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Readers' workshop in the elementary classroom

Alaina Terese Daters
University of Northern Iowa

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In this research project, Reader's Workshop is defined and explored in relation to an elementary classroom setting. The literature review describes the importance of independent reading, the structures and components of readers' workshop, how readers' workshop motivates and engages readers, and finally how to get started with readers' workshop in the elementary classroom. Following the literature review, there is a three-year professional development plan that lays out the key components of readers' workshop and its format for training a staff on how to implement this structure into their elementary classroom. Year one of the professional development project discusses what reader's workshop is, the major components of it and how to build a classroom library. Year two of the project discusses the components such as mini lessons, conferencing, and guided reading during workshop time in a more in-depth approach that year one. Finally, year three is focused on sharing time and using data to drive instruction through the format of reader's workshop.

Readers' Workshop in the Elementary Classroom

A Graduate Research Project

Submitted to the

Division of Literacy Education

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Education

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

By

Alaina Daters

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Has been approved as meeting the research requirement for the

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Date Approved

Deborah Tidwell
Graduate Faculty Reader

05/03/2011
Date Approved

Mingshui Cai
Graduate Faculty Reader

5-3-11
Date Approved

Jill M. Uhlenberg
Head, Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Abstract

In this research project, Reader's Workshop is defined and explored in relation to an elementary classroom setting. The literature review describes the importance of independent reading, the structures and components of readers' workshop, how readers' workshop motivates and engages readers, and finally how to get started with readers' workshop in the elementary classroom. Following the literature review, there is a three-year professional development plan that lays out the key components of readers' workshop and its format for training a staff on how to implement this structure into their elementary classroom. Year one of the professional development project discusses what reader's workshop is, the major components of it and how to build a classroom library. Year two of the project discusses the components such as mini lessons, conferencing, and guided reading during workshop time in a more in-depth approach that year one. Finally, year three is focused on sharing time and using data to drive instruction through the format of reader's workshop.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Although learning to read begins at early stages in children life, kindergarten and first grade is the time when children are formally introduced to reading and reading instruction in a classroom setting. With that comes a great responsibility for early childhood and elementary classroom teachers. Those teachers are asked to instruct students on skills and strategies to make them lifelong readers and learners. Because all children have a different experience with books and texts before entering school, many of them come to school with different levels of understanding in relationship to books and reading. Some children have never seen a book while others are well into understanding how to read and understand a book. This creates an extremely diverse environment of learning abilities and teachers use small group and one-on-one instruction to try to close the gaps for their students.

One way for teachers to have this important small group and one-on-one instruction is to implement readers' workshop into their classroom. What could be better than a system that "provides students with a supportive environment that involves them in authentic reading experiences that focus on the strengths and needs of each individual student" (Orehovec & Alley, 2003, p. 9)? Through readers' workshop, students have opportunities to practice their skills and strategies they are learning in their small group instruction while engaged in meaningful independent practice of their reading skills and knowledge.

Readers' Workshop is also a nice addition to a balanced literacy framework. In fact, Collins (2004) suggested that independent reading time is an essential part of

a balanced literacy approach. Through the mini-lesson, the independent practice, and the sharing, students are engaged in meaningful practice while discovering of the true meaning of reading. In the mini-lesson a skill or strategy is taught that will help further student's reading ability or students' ability to understand text. During the independent practice, the students have an ample amount of time to practice the new skill or strategy along with previous learning. And finally, learning is social so what better way to wrap up then sharing out the learning that has occurred and the excitement the students are feeling about their new learning?

Finally, readers' workshop easily fits into a classroom that is already using other instructional formats and strategies such as Writers' Workshop, guided reading, shared reading, and read aloud. Readers' Workshop can take the place of traditional centers or it can provide an additional piece of literacy learning to the classroom. Either way, the students are engaged and becoming motivated independent readers, independent learners, and independent thinkers.

