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Teachers' Perceptions and Strategies Implementing the Alabama Reading Initiative to Teach Literacy

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LaTanya Williams-Collins

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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the review committee have been made.

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Walden University

2019

Abstract

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Teach Literacy

by

LaTanya Williams-Collins

EdS, University of Montevallo, 2007

MEd, University of West Alabama, 2001

BA, Stillman College, 1996

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

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Abstract

A report from a 2015 descriptive study of the Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI) showed that 85% of the participants who were trained in strategies to address students' reading difficulties in high school were not implementing them. Teachers' implementation of ARI was the focus of this study. Pragmatism was the epistemological framework of the study, and Roger's diffusion of innovation theory was the conceptual framework used to support the study. The purpose and corresponding research questions examined the extent of ARI implementation, reasons for not implementing those strategies, and ideas for future professional development in ARI. Six content-area teachers who taught Grade 9 participated in the study. A basic qualitative study was used to address research questions through individual interviews. Inductive and deductive coding was used to analyze data and identify themes. The results indicated that content area teachers who teach science and social studies implemented ARI strategies in their content to teach literacy. Math teachers did not implement ARI, citing time and a mismatch of ARI strategies with math content and ARI strategies. Strategies suggested to implement ARI were time with the literacy coach, embedded professional development, and collaboration among teachers. The results were used to create a 3-day teacher training project, which included these strategies. Results and project implementation can help administrators and teachers understand how to better implement school-wide reading initiatives in secondary schools, creating positive social change.

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Dedication

Words are not enough to express the gratitude I have to my family and friends for their continuous love and support throughout this process. To my children, Tiara and Javaris, the two of you have been my motivation and inspiration. There were times that you lifted me up when I was feeling down, confused, and overwhelmed with this entire process. I love you dearly for always believing in me. I am so proud to be your mom. To my mom and dad, thank you for raising me the way you did. What you have instilled in me as a child has guided me through this doctoral journey. Dad, although you have passed away, I know that you are looking down on me smiling. My character has remained the same through and through because you taught me how to be strong, faithful, and courageous. To my brothers and sisters, thank you for just been there when I needed you. To my friends, thank you for your friendship, love, and support. It means so much to have friends that are encouraging and just as excited as I am to reach another milestone in my life.

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Section 1: The Problem

The Local Problem

The problem in this study is that content-area teachers at the local research site were not implementing Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI) strategies they were trained on to teach literacy across content areas. As a result, Grade 9 students at the research site still had difficulties reading content-specific texts (personal communication, September 10, 2015). Researchers have suggested that students need to be able to use literacy strategies to support learning content and reading comprehensively (Brozo, Moorman, Meyer, & Stewart, 2013; Fisher & Frey, 2014). In a state effort to address the literacy practices used in K to 12 classes and the reading deficiencies of students in Alabama schools, the ARI was developed. ARI is a statewide K to 12 initiative developed to provide high-quality instruction that will prepare all students with the language arts skills needed for them to reach the minimum standards (ARI, 2015). ARI coaches provide training for secondary content-area teachers on comprehension strategies, reading and writing connection literacy across the curriculum, and informal and formal assessments to potentially change teaching practices in the classroom (ARI, 2015).

The national adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) mandated that literacy skills such as reading, writing, and speaking are used more in language arts, science, social studies, and mathematics (Cervetti & Hiebert, 2015; Porter, McMaken, Hwang, & Yang, 2011). According to the U.S. Department of Education, the CCSS for English language arts requires students demonstrate the ability to read more complex text and discipline-specific text (as cited in Porter et al., 2011). Secondary content-area

teachers are expected to provide high school students with instruction that will help them to comprehend content-specific texts across the curriculum (Aina, Ogundelle, & Olanipekun, 2012; Ali & Heck, 2012; Fisher & Frey, 2014). Researchers have suggested that in order to address the reading needs of students in high school, content-area teachers must provide reading instruction across the curriculum that develops students' reading comprehension skills (Ali & Heck, 2012; Arrasita, Jakiel, & Rawls, 2014; Brozo et al., 2013). Although CCSS proposed that all content areas teach and implement literacy strategies during classroom instruction, there are still challenges with this task at the local school level.

Secondary level content-area teachers are not eager to assume the responsibility of teaching literacy during content instruction (Kukner & Orr, 2015; Vaughn & Fletcher, 2012). Preparing secondary content-area teachers to meet the literacy demands of adolescents at the secondary level remains a challenge (Brozo et al., 2013; Consagra, 2013; Fisher & Frey, 2014). Specifically, content-area teachers in high schools across the United States are faced with teaching adolescents who struggle to read and comprehend content-specific texts independently. Not all students read competently.

Evidence from numerous research studies has illustrated that students are not entering high school with the reading skills necessary to read and learn academic content in textbooks targeted to the high school level (Fisher & Frey, 2014; Moreau, 2014; Vaughn & Fletcher, 2012). The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP; 2015) assesses what students in the United States know and can do in academic subjects such as reading through on-going assessments. The NAEP results showed that

approximately 66% of students entering Grade 9 are not reading at or above the proficient rate as measured by the NAEP. These indicators suggest that reading instruction is needed across all subject areas in secondary schools.

School districts are continuously seeking ways to improve student achievement in reading by offering professional development opportunities to secondary content-area teachers on how to incorporate literacy across the content areas (Armstrong, 2016; Calo, Sturttvant, & Kopfman, 2015; Darling-Hammond, Hyler, Gardner, & Espinoza, 2017; Hinchman & Moore, 2013). To face the challenge of teaching students who read below grade level in high school, content-area teachers in Grade 9 in the TCS district, a pseudonym for the research site, participated in on-going professional development to learn how to teach literacy in their content to help students develop reading comprehension skills. Content area teachers at the research site were trained to implement ABI strategies such as close reading, think-aloud, and thinking maps across content areas. However, many teachers do not use any of the ARI strategies during classroom instruction. The principal at the research site stated, “All Grade 9 content-area teachers were trained to implement literacy strategies across the content areas at a 2015 ARI training.” The principal reported that during classroom observations, five out of 12 teachers effectively implemented the literacy strategies they learned at the ARI training (personal communication from principal, September 10, 2015). The intent of this research study was to examine the extent of ARI implementation, reasons for not implementing ARI strategies, and ideas for future professional development in ARI. This may help school administrators understand reasons content-area teachers are not implementing the

mandated ARI strategies to teach literacy across content areas and additional training needed on ARI.

Rationale

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

Based on the 2016 American College Test (ACT) Aspire scores, 28% percent of Grade 9 students in the local research site scored between 400 and 420 on the reading subtest (personal communication, November 15, 2017). Students who scored in this range were categorized as close to proficient. Five percent of Grade 9 students scored between 428 and 434 and were categorized as ready (personal communication, November 15, 2017). The principal of the local research site also noted that 67% of Grade 9 students scored below 400 on the ACT Aspire reading subtest. These students were categorized as needs improvement. The Alabama Department of Education (2015) reported that three quarters of ninth grade students in low-performing high schools start their freshmen year with significant reading deficiencies and lack the skills needed to comprehend content-specific texts. In an effort to address students' reading deficiencies and provide secondary teachers with support on teaching literacy, the school district mandated the implementation of a strategic literacy plan that corresponded with the ARI.

To improve reading comprehension skills for students in Grade 9 at the research site, teachers attended a mandatory summer training in 2015 to learn about content literacy strategies used to teach reading across the content areas such as scaffolding, close reading, strategic teaching, and thinking maps. A report from a 2015 descriptive study of the ARI showed that 85% of the participants were aware of content literacy strategies

used to teach comprehension in the classroom but were not using these strategies to address students reading difficulties on the secondary level (ARI, 2015). Two years later, the district-wide strategic literacy plan was reviewed and reinitiated during the 2016-2017 school year to improve student reading across the content areas (personal communication from principal, November 15, 2017). Grade 9 content-area teachers were trained again in September 2017 to implement ARI strategies across content areas as mandated in the district-wide strategic plan. Content-area teachers participated in the ARI retooling process for 3 days. The ARI retooling process consists of ARI coaches modeling with students and having teachers practice with students (ARI, 2015).

The literacy coach at the research site stated that Grade 9 content-area teachers in science, social studies, and mathematics were not implementing the required ARI strategies (personal communication, November 15, 2017). The literacy coach stated that the past two district-level walkthroughs at the research site noted that content-area teachers were not implementing any of the ARI strategies such as close reading, explicit instruction, thinking maps, and think-aloud. The problem in this study was that content-area teachers were not implementing ARI strategies they were trained on to teach literacy across content areas.

Evidence of the Problem From the Professional Literature

According to Cervetti and Hiebert (2015), the National High School Center reported that 32% of high school students have low-level literacy skills. Because literacy is essential to content knowledge, this problem influences learning across the content areas. With the growing demands of the Common Core standards, secondary students are

being asked to read more informational text (Brown & Kappes, 2012; Cervetti & Hiebert, 2015). Students are expected to read a significant amount of informational text independently. To build their content and world knowledge, students must be able to demonstrate that they understand the text through application and writing (Brown & Kappes, 2012; Cervetti & Hiebert, 2015; Fisher & Frey, 2014). However, many content-area teachers are not adequately preparing adolescents to develop these types of literacy skills. Content-area teachers have very little experience with teaching adolescent readers in their classes to read and comprehend content-specific texts (Armstrong, 2016; Brozo et al., 2013; Dyer, Ortlieb, & Cheek, 2013; Fisher & Frey, 2014).

Teaching reading comprehension in high school can be a challenge for secondary content-area teachers. Regardless of the amount of knowledge or skills content-area teachers possess in their specific subject, it is evident that teaching adolescent readers to comprehend content-specific reading materials is difficult (Arrasita et al., 2014; Fisher & Frey, 2014). Researchers have indicated that high school students are not receiving the instruction they need to reach the nations' goal of literacy for all students (Fisher & Frey, 2014). Fisher and Frey (2014) noted that content-area teachers often rely heavily on lecture and textbook to convey information to the students in their classes. Brozo et al. (2013) suggested that content-area teachers have extensive content knowledge but are less experienced in teaching reading.

The majority of high school content-area teachers do not have the background or training to incorporate literacy strategies into content instruction (Armstrong, 2016; Brozo et al., 2013; Fisher & Frey, 2014; Goldman, 2012). Armstrong (2016) asserted that

content-area teachers can teach writing and literature, but they have not been prepared to help adolescent readers improve their reading skills. Fisher and Frey (2014) noted that high school content-area teachers expect students to be independent readers, so they are not prepared to provide reading instruction to adolescent readers in their classes. Goldman (2012) suggested that content-area teachers are not equipped to teach content reading comprehension skills to adolescent readers in their classes.

A variety of instructional strategies related to reading were given to Grade 9 content-area teachers during an ARI summer training in 2015 and the retooling process in September 2017 at a secondary school in Alabama. The purpose of this study was to examine the extent of ARI implementation, reasons for not using ARI strategies, and ideas for future professional development in ARI. From this study, school district personnel may gain a deeper understanding on how to assist content-teachers with integrating literacy strategies into their content as well as providing meaningful professional development in the use of literacy strategies needed to improve ninth grade students' reading comprehension. Spencer and Bouwman (2014) pointed out that reading practices used by content-area teachers in the classroom helps students to better read and understand content-specific texts.

Definition of Terms

Definitions of key terms are provided below to clarify and provide a context for this study.

Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI): ARI is a statewide K to 12 initiative developed to provide high-quality instruction that will prepare all students with the language arts

skills needed for them to reach the minimum standards (ARI, 2015). ARI provides training for secondary content-area teachers on comprehension strategies, reading and writing connection literacy across the curriculum, and informal and formal assessments to potentially change teaching practices in the classroom (ARI, 2015).

Content-area teachers: Arrasita et al. (2014) stated that content-area teachers are those that teach science, social studies, math, and language arts in a middle and high school settings. For this study, the operational definition referred to high school teachers of science, social studies, and mathematics.

Content-specific texts: Content-specific texts are usually informational or expository texts used in specific subject areas to teach content (Fisher & Frey, 2014).

Instructional strategies: Spencer and Bouwman (2014) pointed out that instructional strategies are techniques or methods teachers use in the classroom meet need students' learning and literacy needs such as reading, writing, language, and thinking.

Significance of the Study

School administrators and content-area teachers recognized that lecturing, using textbooks, and handing out worksheets were not the solution students reading below grade level (personal communication, September 10, 2015). Goldman (2012) pointed out that when content is taught with attention to the reading process, students are able to make connections between the academic discipline and the existing knowledge they bring to the classrooms. Aina et al. (2012) explained that academic reading constitutes meaning for students, which enable them to read, synthesize, and process information. Fang (2014) suggested that the idea of teaching reading in the content areas especially in science helps

students to cope with more demanding informational and expository text. Previous researchers have indicated that some content area teachers are unprepared to teach reading in content classes (Arrasita et al., 2014; Fisher & Frey, 2014; Goldman, 2012). The results of this project study may help school administrators develop professional workshops for content-area teachers in mathematics, science, language arts, and social studies to successfully use reading strategies across the content areas to teach literacy.

Fisher and Frey (2014) suggested that reading skills at the high school level are more complex and extend beyond simply decoding words; they require adolescent students to comprehend text to learn content, write fluently, and transfer learning across the curriculum. The national adoption of the CCSS mandated that literacy skills such as reading, writing, and speaking be used more in language arts, science, social studies, and math (Cervetti & Hiebert, 2015). Cervetti and Hiebert noted that the CCSS for English language arts requires students to read more complex text and discipline-specific text. Spencer and Bouwman (2014) suggested that the CCSS raised the literacy demands in secondary classrooms in all content areas in order to ensure that students are college and career ready. With these high demands, students will become more skillful in reading, writing, and understanding discipline-specific text (Spencer & Bouwman, 2014; Zygoris, 2012). From this study, positive social change can occur through the possible implementation of professional development for teachers to better assure that all ninth grade content-area teachers are comfortable in using the strategies noted in the results to teach literacy.

Research Questions

The problem in this study is that content-area teachers at the local research site were not implementing ARI strategies they were trained on to teach literacy across content areas. As a result, Grade 9 students at the research site still have difficulties reading content-specific texts. The following guiding research questions were used in study to examine the extent of ARI implementation, reasons content-area teachers are not implementing ARI strategies, and ideas for future professional development in ARI:

1. How do the teachers describe the extent to which they are using ARI strategies?
2. What are the reasons that ninth grade content-area teachers note for not using the ARI instructional strategies to teach literacy?
3. What on-going professional development do these content-area teachers suggest be offered to assist them with using ARI strategies to teach literacy across content areas?

