

classes. Teacher 2 and 3 wrote that they would use the techniques and lessons in the future, but Teacher 1 felt unsure that she would continue to stretch herself professionally without the ongoing support of the coach.

The survey data is also fairly inconclusive as well in terms of patterns of growth as a result of the coaching experience. Two of the coaching group participants, Teacher 2 and Teacher 3 both showed significant positive growth in the strategies they used from the pre-coaching (September) to post-coaching (December) surveys. The growth, however, seemed to moderate by the February survey and both Teacher 2 and Teacher 3 showed that some of their earlier gains had returned to pre-coaching conditions. This return to baseline data may show that coaching may improve practice in the short term, but in order for teachers to sustain gains or make growth, coaching may need to be continue for a period of time longer than the nine weeks allotted in this action research plan. Teacher 1, on the other hand, saw limited improvement from the pre-coaching to post-coaching survey, but some growth between the December and February surveys. Unlike Teacher 2 and Teacher 3 who already felt relatively confident in their incorporation of literacy strategies prior to the coaching group, Teacher 1 was more reluctant and described herself as “traditional” and “in a rut.”The reason for this more delayed perception of growth could be due to a more critical analysis of classroom practices, or simply the result of having more time to practice and perfect techniques once the coaching experience was concluded. The survey responses of all three teachers indicate that one’s response to coaching is unique: individual teachers will see growth or experience perceived slumps in strategy instruction at different times depending on many different factors. In all cases, however, some growth was noted from the pre-coaching survey, but when the growth surfaced on the survey and whether the growth can be maintained cannot be determined by this action research study.

Suggestions for Further Study

While there was a great deal of data collected by the researcher and the school literacy team as part of the action research, there are still a number of areas that could be the focus of additional study in the future. In terms of determining how reading is being taught across the content areas, additional observations over time could help create a more comprehensive picture. The design of the original action research does not take into account that classes may not be working with a reading task on the day of observation. Retooling the observation form to reflect lessons that do not address reading would also provide additional data on how often reading is actually being taught or used in content area classes.

In terms of the effect of literacy coaching, further study could be conducted on different formats of coaching and which of those forms is most effective in helping teachers retain and apply strategies in their classrooms. For example, do concentrated nine-week coaching groups, such as the one formed as part of this action research study, yield the same results after one or two years that semester-long, year long, or ongoing coaching groups do? Or do teachers far better in one-on-one coaching relationships with their coach versus one-on-one coaching with coaching groups? Such data might give administrators and literacy coaches data to help them choose appropriate coaching models for professional development. In addition, further study could be done on the long-term effects of coaching. The scope of this study only gathered data from teachers in the coaching group for two months after the conclusion of the coaching experience. Noting how long the self-reported gains last and gathering information from those who participated about whether they feel the coaching made a long-term difference in their teaching would also provide useful information.

References

- Adolescent literacy: The hottest topic. (2007). *Reading Today*, 24(4), 12-13. Retrieved March 1, 2007, from the Academic Search Premier database.
- Ash, G. (2005). What Did Abigail Mean?. *Educational Leadership*, 63(2), 36-41. Retrieved Thursday, March 29, 2007 from the Academic Search Premier database.
- Biancarosa, G. (2005). After Third Grade. *Educational Leadership*, 63(2), 16-22. Retrieved Thursday, March 29, 2007 from the Academic Search Premier database.
- Biancarosa, C., & Snow, C. E. (2006). *Reading next—A vision for action and research in middle and high school literacy: A report to Carnegie Corporation of New York* (2nd ed.). Washington, D.C.: Alliance for Excellent Education.
- Barton, R. (2006). Getting on the same page. *Northwest Education*, 12(1), 30-35.
- Blachowicz, C. L. Z., Obrochta, C., & Fogelberg, E. (2005). Literacy coaching for change. *Educational Leadership*, 62(6), 55-58. Retrieved March 1, 2007, from the Academic Search Premier database.
- Buly, M. R., Coskie, T., Robinson, L., & Egawa K. (2006). Literacy coaching: Coming out the corner. *Voices from the Middle*, 13(4), 24-28. Retrieved March 1, 2007, from the ProQuest Education Journals database.
- Cavanagh, S. (2005). Cross-curricular standards issued for reading coaches. *Education Week*, 25(11), 10. Retrieved March 1, 2007, from the ProQuest Education Journals database.
- Coutant, C., & Perchemlides, N. (2005). Strategies for Teen Readers. *Educational Leadership*, 63(2), 42-47. Retrieved Thursday, March 29, 2007 from the Academic Search Premier database.

