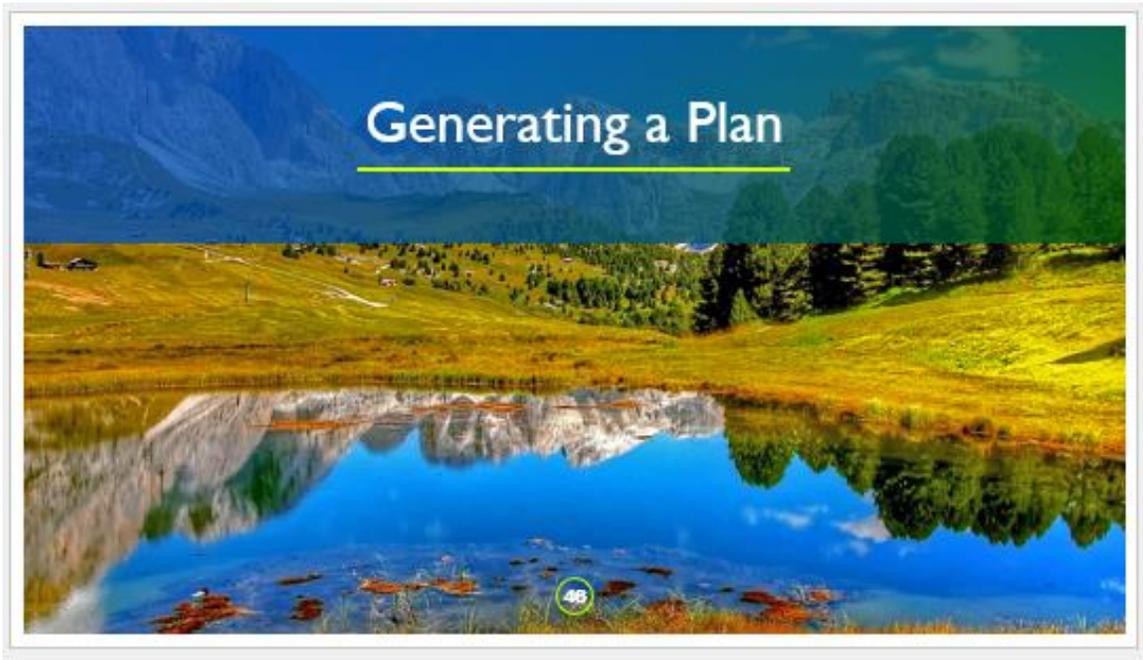
Generating your Schedule

- Using your weekly schedule, mark all of the “have tos”
- Look at your list of teachers
- Using your master schedule, start plugging in teachers in slots – identify which part of the coaching cycle

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Take this time to generate your schedule. Start by marking all of the non-negotiables. Now, look at the teachers who you have identified as your “coaches”. Then you will look at your master schedule to verify instructional blocks and conferences. Begin to plug in your teachers’ names. Go beyond your first meeting – schedule observations, debriefs, etc. Be sure to indicate what component of the cycle you are implementing on your schedule – this will help you adhere to the coaching cycle. Understandably, conferences and observations will drive movement within the cycle, but this will commit you to follow-ups and provide you with a reflection on why the cycle is moving in a different direction.





Now you have your teachers and a tentative schedule. What about what you are going to do? What resources do you need? What do you want to begin with? We need a plan, a road map, for this journey.