Rationale

Writers' Workshop is a format I have used in my first grade classroom since I started teaching. I have enjoyed the structure it has provided for my students in their journey to becoming good writers. During one of my graduate courses, I was introduced to the readers' workshop format. Because of my love for writers' workshop I decided to do a little reading on it and found its structure was very similar to that of writers' workshop so I was immediately interested. Once reading a little more on the topic, I decided to do my research on it so I could learn how to best implement it into my first grade classroom. As my graduate work continued, I also

became interested in exploring the idea of becoming a reading coach. I was intrigued by the idea of working with adults to support them in their teaching of reading while still getting a chance to work with children. With those two interests combined, I decided to create a professional development plan for an elementary school that was interested in learning more about how to implement readers' workshop into their elementary classrooms. I felt that by combining these two new found interests of mine, I could learn how to become a better first grade teacher while also gaining some experience with a task that many reading coaches are required to perform. I also knew that by creating a project that was centered on teaching others about readers' workshop, I would myself gain a more in-depth understanding of the format and how it can be used in an elementary classroom.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to design a three-year professional development plan for an elementary school. I wanted to provide a resource for teachers and administrators to use when exploring ways to increase student achievement through the realm of independent reading/work time while guided reading instruction or one-on-one teaching was occurring in the classroom. With the professional development plan project, I hoped to gain insight into the duties of a reading coach while exploring something of interest to me as a classroom teacher. I wanted the presentation of the materials to be useful for elementary teachers so they could easily apply their new learning to their current classroom setting.

I was also very interested in reader's workshop because of the lack of research done by the National Reading Panel in regards to independent reading (National

Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). As a professional, I hoped to gain a better understanding and rationale for why a teacher would want to and should use an independent reading program in their classroom.

Terminology

Readers' Workshop is the focus of this project and it is also a term used frequently in this project. According to Alpine School District (2007), "Readers' Workshop is the organizational structure for the instructional components for reading instruction" (Alpine School District, 2007, p. 1).

Independent reading time is another term referred to in this project. Independent reading time is an un-interrupted duration of time in which children read material from their classroom libraries. It is a time where students are expected to work quietly without disruption.

Conferencing refers to a small chunk of time where a teacher is working one-on-one with a student. This time can be spent discussing books, answering questions about what has been read, or looking for quality hooks for the student to read on the following day.

Research Questions

The primary question guiding this research project was: Is readers' workshop an effective structure for independent reading time in the elementary classroom? From the primary question, four other questions evolved:

o What is the structure of readers' workshop?

o How do you implement readers' workshop in an elementary classroom?

- o What are the required components of readers' workshop in order for it to be effective?

- o Does readers' workshop motivate students to read independently?

Chapter II

Literature Review

A question for most primary grade teachers at some point in their teaching career, is how do I engage my students in meaningful independent reading practice? Throughout history, there has been many answers to that question with good supporting research and this literature review will review one answer in particular; readers' workshop. This literature review will uncover the importance of independent reading, the structures and components of readers' workshop, motivation and engagement and getting started in the elementary classroom.

Importance of Independent Reading

Cunningham & Allington (2007) compared learning to read with learning to play an instrument or a sport. As with all learning, you need instruction, time to practice skills, and time to practice your learning as a whole. This is true for reading instruction as well. Children cannot learn to read with just instruction, just skills practice, or just independent practice. Like with sports or other activities, they need all three experiences to become proficient in their learning. Collins (2004) used the analogy of soccer in her chapter introduction to readers' workshop. She concludes her analogy explaining that when all pieces of instruction are taught and learned well, you are not only a better soccer player, but a better athlete as well. This is true for readers and learning to read. Through good instruction and well-learned material, students will not only become better readers they will also be better learners.

Authors Trudel (2007), Kragler (1995), and Garan & DeVoogd (2008) also agreed that independent reading is an important step in learning to become a better

reader. As in other areas in life, it is important to practice the skills you want to improve upon. If educators accept that independent reading should be eliminated from schools then shouldn't parents also accept discontinuing sports practice, music practice, and homework? Practice is either an important part of life or it isn't (Garan & DeVoogd, 2008). Similarly, Trudel (2007) argued that silent reading in schools has been around for more than 20 years. Researchers and teachers alike have always felt that skills instruction alone is not enough; students need time to read.