Review of the Literature

The method I used to gather articles for this literature review was to focus on the research topic, question, and problem. Key phrases such as *challenges implementing reading initiatives in secondary content-area classes*, *problems with incorporating content literacy strategies across the content-areas*, *literacy professional development for content-area teachers*, *teaching literacy skills across the content-areas*, *teachers' attitudes about teaching literacy in secondary classes*, and *teachers' perspectives on teaching content literacy* were researched using Sage Journals, ProQuest, Google Scholar, the National Center of Educational Statistics, and ERIC to locate articles.

Literature was selected for the review if it contributed to the extent of ARI implementation by content area teachers and reasons for not implementing ARI strategies to teach literacy across content areas.

Because adolescent readers are expected to comprehend the information from the text and apply what they learned from it, content teachers are being asked to learn how to teach literacy across the content areas. The national adoption of the Common Core standards has caused school districts to look for ways to align the curriculum with the standards (Consagra, 2013). Professional development is most likely the avenue that school districts explore to prepare content area teachers to implement literacy strategies across content areas. School districts are providing content area teachers with professional development initiatives targeted at helping secondary content-area teachers incorporate literacy strategies to improve students' reading comprehension.

ARI is a statewide K to 12 initiative developed to provide high-quality instruction that will prepare all students with the language arts skills needed for them to reach the minimum standards (ARI, 2015). Bacevich and Salinger (2006) noted that ARI provides training for secondary content-area teachers on comprehension strategies, reading and writing connection literacy across the curriculum, and informal and formal assessments to potentially change teaching practices in the classroom. Bacevich and Salinger stated that teachers are given opportunities to learn how to teach literacy skills across the content areas to students with various reading abilities and learning styles. Like students, teachers learn differently and have various backgrounds and experiences that contribute to that learning.

Epistemological Framework

Peirce developed the pragmatic maxim to explain that the nature of action is suggested by an idea composed solely on the meaning of that idea (as cited in Korte & Mercurio, 2017). Peirce (1878) stated that “pragmatism is a philosophy of action. The pragmatic maxim asserts that to clarify the meaning of a concept, one has to look for its conceivable practical bearings” (p. 17). Peirce noted that action and its consequences, not ideals or principles, were the basis for pragmatism. Pragmatism is focused on the practical outcomes of what humans think and do. Korte and Mercurio (2017) suggested that a key focal point of pragmatism is on practice and action. Korte and Mercurio stated that “practice hypothesis frame and explain natural action that are continually performed, produced, and reproduced through a dynamic entanglement of action mechanism” (p.72). Pragmatism and practical theories are relatable perspectives focused on the consequences of ideas and the results of actions (Korte & Mercurio, 2017). In relation to Peirce’s perspective on pragmatism, Morgan (2014) noted that Dewey’s perspective of pragmatism involved the process of interpreting one’s experiences and beliefs to generate action. Dewey (1938) believed that experience is the manner in which teachers craft beliefs about coaching and gaining knowledge. Dewy cautioned that teaching can be educative or miseducative and explained that “educative experience broadens one’s horizons and results in movement; while miseducative experience is contorted” (p.34). Korte and Mercurio (2017) noted that Dewey’s theory of inquiry is a robust process that explains that when people experience an uncertain situation, it causes one to doubt their cognition or power to do something. Pragmatism stresses the idea that researchers share

the power of acknowledging what other stakeholders bring with their knowledge and experience (Morgan, 2014). The pragmatic view in this study aligned with Roger's diffusion of innovation theory.

Conceptual Framework

Rogers (2003) noted the steps in the model of accepting innovation process. The first step was knowledge, which happens when someone sees the innovation but does not respond to it (Rogers, 2003). The next step is persuasion, which is defined as the time one begins to seek information on that innovation (Rogers, 2003). This is followed by the decision stage, which Rogers defined as that time when someone balances their needs for that changes. Rogers noted that this is the most time-consuming stage of the process. The implementation phase is when action is taken on the use of that change (Rogers, 2003). The final stage is confirmation, when the person makes their final decision on whether or not to accept or use the change (Rogers, 2003). Rogers claimed that "this stage is both intrapersonal (may cause cognitive dissonance) and interpersonal, confirmation the group has made the right decision" (p. 169). Rogers's diffusion of innovation theory specified that people go through the five-step process at different paces, which influences how other people around them respond and adapt to the innovation.

At the local research site, ARI coaches introduced instructional literacy strategies to content area teachers on the secondary level, and teachers were expected to implement these strategies across the content to teach literacy. Research Question 1 addressed the extent of ARI implementation by content area teachers. Research Question 1 addressed practical knowledge and application, which explained practice and action--the basis for

pragmatism. Practical knowledge and application agreed with all five stages of Rogers's (2003) diffusion of innovation theory. Stages 1 through 3 of Rogers's theory related to Research Question 2 and Research Question 3, which addressed reasons content area teachers do not implement ARI strategies and ideas for the future professional development of ARI. Research Question 3 agreed with Dewey's perspective on inquiry and how people experience uncertain situations that cause them to doubt their thinking or power to do something and being educative, which results in action.

Reasons Why Implementing a Reading Initiative Fails

Shanahan and Shanahan (2008) contended that the antique adage "every teacher is a teacher of reading" has been a supply of resistance for a lot of content teachers (p. 11). Arrasita et al. (2014, p. 11) noted that "not every teacher is a reading teacher;" however, every subject includes reading textual content. Arrasita et al. suggested that using reading strategies in secondary school can be a test for content area teachers. Notwithstanding the measure of learning or abilities content area teachers have in their particular subject area, encouraging them to teach literacy in their content is troublesome (Arrasita et al., 2014; Fang, 2014; Fisher & Frey, 2013). Researchers have shown that secondary school content area teachers are not accepting the guideline they have to achieve the countries' objective of literacy proficiency for all students (Fisher & Frey, 2014). Fisher and Frey noticed that content area teachers in science, social studies, and mathematics frequently depend on language arts teachers to intensely address literacy concerns of students in their classes. Brozo et al. (2013) suggested that content area teachers have comprehensive content knowledge however are less experienced in teaching their students reading skills.

Secondary school content area teachers do not have the foundation or preparing to literacy techniques into content instruction (Consagra, 2013; Fisher, Frey, & Nelson, 2012; Goldman, 2012; Spencer & Bouwman, 2014). Consagra noted that subject area teachers can show composing and writing; however, they have not been set up to enable students to enhance their reading abilities. Fisher et al. noticed that secondary school content area teachers anticipate that students will be proficient readers, so they are not set up to give reading instruction to students in their classes who are not proficient readers. Goldman recommended that high school teachers who teach science, social studies, and mathematics are not prepared to teach content literacy strategies to students in their classes.

In the following section of the paper, I delineated several reasons that cause reading initiatives on the secondary level to fail. Topics to be covered include professional development, lack of support from administrators, teachers' attitude, content, and insufficient instructional time. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) documented that professional development and lack of support from administrators are two of the reasons why reading initiatives fail in high school. Sims and Penny (2015) found that teachers' attitude, content, and insufficient instructional time are reasons content teachers have a difficult time implementing reading initiatives.

Professional development issues. Professional development is often a 1-day or less presentation where information is presented, usually through lecturing. While this type of professional development can serve to provide information or to reinforce district initiatives, it does not usually effect change in most classrooms (Armstrong, 2016;

Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Franckowiak, 2016; Sims & Penny, 2015). Professional development initiatives on the topic of literacy often fail because there is no consideration given to brain-based research. Researchers have suggested that professional development initiatives that expose teachers to information only one-time result in people forgetting 95% of the content (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Franckowiak, 2016; Sims & Penny, 2015). Darling-Hammond et al. suggested that the way professional development is presented to teachers often hinders learning rather than changing teachers' mindset, classroom instruction methods, or skills. Unless professional development leaders find engaging ways to develop deeper understanding about teaching literacy in their content, change will remain nonexistence and implementation will not be successful (Armstrong, 2016; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Franckowiak, 2016).

According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), the National Staff Development Council reported that teachers themselves say that their main priority in professional development training is to gather information about the specific content they teach. Gates and Gates (2014) noted that teachers feel that professional development initiatives that are not relevant enough to the content they teach and skills they need to implement new approaches are worthless. Darling-Hammond et al. noted that professional development that does not focus on teaching strategies associated with specific content is considered useless to teachers. Franckowiak (2016) noted that from the perspective of teachers, professional development initiatives are meaningless if they do not relate to the discipline teachers actually teach. Professional development should help content teachers acquire new skills and knowledge to help them successfully achieve implementation of a district-

wide or school-wide literacy initiative (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Lack of support from administrators. Researchers have indicated that the largest struggle for teachers with professional development is not learning new approaches to teach literacy but to implementing those approaches in their content area (Gulamhussein, 2014). Gulamhussein reported that the Center of Public Education suggested that professional development cannot simply expose teachers to a concept in a one-session workshop. If professional development is going to be used as a vehicle for improving literacy needs on the secondary level, teachers need to learn how to incorporate the new skills they learn in their content. Researchers have shown that on average, it takes a teacher at least 20 times to practice a skill before they are able to master it. Traditional professional development fails because it does not provide teachers with on-going support during implementation (Gulamhussein, 2014).

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation conducted a study on 1,300 teachers, instructional coaches, administrators, and professional development leaders through surveys and interviews to research teachers' views on professional development (Gates & Gates, 2014). These authors reported that the study findings showed that a large majority of the teachers did not believe that professional development helped them to change their classroom practices or to implement district or statewide reading initiatives and/or Common Core standards. Teachers stated that they do not feel supported when trying to implement new approaches in their content areas. Research cited in the book, *Student Achievement through Staff Development* noted that teachers need support after professional development to help with implementation of the new skill or approach

(Gates & Gates, 2014).

Teachers' attitudes. Teachers' attitudes have been identified as one of the challenges faced in successful implementation of any professional development initiative (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Franckowiak, 2016; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014). Darling-Hammond et al.) noted that failure to involve teachers in the planning of professional development activities demoralizes them and may help in the development of their negative attitudes. Franckowiak suggested that teachers' frustration with implementing new approaches stems from a feeling of disrespect. The author suggested that the feeling is that implementing new approaches to teach literacy is mandated, thus teachers see it as imposing ideas on them.

Gates and Gates (2014) suggested that many teachers viewed professional development more as compliance rather than learning. These authors report that 30% of the teachers in the study stated that they were unsatisfied with professional development because they were not allowed to choose what topics were presented because the school system or school administrator mandates it. Dixon, Yssel, McConnell, and Hardin (2014) noted that a lack of teacher ownership in professional development influences their decision to implement new approaches because administrators impose it on them. The author also suggested that teachers do not buy-in to implementation of new approaches in their classrooms due to it being dictated to them by the school district or administrators.

Curriculum does not match teaching content. Orr, Kukner, and Timmons (2014) noted that one reason content area teachers do not implement reading strategies in their curriculums is addressing reading difficulties just does not fit with teaching content.

Goatley and Hinchman (2013) suggested that science and math teachers do not see a connection between language arts literacy and their subject area material. The authors suggested that the literacy skills teachers are asked to teach are inconsistent with the traditional learning of content information. Teachers demonstrate minimum understanding of how literacy can be content-specific (Goatley & Hinchman, 2013; Orr et al., 2014). Cantrell, Burns and Callaway (2009) reported that respondents who taught in the area of mathematics believed they were not responsible for teaching literacy strategies or did so at a minimal.

Insufficient instructional time. Previous research noted that content area teachers cited limited instructional time as a reason for not incorporating literacy strategies into instruction (Armstrong, 2016; Cantrell et al., 2009; Franckowiak, 2016; Sims & Penny, 2015). Cantrell et al. suggested that teachers feel more pressure to teach content efficiently and tend not to incorporate literacy strategies during instruction. Ness (2009) pointed out that teachers feel that teaching literacy infringes on instructional time that should be spent on delivering content. Ness further suggested that content area teachers saw incorporating literacy into instruction and providing support to students to increase reading comprehension as another task which took away from instructions, rather than as a way to increase students' understanding of content.

Implications

The results of this study may offer suggestions to the local district level administrators. School administrators may benefit from knowing the extent of ARI implementation, reasons for not implementing ARI strategies, and ideas for future

professional development in ARI. Understanding this may provide administrators with insight about effective professional development for content area teachers to teach literacy in high school classes. Calo et al. (2015) noted that it is important that administrators determine what meaningful professional development content-area teachers may need to help improve their instructional literacy practices to support their students with comprehending content-specific texts. Implications for teachers include selecting and using effective strategies for developing comprehension in content reading and striving for teacher effectiveness in content area classes.

The results of this project study may help administrators devise a professional development training program to address the reasons content teachers do not implement strategies they are trained on to teach literacy across contents areas. The program will repeat the previous training, but present new ways to assist teachers based on the data uncovered. Content-area teachers need to understand how to deal with the obstacles they may face in order to successfully implement literacy strategies across the content areas.

Summary

High school content-area teachers are not as successful in integrating content reading strategies as they could be into content instruction (Brozo et al., 2013; Fisher & Frey, 2014). Research has supported the need to examine reasons content area teachers do not implement literacy strategies they learned through professional development to teach literacy across content areas (Armstrong, 2016; Brozo et al., 2013; Fisher et al., 2012; Gulamhussein, 2014).

Section 1 outlined the framework of my study and defined terms used in the

study. The local and larger problem was presented with the significance and rationale of the study. The purpose of this study was to examine the extent of ARI implementation, reasons for not implementing ARI strategies, and ideas for future professional development in ARI. In this basic qualitative research study, six content area teachers who taught Grade 9 and received ARI summer training were interviewed to examine the extent of ARI implementation, reasons for not implementing ARI strategies (if any), and ideas for future professional development in ARI. Next, a review of the literature presented background information for the study. The review started with an explanation of the epistemological and conceptual frameworks. Pragmatism served as the epistemological framework. Conceptually, the study was supported by Rogers' diffusion of innovation theory. A review of literature documented reasons implementing reading initiatives on the secondary level fail was then presented. Reasons included professional development issues that content area teachers encounter; lack of support from administrators; the curriculum does not align with teaching literacy across the content areas; and insufficient instructional time.

Section 2 provides information about research design and approach, the sample, data collection, data analysis, limitations, delimitations, and assumptions. Section 3 details the project derived from the findings of my study. Section 4 addresses what I learned from the project and a brief discussion about the overall project.

Section 2: The Methodology

In Section 2, I present the research design and approach of this study. Information about the participants in this study is given. Protection of participants and ethical considerations are discussed. Other elements of this research study, including data collection and data analysis processes are identified.