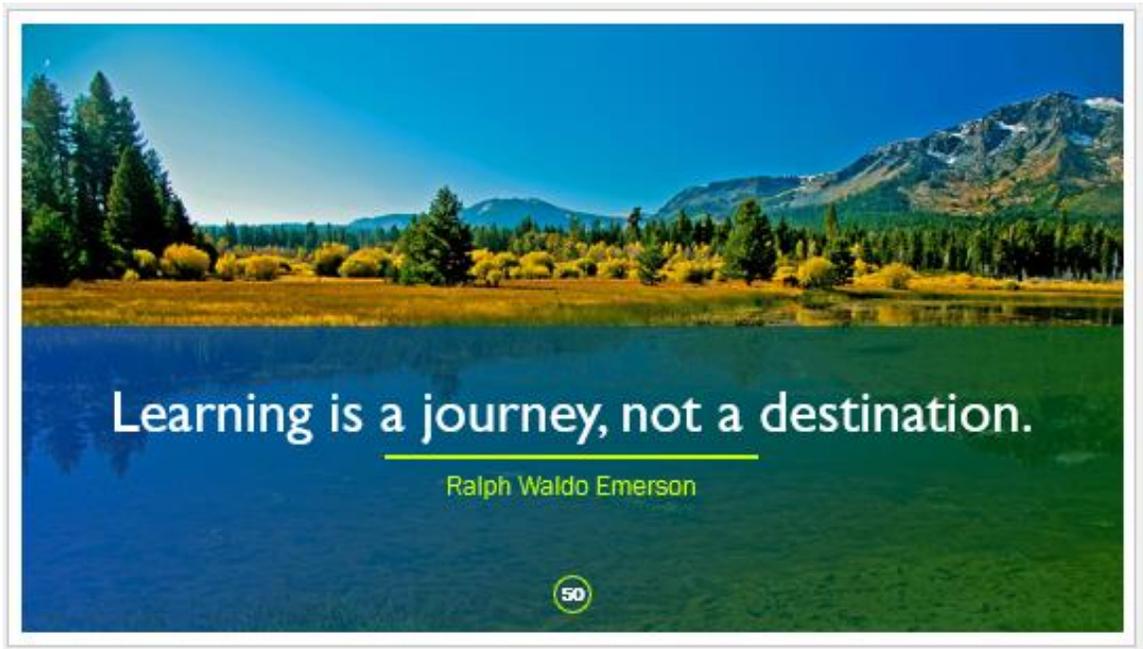


You have your teachers. You have a schedule of sorts. Now what? This is probably the most important piece. You need a plan, road map, and lesson plan of sorts, for each teacher. We know that the coaching cycle centers on communication between you and the coachee; however, you still need a plan to proceed explicitly and systematically. Now is the time to start formulating that plan. For each teacher, what will drive your pre-conference? What questions do you want to include? What resource will you use? How will you document this? What types of observation tools will you use – checklists, videos, scripts? How will you keep track of the coaching itself? Binders? Virtual/online documentation? These are all things that need to be considered and can be prepared for in advance to a point. For the rest of the afternoon, you and your team will work on your plan. Do not forget to include how and what you will communicate with the administration.

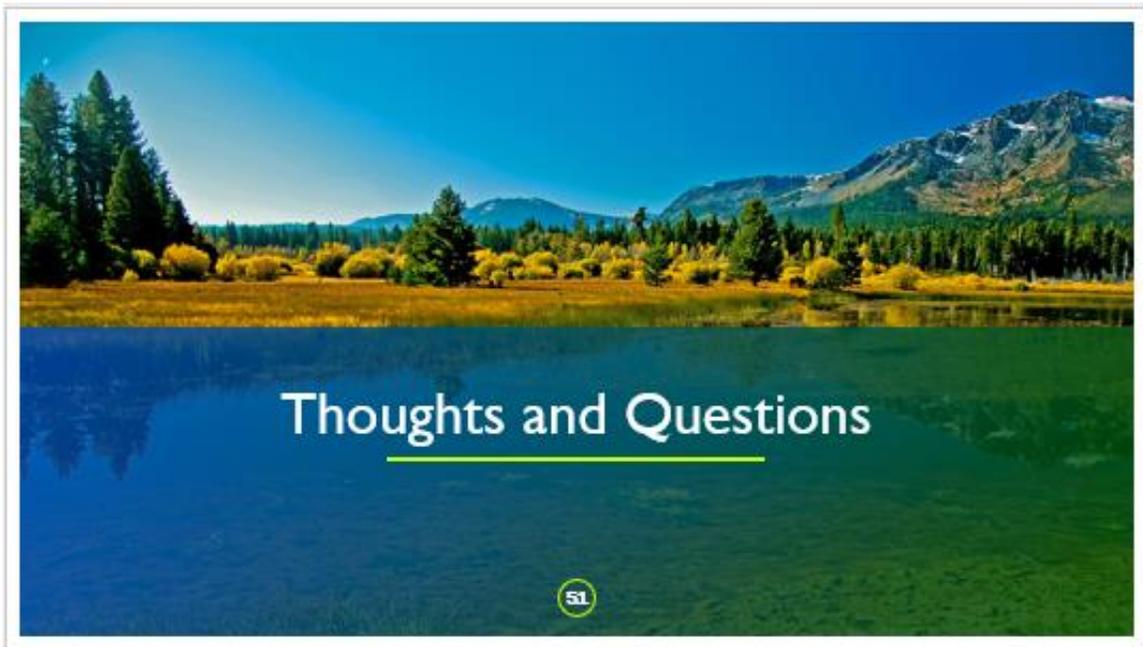




You have your teachers. You have a schedule of sorts. Now what? This is probably the most important piece. You need a plan, road map, and lesson plan of sorts, for each teacher. We know that the coaching cycle centers on communication between you and the coachee; however, you still need a plan to proceed explicitly and systematically. Now is the time to start formulating that plan. For each teacher, what will drive your pre-conference? What questions do you want to include? What resource will you use? How will you document this? What types of observation tools will you use – checklists, videos, scripts? How will you keep track of the coaching itself? Binders? Virtual/online documentation? These are all things that need to be considered and can be prepared for in advance to a point. For the rest of the afternoon, you and your team will work on your plan. Do not forget to include how and what you will communicate with the administration.



I placed this quote back up to see if your thinking has changed in any way as we wrap up our journey. Is there anyone who would like to share anything?



