Building a Culture of Writing

Collaborative

Conversations

With Colleagues
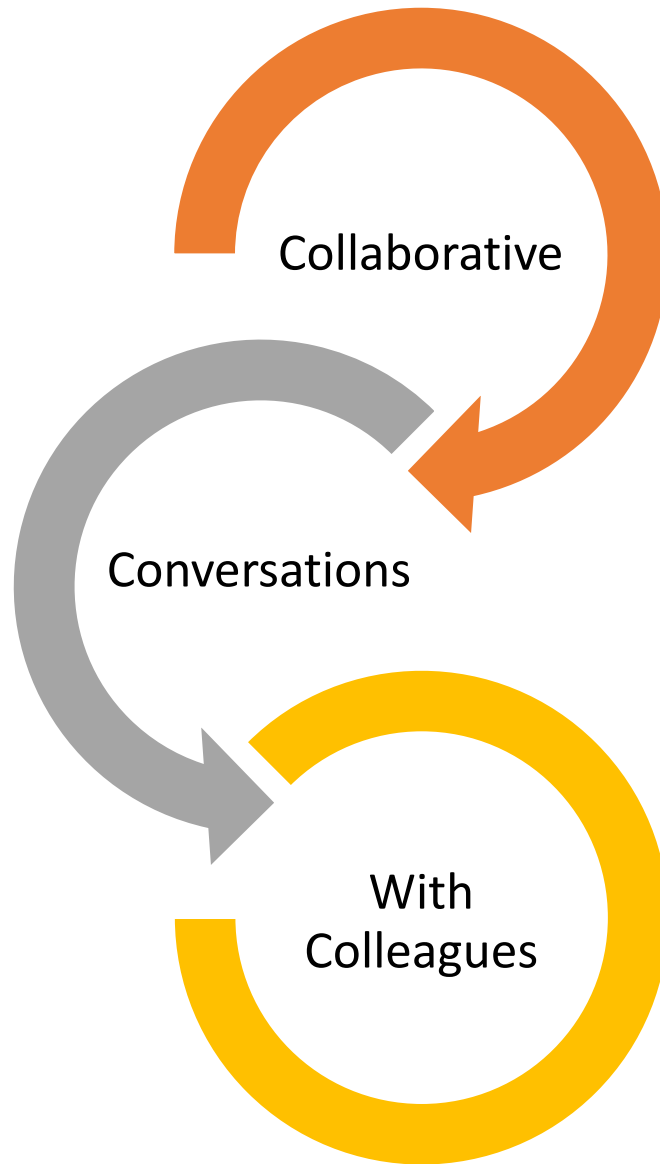
Professional Learning Guide (6-12)
Essential Components for Teaching Writing

How to Use this Guide

This guide is designed to support facilitators with planning for the webinar and conducting the 90-minute follow-up session after the webinar. The guide is also designed to support Tier I participants who are self-directed and participating in the series at their own pace. Included in this guide are the following:

- descriptions of each session outlining the content
- guiding questions for participants to think about as they view the webinar
- references for the research-based practices shared by presenters
- activities to deepen participants' understanding of webinar content
- resource materials to support participants with developing plans for classroom implementation

Following the webinar, facilitators will then guide participants through a series of discussions and activities designed to deepen their understanding of webinar content. Participants will also work to create next steps for individual classroom implementation. Upon returning to their building and implementing the high-quality instructional strategies shared in the webinar, participants are encouraged to further collaborate with colleagues in their schools through Professional Learning Communities and/or peer observations. It is suggested that participants share practices with colleagues across *all* content areas.

The outline for the 90-minute, face-to-face session is as follows:

Discussion of Webinar Content	Suggested time: 10 minutes
Small Group Work	Suggested time: 15 minutes
Break	Suggested time: 5 minutes
Plan for Implementation	Suggested time: 40 minutes
Share plan	Suggested time: 10 minutes
Reflection	Suggested time: 10 minutes
	Total time: 90 minutes

<u>Things to Consider for Tier 2 and Tier 3 Facilitators</u>

Each session opens with an **Activator** that includes questions for participants to consider prior to viewing the webinar. Facilitators can have participants share their responses orally, complete a written response or "hold" their thinking. Following the webinar is **Opening Moves**. This is a Think-Pair-Share activity that engages participants in collaborative conversations as they reflect on the webinar content and debrief the concepts and ideas shared by Presenters and Co-Presenters. Facilitators will then guide participants through the **Work Period** where they will participate in a small group activity to deepen their understanding of the instructional practices highlighted during the webinar, create a plan for classroom implementation, and share their plan with the group. The session ends with **Closing Moves** where participants will engage in a reflection activity.