Qualitative Research Design and Approach

I selected a basic qualitative design for this study. Merriam (2009) defined basic qualitative research as a way to obtain an in-depth understanding of how people make sense of their experiences with the educational process. Merriam believed that basic qualitative research design does not focus solely on beliefs, opinions, attitudes, or ideas; it investigates actual experiences. The foci of this study were the extent to which Grade 9 teachers are implementing ARI strategies; reasons why they are not implementing, if they are not; and teachers' professional development needs. Patton (2002) emphasized that the value a basic qualitative research design is to uncover the experiences of participants and the meaning attributed to those experiences.

Generally, qualitative research methods are useful in discovering the meaning that people give to situations or events they experience (Merriam, 2009). A qualitative approach is used when the answers to the research questions requires textual, not numerical explanation. Qualitative questions often begin with the words *what* or *how* so that the researcher can garner a detailed understanding of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2009).

Justification for a Qualitative Research Design

I selected a basic qualitative study approach as a way to provide an insightful and thorough process to examine the extent of ARI implementation, reasons for not implementing ARI strategies, and professional development needed to implement ARI strategies fully across the content areas. A basic qualitative research design was selected to seek answers to the research questions through specific information about behaviors, opinions, and beliefs (Merriam, 2009). I conducted the study and collected data in a secluded setting to ensure that participants remained anonymous. Open ended interview questions were used to collect data from participants' personal experiences with the implementation of ARI strategies across the content areas. The data analysis process was inductive and grew from specific themes. I interpreted the collected data. The goal was to uncover and interpret the meaning of the experience from each participant (see Merriam, 2009).

The research questions for this study were designed to examine the extent of ARI implementation, reasons for not implementing ARI strategies, and professional development needed. The school district had decided that all secondary teachers would be trained in ARI, and teachers were expected to implement these strategies across the content areas. Answering the research questions required the participants to respond in their own words to bring meaning to the information participants could provide. Merriam (2009) asserted that a basic qualitative study is not limited by planned groupings or measures but lends itself to openness and allows for depth and discovery.

Justification for Rejection of Other Research Designs

A quantitative research design was not selected because the study did not involve seeking to confirm a hypothesis about phenomena or to quantify variation (see Creswell, 2012). Instead, I was interested in examining individual teachers' experiences with implementing ARI strategies in their content areas. A quantitative research design does not allow the freedom to explore the experiences of the participants. All participants took part in the study, which did not involve a control group, to determine if a specific treatment influenced an outcome (see Creswell, 2012). A quantitative approach would not have answered the type of research questions posed in this study nor allowed for participants' responses in their own words.

Likewise, a mixed-methods research design was not the right choice for this study because the study was primarily a basic qualitative design. Two types of data were not collected in this study. The research questions were answered in a subjective manner. Participants were encouraged to respond openly to get to the root of their experiences with implementing ARI strategies in their content areas. The data in this research were collected through a qualitative approach.

Additionally, among the qualitative designs, I first thought of conducting a qualitative case study. I was advised that this type of study did not pursue multiple stages of data collection. A case study design is an in-depth analysis of people, events, and relationships, bounded by some unifying factor (Merriam, 2009). Instead, this study consisted of the in-depth exploration of the perspectives of a small number of purposefully selected individuals regarding a specific phenomenon. Therefore, the case

study approach was the optimal qualitative design.

Research Questions

The following guiding research questions were used in the study to examine the extent of ARI implementation, reasons content-area teachers are not implementing ARI strategies, and ideas for future professional development in ARI: How do the teachers describe the extent to which they are using ARI strategies? What are the reasons that ninth grade content-area teachers note for not using the ARI instructional strategies to teach literacy? What on-going professional development do these content-area teachers suggest be offered to assist them with using ARI strategies to teach literacy across content?

Research Site

The research site for my study was a high school in west-central Alabama. The high school served 756 students in Grades 9 through 12. The school was primarily located in a low-poverty area with a 99% African American student population and 95% of the student population receiving free or reduced lunch (Alabama Department of Education, 2015). The research site was considered a low-performing, urban high school (Alabama Department of Education, 2015). A majority of the students were performing at or below state assessments, which includes the ACT Workkeys, ACT, and ACT Aspire.

The local high school has a principal, two assistant principals, three guidance counselors, a literacy coach, an Internal Baccalaureate coordinator, and a dean of students. There were 45 certified teachers in the areas of language arts, social studies, science, math, fine arts, foreign languages, health and physical education, family and

consumer science, business education, and special education. As defined by the Alabama Department of Education (2015), 100% of the teachers are highly qualified.

Sample

I used purposeful criterion-based sampling to select participants for this project study. Creswell (2012) referred to purposeful sampling as the intentional selection of individuals and sites to learn or understand a central phenomenon. Merriam (2009) suggested that purposeful sampling guides the researcher in the identification of information that is rich and assists the researcher with identification of the criteria for selecting participants for a study. Only participants who met the following criteria were invited: (a) They taught at the research site, (b) they taught a section of ninth grade students in math, science, or social studies, and (c) they attended the ARI summer professional development. Patton (1990) stated, “The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for study in-depth. Information rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research” (p. 169).

There were 12 content area teachers who taught ninth grade students: three language arts teachers, three mathematics teachers, three science teachers, and three social studies teachers. I recruited a minimum of six content area teachers to participate in my study. The number of participants was a minimal of six in order to present a rich, detailed description as it related to the research questions posed. According to Creswell (2012), using a few individuals in qualitative research to study is typical because it gives the researcher the opportunity to provide an in-depth picture of the central phenomena

and a more comprehensive narrative of the individuals being studied.

Because the problem existed across the content areas, it did not matter how many teachers were selected from each subject. I received emails from six out of 12 teachers invited to participate in the study. Merriam (2009) noted that “purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (p. 77). For the purpose of this study, I examined the extent of ARI implementation, reasons for not implementing ARI strategies, and ideas for future professional development in ARI.

I completed and submitted a request to conduct research to the principal of the research school for approval. After I received approval from the Walden University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB), I sent invitations via email to 12 certified content-area teachers who taught at least one group of ninth grade students at the research school to participate in this study. All email addresses in the district were public. The participants represented across the curriculum from math, science, and social studies. Using the district email list was the easiest way for me to make contact with participants for my study. I reinforced to participants that the study was not required by the district and that the study was being conducted in a personal manner to help me obtain information for my project study. I informed participants that they could decline being a part of the study at any time.

Protection of Participants

Standard safeguards to the participants during this study included guidelines set forth by the IRB of Walden University. Immediately after approval from IRB (12-04-18-

0356343), I sent invitations via email to invite teachers from the research school to participate in my project study. I used the district directory to obtain school emails for all those invited to participate. I gained permission from the principal of the research school to conduct the study. The email correspondence informed them of the purpose of this study, research questions guiding the study, selection process, procedures for collecting data, statement of voluntary participation, the right to withdraw from the study, permission to audiotape, and confidentiality. They were asked to complete the informed consent by typing their name on the consent form to signal their consent. Participants were instructed to send the completed consent form to me via email. Once the participants were selected based on the criteria, I sent them a second email asking selected participants to meet with me individually with any additional questions they may need to ask. These individual meetings were held after school between the hours of 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the public library in the conference room. I secured all agreements made with the participants in this study. I completed the above actions to prevent possible dangers or harms such as breach of confidentiality, embarrassment, and type of reprimands from the immediate supervisor. Any documents received from participants during this study were stored in a locked cabinet at my residence. To help ensure confidentiality, the identity of the participants, research site, and the school district remained confidential with the use of pseudonyms. The six participants were assigned the pseudonyms Teacher A, Teacher B, Teacher C, Teacher D, Teacher E, and Teacher F. The research site was assigned XYZ school.

Role of the Researcher

For 4 years, I held the position of instructional coach at the local research site. Part of my job was to help improve teacher instructional practices through coaching, modeling lessons, and providing professional development. I observed and monitored the instruction of teachers in all four content areas, but I did not evaluate teachers in any way. I am no longer the instructional coach at the research site. I have taken a principalship at another school in the district. I am also a former elementary teacher in the school district and have occasionally worked with secondary teachers on the district-wide literacy team.

As an internal researcher, my association with content-area teachers at the research school may cause ethical problems. According to Creswell (2009), ethical concerns are considered when the participants in the study have a different view of the purpose than the researcher. It is important that I make it known to participants that the school district has no stake in the study or the findings. Based on IRB guidelines, I am obligated ethically to maintain the confidentiality of the participants in this study and to provide them with information on the progress of the research.

Data Collection

The primary data source for this study was interviews. This source was employed to collect data to examine the extent of ARI implementation, reasons for not implementing ARI strategies, and ideas for future professional development in ARI. Interviews were conducted immediately after getting IRB approval (12-04-18-0356343) and the consent for participation.

Interviews

The primary data collection method in this study was interviews. I developed three open-ended questions based on the research questions for this study and the related literature . I structured the interview questions to gather information directly related to answering the research questions. The questions followed the semi structured interview protocol (Merriam, 2009). The interview questions correspond with the research questions and align with the qualitative research approach. These interview questions were designed to examine the extent of ARI implementation, reasons for not implementing ARI strategies, and ideas for future professional development in ARI.

Interview questions for this study were piloted. The researcher used the same criteria for the selection of participants as would be used in the main study. The targeted participants in this pilot testing were three high school administrators and three literacy coaches who previously taught science, social studies, and mathematics to students in grades 9 in the district. The purpose of pilot testing was to test the quality of the questions and to provide the researcher with some idea on the potentials of the study. The participants were sent a copy of the interview questions via email. Each participant was asked to read each question and provide written responses. The participants were then asked to provide feedback about the questions and offer any suggestions they might have about the questions based on their familiarity with ARI strategies used to teach literacy across content areas in the district.

Pilot testing the interview questions provided the opportunity to rephrase, refine, and clarify some questions. For example, Question 1 of the interview protocol which was

aimed towards determining the reasons content area teachers are not using ARI strategies was amended as it was noticed that the original question, as it was framed, presumed that teachers are not using the strategies they were trained to use. The question was rephrased to describe the extent to which you implemented ARI in science, social studies, and mathematics. Participants will be asked to name the strategy and explain. McNamara (2009) suggested the researcher design research questions which have the following characteristics: they are (a) open-ended (allowing participants to take to speak or write for as long as they wish), (b) avoid any subjectivity or bias), (c) asked one after each other, not in groups, (d) not have any technical terms the participant may not understand, and (e) not be threatening in posing follow-up “why” questions.

For this study, six participants were interviewed in a semi structured person-to-person conversation. According to Creswell (2009), limiting the number of participants provides the researcher with a more comprehensive narrative of the study. Using a few individuals in qualitative research to study is typical because it gives the researcher the opportunity to provide an in-depth picture of the central phenomena (Merriam, 2009). The interviews were conducted over a 2-week period during the semester I received IRB approval. I interviewed three participants the first week, and three participants the second week. Participants in this study were given a schedule and asked to sign-up for a time to be interviewed. For convenience and confidentiality, the participants were interviewed afterschool between the hours of 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. to accommodate their schedules. If any of the suggested times were not desirable for a participant, I allowed them to arrange a time suitable for them. I sent, via email, the location of the interview site to the

participant prior to the interview. The location of the interviews was a secured meeting room at the public library. The interviews lasted approximately 5 minutes.

To begin the interview process, I reminded the participants of the purpose of the study, their rights to withdraw from the study at any time, describe the research procedures, and how I intend to protect confidentiality. Participants were asked to respond to three open-ended questions. Based on prior approval from the participants, I recorded four participants during the interviews using a digital audio recorder to ensure accuracy. I used the recorder on my cell phone as a backup. I wrote notes during each interview to review key points or ideas that were significant after each interview. Two participants did not give permission to be audiotaped. I gave them the option to provide written responses to the interview questions. The written responses were still used as data. Transcripts and interview notes for the six interviews were presented. After each interview, I reviewed the participants' responses to identify key words or phrases that were repetitive. In addition, I used an open coding process to define themes and classify key information. Using coding processes allowed for inductive and deductive analysis (Saldana, 2009). All interviews were transcribed, and themes coded manually.

Timeline of Events

During Week 1, I discussed with participants information about the study, scheduled interviews with participants. Before I collected any data, I contacted participants via email to provide information on the type of research that was being proposed and to secure their participation. I emailed informed consent forms to each participant. The informed consent form included a detailed description of the project

study, any potential risks involved in the project, the nature of the study, and a confidentiality statement. Participants were instructed to type their name on the form to give consent if they chose to be a part of the research study and type also “I consent” by their names. Participants emailed their signed consent form to me.

During Week 2, I began collecting data. I started the interview process with three of the six teachers participating in this study. Participants were reminded that the interview would be audio recorded and that they can refuse to be recorded at any time during the interview or decline being a part of the study. The interview schedule consisted of the date, time, and location of the interview. Each participant was interviewed at his or her scheduled date and time using the interview protocol presented in Appendix B. Interviews took place after school at a private, quiet library location. Additional time was not necessary. Participants responded to the interview questions in an average of 2 to 5 minutes.

During Week 3, I continued the interview process with the remaining three participants in the study. The previous procedures were repeated to conduct the interviews. After all interviews were completed, I transcribed the interviews and allowed each participant to review their responses for accuracy. Then, I coded the data to identify categories and themes manually.

During Weeks 4-6, I continued to code and analyze the collected data. A chart was created to organize the data. The chart displayed a list of themes and codes. As codes emerged, they were added to the chart and assigned a word or phrase .

Data Analysis

For this qualitative study, the researcher planned to use Hyper RESEARCH because Creswell (2012) reported it as “being simple to work with and allows for coding, arranging the information, and finally, analyzing data that were collected. Initially, I was given a free trial in 2018 for 1-year to use Hyper RESEARCH. Since, the free trial has expired. The software was too expensive and at the time, I could not afford to purchase it. Instead, data were organized by hand. The researcher transcribed and analyzed interviews for emergent themes based on the responses from the participants. Transcribed interviews were analyzed inductively (Saldana, 2009). The data from the interviews were transcribed to validate possible findings in the study. The transcripts were examined and themes like literacy strategies, training, relevance to content, and time. After all the interviews were completed, responses were typed and coded using an open coding system. The coding was completed by reading the transcripts of the written interview questions and the recorded interview. These codes were listed in a chart). The codes were identified based on frequent occurrence in the interview responses from each participant. While reading the transcripts, I wrote notes and highlighted statements. Saldana (2009) stated that coding qualitative data contributes to the research as a portion of data being presented. Saldana noted that coding links data to ideas, leading to a solution to a problem. Emergent themes were identified from each interview response (literacy strategies, training, relevance to content, and time) and compared across the interview responses of six teachers. The researcher transcribed the interviews and sent each participant a transcript for review.