- Deussen, T., & Buly, M.R. (2006). Connecting coaching and improved literacy. *Northwest Education, 12(1)*, 43-45.
- Egawa, K. (2006). A trainer's voice: Revisiting your literacy coaching program. *Northwest Education, 12(1)*, 41-42.
- Guiney, E. (2001). Coaching isn't just for athletes. *Phi Delta Kappan, 82(10)*, 740-743.
Retrieved March 1, 2007 from the Academic Search Premier database.
- Kamil, M. (2006). What we know—and don't know—about coaching. *Northwest Education, 12(1)*, 16-17.
- Knight, J. (2006). Instructional coaching. *School Administrator, 63(4)*, 36-40. Retrieved March 1, 2007 from the Education Research Complete database.
- Manzo, K. (2001). A Primary Subject Goes Secondary. *Education Week, 20(31)*, 13. Retrieved Saturday, March 10, 2007 from the Academic Search Premier database.
- McConachie, S., Hall, M., Resnick, L., Ravi, A. K., Bill, V. L., Bintz, J, et al. (2006). Task, Text, and Talk. *Educational Leadership, 64(2)*, 8-14. Retrieved Saturday, March 10, 2007 from the Academic Search Premier database.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (1999). *Nation's report card: Reading 1998*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pdf/main1998/1999500.pdf>
- Neufeld, P. (2005). Comprehension instruction in content area classes. *Reading Teacher, 59(4)*, 302-312. Retrieved Saturday, March 10, 2007 from the Academic Search Premier database.

- Poglinco, S. M., & Bach, A.J. (2004). The heart of the matter: Coaching as a vehicle for professional development. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 85(5), 398-400. Retrieved March 1, 2007 from the Academic Search Premier database.
- Richardson, J. (2004, September). Coaches build strong teams. *Results*, Retrieved March 27, 2007, from <http://www.nsd.org/library/publications/results/res9-04rich.cfm>
- Sturtevant, E.G. (2003). *The literacy coach: A key to improving teaching and learning in secondary schools*. Washington, D.C.: Alliance for Excellent Education.
- Swafford, J. (1998). Teachers supporting teachers through peer coaching. *Support for Learning*, 13(2), 54-58. Retrieved March 1, 2007, from the Academic Search Premier database.
- Symonds, K. (2003). Literacy Coaching: How School Districts Can Support a Long-Term Strategy in a Short-Term World. Retrieved Thursday, March 29, 2007 from the ERIC database.
- Taylor, R. T., Moxley, D. E., Chanter, C., & Boulware, D. (2007). Three techniques for successful literacy coaching. *Principal Leadership*, 7(6), 22-25. Retrieved March 1, 2007, from the ProQuest Educational Journals database.



Appendix A

Teacher Survey



Name: _____

Subject Area: _____

TEACHER SURVEY: READING

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this teacher survey. The purpose of this survey is to provide information regarding how reading is currently being taught in content-area classrooms and the attitudes and practices of teachers in those classrooms. Before you complete each section below, please read the directions carefully. Remember that your specific responses will be kept confidential, so please answer as honestly and sincerely as possible.

When you have finished, please return responses to Tonya Arnold's mailbox by no later than Friday, February 15.

Directions: Place an "X" in the box that best represents your personal opinion.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The teaching of reading is the responsibility of all teachers, regardless of content area.					
2. My students are able to read classroom textbooks without additional scaffolding or reading instruction.					
3. Students better understand material in my classroom when I incorporate reading strategies.					
4. My students are not required to do much reading to be successful in my content area.					
5. Reading strategies can be easily adapted to fit my curriculum.					
6. When I use reading strategies in my classroom, I feel I must sacrifice too much of the content to be covered.					
7. I do not have the tools I need to support struggling readers in my classroom.					

CONTENT-AREA READING AND LITERACY COACHING 95

Directions: Place an “X” in the box that best represents your current classroom climate and practices.

	Always	Most of the time	About half of the time	Rarely	Never
8. I introduce the pronunciation of new words.					
9. I provide systematic instruction on vocabulary terms important to my content area.					
10. I provide instruction on general academic vocabulary terms.					
11. I incorporate pre-reading strategies and techniques into my classroom like KWL, anticipation guides, Likert scales, journaling, etc. to activate background knowledge in my students before a reading assignment.					
12. Students in my classroom preview the reading they are assigned for my class using techniques such as figure or chapter previewing.					
13. Students in my class are knowledgeable about the purpose for their reading prior to reading assignment.					
14. I activate the background knowledge of my students before assigning reading selections and provide important background information for topics on which they may lack prior knowledge.					
15. I provide guided reading opportunities for students using choral reading, cloze reading, and partner reading.					
16. Students in my class routinely read in small groups, in partners, and independently.					
17. I teach students to use graphic organizers such as double-entry diaries, discussion webs, note-takers, etc.					
18. I model how to use graphic organizers and other comprehension strategies before expecting students to use them.					
19. Students engage in during-reading strategies (graphic organizers, sticky notes, coding text, highlighting, partner retelling, etc) for reading assignments in my classroom.					
20. I hold students responsible for the information they read.					