<u>Before viewing:</u>

The **Activator** should be done prior to viewing the webinar and take no more than 10 minutes. The activator questions are designed for participants to ponder as they prepare to engage in the webinar. Facilitators can also choose to have participants write a response using the following:

Carousel Brainstorming

Post activator questions or on poster paper.
Divide your group into smaller teams to match the number of questions you have.
Give a different color marker to each team, and have each team start at a particular question.
At each question, participants should brainstorm responses or points they want to make about the posted question.
After 2-3 of minutes with each question, signal the teams to move to the next question, until all teams have responded to all questions.

View with a Question in Mind

Before viewing the webinar, have participants review the session overview and objective(s). From these, ask them to develop a question that comes to mind. After developing the question, encourage them to view the webinar with their question in mind and note new learning, important information, connections, and questions they may have.

Resource:

Harvey, S., & Daniels, H. (2009). Comprehension and collaboration: Inquiry circles in action. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

After viewing:

"Opening Moves" is a post-webinar activity that engages participants in collaborative conversations as they reflect on the webinar content. It is designed as a Think-Pair-Share activity but again facilitators can utilize alternative methods for a collaborative reflection. Here are a few suggestions:

The National School Reform Faculty's 4 "A"s Protocol

- What **Assumptions** do the presenters in the webinar hold?
- What do you **Agree** with in the presentation?
- What do you want to **Argue** with in the presentation?
- What parts of the presentation do you want to **Aspire** to?

Resource:

http://www.nsrfharmony.org/system/files/protocols/4_a_text_0.pdf

Visible Thinking Protocol

I used to think_____, but now I think_____ **or**

I used to think _____ and I still think_____

Have participants share and explain their shifts in thinking.

Resource:
http://www.visiblethinkingpz.org/VisibleThinking_html_files/03_ThinkingRoutines/03c_Core_routines/UsedToThink/UsedToThink_Routine.htm

Things to Consider for Tier I Participants

Each session opens with an **Activator** that includes questions for participants to consider prior to viewing the webinar. Participants can complete a written response or "hold" their thinking as they prepare to view the webinar. While Tier I is self-paced, it is suggested that participants view the entire webinar in one session and make note of key ideas. Following the webinar is **Opening Moves**. This is an activity designed to debrief the concepts and ideas shared by Presenters and Co-Presenters. Tier I participants will complete a written response to the questions in this section.   Following **Opening Moves** is the **Work Period**. Tier I participants will notice that the **Work Period** engages participants in a *small group* activity to deepen their understanding of the instructional practices highlighted during the webinar and allows time for participants to create a plan for classroom implementation. **Although Tier I participants will likely work through the series independently, they are still encouraged to work through the activity.** After creating a plan for implementation, participants are further encouraged to share their new learning and plan with a colleague. The session ends with **Closing Moves** where participants will complete a written reflection.
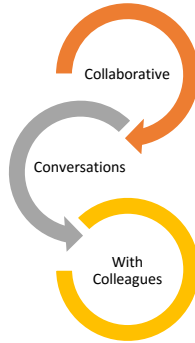
Session 2: Essential Components of Teaching Writing - *Practical, Research-Based Methods for Literacy Instruction*

Lead Presenter: Dr. Kevin Raczynski   **Co-presenter: Ashley Morris**

Session Overview: This session is a natural extension of the previous session on Assessing Writing. Having discussed specific elements of argumentative and narrative writing that are in view when assessing writing in these genres, the focus naturally turns to helping students understand and apply these elements when writing their own arguments and narratives.   All instructional strategies discussed during this webinar are informed by theory and research from cognitive psychology and sociocultural perspectives. A select reference list of this research will be provided so that any interested parties can delve further.

We will start our discussion by looking at practical strategies for instruction in the context of shorter argument and narrative assignments. We will explore example activities that help students understand the purpose of the writing context, gather relevant evidence, and craft an effective response.