Feel free to place your learning on the flip chart provided to capture your thoughts. Place questions or areas for further learning on the flip chart for me to study and provide information.



Appendix B: Interview Questions for Teachers

1. Describe your experience with your literacy coach.
2. Did you have any concerns about having a literacy coach (in connection with changing literacy instructional practices in your classroom)? If yes, what were your concerns?
3. Were there any positive aspects or benefits to having a literacy coach? If yes, please describe.
4. What specific types of coaching activities have been the most helpful?
5. What specific types of coaching activities have been the least helpful?
6. Please describe how having a literacy coach has changed (or not changed) your literacy instructional teaching practices in each of the following areas:
 - a. Phonological Awareness (rhyming, initial sounds, understanding syllables)
 - b. Dialogic Reading (prompts and questioning)
 - c. Vocabulary (introduction of new and challenging words)
 - d. Writing (materials, strategies to promote writing)
 - e. Extended Conversations (making home-school connections)
7. Is there anything else you would like to share about literacy coaching and literacy practices in your classroom?

Thank you for your time!

Appendix C: Interview Protocol for Coaches

1. How would you describe your role as a coach? What knowledge and skills do you feel you needed to work successfully with teachers (i.e. adult learners)?
2. What are some of the successes you have had as a literacy coach?
3. During your coaching experience have you experienced resistance from teachers? If so, why do you think the teacher(s) were resistant and what did you do about it?
4. What are some of the challenges or barriers you have had as a literacy coach?
5. What types of coaching activities do you believe have been the most effective (and least effective) in changing teacher's literacy instructional teaching practices in the following areas?
 - a. Phonological Awareness (rhyming, initial sounds, understanding syllables)
 - b. Dialogic Reading (prompts and questioning)
 - c. Vocabulary (introduction of new and challenging words)
 - d. Writing (materials, strategies to promote writing)
 - e. Extended Conversations (making home-school connections)
7. Do you think a teacher's level of concern impacted their ability to implement instructional literacy practices at higher levels? Why or why not?
8. Do you have any suggestions on how the literacy coaching program could be improved?
9. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with literacy coaching?

Thank you for your time!

Appendix D: Participant Packet



Day 1
Month Day, Year

8:00–8:15	Check-in
8:15–8:30	Introductions
8:30–8:45	Objectives
8:45–9:00	Learning is a journey...
9:00–9:30	What does our data say about our coaching?
9:30–11:30 Break 10:00–10:15	What is a Literacy Coach?
11:30–12:30	Lunch
12:30–3:30 Break 1:45–2:00	The Coaching Cycle
3:30–4:00	Thoughts and Questions



Academic Coach Job Description

Title	Academic Coach	
Department	Campus-Based	
Reports To	Campus Principal	
Compensation	AP 505	
Days	202 Elem 207 MS	Date 4/22/19

PRIMARY PURPOSE:

The Academic Coach, under the supervision of the campus Principal, works collaboratively with staff to coordinate, support, and implement the campus and district instructional intervention initiatives and dropout prevention programs at the campus level. This position also provides coordination to the campus by ensuring sound curriculum development, vertical alignment, and staff development in order to improve student achievement for at-risk students.

QUALIFICATIONS

Education and Certification Requirements

- BA or BS in Education required
- Valid Teaching Certification
- Master's degree required
- Valid Mid-Management/Principal Certificate
- Valid Texas Driver's License
- Candidate must have satisfactory outcome of fingerprinting background check. Non-refundable fee (approximately \$50.00) paid by the employee.

Special Knowledge and Skills

- Ability to organize and coordinate SCE Dropout Prevention campus-wide programs
- Expertise in data analysis to improve student achievement
- Knowledge of curriculum alignment and standards-based instruction; current instructional and assessment research; and instructional technology integration.
- Excellent organizational, interpersonal skills, and ability to work collaboratively
- Ability to communicate effectively with administrators and teachers
- In-depth knowledge of STAAR/EOC Blueprints
- Ability to assess and modify an effective instructional program
- Ability to allocate resources efficiently and effectively



Experience

- Minimum of three years teaching experience.
- Experience with planning and implementing effective staff development and instructional coaching

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES:

(The following statements describe the general purpose and responsibilities assigned and should not be construed as an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, skills, efforts, or working conditions that may be assigned or skills that may be required.)