Kragler (1995) discussed independent reading practice in relation to Vygotsky's theory of language development that a child's language moves from social speech to inner speech. She believes it is possible that the practice of reading may go through a similar process, moving from oral reading, to mumble reading, to silent reading. This suggests that children would need time to practice reading in order to move through these stages of reading development.

Structures and Components of Readers' Workshop

The most important thing about the structure of readers' workshop is simply that it is structured well and structured in a way that students can anticipate what to expect during that portion of their day (Calkins, 2001). According to Collins (2004) and Calkins (2001), readers' workshop consists of four major components; mini-lesson, independent work/reading time, mid-workshop partner/buddy work, and share time. Each of these components is as equally important as the other because each portion provides a meaningful opportunity for students to learn.

Mini-lessons. The first component of readers' workshop is the mini-lesson. The mini-lesson is the portion of the workshop that sets the meaning for the student's

work. Typically the mini-lesson is ten to fifteen minutes in length and covers learning that is needed by a class (Swift, 1993). According to Calkins (2001), mini-lessons generally follow one topic for one to two weeks. These topics could range from using expression (fluency) and understanding character development (comprehension), to understanding the importance of reading and the structures of reading in the classroom setting.

This time is similar to that of writer's workshop in that it is a time to teach a skill, strategy, or important element of reading (Collins, 2004). Orehovec & Alley (2003) suggested creating mini-lessons around the following topics, workshop procedures, skills and strategies, and literary elements and techniques. They also suggested using a variety of children's literature, such as *Chrysanthemum* by Kevin Henkes (1991), to support your teaching of literary elements and techniques.

Independent reading time. The second component to readers' workshop is independent reading time. This is the time for students to sit or lay down with a book and read. Although this may look different in many classrooms the part that is consistent is that students are in a comfortable setting and they are looking at and interacting with books. This portion of workshop should last approximately thirty to forty minutes (Calkins, 2001), or fifteen to twenty minutes for early childhood aged children (Bryan, 1999; Collins, 2004).

Taberski (2000) suggested using a checklist, like the one that follows, when considering how to structure and manage the independent reading time of readers' workshop:

- o Create clear goals and determine how those goals will be achieved

- o Communicate your goals in a clear and concise manner

- o Have the environment and materials needed to support your goals ready

- o Children should read at their independent reading level

- o Offer a variety of reading experiences

- o Allow appropriate durations for reading based on age and reading level

- o Hold children accountable for their reading

Taberski (2000) also discussed a variety of things readers can do during independent reading time such as; read from their bags, complete a weekly reading log, respond to a book, read a big book, read along with a book, read with a partner, work on a strategy sheet such as a graphic organizer, and do an extension activity from their guided reading group.

Another important aspect of independent reading time is the material available for the students to read. Having just right or leveled reading material available for students to read is an important part of readers' workshop (Collins, 2004). In addition to the just right or leveled materials, it is also important to have a selection of books that will broaden the student's experiences and create a level of interest in reading. This will be discussed further in a later section.

Conferencing. During independent reading time, teachers spend their time conferencing with different students about their work or teaching small group reading instruction, such as guided reading. Collins (2004) suggests using readers' workshop reading time for conferencing with students one-on-one. She recommends teachers move to the students for conferencing rather than having the students move to the

teacher. This way, students are not disrupted from their reading pattern. She also recommends conferences last between three to five minutes. During that time, a teacher needs to offer a compliment to the reader, take notes of what the reader is doing well and is not doing well, offer a brief lesson on a skill or strategy the child needs to work on and then wrap up with how to apply the new skill or strategy.

Calkins (2001) offered a method to readers' workshop conferencing that is called Research-Decide-Teach. Research is done in the sense of finding out information about a reader. Asking questions while observing the reader can help you find out quality information about the reader and their habits. Is the reader interacting with the text? Is the reader using a finger to point to the words on the page? Is the reader engaged in the text? All of these questions and more will help you learn more about the reader.