In order to strengthen the research data, Shenton (2004) noted that trustworthiness criteria are used when employing qualitative research methodology to ensure credibility, dependability, conformability, and transferability. Patton (2002) suggested that trustworthiness is the extent to which the researcher is able to balance the perspectives of the participants in a fair manner. The trustworthiness of this study will be ensured through creditability, dependability, and conformability.

Merriam (2009) noted that use of qualitative research is an act of the experiences of people with whom researchers possibly interact with. Merriam suggested that researchers must be confident that the research is trustworthy and credible. Shenton (2004) described credibility as an attempt to “demonstrate a true picture of a phenomenon that is being scrutinized”. To ensure accuracy during the transcription process and address credibility, I reviewed each transcript while listening to the audiotapes. Member-checking was used to verify the responses from the interviews. Merriam (2009) suggested member checking provides a means to accuracy of the transcriptions. Participants were given written transcripts of the words they offered during their interviews for the purpose of checking their accuracy. Participants were asked to edit, explain, expand, and if necessary, delete their own words from the text. Follow-up interviews were not necessary.

Shenton (2004) explained that dependability to the extent which the proper research practices were followed in the study. In addressing the issue of dependability, the researcher in this study provided detailed descriptions of the research methodology. To address confirmability, the researcher looked for similarities and differences between

what each participant shared during the interviews. Shenton (2004) noted that confirmability establishes that the study findings of the data are not the perspectives of the researcher but is derived from the data collected. It is imperative that sources of data are converged or triangulated to ensure that participants' understanding of the phenomenon is accurately represented (Creswell, 2009). I converged categories into themes. I did not encounter any discrepant data and so did not have to reexamine transcriptions for consistency (Creswell, 2012).

Limitations

This study has a number of limitations that may affect the collected data. First, the participants in this study were 9th grade content-area teachers in math, science, and social studies at only one high school in the school district. Findings are limited to this setting. Additionally, the study is limited by purpose. The purpose of this study was to examine the extent of ARI implementation, reasons for not implementing ARI strategies, and ideas for future professional development. Information gathered beyond this purpose was not analyzed. Information obtained from the interviews is primarily based on the interviewee and what he or she is willing to share with the interviewer. The nature of the information was limited to his or her personal experiences, knowledge, and perspectives. Finally, all interviews were conducted and analyzed by one researcher. I managed my biases by maintaining a neutral stance by periodically examining what my views were and why I had them during the research process. This helped me to keep my personal biases from tainting findings.

Delimitations

This study is delimited in purpose and method. I only examined the extent of ARI implementation, reasons for not implementing ARI strategies, and ideas for future professional development in ARI of 9th grade content-area teachers in math, science, and social studies. I did not examine the perspectives of elective subject-area teachers, such as music, art, or the practical arts. The study was not expanded to teachers of other grades, because the focus was 9th grade content teachers and there were enough participants for the study. Other secondary content-area teachers who teach math, science, and social studies and did not participate in this study may have different perspectives about the extent of ARI implementation, reasons for not implementing ARI strategies, and ideas for future professional development in ARI.

Assumptions

The assumption in this study related to interviews being used in collecting data. Teachers participating in the interviews were trained to implement ARI strategies in their content areas as part of their work requirements. It was assumed that the selected content-area teachers in this study provided authentic and honest answers regarding the extent of ARI implementation, reasons for not implementing ARI strategies, and ideas for future professional development in ARI.

Data Analysis Results

The interview data yielded data to capture content area teachers' perceptions regarding implementation of ARI strategies across content areas. The teachers were asked to respond to the following interview questions which related to the study research

questions: 1).To what extent have you implemented any of the ARI strategies in your content area? 2a). If some or a lot, tell me about those—why did you choose them and are they working? 2b). If not, why not? 3. If you could design training to help you implement ARI strategies, what would you do? Below are specific findings related to each of the research questions in this project study. Transcripts and notes are included .

Research Question 1

How do the teachers describe the extent to which they are using ARI strategies?

Finding 1: The content area teachers participating in this study revealed that ARI strategies were implemented in their content instruction a great deal to activate prior knowledge, make predictions, generate questions, analyze charts and graphs, and locating information in the text.

Several participants openly responded to Interview Question # 1, which related to the extent participants implement ARI strategies in the content they teach. Teacher A, B, C and D responded that they use ARI strategies a great deal during content instruction. Teacher A stated, “I use ARI strategies daily in my AP Biology class”. Teacher B responded, “ I use ARI strategies a lot. The strategies are used daily before I start a lesson. Teacher C stated, “I use the ARI strategies some during instruction. It depends on the concept I am teaching in the lesson”. Teacher D stated, “ I use the ARI strategies a lot in my class. I would say at least 3 to 4 times weekly”. Teacher E and Teacher F both expressed that they have not used any ARI strategies in the content they teach.

Participants’ responses to Interview Question #2 showed that ARI strategies were also viewed as useful in content areas such as science and social studies. Some

participants expressed that ARI strategies assisted students with reading content materials. Teacher A stated,

I use a large variety of literacy strategies before, during, and after the lesson to activate prior knowledge, make predictions, and generate questions. These strategies help students to interact with the text. I think the strategies are working because students seem to be actively engaged in the lesson. The students are able to discuss the text with others and cite evidence to support their answers to questions about the text.

Teacher B stated,

I use the strategies to guide discussions about what we are about to read or have read . For the most part, I use the turn-and-talk strategy to assist students with dialogue about the text. We use think-pair-share and think-pair-write-share almost daily. This works to keep students engaged and to strengthening reading skills.as they prepare to read content material.

Teacher C responded,

I mostly implement the ARI strategies through chunking and using graphic organizers to read the text in history. When I introduce a lesson for the first time, the students and I chunk the passage before we read. As we read, the students use a graphic organizer to use details from the passage to ask and answer questions about the passage. Sometimes, I use the I Do, You Do, We Do strategy to teach new concepts. I think strategic teaching has helped me to scaffold the instructional activity, so students are able to build their reading skills through the

entire lesson. These strategies are working because we have witnessed an increase in reading proficiency, based on data from the district Scantron Performance Series Reading test.

Teacher D responded, “Implementation of ARI strategies into my science courses has been extremely beneficial for promoting literacy strategies such as locating information and analyzing charts and graphs. These are useful skills to have when taking the Workkeys and ACT assessments”.

Research Question 2

What are the reasons that 9th grade content-area teachers note for not using ARI instructional strategies to teach literacy? Finding 2: The content area teachers participating in this study who taught mathematics revealed that ARI strategies were not implemented in math instruction due to lack of relevance to the content.

While several participants expressed that using ARI strategies in the content area they teach was important to enhance their students’ reading skills, a few teachers were upfront about reasons they did not implement ARI strategies. Interview Question #2b related to reasons teachers did not implement ARI strategies in the content they teach.

Teachers E and F both responded openly about why they did not implement ARI strategies in mathematics. Teacher E expressed, “ I did not implement ARI strategies in math instruction because they don’t match what I am teaching. The strategies we learned in the ARI training seem to fit with language arts teachers and social studies. There is not enough time during instruction to incorporate literacy strategies and teach math content. Teacher F stated, “ ARI strategies are not appropriate to use in math. The strategies are

for teaching reading, not math. There is too much to teach in math to focus on reading. The period last for 60 minutes and I do not have time to teach literacy, when I should be focused on math instead”.

Research Question 3

What on-going professional development do these content-area teachers suggest be offered to assist them with using ARI strategies to teach literacy across content areas?

Finding 3: The content area teachers participating in this study revealed that coaching from the literacy coach, continuous job-embedded training, and time to work with other teachers are needed to assist them with implementing ARI strategies. Interview Question # 3 asked participants about a design for professional development to help with implementing ARI strategies in the content they teach. Several participants seemed to want periodic training to refresh what was taught in ARI professional development during the summer of 2015. Teacher A explained, “In order to continue with the implementation of the ARI strategies, I think job-embedded PD is needed to assist teachers with how to incorporate these strategies during content instruction. Although we have a comprehensive understanding of the subjects we teach, it is difficult to incorporate literacy strategies into our content. As high school teachers, we need to participate in continuous professional development to show us how to use these strategies successful when teaching content. This will allow teachers to unpack the reading standards and make them relevant to content standards”. Teacher B stated, “Teachers need explicit teaching model to effectively implement ARI strategies in the content they teach. The district needs to invest in on-going training that is geared towards helping high school

teachers with implementing ARI strategies to fidelity. Peer coaching is also necessary to ensure implementation of these strategies”. Teacher C stated, “To continue with the implementation of the ARI Strategies, teachers need more embedded PD, more opportunities for peer observations/modeling for teachers, and more training for teachers to unwrap both reading standards and content standards. I would also offer incentives for teachers for them to buy in with teaching literacy across the curriculum. By continuing peer modeling of the ARI strategies, teachers can learn how to implement ARI strategies successfully in their content area from peers who have mastered it. This allows teachers to experience their own success”. Teacher D responded, “ I think focused observations need to be conducted to provide opportunities for teachers to use the ARI strategies with content material. I honestly think if teachers can observe other teachers who are effectively using ARI strategies and debrief afterwards, this may help teachers use of these strategies within their own content. This type of peer coaching allows teachers to see how ARI strategies are implemented across the content areas.” Both Teacher E and Teacher F stated that more professional development on ARI strategies specific to math is needed. These teachers want to see how ARI strategies can be implemented in teaching math content to their students. Both teachers agree that peer coaching will help them with implementing ARI strategies effectively with teaching mathematics. These participants expressed it would help them if they were given time to collaborate across content areas for planning purposes and to share expertise.

Summary of Results

A Summary of Results is presented in tabular form in Appendix C. The themes

represented the varied responses of the participants regarding implementing ARI strategies across content areas. Themes emerged from the data that indicated that teachers mostly implemented ARI strategies specific to their content area and ongoing training is needed in specific content areas to assist teachers with successful implementation.

Teachers were open and honest about their experiences with implementing ARI strategies in their specific content, therefore giving insight into teachers' concerns and needs. While the interview data showed evidence of teacher compliance with the district reading initiative to implement literacy strategies across content areas in high schools, there was also a clear indication of reasons some teachers did not implement ARI strategies. The primary reasons given for not implementing ARI was time and a mismatch with content. Such was the case with mathematics teacher responses.

Discussion

The interview process was instrumental in examining teachers' experiences with implementing ARI strategies in their content areas, as mandated by the school district on the secondary level. For the most part, participants seemed comfortable talking and sharing their experiences with implementing ARI strategies into their content area, therefore, I trusted that they were open and honest with their responses. Most of the teachers were not opposed to implementing ARI strategies into content instruction. Three science teachers and one social studies teacher discussed how they implement ARI strategies into their content areas 3 to 4 times weekly to help students activate prior knowledge, locate important information in the text, build background knowledge, analyze and interpret graphs and charts, cite textual evidence to answer questions. In

addition, teachers expressed that they see the value in using ARI strategies to teach literacy across the content areas.

Math teachers expressed that implementing ARI strategies in math would take time away from students learning math concepts. Another challenge that teachers expressed was that ARI strategies are not relevant to the math curriculum. Teachers did not see the value in using ARI strategies to teach literacy in math, since math concepts are more related to the use of numerical expressions.

In regard to professional development, the majority of the teachers in this study expressed that on-going, job-embedded training is needed to implement ARI strategies across the content areas. Teachers stated that it will help to have a literacy coach or someone to guide them through implementing the strategies to fidelity. Other teachers talked about seeing someone who teaches the same content implementing the ARI strategies. Teachers expressed that more practice with the ARI strategies in their classrooms is needed to help them effectively use these strategies. The teachers emphasized that the ARI training needs to be content-specific.

In regard to the philosophical and conceptual frameworks of the study, I observed the following. Korte and Mercurio (2017) suggested that a key focal point of pragmatism is on practice and action. I noticed from the responses that each teacher's level of thinking or comfort impacted if they implemented ARI strategies in their content area. Finally, I noticed evidence of Rogers' diffusion of innovation theory. Rogers' diffusion of innovation theory noted that people go through the five-step process at different paces, which influences how other people around them respond and adapt to the innovation

(2003). All participants took part in the ARI training, but only 4 out of 6 participants actually implemented what they learned during the professional development. Research question 1 examined the extent of ARI implementation by content area teachers. This question focused on practical knowledge and application, which explained practice and action-the basis for pragmatism and all five stages of Rogers' diffusion of innovation theory. Stages 1 through 3 of Rogers' theory related to research Questions 2 and 3, which examined reasons content area teachers do not implement ARI strategies and ideas for future professional development on ARI.

Conclusion

This section provided support for a basic qualitative research design and justification for rejection of other research designs. A basic qualitative approach was selected to seek answers to the research questions through specific information about behaviors, opinions, experiences, and beliefs (Merriam, 2009). Justification for rejection of other research methods such as quantitative, mixed-methods, and case studies were discussed. After deciding to use openness and exploration to answer the research questions, other research methods were rejected. I explained the purposeful sampling procedures for selecting participants and provided detailed information to protect human subjects. Data collection included interviews. Finally, this section included the procedures for data analysis and to validate the results. Results were presented for each research question and a summary of results was presented. Next, Section 3 details components of the project, presents a literature review in support of the project, and outlines the plans for presentation of the study results.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

The problem in this study is that content-area teachers at the local research site were not implementing ARI strategies they were trained on to teach literacy across content areas. As a result, Grade 9 students at the research site still have difficulties reading content-specific texts. The purpose of this project study was to examine the extent of ARI implementation, reasons for not implementing these strategies, and ideas for future professional development for ARI implementation. To accomplish this purpose, I conducted a basic qualitative research study. The project described in this section was developed based on the findings of the research study. The primary data source was interviews with the participants. In this section of the project, I provide a description of the project, intended goals, and rationale. I also include a comprehensive literature review of the project. After the literature review, I offer possible resources and supports needed to implement the project.