- Collaborate with campus teachers to support instructional practices that improve academic success for at-risk students
- Works directly on interventions with classroom teachers and campus administrators to implement effective instructional strategies to promote quality instruction for at-risk students to increase students' academic performance
- Provides classroom demonstration lessons that include the use of *best practices* for teaching and learning with at-risk students
- Observes teachers of at-risk students and provides timely feedback to improve the quality of instruction
- Frequently plans and implements with campus administrators, grade level teams, and Department Chairs to improve instruction for at-risk students
- Collaborate with campus instructional staff to align vertically and horizontally the curriculum and instructional practices with focus on interventions and dropout prevention programming for at-risk students
- Collect and disaggregate data and uses a variety of information to support classroom teachers with the growth and development of at-risk students
- Keeps current with effective instructional strategies through professional literature
- Attends campus administrative team meetings, district required Professional Development and campus department meetings related to at-risk students
- Attends conferences and workshops directly related to improving at-risk students' academic performance
- Promotes positive school-community relations by communicating effectively with staff, students, parents, and the community by projecting a positive image that enhances the campus mission
- Identifies, compiles, maintains, and files appropriate at-risk student reports, records, and documents related to job activities
- Collaborates with campus staff and central office with curriculum and assessments documents
- Assists campus teams with at-risk program evaluation
- Assist in developing, implementing, and assessing the Campus Needs Assessment and Campus Improvement Plan



- Adheres to all District, State and Federal policies, including State Compensatory Education policies/guidelines
- Maintain a consistent professional demeanor and appearance
- Ensure compliance with the Texas Educator's Code of Ethics
- Daily attendance and punctuality at work are essential functions of the job

Supervisory Responsibilities:

N/A

Equipment Used:

- Office equipment – personal computer, printer, calculator, multi-line telephone, software programs and peripherals, copier, fax, and other equipment applicable to position.
- Communication equipment – radio communication equipment, cellular telephone
- Video monitoring equipment

Working Conditions:

Mental Demands:

- Maintain emotional control under stress
- Work with frequent interruptions

Physical Demands:

- Frequent: Sitting, standing, walking, climbing stairs and/or ramps, balancing, stooping, kneeling, crouching, crawling, pulling, pushing, reaching, repetitive hand motions, hearing, speaking clearly, visual acuity, distinguishing colors, driving, traveling.
- Occasional: Lifting, moderate, 15-44 pounds; carrying, moderate, 15-44 pounds

Environmental Factors:

- Frequent exposure to: temperature extremes (hot and cold), humidity extremes, noise, low or intense illumination, vibration
- Occasional exposure to: biological hazards (communicable diseases, bacteria, insects, mold, fungi, etc.), work outside, work around moving objects or vehicles, work on uneven surfaces, work alone, work prolonged or irregular hours.

Nondiscrimination Statement:

The [Name Redacted] School District considers applicants for all positions without regard to race, color, national origin, age, religion, sex, marital or veteran status, the presence of a medical condition, disability, or any other legally protected status.



eGrove Model used by District <https://engage2learn.org/>

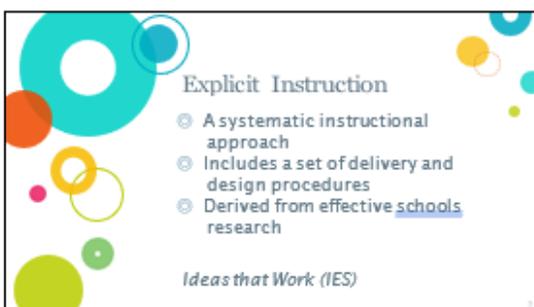
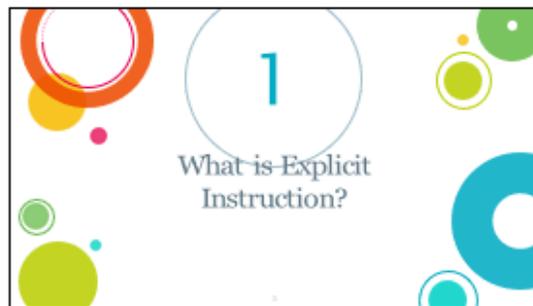
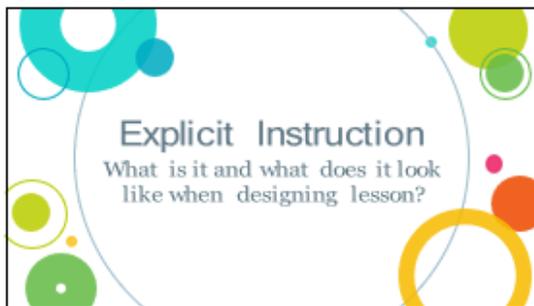
<p>e</p>	<p>Evidence: Every eGrove Coaching Conversation starts and ends with evidence! The coachee brings to their coaching conversation the evidence of growth and implementation completed since the last coaching session. This evidence shows that the coachee is growing and completing their next steps. Coaches can ask: “What evidence did you bring to show progress from our previous conversation or training for which we can celebrate and mark growth indicators in your portfolio?” “What would you change about this for the next time you facilitate it or something similar?” (You will skip this step if this is your first Coaching Conversation because there will be no evidence to review.)</p>
<p>G</p>	<p>Goal: The goal for each coaching conversation should be on best practices from the coaching timeline. A teacher may have a choice, but guiding questions from you such as "What challenges are you running into?" can also help narrow down from which of the cluster options to choose. During this part of the coaching conversation, the coachee chooses his or her standards of growth from a sequenced timeline of professional learning standards. The coach can ask guiding questions, such as "What challenges are you running into?" to help the coachee decide which standards to select. Once selected, the coachee chooses the level of mastery they wish to achieve for their selected standard.</p>
<p>r</p>	<p>Reality: The Reality is where they are now. Once the best practices for goal setting have been determined from the timeline, have the coachee reflect on the rubric to determine the current reality. Other Reality data could come from walkthroughs or</p>