The second step is to decide. Once you have observed from afar, Calkins (2001) suggested moving yourself next to the child. Then ask the student questions about the book and their interest in the book. If needed, take time to listen to the reader read then quickly decide on a lesson in which you want to review or teach. This can also be done previous to the conference if you have made notes during a previous conference about something you would like to teach.

The last step is to teach. According to Calkins (2001) you should begin a conference stating something you've noticed. If you can make your observation into a compliment before moving to your teaching point, the student may be more receptive to your lesson (Collins, 2004). During the teaching of your lesson, make sure you connect the lesson to their reading and to the learning of the class. Make

sure students know and understand why this particular strategy or skill is important (Calkins, 2001).

Another aspect of conferencing discussed by Calkins (2001) is goal setting. It is important for students to have a goal during independent reading time. Using your conferences to discuss or create goals for readers is time well spent. When readers have goals guiding their reading, they are more apt to be intrinsically motivated to practice their reading independently.

Mid-workshop time. Following the independent reading time is the mid-workshop partner/buddy work time (Collins, 2004; Calkins, 2001). This time of workshop can range from ten to fifteen minutes. During this time partners can read together (Collins, 2004) or share what they've read and have conversations about books (Calkins, 2001). It is important to note that because this is a time for sharing and buddy work, this is not the most opportune time for conferencing or teaching intense instruction. During this time, the teacher can pull a small strategies group or observe the discussions that are happening amongst the students (Collins, 2004).

Sharing time. Wrapping up readers' workshop comes with sharing time. During this time, the teacher calls the students to the common area to share their workshop time learning (Collins, 2004). Sometimes, teachers review the mini-lesson, other times kids are aloud to share about the books they read or books they plan to read in the future. Bryan (1999) argued that good literature creates good discussion therefore making the sharing portion of readers' workshop absolutely necessary.

Motivation and Engagement

Motivating students to read can sometimes be a struggle especially in a classroom where students are all reading at different levels and some students are not reading at all. According to Taberski (2000), "Engagement is a process by which the learner sees himself as capable of learning a particular skill and decides to do what is necessary to acquire it" (p. 136).

Guthrie (2000) discussed four main types of motivators, task-mastery, performance orientation, self-efficacy, and social motivation. Task-mastery refers to the desire to improve upon skills by taking on new challenges. Performance orientation can be described as a person's desire to complete something. Self-efficacy is similar to self-image. It is the way in which a person judges their performance based upon goals they have made for themselves. Finally there is social motivation, which refers to students being motivated by interaction. Calkins (2001) and Collins (2004) stressed the need for children to be social. They incorporated this into readers' workshop during the mid-workshop partner time because they know how motivating it is for students.

Taberski (2000) argued that making good book choices with students is key to motivation and sustained independent reading time. She explains that by allowing children to read just right (leveled) books, you are supporting their interest and engagement in the reading process. By allowing them to read and work with books that they can practice the skills being taught in their small guided-reading group, you are motivating them and boosting their self-esteem.

Getting Started in the Elementary Classroom

There are two main things that authors agree are required for an effective readers' workshop model, a library of books and materials for reading, and a structure for workshop time. Both of these things will need to be thought out thoroughly and planned for effectively before beginning readers' workshop in an elementary classroom.

According to Diller (2003), setting up your classroom library is an essential part of any elementary classroom. She discussed in detail and provides pictures to support her ideas for organizing both leveled library materials and interest library material. Diller (2008) again discussed important aspects of setting up your library but the overall theme is organization. She suggested using baskets or buckets on shelves for separating books so that they can be easily labeled for students to search through and find materials. She also suggests creating an environment where students feel comfortable and relaxed so the can really enjoy the materials they are reading.

Collins (2004) also discussed the importance of the classroom library. She, like Diller, believes there is a need for both just right books and leveled books. She also suggests making sure the library is always changing. Making sure kids have opportunities to read and explore different texts is important. An example she uses is holiday related material and material being covered in science or social studies. Rather than having the holiday reading materials out all year, rotate them in and out of the library based on the season or the month you are teaching about certain topics. This will help keep the library new and exciting for students as the year progresses.