Next, we will transition to longer assignments. We will discuss these as extensions of shorter assignments, building on students' schema. The tools remain the same, essentially.

Some of the key concepts in this session will include *creating a positive writing environment, defining and modeling genre-specific terms, following the writer's process, and engaging in meaningful peer editing*.

Objective(s): By the end of this session, participants will be able to

- demonstrate their understanding of effective writing instruction
- model effective writing
- employ practical strategies to support students with building strategic writing behaviors

Questions to consider prior to viewing webinar:

- What are your current beliefs on the connection between reading and writing?
- What is your current approach to writing instruction?
- How do you support struggling or unmotivated writers?

Guide for Follow-up Session

Materials: Power Statement Sheet   Square/Triangle/Circle Reflection Sheet

Opening Moves

Discussion of Webinar Content (Think-Pair-Share)   *Suggested time: 10 minutes*

- How has what was shared in the webinar reshaped or confirmed your thinking about writing instruction?
- What is one take-way that you feel you can immediately implement into your practice?

Work Period   *Suggested time: 15 minutes*

Power Statement Analysis: What Speaks to You?

Step 1.

   a. Have participants partner with others in similar grades. *Support staff members should assign themselves to the grade with which they work.*

   b. Give each participant a copy of the Power Statement below.

     All the standards in English are important (Reading Literary Texts, Reading Informational Texts, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language); they are recursive but gain complexity from one grade level to the next; they are

synthesized and blended. Students must read for deep understanding and be able to write about what they have read. Additionally, students must be able to speak about topics or themes they have studied and do so by using the appropriate standards of language (grammar and usage). Thus, all standards are of equal importance; there is more power in the standards if they are taught together rather than separately. Standards build upon the foundational skills learned in the primary grades.

Courtesy of GADOE (English Language Arts Program)

    c. After a close reading of this text, have participants engage in small group conversations about how this power statement supports their current practices.

    d. Ask, "How does this support your current practices and beliefs? What opportunities for growth do you see? How does this power statement support consistent, rich writing instruction in your classroom?"

Break   *Suggested time: 5 minutes*

Step 2. Create a Plan for Implementation   *Suggested time 40 minutes*

Say, "Think about your existing approach to teaching writing. What are some additional concepts you learned today that could support you with teaching writing more effectively? What can you begin immediately implementing into your writing instruction tomorrow? What would it look like?" Explain that they will now work to create an authentic argumentative or narrative writing task using a mentor text.

Step 3. Share   *Suggested time: 10 minutes*

Have participants get into groups of 3-4 people. Have them share their writing task and rubric with group members.

Closing Moves

Reflect on what we have learned   *Suggested time: 10 minutes*

Use the Square/Triangle/Circle (STC) reflection process below as a framework for reflecting on today's session.

Square	What "squared" with your thinking? That is, what concepts or ideas did you hear and/or see that were consistent with what you already know and/or believe about teaching writing?
Triangle	What "pointed" you in new directions? What new ideas did you learn about and plan to implement? Share ways in which the webinar provided new understandings about writing instruction.
Circle	What thoughts are still "circling" in your mind? What is something that you are still wondering or are concerned about?

Adaptation of Triangle-Circle-Square (2016, May 19). Retrieved from
http://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/triangle-square-circle.

<center>**Power Statement (K-5 Assessing Writing)**</center>

All the standards in English are important (Reading Literary Texts, Reading

Informational Texts, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language); they are

recursive but gain complexity from one grade level to the next; they are synthesized

and blended. Students must read for deep understanding and be able to write about

what they have read. Additionally, students must be able to speak about topics or

themes they have studied and do so by using the appropriate standards of language

(grammar and usage). Thus, all standards are of equal importance; there is more

power in the standards if they are taught together rather than separately. Standards

build upon the foundational skills learned in the primary grades.

STC Reflection Sheet

Square	What "squared" with your thinking? That is, what concepts or ideas did you hear and/or see that were consistent with what you already know and/or believe about teaching writing?
Triangle	What "pointed" you in new directions? What new ideas did you learn about and plan to implement? Share ways in which the webinar provided new understandings about writing instruction.
Circle	What thoughts are still "circling" in your mind? What is something that you are still wondering or are concerned about?

References

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