	evidence brought to the conversation based on the previous reflection tools.
O	Options: What specific ideas can we brainstorm together that could help us reach our goals? This should be a coach/coachee collaborative effort in brainstorming and sharing strategies, ideas, resources, etc. Creating this list does not mean the coachee is going to attempt every idea, but it could be referenced in the future for more options.
W	Will: Out of all the options we discussed, which of them makes the most sense to try between now and our next conversation?
e	Evidence: What evidence could you bring to show progress? We will start the next coaching conversation by looking at this together. What was most useful to you here?
Time	Suggested amount of time spent in steps of eGrove: eG = 30% ro = %65 we = %5
Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start every conversation positively with celebrations of their evidence, or what's going well for them currently if they did not bring evidence. • Finish the conversation by asking what they found most useful about the conversation and even answer as well if time permits. • Choose your favorite coaching question stems for each stage of eGrove to create a skeleton you can paste into your coaching logs to use as a reminder/guide. • Encourage coachees to request crit and/or share designs with you before coaching conversations • Check out Common Coaching Questions from Teachers • Additional eGrove Coaching Stems, eGrove Questions for Building Coachee Capacity



Day 2
Month Day, Year

8:00–8:15	Welcome back
8:15–8:30	Review
8:30–8:45	Objectives
8:45–11:30 Break 10:00-10:15	Explicit Instruction
11:30–12:30	Lunch
12:30–3:30 Break 1:45-2:00	The Science of Reading
3:30–4:00	Thoughts and Questions

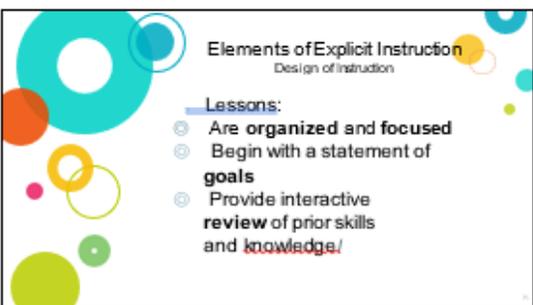
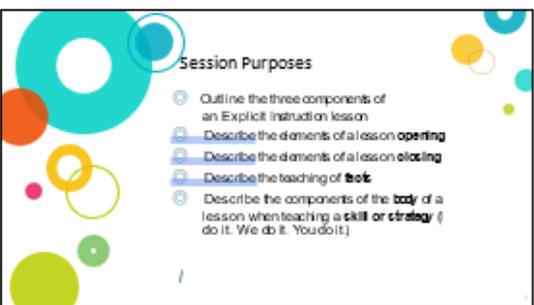


Explicit Instruction

Content	Design of Instruction	Delivery of Instruction	Practice
Focus: Review of skills and strategies	Design organized and focused lessons	It requires frequent responses WHILE QUESTION WHY STUDENT	Provide distributed and cumulative practice
Design: clear, specific, measurable	Begin lessons with a clear statement of the day's goals and your expectations	Monitor student performance carefully	
It will direct: concrete skills and strategies into an active and engaging task	It reviews prior skills and knowledge before beginning instruction Provide step-by-step demonstrations MODEL	Provide immediate affirmations and corrective feedback	
	Use clear and concise language	Give students frequent feedback MARK CORRECTIONS	
	Provide a adequate range of examples and non-examples		
	Provide guided and supported practice		

Explicit Instruction

Lesson	What does it look like?	What does it sound like?
Review	• Review content from previous lessons quickly to activate prior knowledge	• Review content from previous lessons that is not in students' prior knowledge
Introduction	• Review content from previous lessons quickly to activate prior knowledge	• Review content from previous lessons that is not in students' prior knowledge
Instruction	• Review content from previous lessons quickly to activate prior knowledge	• Review content from previous lessons that is not in students' prior knowledge
Practice	• Review content from previous lessons quickly to activate prior knowledge	• Review content from previous lessons that is not in students' prior knowledge
Assessment	• Review content from previous lessons quickly to activate prior knowledge	• Review content from previous lessons that is not in students' prior knowledge
Reflection	• Review content from previous lessons quickly to activate prior knowledge	• Review content from previous lessons that is not in students' prior knowledge



Elements of Explicit Instruction

Design of Instruction

- ① Provide **step-by-step demonstrations**
- ② Use **clear and concise language**
- ③ Provide a range of **examples and non-examples**
- ④ Provide **guided and supported practice**

General Lesson Design

- ① **Opening**
 - Attention
 - Review
 - Preview
- ② **Body**
- ③ **Closing**
 - Review
 - Preview
 - Independent Work

Lesson Opening - Attention

Attention

- Provide a **verbal cue** such as
 - "Listening"
 - "We are going to begin"
 - "Eyes and ears on me"
- Follow the verbal cue with **silence**
- Regain attention throughout the lesson

Lesson Opening - Review

Review

- Content** of previous lessons
- Necessary prerequisite skills (preskills)** for target skill or strategy being taught
- Background knowledge** needed for today's lesson

Lesson Opening – Review cont.