In addition to the always changing library, the organization, and the leveled materials, Calkins (2001) goes into detail about how to teach children to find and read just right books. She discusses the need for having good conversations about books with kids as a group and one-on-one. She suggests creating visual posters to hang in or near the library to help students when they are trying to make appropriate book choices. Some of the ideas that go into what a just right book feels like are; is it smooth reading, do you know most of the words, are you interested in what you're reading about, and can you understand what you are reading? Those are just a few of the guidelines she suggests giving students when they are trying to determine their just right books for their book bags.

As discussed in Cunningham & Allington (2007), independent reading through the structure of readers' workshop is a valuable way to not only increase reading achievement but to keep students busy in a productive way while teaching small guided-reading group instruction or while conferencing one-on-one with students about their reading. Authors have concluded that time to read and structuring that reading time can create a classroom of readers and more importantly, learners. Readers' workshop is a format that allows independent reading time to occur with purpose and motivation for all readers.

Chapter III

Methodology

The purpose of this project was to create a professional development plan for an elementary school staff to use when looking to implement readers' workshop into their classrooms. The literature review was created with a variety of references from a variety of sources. I used four textbook style resources about readers' workshop to guide most of my literature review. In addition to the textbooks, I found peer-reviewed articles from many education databases such as, ERIC, EBSCO, Wilson, and APA. All other references came from the reference lists of the books and articles I read.

In regards to the Professional Development Plan, I used the same references as the ones used for my literature review. In addition to those resources, I used a textbook that is designed for reading coaches and literacy specialists to use as a resource for creating professional development for teachers. The textbook guided me into creating and developing the most important parts of the professional development plan. I also looked at the resources used for the literature review and decided which guides and books I felt were more teacher friendly and easy to read. The purpose of having quality guides and resources was to make sure the teacher's learning time was useful and effective.

The Professional Development Plan also includes a three-year timetable. In that timetable, I set up the plans for how the in-service time would be spent in regards to which steps of readers' workshop would be introduced at which times. In addition to the timetable, the project describes other workshops or in-services that will be

available to teachers as well as the materials and budget that will be required to make this Professional Development Plan effective. Finally, the project considers assessment and evaluation of both the teachers and how it affects student achievement data.

I chose to make this a three-year Professional Development Plan because of the amount of material that needs to be covered. I believe teachers need time to process information and to apply new strategies to their classrooms. The three-year plan allows teachers to learn a little, apply a little, learn a little more, apply it in full, then continue to have Professional Development to support them in modifying the process in their classrooms.

Chapter IV

The Project

Easton Elementary School Professional Development Plan

Created by Alaina Daters, Reading Specialist

The Literacy Team: Mrs. Daters (Reading specialist), Mr. Hagger (Principal), Mrs. Jansen (ELL), Ms. Elpt (Special Education), Mr. Labin (Kindergarten), Mrs. Amiston (First Grade), Mr. Mitchell (Second Grade), Ms. Jelina (Third Grade), Mary Tamis (Parent), Steve Smith (Parent)

Targeted Need: Improving student achievement through the use of readers' workshop as an alternative to traditional literacy centers, Grades K-5

Goals of Professional Development

1. Teach staff about readers' workshop and its use in their elementary classrooms.

2. Increase student achievement scores on both formative and summative district assessments.

3. Give staff time and support while trying to implement readers' workshop into their classrooms.

4. Provide staff with a solid understanding of the guiding principals of readers' workshop.

Currently Used Instructional Materials and Curriculum

- Basal reading program

    o Shared reading instruction

- Guided reading

- Variety of different literacy centers approaches

- BRI assessment

- Phonemic Awareness Test

- Literacy team will survey staff about other approaches already in use

Professional Resources

Purchase six copies of the following book (one per grade level):

Collins, K. (2004). *Growing readers: Units of study in the primary classroom.*

Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

Purchase twelve copies of the following books (two per grade level):

Boushey, G., & Moser, J. (2006). *The daily five: Fostering literacy independence in*

the elementary grades. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

Boushey, G. & Moser, J. (2009). *The cafe book: Engaging all students in daily*

literacy assessment and instruction. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

Purchase one copy for each teaching staff member of the following book:

Orehovec, B., & Alley, M. (2003). *Revisiting the reading workshop: Management,*

mini-lessons, and strategies. New York: Scholastic.