Project Overview and Goals

The project is a comprehensive professional development/training plan for assisting secondary content area teachers with ARI implementation in their own content. The project consists of ongoing job-embedded professional development, a resource guide with content-specific literacy strategies, and collaborative planning sessions. The first part of the comprehensive professional development/training plan focuses on ongoing, job-embedded professional development opportunities to address participants' concerns with continuous support for ARI implementation in all content areas. A planned

calendar has been designed to provide bimonthly professional development/training to content areas teachers with implementing ARI strategies in the content they teach. All ninth grade content area teachers and the literacy coach will participate in a 2-hour session with district literacy specialists trained in ARI as well as fellow colleagues. The building administrator has planned a modified schedule for ninth grade students, which includes extended time for art, music, and physical education. The building administrator has also acquired four substitute teachers to relieve content teachers for job-embedded professional development bimonthly during the first semester (October/January/March), if the modified schedule does not work. Teachers will be divided into two groups: English Language Arts and Social Studies (Group 1) and Math and Science (Group 2). The purpose is to learn from their colleagues and acquire ongoing assistance with ARI implementation from trained ARI specialists. Teachers will have the opportunity to observe a colleague implementing ARI strategies in the content they teach through a 45-minute demonstration lesson. The district literacy specialists will provide teachers with a look-for form to complete as they observe the demonstration lesson. Following the demonstration lesson, teachers will have a group discussion about what worked and what did not work in the lesson. At this point, the literacy specialists will clarify as needed. The next step is to have teachers and literacy specialists work together to plan a side-by-side lesson to teach to a group of ninth grade students during the fifth period in their own content area the same day of the professional development. In addition, the school literacy coach will provide more support to teachers as needed. The goal is for all ninth grade content-area teachers to be able to acquire ongoing assistance with ARI

implementation in their own content trained ARI literacy specialists, school literacy coach, and fellow colleagues.

The second part of the comprehensive professional development/training plan will focus on selecting appropriate ARI strategies for each content to address participants' concerns with ARI strategies not being relevant to the content they teach. In this project, a resource guide will be created to provide teachers with a compiled list and sample lesson plans for incorporating selected ARI strategies in each content. These strategies will assist teachers with strategic teaching (before-during-after) and incorporating literacy into all contents. The resource guide will be provided to each ninth grade teacher to ensure that there is consistency across the content areas. The goal is to help content area teachers identify ARI strategies that fit the content they teach and consistently use ARI strategies across the content areas to reinforce the state of Alabama's literacy expectations for secondary students.

The final part of the comprehensive professional development/training plan will focus on collaboration among teachers and administrators within the school to address participants' concerns with time to plan for ARI implementation across the content areas. Monthly collaborative planning sessions will be scheduled for teachers to collaborate with each other as well as with school level administrators. Substitute teachers will be used to cover classes while content area teachers participate in collaborative planning for 75 minutes. Collaborative planning will require teachers to communicate with colleagues, share expertise, and plan lessons. The goal is to provide collaboration, support, and consistent communication between teachers and administrators to promote buy-in and

successful ARI implementation across the content areas.

Rationale

The goal of this study and project was to support and extend the implementation of ARI in high schools. The school district is in its fifth year of ARI implementation in secondary schools and has invested more resources to fully implementing ARI in Grades K through 12. The three research questions were designed in response to the problem in this study. The problem in this study was that content-area teachers were not implementing ARI strategies they were trained on to teach literacy across content areas. I examined the extent of ARI implementation, reasons for not implementing these strategies, and ideas for future professional development for ARI. This project is not intended to evaluate the implementation of ARI in secondary schools because this does not align with the study's guiding research questions.

Because the school district is continuing to move forward with ARI implementation across the grade levels, I have considered developing a comprehensive professional development/training plan to assist high school content area teachers with successfully implementing ARI in the content they teach. Additionally, the purpose of this project is to provide participants with professional development to support with implementing ARI with fidelity and collaboration. The project includes teacher participation in bimonthly job-embedded and monthly collaborative planning sessions. It also includes a resource guide for teachers with ARI strategies used in each content. All parts of this project will be designed to give all ninth grade teachers the opportunity to plan and collaborate with each other across the content areas. This will provide teachers

with the support they need for ARI implementation across the content areas. The design of this project will focus on teachers being collaborators and school-level and district-level administrators being supporters. It also focuses on the development of on-going job-embedded professional development, a resource guide with selected content-specific ARI strategies, and collaborative planning sessions. This comprehensive professional development plan is feasible for high school content area teachers as it addresses all three research questions.

Research Question 1: How do the teachers describe the extent to which they are using ARI strategies? The results of the data analysis showed that content area teachers participating in this study revealed that ARI strategies were implemented in their content instruction. ARI strategies were implemented to activate prior knowledge, make predictions, generate questions, analyze charts and graphs, and locate information in the text. The project will be designed to provide content teachers with job-embedded professional development to acquire ongoing assistance with ARI implementation in their own content as well as continued support from ARI trained literacy specialists and school-level administrators. The project supports consistent use of the same ARI strategies across the content areas, regardless to what each teacher teaches. Content area teachers who teach ninth grade students at the research site will have had additional training on-site to implement ARI strategies and tailor these strategies to fit the content in which they teach.

Research Question 2: What are the reasons that ninth grade content-area teachers note for not using the ARI instructional strategies to teach literacy? The data analysis

showed that content area teachers participating in this study who taught mathematics revealed that ARI strategies were not implemented in math instruction due to lack of relevance to the content. The project will support ARI implementation with all content area teachers at the research site as it builds their knowledge on what ARI strategies fit the content they teach. The resource guide will provide content area teachers with content-specific ARI strategies to use and sample lessons to demonstrate these strategies being used in each content.

Research Question 3: What on-going professional development do these content-area teachers suggest be offered to assist them with using ARI strategies to teach literacy across content areas? The results of this study revealed that content area teachers felt that coaching from the literacy coach, continuous job-embedded training, and time to work with other teachers are needed to assist them with implementing ARI strategies to teach literacy across the content areas. This project will be designed to provide on-going, job-embedded professional development, onsite training for teachers with the literacy coach and ARI trained literacy specialists from the district, and collaborative planning for teachers. This will provide teachers with the support they need to fully implement ARI in their own content area. Teachers will be able to share their expertise and resources as well as collaborate and communicate with each other in a nonthreatening, learning environment.

Review of Literature

The method I used to gather articles for this literature review was to focus on the research topic, question, and problem. Key phrases such as *professional development for*

implementing reading initiatives in high schools, collaborative planning in high schools, collaboration among teachers, specific literacy strategies for contents, and coaching content area teachers were researched using Sage Journals, ProQuest, Google Scholar, the National Center of Educational Statistics, and ERIC to locate articles. Literature was selected for the review if it contributed to the extent of ARI implementation by content area teachers and reasons for not implementing ARI strategies to teach literacy across content areas.

The review of literature presented in the first section of the project study supported the need for content teachers to learn how to teach and incorporate literacy strategies across the content areas. Students in secondary schools are expected to comprehend the information from the text and apply what they learned from it. The national adoption of the Common Core standards has caused school districts to look for ways to align the curriculum with content standards (Consagra, 2013). School districts are providing content area teachers with professional development initiatives targeted at helping secondary content-area teachers incorporate literacy strategies to improve students' reading skills. Bacevich and Salinger (2006) noted that ARI provides training for secondary content-area teachers on comprehension strategies, reading and writing connection literacy across the curriculum, and informal and formal assessments to potentially change teaching practices in the classroom. Teachers are given opportunities to learn how to teach literacy skills across the content areas to students with various reading abilities and learning styles. In the review of the literature, I also presented background information for the conceptual framework of this project study. Pragmatism

served as the conceptual framework and was supported by Rogers's (2003) diffusion of innovation theory.

The literature review for this section of the project study supports the findings from the data analysis. Vaughn, Swanson, Roberts et al. (2013) noted that the main challenge for secondary content-area teachers with implementing reading initiatives is how to integrate literacy strategies into their content. The review of literature for the development of this project supports continuous and collaborative professional development to address the challenge content teachers have with implementing literacy strategies into their content area.

Professional Development for Content-Area Teachers

Brozo et al.(2013) noted that effective reading practices on the secondary level is not possible without meaningful professional development. Professional development for teachers is mostly used to introduce, educate, or implement new strategies and/or initiatives (Armstrong, 2016; Zarrow, 2014). It can be a process in which teachers improve their teaching skills to meet the needs of all students, especially in the area of reading. Lockwood, McCombs, and Marsh (2010) suggested that professional development promotes active learning, collaboration, and reflection among content-area teachers to help them understand what instructional strategies are most effective when teaching students to learn how to read comprehensively. Zarrow noted that on-going professional development for high school content- area teachers can be useful in changing their instructional practices when teaching students to develop reading comprehension across the content areas.

Professional development for teaching literacy skills in high school classes is necessary for content area teachers. Fang and Pace (2013) suggested that learning content is related to reading words fluently and accurately; using vocabulary that is needed to comprehend; and having the necessary critical thinking skills to understand content. Fang et al. noted that through literacy professional development content area teachers can learn how to teach reading skills in an explicit and systematic to help students develop the necessary vocabulary to relate to what they read and what they know, to connect new content to existing knowledge to enhance comprehension skills, and to apply learning through writing. Fisher and Frey (2014) believed that all content area teachers should know how to provide instruction using literacy strategies that can help students make sense of content-specific texts and to read, write, and communicate effectively. Orr et al. (2014) suggested that subject area teachers need to be able to assist students with how to comprehend, interpret, and evaluate content-specific texts. Calo et al. (2015) noted that high school content-area teachers in math, science, social studies need continuous professional development to help develop their instructional practices teach literacy across the content areas. The project study discovered that content area teachers need additional training /professional development with implementing ARI strategies across the content areas to teach students reading strategies for before, during, and after reading content-specific texts. The type of professional development this project will present is job-embedded training, which gives teachers the opportunity to collaborate with other teachers as they learn to implement ARI in their own content area.

Collaborative Planning

In this project, collaboration is an essential component of the ongoing, job-embedded professional development. Research indicated that teachers should no longer work in isolation to learn how to implement new initiatives, instead teachers should work in learning communities together (Jordan & Kaplan, 2014; Ladda & Jacobs, 2015; Woods, 2014). Jordan and Kaplan noted that working with other teachers in different contents help teachers to construct knowledge through sharing ideas, expertise, and best practices. The authors added that collaboration among teachers from different content areas has shown to improve student learning. Ladda and Jacobs suggested that collaboration happens when teachers intentionally come together to discuss their work, ideas, challenges, and questions. Szczesiul and Huizenga (2014) noted that collaboration among teachers during job-embedded professional development provide opportunities for social interaction that is focused on purposeful conversations and meaningful issues. Woods pointed out that when teachers meet on a regular basis to discuss best practices, it strengthens collaboration and learning. In addition, giving teachers the opportunity to connect and communicate with each other to share ideas, best practices, and expertise is a necessary component to implementing ARI strategies across the content (Bacevich & Salinger, 2006).

Jordan and Kaplan (2014) found that collaboration among teachers does not often happen during professional development, faculty meetings, or team meetings. For this reason, collaboration among teachers should be planned to support professional growth and implementation of new initiatives (Jordan & Kaplan, 2014). This project will allow

monthly collaborative planning time for content area teachers. Collaborative planning for teachers will give teachers support, time to plan for instruction together, and collaboration with each other across the content areas. The ultimate goal for this is to assist teachers with ARI implementation in all content areas.

Literacy Coaches in Content-Area Classes

Research in secondary reading instruction has caused educators to rethink professional development to focus on long-term efforts to enhance content-area teachers' knowledge and instructional practices (Howe & Barry, 2014). Coaching is a form of highly focused professional development that can be a potential vehicle for improving adolescent readers' reading skills and teachers' instructional practices in the classroom (Calo et al., 2015; Zarrow, 2014). A literacy coach assists content-area teachers with developing instructional literacy practices that will help students use and continue to - build their reading skills through content learning rather than trying to make content-area teachers become reading teachers. Armstrong (2016) suggested that reading coaches help content-area teachers improve the quality of their instruction, combining both content and literacy. Lockwood et al. (2010) found that professional development with reading coaches in a Florida middle school did improve content-area teachers' knowledge of research-based reading instruction and increased their usage of literacy practices during content instruction. Stephens et al. (2011) reported that the implementation of the South Carolina Reading Initiative on the secondary level demonstrated that reading coaches affected the practices and beliefs of content-area teachers when teaching adolescent readers in their classes.

Using literacy coaches in secondary classes can help content-area teachers become more familiar with instructional strategies used to teach adolescent readers in high school to comprehend content-specific texts across the curriculum. Devine, Houssemand, and Meyers (2013) noted that coaching is an effective way to support and assist teachers with incorporating scaffolding, differentiation, and cooperative learning activities into their content instruction. Lockwood et al.(2010) explained that literacy coaching enhances content-area teachers' fidelity of research-based practices when assisting students with comprehending content-specific texts. Cronin (2014) recommend that content-area teachers closely work with literacy coaches to learn how to incorporate literacy skills to the content they teach to help students understand what they are learning. ARI coaching focuses on the collaboration between the teacher and the coach framed around a goal for student learning (ARI, 2015).

Content-Specific Strategies

At the high school level, students are expected to be able to analyze content specific text and think critically in order to build content knowledge (Ford-Connors, Dougherty, Robertson, & Paratore, 2015). Ford-Connors et al. noted that content area teachers may learn to provide effective reading instruction to improve students' literacy skills in high school if teachers move away from heavily relying on lectures and textbooks in the classrooms. Cronin (2014) suggested that content-area teachers should use a range of strategies during instruction to help students learn how to monitor their comprehension when they don't understand what they are reading. Fang and Pace (2013) maintained that content-area teachers need to teach adolescents comprehension skills

across the disciplines in order for students to learn content, read comprehensively, think critically, and write fluently. Teachers use these strategies to help students clarify and construct meaning when they encounter confusing parts as they read text. In other words, these strategies involve active thinking which lead to comprehensive reading and content learning (Goldman, 2012). Students learn to acquire information from the text, to make inference using details from the text, and to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate what they have learned from what they have read in the text. As a result of the findings, to address teachers' concern with ARI strategies not being relevant to the content which they teach, I examined strategies that can be used in specific or all content areas. These strategies focus on engaging instruction to help students comprehend content specific text (Fisher & Frey, 2014).

Close reading is a research-based strategy that teaches students to slow down their reading in order to analyze what they are reading. ARI coaches identified close reading as mostly used in language arts, science, and social studies because of the significant amount of reading in these content (Bacevich & Salinger, 2006). This method allows students to read the text closely through rereading, annotating, summarizing, self-explanation, and determining. Fisher and Frey (2014) asserted that close reading of a specific text helps struggling readers comprehend the text while reading in small segments and at different rates. The authors noted that close reading of a text consists of investigating a chunk of the text at a time with multiple readings. Fisher and Frey (2014) explained that students deeply analyze and evaluate the text through questioning and discussion. Hinchman and Moore (2013) stated that close reading is the key to increasing

a student's reading comprehension because it provides opportunities for students to identify important vocabulary words in text, key details and important information, and meaningful reading. Hinchman and Moore suggested that close reading supports content literacy by using content specific texts while focusing on the details and vocabulary in each content area.