Review

- Must be **interactive**
 - Request responses during review
- Should include **retrieval practice**
 - Request responses without scaffolding
- Is "Ask don't Tell"

Lesson Opening - Preview

State goal of lesson

- Use student-friendly language
 - WALT** - "We are learning to..." (Learning Intention)
 - WILF** - "What I'm looking for.." (Learning focus)
 - TIB** - "This is because..." (Rationale)

Lesson Opening - Preview

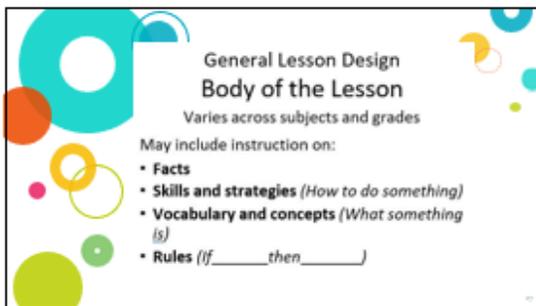
Discuss relevance of target skill or larger goal

3 W's

- Where?
- Why?
- When?

Lesson Closing

- **Review**
 - Review critical content
 - Review must be interactive**
 - Review should contain retrieval practice
- **Preview**
 - Preview content of next lesson
- **Independent Work**
 - Assign independent work
 - Review assignments, quizzes, projects, performances due in future



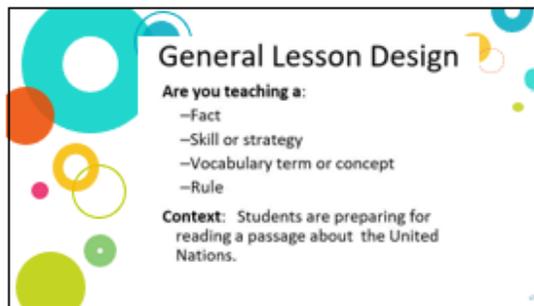
General Lesson Design

Body of the Lesson

Varies across subjects and grades

May include instruction on:

- **Facts**
- **Skills and strategies** (*How to do something*)
- **Vocabulary and concepts** (*What something is*)
- **Rules** (*if _____ then _____*)

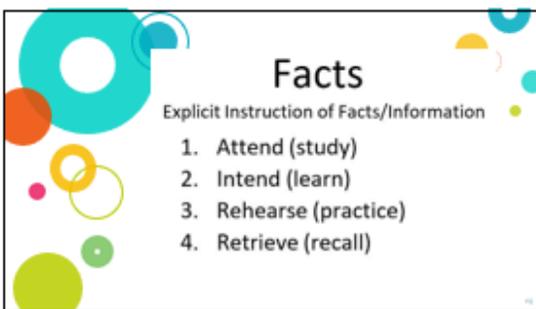


General Lesson Design

Are you teaching a:

- Fact
- Skill or strategy
- Vocabulary term or concept
- Rule

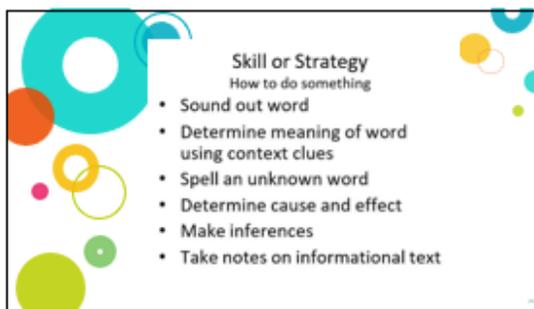
Context: Students are preparing for reading a passage about the United Nations.