Suggested Activities for Professional Resources

- Review guided reading procedures during staff meetings once a month.

- Encourage grade level teams to follow a book talk format for reading and discussing the chapters in the books selected.

- Review running records during staff meetings four times each year.

- Offer in-service training on how to administer the BRI assessment and PAT

In-Service and Workshops

- Offer an in-service on guided reading activities

- Offer a workshop on how to build a classroom library

- Suggest attending reading conferences or workshops throughout the year

- Offer a workshop on using data to support instructional decisions

Demonstration Lessons

- Offer and schedule demonstration lessons for the following topic areas:

  o Managing readers' workshop

  o Conferencing one-on-one with a student

  o Teaching guided reading during readers' workshop

  o Using running records as a formative assessment tool

  o Using data to support instructional decision making

Self-Assessment/Peer Coaching/Mentoring

During professional development:

- Coaching cues and prompts will scaffold understanding to ensure learning is evident during all professional development in-service days.

- The literacy team will do informal observation of staff learning during professional development days. If a lack of understanding is noticed, small group or one-on-one review will be offered.

- A questionnaire will be filled out by staff members at the completion of each professional development day in order for the literacy team to assess staff's comfort level with newly introduced material/learning.

Following professional development:

- Through collaborative planning grade-level teams will determine a plan of action for implementing readers' workshop into their classrooms.

- The Literacy Team Lead (Mrs. Daters) will accept any personal requests to confer/demonstrate/evaluate classroom implementation of readers' workshop components at any time during the school year. Please e-mail personal/team requests as needed to the Literacy Team Lead (Mrs. Daters) and arrangements will be made to promptly meet the needs of your request.

Professional development webpage:

- Outlines from previous professional development sessions including video links

- Examples of one-on-one conferences between teacher and student

- References of professional resources

- Commonly asked questions & answers

- Favorites page - Any additional suggestions/examples/resources that have worked well for various team members/individuals will be posted here (we warmly welcome participation).

Student Outcomes

- Improvement in reading fluency and comprehension as determined by a pre and post BRI assessment

- Improvement in student attitude towards reading as determined by a pre and post student survey

Evaluation

- Surveys from staff members about their understanding of readers' workshop

- Surveys from staff members about the comfort level with implementing readers' workshop into their classroom.

- Data collected and complied from questionnaire used following each professional development day.

- Comparison of pre and post assessments of BRI and student attitude survey.

Estimated Budget

- Professional reading materials $1,000
  (year 1)

- Duplicating printed materials $150 ($50 per
  year)

- Other materials needed for in-service days $300 ($100 per
  year)

- Conference Registrations (literacy team) $1,000
  (year 1)

- Materials to supplement classroom libraries $1,000
  (year 2)

- Total Cost

  $3,450

Tentative Time Line

Year One

August-September

Topic: What is Readers' Workshop

- Distribute materials including in-service agenda (see Appendix A)

- Complete pre surveys of staff understanding of readers' workshop (see Appendix B)

- Complete surveys staff's current classroom activities for centers time (see Appendix C)

- Instruct teachers on having students complete pre attitude surveys about reading (see Appendix D)

- PowerPoint presentation on readers' workshop (see Appendix E)

- Question and answer session about new professional development plan

October-November

Topic: The components of readers' workshop

- Discuss using a study group format within grade level teams for reading assignments

- Video of readers' workshop (link below):

  o http://bcove.me/zmmwihwu

- PowerPoint presentation on the four major components of readers' workshop (see Appendix F)

- Question and answer session about readers' workshop

January-February

Topic: Building a classroom library

- PowerPoint presentation on how to build a classroom library (see Appendix G)

- Discussion of how to level books

- Share out session on classroom libraries already in place at Easton Elementary

- Work time in classrooms to assess materials and support needed to build a classroom library

March-April

Topic: Wrap up classroom library and materials needed

- Share out session on what materials and support are needed to build a classroom library.