Small group instruction is another scaffolding technique used to give students with similar learning needs instruction from the teacher using text that require instruction and support (Fisher & Frey, 2013). The authors noted that small group instruction in secondary classrooms is not limited to adolescent readers with reading difficulties, but to help the teacher gain an understanding of what students do to monitor their reading when they are confused. Focusing on a smaller set of literacy-related skills at a time, content-area teachers provide opportunities for students to practice on the skills with the teacher and other peers through interaction with the text. Small group instruction supports all content areas with helping students to understand what is being taught.

Reciprocal teaching is an instructional approach used to facilitate student reading and discussion about what they are reading (Fisher & Frey, 2013). This approach emphasizes teaching adolescent readers essential cognitive reading comprehension strategies to predict, clarify, question, and summarize the content of the reading material (Goldman, 2012). Reciprocal teaching explicitly teaches students about predicting, clarifying, questioning, and summarizing using scaffolding to engage students in discussing what they are reading and learning. The discussion quickly moves from teacher-dialogue to student-dialogue. The student takes the role of teacher as they use the

strategies to support and monitor comprehension. Research suggested that reciprocal teaching is an effective strategy in improving reading comprehension (Cantrell et al., 2009; Fisher & Frey, 2014; Goldman, 2012).

All of the strategies mentioned above can be helpful in each content area. The project will create a resource guide with content-specific strategies such as close reading, small group instruction, reciprocal teaching, and many more to assist teachers in secondary classes with implementing ARI strategies within their own content area to teach literacy. Additionally, when teachers use the resource guide it will provide them with sample lessons using the strategies in a specific content. The resource guide will ensure that there is consistency across the content areas. Teachers will be able to identify ARI strategies that fit the content they teach and consistently use ARI strategies across the content areas to reinforce literacy expectations for secondary students.

Project Description

The project was developed in response to results of the study. The project (see Appendix A) begins with a PowerPoint presentation to share the results of the study with administrators on the school level and other interested colleagues. The sections below list potential resources and existing supports, potential barriers and solutions, implementation and timetable, roles and responsibilities, and project evaluation.

Potential Resources and Existing Supports

The potential resources and existing supports currently in place to implement this project are district-wide literacy specialists and ARI Resource Guide. First, the literacy specialists will work with content area teachers to provide ARI training during the school

day. Teachers will receive job-embedded professional development and coaching from literacy specialists through demonstration lessons, side-by-side teaching, and planning for content-specific instruction using ARI strategies. I will construct a modified schedule to provide the time literacy specialists need to work with content area teachers. I selected to use district-wide literacy specialists because they are trained every 3 years with ARI. I intend to use the literacy specialists as on-going support for content area teachers with ARI implementation.

Second, an ARI Resource Guide was developed by the Alabama Department of Education in 1998 and later revised in 2007. The resource guide contains a list of strategies used to enhance student learning and literacy needs in grades K through 8. A description of the strategy is given to help teachers with when and how the strategy is used in instruction. I will use a few of these strategies to develop a resource guide for high school content area teachers specific to the content they teach. I will compose a detailed description of each strategy, a sample lesson using the strategy in a specific content, and additional activities using the strategy in the subject. The resource guide will be titled, *Content-Specific Literacy Strategies for High School Teachers in Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies*. Content teachers will receive training on how to use the strategies in the content area they teach. Additional support from the literacy coach in the school will be needed throughout the school year to compile more strategies for the resource guide, modeling those strategies for teachers if necessary, and working with teachers during collaborative planning to plan instruction.

Potential Barriers and Solutions

One potential barrier that exist to prevent all components of the project from happening is time. A lack of support from administrators to allow teachers time to participate in professional development training during the regular school day would be a barrier. Administrators would need to develop an alternate schedule for students in order for teachers to participate in the job-embedded professional development and collaborative planning. The schedule will need to combine two 45-minute class periods (ex. 8:30 to 10:00) to allow teachers time to work with literacy specialists and collaborate with each other. Special area teachers such as art, music, physical education, career tech, and counseling will need to work with the principal to provide additional class time to their schedule twice a month. Additional substitute teachers will also be needed to ensure that classes are not overcrowded. Various engaging activities will need to be plan for students to participate in during the extended class time.

Another existing barrier could be the attitude of the teachers. Teachers may not be willing to use the literacy strategies recommended in this project to teach literacy in their content area. A possible solution to this barrier could be to allow teachers to work with the literacy coach in the building to compile a list of strategies with step-by-step directions on how to use the strategies in their classes.

Implementation and Timetable

After gaining approval from my project study committee, I will begin implementation of the project. To implement the project, I will use a step-by-step process to explain the project and communicate expectations. Step 1 will involve an initial

meeting with the building administrator to discuss the project and schedule a time to share the project with the faculty. Before sharing the project with the faculty, I will need to meet with the district literacy specialists and the building literacy coach to construct a schedule for the professional development and collaborative planning with teachers. Afterwards, I will share the project with the faculty. Next, I will use the ARI Resource Guide for K through 8 to compile a list of strategies that can be used in high school content areas. I will identify the strategies, compose a detailed description of each strategy, and plan a sample lesson for a specific content using the strategy to include in the *Content-Specific Literacy Strategies for High School Teachers in Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies* resource guide. Once I have completed these tasks and the project has been finalized, I will send communication to the faculty regarding the dates and times for professional development, collaborative planning, and reviewing the resource guide and/or needed training. An example of the timetable can be found in Appendix A.

Roles and Responsibilities

My main responsibility is to share the findings of this study with the building administrator. During my presentation, I plan to effectively communicate the project results and answer any questions or concerns that may arise. If the building administrator accepts the recommendations presented in my project, I will assume the lead role and welcome any support from him. Another responsibility will be to collaborate with the district Director of Literacy Support, literacy specialists, and the building literacy coach to gain their support and to explain what role they will assume during the implementation

of my project.

Project Evaluation

Evaluation in this project is the process of determining what worked or what did not work. Creswell (2012) suggested that formative evaluation is an internal method for determining the worth of a program while the activities are in progress. Creswell noted that formative evaluation serves as a design for judgment or improvement of the program. Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtler (2010) suggested that formative evaluation gives the program developer a way to analyze how well the goals or objectives are being met in the program.

The type of formative evaluation that will be used to evaluate the project goals for job-embedded professional development and collaborative planning is a questionnaire. The project goal for job-embedded professional development is to provide content area teachers in grade 9 with ongoing assistance with ARI implementation in the content area they teach. The project goal for collaborative planning is to provide collaboration, support, and consistent communication between teachers and administrators to promote buy-in and successful ARI implementation across the content areas. A specific set of written questions regarding the job-embedded professional development and collaborative planning will be used to gather specific information from teachers (Appendix A). The questions and answers will be designed to gather information about teachers' participation in the professional development and collaborative planning. I will review teachers' responses to the questionnaire to determine the effectiveness of the job-embedded professional development and collaborative planning. Also, I will set aside

time to have one-on-one listening sessions for the purpose of encouraging teachers to provide suggestions on how to improve both the job-embedded professional development and collaborative planning. The feedback from teachers will indicate the participation level of teachers and determine the next steps.

Next, I will ask teachers to keep a reflective journal regarding their use of the content specific literacy strategies found in the resource guide (Appendix A). The goal of developing a content-specific literacy guide is to help content area teachers identify ARI strategies that fit and consistently used in the content they teach to reinforce the state literacy expectations. A reflective journal will be used as formative evaluation to address how teachers are using the support provided to them from the resource guide. The feedback from teachers will be reviewed to determine the need for more training on specific literacy strategies or the need to remove or add literacy strategies based on how teachers use them in their content. The ongoing support throughout this project should help content area teachers become more familiar and comfortable with implementing ARI strategies in their content area, which will support the district reading initiative for full ARI implementation in high schools. Also, the project will allow teachers to show support to each other by sharing expertise, knowledge, practices, and ideas.

Project Implications

This project may contribute to positive social change by assisting school administrators and district leaders with identifying barriers content area teachers face implementing reading initiatives in the content they teach. Consagra (2013) noted that the national adoption of the Common Core standards has caused school districts to look for

ways to align the curriculum with the standards. Because of the adopted Common Core standards, content area teachers on the secondary level are mandated to teach literacy in all content areas (Consagra, 2013). Through my research, I have examined the extent content area teachers implement ARI strategies within their content, reasons content area teachers do not implement ARI strategies, and future professional development needed for ARI implementation. Teachers are mostly responsible for the delivery of reading initiatives in the school, and district leaders should be aware of teachers' experiences with the implementation process (Calo et al., 2015). The problem that guided this study was that content area teachers were not implementing ARI strategies to teach literacy across the content areas. An awareness of the information in this project study will create social change and support content literacy in high schools.

Summary

In Section 3, I presented specific details about the project deliverable, a professional development training presented in Appendix A. Section 3 also included a review of literature to support ongoing, job-embedded professional development, a resource guide with content-specific literacy strategies, and collaborative planning. Section 3 outlined potential barriers, existing supports, and possible solutions. It also contained the rationale for the project, a proposal for implementation, and a plan to evaluate the project. I described the implications for social change. Section 4 will present the strength and limitations of the project as well as my reflections.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Introduction

The purpose of the project was to examine the extent of ARI implementation, reasons for not implementing these strategies, and ideas for future professional development for ARI implementation. Content area teachers responded to questions about ARI implementation during interviews. I learned a great deal about the extent of ARI implementation in their content areas, reasons for not implementing ARI, and the type of professional development teachers need to successfully implement ARI. The results from the study influenced the development of the project. The professional development plan can inform future training for ARI implementation in all content areas. In this section, I evaluate the strengths and limitations of the project. I also provide additional information on recommendations for this study.

Project Strengths and Limitations

The project was designed to address the reasons content area teachers stated for not fully implementing ARI strategies within their content areas and what they need in order to successfully implement ARI. The project offers research-based strategies to assist content area teachers with ARI implementation. The project provides ongoing, job-embedded professional development and support from the building administrators, literacy coach, and district literacy specialists. Content area teachers will learn about selected ARI strategies specific to the content they teach for successful implementation. The building literacy coach and teachers will be able to collaborate across the content areas to provide support to each other. Teachers will work together to plan instruction

how to use ARI strategies in their content area and share expertise and ideas. This will occur monthly during the school day. Overall, the project gives high school administrators insight to what is needed for teachers to teach literacy in their content areas. The project also supports implementation of the district reading initiative (ARI) in secondary classes.

The limitation to this project is that it was developed based on data collected from six content area teachers in the district who teach ninth grade. Although I was able to obtain the data I needed from the small sample size in my study, the input of more content teachers in other grades may have added to the development of the project. The evaluation of the project will allow me to gain insight from each participant, and the sessions will provide support to all content area teachers. This may cause the professional development to be extended to more content area teachers in all grades.

Recommendations for Alternate Approaches

The problem in this study is that content-area teachers at the local research site were not implementing the ARI strategies they were trained on to teach literacy across content areas. One recommendation to address this problem would be for professional development specialists and school leaders to lead purposeful discussions with content area teachers monthly about the literacy needs of their students and why ARI strategies are important to promote content literacy. Another recommendation would be for the building literacy coach and content area teachers to work together weekly to address any concerns they may have with implementing ARI into their content. In addition, it would be beneficial to the building administrator to facilitate collaboration between the literacy

coach and content area teachers to ensure that everyone understands the importance of literacy across the content areas.

Although a basic qualitative design was used to conduct research, the problem could be approached in the future using a phenomenological perspective. In examining the problem, the results of the findings from a phenomenological perspective could contribute to understanding of phenomenon. Interviews would be used to understand how content area teachers experienced their learning of ARI strategies during the training. The findings would help administrators to better understand why content area teachers were not implementing ARI.

Scholarship, Project Development, and Leadership and Change

There are several steps to the research process that are necessary when conducting research. First, I identified the research problem, constructed guiding research questions, and selected a conceptual framework to collect data. Next, I chose a data collection method for the research study. I decided on interviews to collect data from the research questions.

Scholarship

I discovered that conducting research is a tedious, time-consuming, strategic, and systematic process that required an extensive approach to answer the research questions. Although I constructed the research questions, I found myself revising them often in order to gather the information I needed for the study. Gathering a variety of articles and resources for the research study helped me to strategically organize the information in a way that was beneficial to answering each research question. I learned to reduce bias as I

collected data. As I listened to the interview responses for each participant, I reframed from making any type of comments either positive or negative. This allowed me to be a more active listener. Finally, I learned that adhering to proper procedures and timeframes during scholarly research is a key element to the research process.

I learned a great deal about myself as a scholar. First and foremost, I see myself as a lifelong learner. I affirmed my passion for promoting literacy across the content areas in secondary schools. As a former elementary teacher for 11 years, I believed that reading strategies should be implemented in Grades K through 12. I wanted to know what I could do to implement the same reading initiative in elementary schools into secondary schools. This project has allowed me to learn all I can about implementing ARI strategies within content areas and share it with my colleagues.

I read numerous articles on implementing reading initiatives in content areas and more than 25 dissertations on literacy across the content areas. I found that my organizational skills were very much needed to avoid getting lost in all the research articles. As a visual kinesthetic learner, I needed to be able to see and manipulate what I was learning. Therefore, I printed every article I read in order to annotate and highlight. I read over 125 peer-reviewed articles to gather information for my project study.

I was frustrated a lot and experienced writer's block often. I found that I had to take time for myself to when I was feeling anxious or tired. I discovered by stepping away from my project for a few days helped me to refocused and be more alert. I learned to be more skillful with time management. I was able to pace myself throughout this process. I learned to work continuously by taking small steps as I worked on my proposal

every day. By doing this, I worked towards more important things like developing my skills in research methodology.

Project Development

Specific components were needed to complete the development of this project. First, a description of the project was given to describe how it would be used to assist secondary content area teachers with ARI implementation in their own content. Next, a rationale for why this type of project was discussed. The findings discovered from the data collection, analysis process, and problem were related to the project. Then, a review of literature was conducted using current research to support project development and recommendations.

I learned several things during the project development. The type of evaluation selected was formative. As the project was developed, I was a little concerned about how the project would be seen by the building principal and the teachers. I was confident that the research supported the project and could support teachers with implementing ARI within the content area to teach literacy. I developed this project to assist teachers with ARI implementation and to support them with the district reading initiative. I talked with the building principal, literacy coach, and content area teachers participating in this project to ensure it was aligned with the district reading initiative. I was able to collaborate with fellow colleagues who were more skilled and experienced with ARI implementation.

As a project developer, I quickly learned that the learning process is continuous and necessary when trying to complete the different stages of projects. I have also learned

to appreciate critical feedback. Searching for the best way to develop this project was necessary to help me with learning from others what worked and what did not work. I had to be able to build trust in myself and others to get through this process. I have learned how to give critical feedback and to assist others as needed.