Facts

Explicit Instruction of Facts/Information

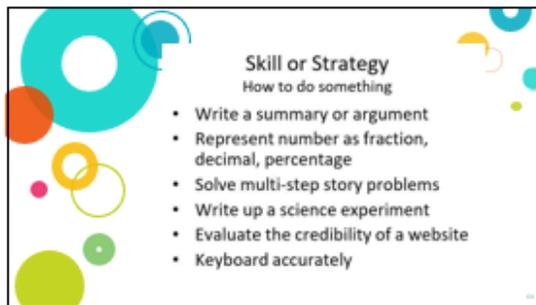
1. Attend (study)
2. Intend (learn)
3. Rehearse (practice)
4. Retrieve (recall)



Skill or Strategy

How to do something

- Sound out word
- Determine meaning of word using context clues
- Spell an unknown word
- Determine cause and effect
- Make inferences
- Take notes on informational text



Skill or Strategy

How to do something

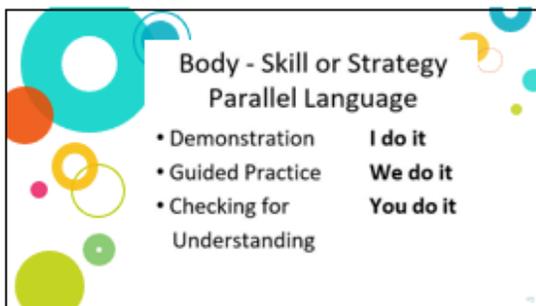
- Write a summary or argument
- Represent number as fraction, decimal, percentage
- Solve multi-step story problems
- Write up a science experiment
- Evaluate the credibility of a website
- Keyboard accurately



Skill or Strategy

The Three Components

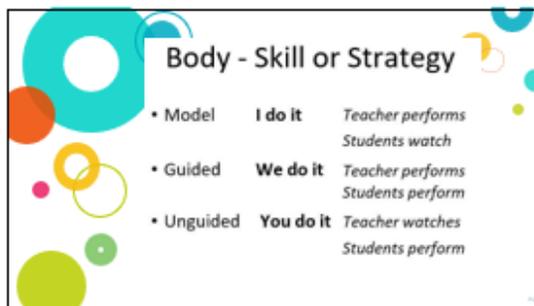
- Model **I do it**
- Guided Practice **We do it**
- Unguided Practice **You do it**



Body - Skill or Strategy

Parallel Language

- Demonstration **I do it**
- Guided Practice **We do it**
- Checking for Understanding **You do it**



Body - Skill or Strategy

- Model **I do it** *Teacher performs
Students watch*
- Guided **We do it** *Teacher performs
Students perform*
- Unguided **You do it** *Teacher watches
Students perform*

Body - Skill or Strategy

Example B	Pronouncing an unfamiliar or difficult to pronounce word
I do it	(Teacher writes <i>sedimentary</i> .) This word is <i>sedimentary</i> . Listen again... <i>sedimentary</i> .
We do it	Say the word with me. <i>Sedimentary</i> Tap and say the syllables in <i>sedimentary</i> . <i>sed / men tar y</i> Again, <i>sed / men tar y</i> (Fade out teacher voice)
You do it	What word? <i>sedimentary</i>

"I do it. - Model

- Show** (*Demonstrating*)
 - Proceed step-by-step
 - Exaggerate the steps
- Tell** (*Describing*)
 - Tell students what you are **doing**
 - Tell students what you are **thinking**
- Gain Responses**
 - Ask for responses
 - What they already know
 - What you have told them

The 3 C's of a Model:

- Clear
- Consistent
- Concise

I do it.

Before modeling

- Ask yourself, what are common errors that students might make
- Pre-correct those errors as you model

I do it.

Strategy-Paragraph Shrinking

- Name the who or what (The main person, animal, or thing)
- Tell the most important thing about the who or what
- Say the main idea in 10 words or less

(From the PAU program by Fuchs, McGee, and Fuchs)

I do it.

The Coldest Continent

Antarctica is not like any other continent. It is as far south as you can go on earth. The South Pole is found there. Ice covers the whole land. In some places the ice is almost three miles thick. Beneath the ice are mountains and valleys.

I do it.

Did the teacher:

- Show students how to perform the skill or strategy.
 - Proceed step by step
 - Exaggerate the steps
- Tell students how to perform the skill or strategy.
 - Tell students what he/she was doing
 - Tell students what he/she was thinking

I do it.

Did the teacher:

- Gain responses
 - What they already know
 - What the teacher told them
- Present models that were clear, consistent, concise



We do it.

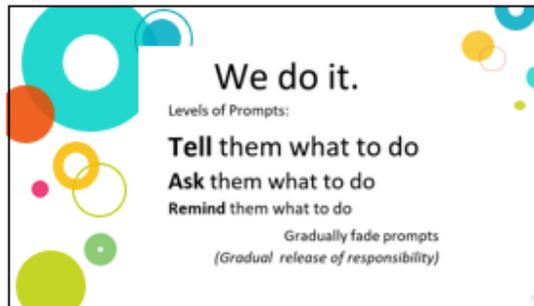
Purposes of guided practice

- Promote high level of success
- Build confidence

Types of prompts

- Prompt **physically**
- Prompt **visually**
- Prompt **verbally**

Step - do - Step - do - Step - do
Three C's = clear, consistent, concise

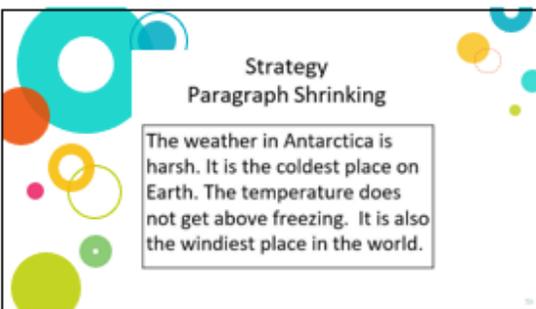


We do it.