- Assign partners/mentors to help with teachers who need support

- Information on how to submit a wish list to the literacy team for materials for classroom libraries.

- Resources available for leveling books

- Work time in classrooms for leveling books and/or organizing classroom libraries.

Year Two

Fall Sessions (2-3)

Topic: Mini-lessons

- PowerPoint presentations on mini-lessons

- Videos of mini-lesson examples

- Review of mini-lesson examples from book

- Share out session of success stories of mini-lessons being taught at Easton Elementary

- Work time in grade level teams to build mini-lessons

Spring Sessions (2-3)

Topic 1: Conferencing

- PowerPoint presentations on one-on-one conferencing

- Video examples of conferencing

- Share our of materials that could be used for organizing conferences

Topic 2: Guided reading during readers' workshop

- Time management

- How to teach guided reading and still conference with students one-on-one

- Video of readers' workshop while teacher is teaching a small group

Year Three

Fall Sessions

Topic 1: Sharing time

- What it looks like

- Variety of ideas on how to use this time

- Why this time in important

Topic 2: Steps for continuing readers' workshop

- Always changing classroom library

- Using other resources for students reading

- Use grade level collaboration time for discussing success and frustrations

Spring Sessions

Topic 3: Using data to drive instructional decisions

- Using conferencing notes to guide mini-lessons

- Using running records to guide mini-lessons

- Using teachable moments during conferencing

Topic 4: Data review

- Is student achievement data on the rise?

- Are students more engaged in independent work during guided reading?

Chapter V

Conclusion

If teachers use the structure of reader's workshop which includes a mini-lesson, independent work time, buddy time and sharing out time, students will be engaged in meaningful independent practice of their reading skills. Authors Diller (2003) and Collins (2004) agree that the biggest portion that determines success with reader's workshop is setting up a classroom and the classroom library. If a teacher's schedule is set up to include the major components and a teacher's classroom library is set up as suggested, reader's workshop will be successful.

Suggestions from Taberski (2000), lead teachers to the idea that providing students with choices such as reading logs or reading response journals will help structure the independent work time in a more effective way. She suggested allowing children to choose from day to day their independent work activities to encourage them to become independent learners and thinkers.

In order for teachers to fully understand and have the knowledge base to implement a structure like readers' workshop, they need to have significant training and time to read the research. The three year professional development model will allow teachers time to adjust their classrooms slowly to the implementation of readers' workshop while continuously gaining a better understanding of the structure and its major components.

Teachers will participate in the a gradual release of information and implementation of readers' workshop while having ample time to collaborate with their teaching peers and grade level teams. Teachers will also be supported with

materials and additional professional development as needed throughout the three-year process.

Certainly with a good professional development model, a strong understanding of readers' workshop, and on-going professional development, teachers can start to make a difference for their students through the use of readers' workshop.

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Appendix A

Professional Development Agenda

Easton Elementary
Professional Development Agenda

Readers' Workshop

8:15 – 9:00	Introduction
9:00 – 9:30	Readers' Workshop Survey
9:30 – 9:45	Break
9:45 – 10:30	Current Classroom Practices Survey
10:30- 11:15	Directions for Student Survey
11:15 – 12:30	Lunch
12:30 – 1:00	Presentation on Readers' Workshop
1:00 – 1:15	Break
1:15 – 2:00	Question/Answer Session
2:00 – 3:30	Distribute Materials then work in classrooms

Appendix B

Readers' Workshop Survey – Likert Scale

Easton Elementary Readers' Workshop Survey

The purpose of this survey is to get a baseline of your understanding of readers'

workshop. Please be honest. This information will help up plan our professional

development for the next few years.