Leadership and Change

I have gained a stronger passion for scholarly leadership and change. I was a high school instructional coach for 4 years where I was responsible for on the job training with colleagues. As a middle school assistant principal, I was given autonomy to lead the district literacy initiative. I volunteered to facilitate professional development training at the research site. As a leader, I think it is an essential component of the principalship to lead with the desire to make a difference and promote change.

As a practitioner, I have become more assertive and vocal about my needs for the project study. I constantly voiced my concerns to my committee about writing this project study as my own and not to depict someone else's thinking. I changed my research proposal several times before moving forward to the next stage. I changed the research title, problem, research questions, research design, conceptual framework, and sample more than once during this process. This was a very frustrating, stressful, and tedious process, and quite honestly, I felt like giving up. Although I faced a lot of disappointment, I decided to continue with the project study. I advocated for what I needed from my committee, participants in the study, and the building principal. I often communicated with the building principal to keep him informed of my progress and resources I needed to deliver this project to teachers at the research site. This has helped

me to become a more active listener by learning how to remain silent and listen to others when they speak.

As a lifelong learner, I have learned to take advantage of opportunities that expand my knowledge and enhance my professional growth. Being able to investigate my own practice through research, I have become a practitioner researcher. As I nurtured my curiosity regarding teaching literacy in secondary classes, I have learned what needs to improve to assist high school students with enhancing their literacy skills. This research proposal has instilled in me the desire to learn and investigate. Knowing that each classroom is different, through my own inquiry, I have learned how to adjust my practices in ways that will improve leadership, teaching, and learning.

Reflection on the Importance of the Work

The information presented in this study has importance and relevance for content area teachers as they will learn how to incorporate literacy strategies within the content they teach. One constant is teacher responsibility for student learning. The district reading initiative focuses on content literacy for all secondary teachers. The implementation of ARI supports teachers with literacy practices in their content area, thus impacting the need for continued research in this area, I learned that many content area teachers understand the need to incorporate literacy strategies into their content area. A few teachers in this study willingly admitted that they did not feel comfortable with implementing ARI across the content area to teach literacy. I discovered that these teachers desired collaboration with other teachers across the content areas.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

My study and project could impact social change for students, teachers, and administrators. The work contained in both the study and project is relevant for high school students as they prepare for a world that relies heavily on technology and literacy daily, whether they choose college or a career. It is necessary for students to be able to read and comprehend what they are reading in print, Internet, or social media. Next, teachers are responsible for student learning content and literacy skills. The results of the study and project implementation can help administrators and teachers understand how to better implement district-wide reading initiatives in secondary schools to support the literacy needs of all students, a positive social change.

Fisher and Frey (2014) noted that district reading initiatives make it clear that all teachers are responsible for literacy. Because of this responsibility being placed on content area teachers in secondary classes, more research is needed on literacy across the content areas. I also recommend future research is needed on removing barriers or challenges for content area teachers with implementing reading initiatives in secondary classes. Regarding the project, I recommend future research is need on using other methods to engage content area teachers with collaborative planning, for example through technology. Also, research is needed on specific content literacy strategies in mathematics and science.

Conclusion

In this section, I reflected on my experiences as a scholar, researcher, practitioner, and project developer. After identifying a problem in my local school setting, I designed

a research study to address this problem. I learned a great deal from analyzing participants' interview responses. I used the data to develop a project to present my findings to building administrators. I developed a comprehensive professional development plan for content area teachers in Grade 9. I reflected on the strengths and limitations. Finally, I gained insight as to my abilities as a literacy leader for social change.

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Appendix A: Professional Development Plan for Assisting Secondary Content Area Teachers With ARI Implementation

Introduction

The project is a comprehensive professional development plan for assisting secondary content area teachers with ARI implementation in their own content area. The project consists of ongoing job-embedded professional development, a resource guide with content-specific literacy strategies, and collaborative planning sessions. The first part of the comprehensive professional development training plan will focus on ongoing, job-embedded professional development opportunities to address participants' concerns with continuous support for ARI implementation in all content areas. The second part of the comprehensive professional development/training plan will focus on selecting appropriate ARI strategies for each content to address participants' concerns with ARI strategies not being relevant to the content in which they teach. In this project, a resource guide will be created to provide teachers with a compiled list and sample lesson plans for incorporating selected ARI strategies in each content. These strategies will assist teachers with strategic teaching (before-during-after) and incorporating literacy into all contents. The resource guide will be provided to each 9th grade teacher to ensure that there is consistency across the content areas. The final part of the comprehensive professional development/training plan will focus on collaboration among teachers and administrators within the school to address participants' concerns with time to plan for ARI implementation across the content areas. The goal of this project is to provide collaboration, support, and consistent communication between teachers and administrators to promote buy-in and successful ARI implementation across the content b

The goal of this project is to support and extend the implementation of ARI in high schools. The professional development training plan was developed to provide ongoing support to content area teachers with implementing ARI strategies across the content areas to teach literacy. The project study discovered that content area teachers need additional training or professional development with implementing ARI strategies across the content areas. Calo et al. (2015) noted that high school content-area teachers in math, science, and social studies need continuous professional development to help develop their skills teaching reading across the content areas. These authors believed that professional development promotes continuous learning for teachers by giving them exposure to current trends and new ideas with teaching reading in content areas. Calo et al. (2015) found that professional development focused on teaching literacy in content areas strengthen teachers' knowledge and practices in the classroom. The type of professional development this project will present is job-embedded training, which gives teachers the opportunity to collaborate with other teachers as they learn to implement ARI in their own content area.

Intended Audience

Audience for this project are the school administrator, content area teachers, and literacy specialists. I will present the findings of the research proposal and recommendations for approval in a PowerPoint presentation.



Comprehensive Professional Development Plan for Implementing ARI Strategies

LaTanya Williams-Collins

Project Study

- The project is a comprehensive professional development/training plan for assisting secondary content area teachers with ARI implementation in their own content. The project consists of ongoing job-embedded professional development, a resource guide with content-specific literacy strategies, and collaborative planning sessions.

Purpose

- The purpose of this study was to examine the extent of ARI implementation, reasons for not implementing these strategies, and ideas for future professional development for ARI implementation. To accomplish this purpose, I conducted a basic qualitative research study to gain insight on the extent content area teachers at the research site implemented ARI, reasons they may not implement these strategies, and ideas teachers may have for future professional development for ARI.

Findings



Finding 1: The content area teachers participating in this study revealed that ARI strategies were implemented in their content instruction a great deal to activate prior knowledge, make predictions, generate questions, analyze charts and graphs, and locating information in the text.



Finding 2: The content area teachers participating in this study who taught mathematics revealed that ARI strategies were not implemented in math instruction due to lack of relevance to the content.



Finding 3: The content area teachers participating in this study revealed that coaching from the literacy coach, continuous job-embedded training, and time to work with other teachers are needed to assist them with implementing ARI strategies.

Project Goals



The first goal of the project is for all 9th grade content-area teachers to be able to acquire ongoing assistance with ARI implementation from in their own content trained ARI literacy specialists, school literacy coach, and fellow colleagues.



The second goal is to help content area teachers identify ARI strategies that fit the content they teach and consistently use ARI strategies across the content areas to reinforce the State of Alabama literacy expectations for secondary students.



The final goal is to provide collaboration, support, and consistent communication between teachers and administrators to promote buy-in and successful ARI implementation across the content areas.

Epistemological & Conceptual Framework

The framework supported the findings in this study. Pragmatism is focused on the practical outcomes of what we think and do. Korte and Mercurio (2017) suggested that a key focal point of pragmatism is on practice and action. I noticed from the responses that each teacher's level of thinking or comfort impacted if they implemented ARI strategies in their content area. Finally, I noticed evidence of Rogers' diffusion of innovation theory. Rogers' diffusion of innovation theory noted that people go through the five-step process at different paces, which influences how other people around them respond and adapt to the innovation (2003). All participants took part in the ARI training, but only 4 out of 6 participants actually implemented what they learned during the professional development.

Research Question #1 examined the extent of ARI implementation by content area teachers. This question focused on practical knowledge and application, which explained practice and action-the basis for pragmatism. This agreed with all five stages of Rogers' diffusion of innovation theory. Stages 1 through 3 of Rogers' theory related to Research Questions #2 and #3, which examined reasons content area teachers do not implement ARI strategies and ideas for future professional development on ARI.

Participants & Facilitators

- ▶ The researcher will assume the lead role in facilitating the project.
- ▶ The researcher will collaborate with district literacy specialists and the building literacy coach to gain their support and to explain what role they will assume during the implementation of my project.
- ▶ Ninth grade content area teachers at the research site will participant in the project.

Timeline



Job-embedded Professional Development (Session 1-Day 1 for 6 hours; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)



Developing Content-Specific Literacy Strategies Resource Guide (Session 2- Day 2 @ 3:00p.m.)



Collaborative Planning (Session 3-Day 3 for 6 hours; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00p.m.)



Sessions will be repeated monthly on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday during the first semester.

Job-embedded ARI Training Session 1

Planning for Instruction:

- ✓ **Preplanning-** The literacy specialist and teacher will review content standards to determine the key concept(s) students should learn in the lesson. This will be used to help write learning targets for the lesson.
- ✓ **Planning-** The literacy specialist and teacher will design a lesson that addresses the key concepts they discussed during preplanning. The literacy coach and teacher will choose a few ARI strategies to teach the concept(s) for a single lesson (before-during-after). Have the teacher think about the responses he/she wants to elicit from their students to determine how students will be assessed in the lesson.

Demonstration Lesson:

- ✓ **Modeling-** The literacy specialist will model the lesson for the teacher using students and provide examples of types of responses that you seek.
- ✓ Encourage students to draw on prior experiences and reframe ideas using their own words when using text resources.

Job-embedded ARI Training Session 1

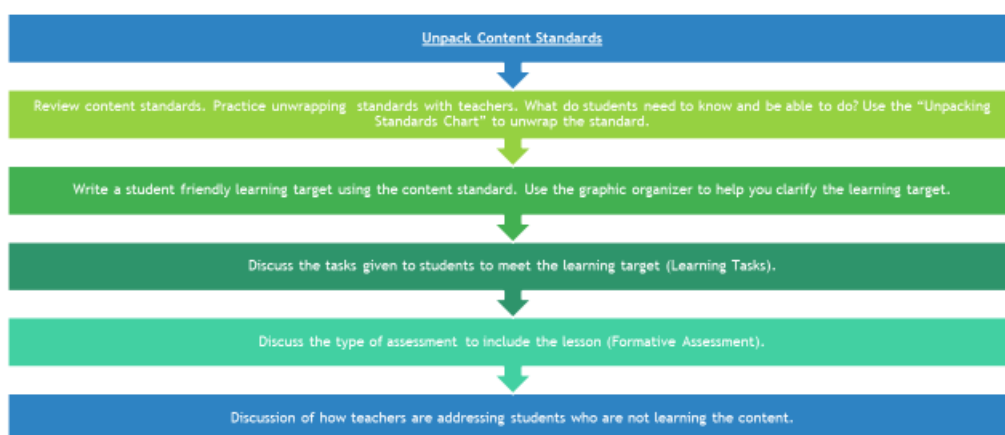
Reflection and Debrief:

- ✓ The literacy specialist allows sufficient time for the teacher to reflect on the coaching cycle process from preplanning to modeled lesson.
- ✓ The literacy specialist will facilitate the discussion and encourage the teacher to explain their thinking and justify their ideas.
- ✓ The literacy specialist discusses next steps with the teacher.

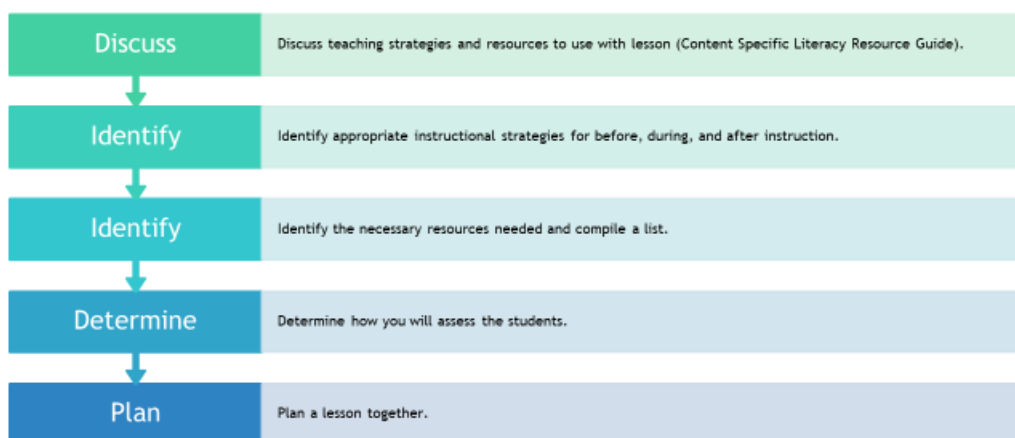
Collaborative Planning Session 3

- ▶ Planning Session Leader- initiates and facilitates collaborative planning and communicates details to all teachers.
- ▶ Timekeeper- keeps everyone on task and manages the time.
- ▶ Recorder- all participants

Collaborative Planning



Collaborative Planning for Content Instruction



Project Evaluation

- ▶ A formative evaluation will be used to determine what worked and what didn't work in the project. The job-embedded professional development and collaborative planning will be evaluated using a questionnaire. A specific set of written questions regarding the job-embedded professional development and collaborative planning will be used to extract specific information from teachers. The questions and answers will be designed to gather information about teachers' participation in the professional development and collaborative planning. Teachers' responses to the questionnaire will be used to determine the effectiveness of the job-embedded professional development and collaborative planning.

Project Evaluation

- ▶ Teachers will keep a reflective journal regarding their use of the content specific literacy strategies found in the resource guide. This type of formative evaluation will address how teachers are using the support provided to them from the resource guide. The feedback from teachers will be reviewed to determine the need for more training on specific literacy strategies or the need to remove or add literacy strategies based on how teachers use them in their content.

Comprehensive Professional Development Training Plan

Purpose

This professional development training plan is intended to help content area teachers implement ARI strategies within their content area. It will provide teachers with on-going support and collaboration among teachers across content areas.

Expectations

Review expectations for job embedded professional development based on Alabama

Reading Initiative (ARI):

- Content
- Reading
- Writing
- Speaking and listening

1. Job-embedded Professional Development (Session 1-August 16)

ARI Coaching Cycle: Use the handout “The Coaching Cycle” to review each stage with teachers and the role of the literacy coach.