CONTENT-AREA READING AND LITERACY COACHING 96

21. I vary the ways in which students are asked to respond after they finish reading selections.					
--	--	--	--	--	--

Directions: Please answer the following questions as completely as possible.

22. Did the last two years of in-service on reading impact your teaching or your classroom? If so, how? If not, why not?

23. What are some of the challenges you face in teaching reading in your content area?

24. What sorts of texts, strategies, or assignments do you use when teaching reading?

25. How do you work with students who say they had difficulty reading the texts for your class?

26. In your opinion, how important is it for content area teachers to explicitly teach reading in their classes? Explain.



CONCORDIA
UNIVERSITY

27. I am interested in learning more about (Check all that apply):

- Effective Vocabulary Instruction
- Pre-Reading Strategies
- Building background knowledge
- Paired/Group Reading techniques
- Literature/Reading Circles
- Increasing student comprehension of textbooks
- During Reading Strategies
- "Real world" texts in the classroom
- Developing differentiated instruction for all readers
- Matching/creating graphic representations for reading
- Teaching reading strategies in my content area
- Post-reading strategies

28. If there anything you would like to add about the subject that the researcher may have forgotten to include on the survey, please feel free to write it in the space below.



CONCORDIA
UNIVERSITY

Appendix B

Observation Worksheet



Observer: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

Literacy Team Observation Worksheet

Teacher Observed: _____ Title of Class Observed: _____
 Minutes spent in literacy activities (circle one): 0-15 15-30 30-45 45-60 60-75 75-90

Directions: Place a check mark in the box that best reflects what was observed during the class visitation.

Classroom Climate and Practice	Observed	Not Observed
Teacher explained the purpose of the reading to students prior to the reading activities.		
Teacher provided for explicit instruction of reading vocabulary prior to the reading.		
Teacher modeled strategies for the whole class prior to having them use the technique.		
Teacher used a pre-reading strategy to activate prior knowledge.	<input type="checkbox"/> KWL <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter preview <input type="checkbox"/> Anticipation Guide <input type="checkbox"/> Likert Scales	<input type="checkbox"/> Journaling <input type="checkbox"/> Probable Passage <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Teacher provided important background knowledge necessary to comprehension prior to reading.		
Teacher read the text to the class.		
Teacher had individuals read aloud to the class.		
Teacher used cloze and/or choral reading.		
Teacher had students read in small groups/pairs.		
Teacher had students read independently.		
Teacher had students use a during reading strategy.	<input type="checkbox"/> Double-entry diary <input type="checkbox"/> Note-taker <input type="checkbox"/> Highlighting <input type="checkbox"/> Coding <input type="checkbox"/> Reading guide	<input type="checkbox"/> Sticky notes <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion webs <input type="checkbox"/> Say something <input type="checkbox"/> Cover and summarize <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Teacher had students engage in a post-reading activity that held them accountable for comprehending the information (discussion, summarizing, developing questions, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/> Small group discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Jigsaw activities <input type="checkbox"/> Summarizing	<input type="checkbox"/> Developing questions <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Classroom featured a variety of texts for students to read.	<input type="checkbox"/> Magazines <input type="checkbox"/> Young adult books <input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers	<input type="checkbox"/> Reference books <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Classroom featured visuals related to vocabulary or reading strategies.		

Appendix C

Coaching Evaluation Cycle Packets



Pre-Conference Questionnaire

Please fill out your responses to the following questions prior meeting with your literacy coach.

1. What are the objectives of the lesson that will take place during the coaching experience?

2. What work has been done leading up to this lesson, and where do you want students to go with the information after the lesson?

3. What literacy strategies would you like to use (if you know of one), or what areas would you like the coaching time to focus on?

4. What role would you like the coach to adopt for this coaching session (check one)
 - Strategy Coach (coach co-plans with teacher, models strategy in class, guides teacher trial)
 - Guide on the Side Coach (coach works with strugglers in small group while teacher tries something new with the rest of the class)
 - Observation Aide (coach models lesson and teacher makes notes about lesson)
 - Grouping Coach (coach assists teacher in setting up and executing flexible groups within their classrooms)

5. What specific types of assistance do you think you will need from the coach (materials, planning, etc)?

6. Other comments or questions:

Coaching Evaluation

Please fill out your responses to the following questions prior meeting with your literacy coach at the post-conference.