Levels of Prompts:

Tell them what to do
Ask them what to do
Remind them what to do

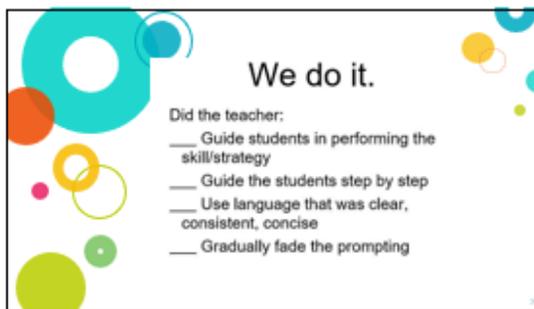
Gradually fade prompts
(Gradual release of responsibility)



Strategy

Paragraph Shrinking

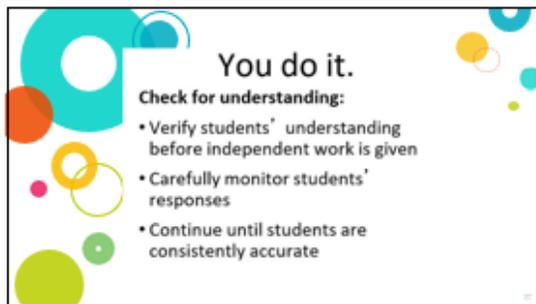
The weather in Antarctica is harsh. It is the coldest place on Earth. The temperature does not get above freezing. It is also the windiest place in the world.



We do it.

Did the teacher:

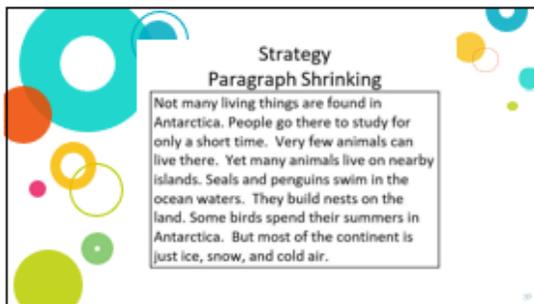
- ___ Guide students in performing the skill/strategy
- ___ Guide the students step by step
- ___ Use language that was clear, consistent, concise
- ___ Gradually fade the prompting



You do it.

Check for understanding:

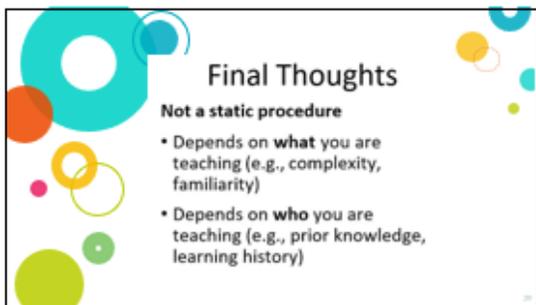
- Verify students' understanding before independent work is given
- Carefully monitor students' responses
- Continue until students are consistently accurate



Strategy

Paragraph Shrinking

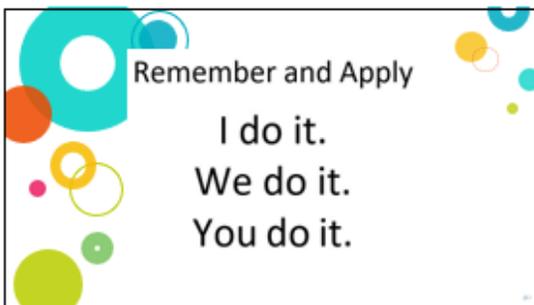
Not many living things are found in Antarctica. People go there to study for only a short time. Very few animals can live there. Yet many animals live on nearby islands. Seals and penguins swim in the ocean waters. They build nests on the land. Some birds spend their summers in Antarctica. But most of the continent is just ice, snow, and cold air.



Final Thoughts

Not a static procedure

- Depends on **what** you are teaching (e.g., complexity, familiarity)
- Depends on **who** you are teaching (e.g., prior knowledge, learning history)



Remember and Apply

I do it.
We do it.
You do it.

Day 3



Month Day, Year

8:00 – 8:15	Welcome back Review
8:15 – 8:30	Objectives
8:30 – 8:45	Knowing Your Teachers
8:45 – 11:30 Break 10:00-10:15	Generating a Schedule
11:30 – 12:30	Lunch
12:30 – 3:30 Break 1:45-2:00	Generating a Plan
3:30 – 4:00	Thoughts and Questions