- **Pre-planning** is an opportunity for the coach to gather information and resources that may be used to plan together with the teacher.

- **Planning** will occur to provide the teacher and literacy specialist time to work beforehand to accomplish a desired outcome.
- **Modeling, Side by Side, and Teacher Practice-** literacy specialists will demonstrate, support, and/or practice a routine or procedure with content area teachers.
- **Reflecting & Debriefing** will be a professional exchange between the teacher and literacy specialist in order to solidify and articulate what the teacher has gained from the experience.

Work Session

- Each literacy specialist will meet with a content area teacher before he or she teaches a lesson using the ARI strategies to hear the teacher's concerns about the strategies. Teachers and district literacy specialists will review content standards and brainstorm ideas for teaching a science, social studies or math lesson using the ARI strategies in a specific content(pre-planning/planning).
- Literacy specialists will model a content specific lesson for teachers using ARI strategies. The literacy specialists and teachers will teach side by side. This will give teachers support with implementing ARI strategies within the content they teach. Next, the teacher will teach the same lesson in order to practice implementing ARI strategies in their content. The literacy specialist observes the

lesson to see how the teacher does with implementing the ARI strategies(modeling/side-by-side teaching/ teacher practice).

- Teachers and literacy specialists meet together after the lesson to debrief and reflect on the lesson. Both will give suggestions to improve using the ARI strategies in the next lesson.
- This cycle will be repeated several times monthly for teachers to master successful implementation of ARI strategies within the content area they teach.

Example of Coaching Cycle Schedule

<p>ELA & Social Studies</p> <p>Literacy Specialists</p> <p>(A, B, C)</p>	<p>Pre- Planning with Teachers</p> <p>(10/15/19@ 8:00 A.M.)</p> <p>Model for Teachers</p> <p>(10/15/19@9:30 A.M.)</p> <p>Debrief/Reflection</p> <p>(10/15/19 @ 10:45 A.M)</p>	<p>Planning with Teachers for Side by Side Teaching</p> <p>(10/22/19 @ 8:25 A.M.)</p> <p>Side by Side Teaching with Literacy Specialist</p> <p>(10/22/19 during 2nd Period)</p> <p>Teacher Practice</p> <p>(10/22/19 during 3rd period)</p> <p>Debrief/Reflection</p> <p>(10/22/19 @ 11:30 A.M.)</p>
<p>Mathematics & Science</p> <p>Literacy Specialists</p> <p>(D, E, F)</p>	<p>Planning with Teacher</p> <p>(10/15/19 @ 12 P.M.)</p> <p>Model for Teacher</p> <p>(10/15/19)</p> <p>Debrief/Reflection</p> <p>(10/15/19 @ 2PM)</p>	<p>Planning with Teachers</p> <p>(10/22/19 @ 12:15PM)</p> <p>Side by Side Teaching with Literacy Specialist</p> <p>(10/22/19 during 4th Period)</p> <p>Teacher Practice</p> <p>(10/22/19 during 5th Period)</p>

		<p>Debrief/Reflection</p> <p>(10/22/19 @ 2:30PM)</p>
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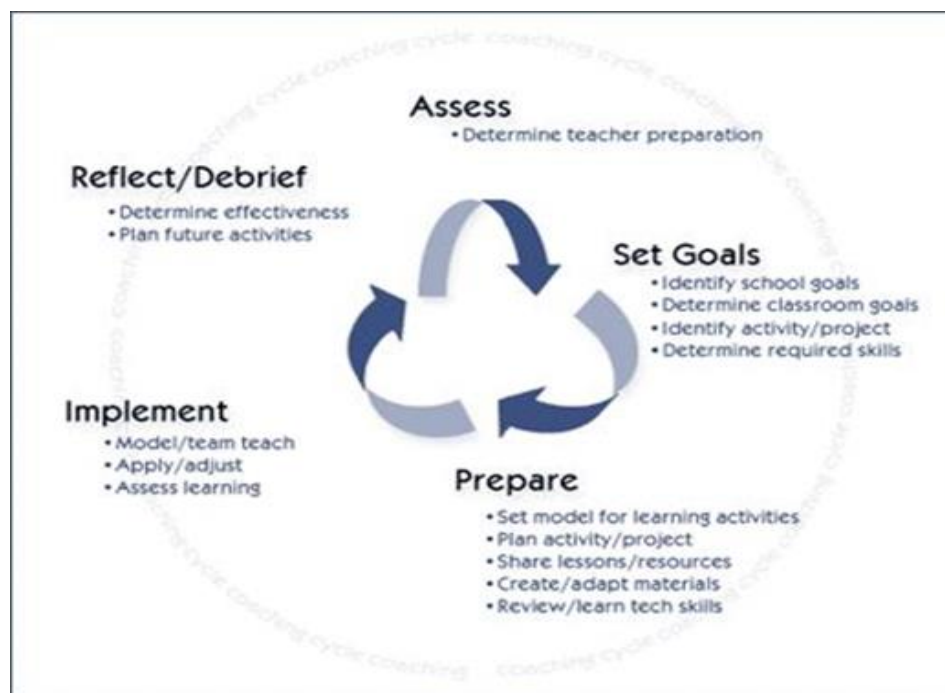
The Coaching Cycle

Directions : Review the Coaching Cycle and the Description of Coaching Cycle Stages.

Then, go back and read the Literacy Coach Roles and determine how they align with the stages of the Coaching Cycle.

Literacy Coach Roles

- Help teachers determine an area of the curriculum to begin to integrate ARI strategies.
- Demonstrate lessons that integrate ARI strategies.
- Debrief with the participating teacher on what worked, what didn't, and how a lesson or activity might be modified in the future to be more effective.



Description of Coaching Cycle Process

Assess

The first stage in helping content area teachers develop a lesson and implement ARI strategies in the content they teach is to assess their instructional needs. This information helps the coach and teacher develop a lesson that the teacher can successfully implement, or to identify the kind of coaching, resources, or skills the teacher might need to carry out the lesson.

Set goals

Setting logical and realistic goals that are linked to the school's educational goals and content standards is essential for establishing a good coaching relationship and helping content teachers incorporate ARI strategies into their content area.

Prepare

Teachers learn to use the Strategic Lesson Planning Checklist to evaluate the strength of a proposed lesson. The coach will use the checklist to assess the lesson implemented by content teacher during the teacher practice. The coach will use the checklist to make suggestions for improvements. This part of the cycle depends on "best teaching practices". The coach may provide resources and other learning activities that help teachers prepare to implement ARI strategies into engaging learning tasks.

Implement activities

Coaches often find that the teachers they work with benefit from seeing their coach model a content lesson integrating ARI into , or team teach a lesson with their coach.

This helps the coach build trust with the teacher and makes coaching a positive experience for both the coach and teacher.

Reflect, debrief

The literacy coach provides the teacher with a structured opportunities for reflection to help the teacher improve their instruction. Literacy coaches use a variety of tools during this stage, including a Collaboration Log to facilitate the dialogue between the coach and teacher.

Strategic Lesson Planning Checklist

Basic Components			Yes	No
1	Learning Target	The learning target is what the student can accomplish in a class period. It is aligned to the content standard.		
2	Practice	The lesson plan should ALWAYS include two practices: “chunking” and student discussion. Text, lectures, etc. should be chunked or divided into smaller amounts of material.		
3	Strategies	Plan before, during, and after strategies. These should be selected based on purpose. All three can help students achieve the learning target.		
4	Direct, Explicit Instruction	<i>I Do/ We Do/YA 'll Do/ You Do</i> All four parts of explicit instruction do not have to be completed during one		

		class period. The goal is a gradual release to students. The <i>I Do</i> is a model. The <i>We Do</i> is led by the teacher. The <i>YA'LL Do</i> is allowing students to work with other students while the teacher offer assistance. The <i>You Do</i> is independent practice.		
5	T	Talking- Students talking		
	W	Writing		
	I	Investigating		
	R	Reading		
	L	Listening-Students listening to each other		

2. Developing Content-Specific Literacy Strategies Resource Guide (Session 2-October 22 @ 3:00 p.m.-Tentative date and time)

- Explain to content teachers why this resource guide is needed:

The Content-Specific Literacy Strategies resource guide consists of brief descriptions of various strategies that promote student engagement and daily learning outcomes. These strategies should help students move towards the learning outcomes by providing multiple opportunities for them to engage in discussions with peers to develop talking and listening skills, read and write in a variety of situations, and investigate relevant and meaningful concepts (ARI, 2015). Teachers are encouraged to select and use strategies that are appropriate for their content area.

- Discuss and review with content teachers ARI strategies that can be used in the different content areas. Talk about the purpose and procedures for each strategy.
- Select ARI strategies that work in specific contents. The ARI strategies can be found on the Alabama Department of Education website (www.alsde.edu)
- Tell teachers to chart those strategies in Google Docs.

Content	Strategy	Description

- Literacy specialists will model the strategies in each content area as needed.

3. Collaborative Planning (Session 3- October 29, 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.-

Tentative date and time)

Collaborative planning involves content area teachers and literacy specialists working and learning together. Collaborative planning gives teachers the opportunity to work together during the school day to review prioritized skills and standards, plan engaging lessons, share ideas, and make connections through examining their practice, consulting with each other, and developing their skills.

Schedule for Collaborative Planning

Social Studies and ELA 8:00 to 11:30

Individual Planning Time for Social Studies and ELA will be from 11:30 to 12:00.

Math and Science 12:30 to 3:30

Individual Planning Time for Math and Science will be from 12:00 to 12:30.

Materials Needed

Lesson Plans (this week)

Content Standards (district pacing guides)

Textbooks (if applicable)

Chromebook or laptop

Instructional Conversation: The building literacy coach and content teacher will discuss instructional needs. The literacy coach will facilitate the conversation by asking the teachers what's working and challenges or concerns with ARI implementation. From the conversation, the literacy coach and content teacher will discuss next steps with incorporating ARI strategies into content instruction.

Collaboration: Content teachers will work together to review standards and prioritized skills for the upcoming weeks (district pacing guides). Teachers will share ideas for

teaching the standards, previous strategies used to teach the concept(s), and resources needed for the lesson.

Planning for Instruction: The literacy coach and content teachers will plan a lesson for the upcoming week.

First, the literacy coach will work with teachers to unpack content standards they will use in next week's lesson (see the chart for "Unpacking Content Standards"). What do we want students to do? What do students need to know? What will students need to complete to demonstrate mastery? What else do students need to understand? How will we check for understanding before, during, and after the lesson? Teachers will write each standard as a learning target after discussing the previous questions with each other. Next, teachers will collaborate together to plan a lesson for their specific content area using the necessary materials. The literacy coach will guide teachers as needed.

Collaboration Log




Literacy Coach:	Date:
Teacher:	Content Area:
What's Working:	Challenges/Concerns:
Teacher's next steps:	Coach's next steps

Unpacking Content Standards



CONTENT STANDARD

Step 1 →

LEGEND
 CIRCLE all skills or verbs <p>This is what students must do</p>
<u>UNDERLINE</u> anything that requires instruction- key concepts (nouns or noun phrases). <p>This is what students must know</p>
 S T R any performance skills <p>You will intentionally watch and listen for this</p>
 BOX any components that need to be part of the final product

Step 2 →

WHAT DOES THE STANDARD SAY THE STUDENT SHOULD KNOW?	
RIGOR	
Content Nouns	Verbs

What students need to know	What students must do
<div>TASKS</div> <div>What kind of experiences does the teacher need to provide?</div>	<div>FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS</div> <div>What will you do to determine if the student has learned?</div>

Step 3

Job-embedded Professional Development

Date _____

Facilitator _____

The purpose of this form is to give you an opportunity to provide feedback on the professional development session you attended. The information will be used to improve the professional development for future presentations.

Check the appropriate box and provide comments about the professional development.

	5-Excellent	4-Above Average	3-Average	2-Below Average	1-Unsatisfactory
Content of the Material					
Presentation of the material					
Active participation					
Collaboration					
Use of time					
Resources used					

Please answer the following questions:

Would you recommend this professional development to other teachers? () Yes () No

Why? _____

Do you think you need more professional development to successfully implement ARI?

() Yes () No Why? _____

Collaborative Planning

Date _____

Facilitator _____

The purpose of this form is to give you an opportunity to provide feedback on the collaborative planning session. The information will be used to improve collaborative planning.

Check the appropriate box and provide comments about the professional development.

	5-Excellent	4-Above Average	3-Average	2-Below Average	1- Unsatisfactory
Teachers/literacy coach contributed to improving instructional practices.					
Teachers/literacy coach actively participated in the planning process.					
Teachers/literacy coach worked collaboratively to implement ARI strategies in the content area.					

Teachers were supported by the literacy coach during the planning process.					
Use of time (structured, purposeful, etc.)					
Resources used for planning					

Reflective Journal

Reflect on your experience with implementing ARI strategies in your content area. Think about the following questions as you recall and evaluate your experience with ARI implementation:

- 1). What is one thing you learned from compiling a list of content-specific strategies?
- 2). What did you discover from this process?
- 3). How will you use the compiled list of strategies to teach literacy in your content area?
- 4). Do you feel that you can effectively implement ARI now that you have a list of content-specific strategies to teach literacy?

Appendix B: Teacher Interview Questions

1. To what extent have you implemented any of the ARI strategies in your content area?

None, some, a lot (RQ 1-Extent)

2a. If some or a lot, tell me about those—why did you choose them and are they working? (RQ 1-Extent and RQ 2-Reasons; confirmation and implementation; conceptual framework)

2b. If not, why not? (RQ 1-Extent and RQ 2-Reasons; knowledge, persuasion, decision conceptual stages)

3. If you could design training to help you implement ARI strategies, what would you do? (Needs for training—knowledge, persuasion, decision needs based on diffusion of innovation theory)

Appendix C: Summary of Results

<i>Research Questions</i>	RQ #1	RQ #2	RQ #3
	How do the teachers describe the extent to which they are using ARI strategies?	What are the reasons 9 th grade content area teachers note for not using the ARI strategies to teach literacy?	What on-going professional development do these teachers suggest be offered to assist them with using ARI strategies to teach literacy across content areas?
<i>Themes</i>	When ARI strategies are used as part of instruction	Time constraint Relevancy to content Knowledge	Purposeful, useful professional development On-going ARI training
<i>Codes</i>	Extent of implementation- a lot, mostly, daily	Strategies do not fit with content, mostly for language arts Irrelevant to what is being taught Not enough time to use strategies	Align training to specific to content Observe strategies being used in the content Work with literacy coach to assist with implementation Develop continuous training to implement ARI strategies