1. How do you feel the lesson went in your classroom today? Explain.
2. What would you change/modify in the future if you were to use the techniques and/or strategies again? Would you use the technique again?
3. How do you think your students responded to the lesson?
4. If the coach was modeling the lesson as part of your class, what did you observe about the lesson that you thought was significant/important (both positive and negative)?
5. If the coach was observing you, what do you think the coach saw in the deliver that he/she thought was significant/important (both positive and negative)?
6. What questions did this session raise for you?
7. Other comments or questions:

Appendix D

Post-Coaching Survey



Name: _____

Subject Area: _____

TEACHER SURVEY: COACHING

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this teacher survey. The purpose of this survey is to provide information regarding your experience in the literacy coaching group. Before you complete each section below, please read the directions carefully. Remember that your specific responses will be kept confidential, so please answer as honestly and sincerely as possible.

When you have finished, please return responses to Tonya Arnold.

Directions: Place an "X" in the box that best represents your personal opinion.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Literacy coaching, as it was presented in the coaching group, is a professional development method I would engage in again.					
2. The coaching experience had little impact on how I approach reading in my classroom.					
3. Students better understand material in my classroom when I incorporate reading strategies.					
4. My daily teaching has changed as a result of going through the coaching group.					
5. Reading strategies can be easily adapted to fit my curriculum.					
6. When I use reading strategies in my classroom, I feel I must sacrifice too much of the content to be covered.					
7. I do not have the tools I need to support struggling readers in my classroom.					

CONTENT-AREA READING AND LITERACY COACHING 108

Directions: Place an “X” in the box that best represents your current classroom climate and practices AFTER the coaching experience.

	Always	Most of the time	About half of the time	Rarely	Never
8. I introduce the pronunciation of new words.					
9. I provide systematic instruction on vocabulary terms important to my content area.					
10. I provide instruction on general academic vocabulary terms.					
11. I incorporate pre-reading strategies and techniques into my classroom like KWL, anticipation guides, Likert scales, journaling, etc. to activate background knowledge in my students before a reading assignment.					
12. Students in my classroom preview the reading they are assigned for my class using techniques such as figure or chapter previewing.					
13. Students in my class are knowledgeable about the purpose for their reading prior to reading assignment.					
14. I activate the background knowledge of my students before assigning reading selections and provide important background information for topics on which they may lack prior knowledge.					
15. I provide guided reading opportunities for students using choral reading, cloze reading, and partner reading.					
16. Students in my class routinely read in small groups, in partners, and independently.					
17. I teach students to use graphic organizers such as double-entry diaries, discussion webs, note-takers, etc.					
18. I model how to use graphic organizers and other comprehension strategies before expecting students to use them.					
19. Students engage in during-reading strategies (graphic organizers, sticky notes, coding text, highlighting, partner retelling, etc) for reading assignments in my classroom.					
20. I hold students responsible for the information they read.					

21. I vary the ways in which students are asked to respond after they finish reading selections.					
--	--	--	--	--	--

Directions: Please answer the following questions as completely as possible.

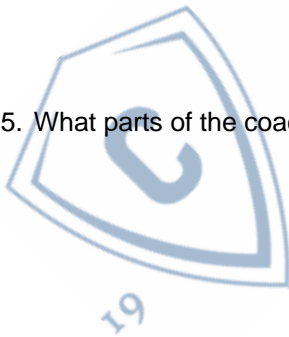
22. Describe how you saw your own knowledge of reading strategies (particularly vocabulary and during reading) before the coaching process. How has that knowledge changed over the last twelve weeks of coaching?

23. Did the last nine weeks of coaching impact your teaching or your classroom? If so, how? If not, why not?

24. How effective do you think coaching is as a method of professional development (based on your own experience) and why do you feel that way? How does it compare with the effectiveness of traditional in-service and workshop methods?

25. What parts of the coaching model we used were most beneficial to you? Least beneficial?

26. As a result of your coaching experience, what sorts of texts, strategies, or assignments do you think you would now use or try to use when teaching reading that you might not have used/tried before?



27. If you could change anything about the process that you underwent, what would it be and why?

28. If there anything you would like to add about the subject that the researcher may have forgotten to include on the survey, please feel free to write it in the space below.



CONCORDIA
UNIVERSITY