Thank you,

Your Literacy Team

Grade Level   K   1   2   3   4   5

Do you have experience with readers' workshop: Yes_____   No_____

On a 1-5 scale (5 being comfortable/expert) please rate your comfort level of the

following:

I have heard of readers' workshop

1   2   3   4   5

I have used part of readers' workshop in my classroom

1   2   3   4   5

I am comfortable working with students in small group

1   2   3   4   5

I am comfortable working with students one-on-one discussing their reading ability

1   2   3   4   5

I like what I have my students doing during guided reading

1   2   3   4   5

I think my literacy centers are an effective use of student time

1   2   3   4   5

Appendix C

Readers' Workshop Survey – Open-ended Questions

Easton Elementary Readers' Workshop Survey

The purpose of this survey is to gain an understanding of what is already occurring in

our school. We want to know both the good and the bad. This way we can keep the

good and change the bad!

Thank you,

Your Literacy Team

Grade Level   K   1   2   3   4   5

How do literacy centers look in your classroom?

Are you happy about how they are going?

What would you like to change about how you do literacy centers?

List any good resources you have used in the past to help you create your centers.

Please use the back if you need more room to answer.

Appendix D

Elementary Reading Attitude Survey

Elementary Reading Attitude Survey

School_____ Grade_____ Name_____

Please circle the picture that describes how you feel when you read a book.

1. How do you feel when you read a book on a rainy Saturday?

2. How do you feel when you read a book in school during free time?

3. How do you feel about reading for fun at home?

4. How do you feel about getting a book for a present?

Please circle the picture that describes how you feel when you read a book.

---

5. How do you feel about spendng free time reading a book?

---

6. How do you feel about starting a new book?

---

7. How do you feel about reading during summer vacation?

---

8. How do you feel about reading instead of playing?

Please circle the picture that describes how you feel when you read a book.

9. How do you feel about going to a bookstore?

10. How do you feel about reading different kinds of books?

11. How do you feel when a teacher asks you questions about what you read?

12. How do you feel about reading workbook pages and worksheets?

Page 3

Please circle the picture that describes how you feel when you read a book.

13.	How do you feel about reading in school?

14.	How do you feel about reading your school books?

15.	How do you feel about learning from a book?

16.	How do you feel when it's time for reading in class?

Page 4

Please circle the picture that describes how you feel when you read a book.

17. How do you feel about stories you read in reading class?

18. How do you feel when you read out loud in class?

19. How do you feel about using a dictionary?

20. How do you feel about taking a reading test?

Page 5

Elementary Reading Attitude Survey Scoring Sheet

Student Name_____

Teacher_____

Grade_____ Administration Date_____

Scoring Guide	
4 points	Happiest Garfield
3 points	Slightly smiling Garfield
2 points	Mildly upset Garfield
1 point	Very upset Garfield

Recreational reading
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Raw Score: _____

Academic reading
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Raw Score: _____

Full scale raw score . . . . (Recreational + Academic): _____

Percentile ranks: . . . . Recreational

. . . . Academic

. . . . Full scale

Appendix E

Power Point Presentation

READERS' WORKSHOP
Easton Elementary School

WHAT IS READERS' WORKSHOP?

"Readers' Workshop is the organizational structure
for the instructional components for reading
instruction"
(Alpine School District, 2007, p. 1).

COMPONENTS OF READERS' WORKSHOP

- o Mini-lesson
- o Independent reading time
- o Mid-workshop partner/buddy reading
- o Sharing time

OVERVIEW OF READERS' WORKSHOP

- o Video
  - • http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/video.jsp?
    pID=1649964947&bcpid=1649964947&bckey=AQ~~,
    AAAAAFv844g~,BASb5BU03X8WjmER7xfeMiLfcMp
    AAcRE&bclid=40458095001&bctid=35149225001

QUESTIONS?

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Appendix F

Power Point Presentation

READERS' WORKSHOP
Easton Elementary

COMPONENTS OF READERS' WORKSHOP

- Mini-lesson
- Independent reading time
- Mid-workshop partner/buddy reading
- Sharing time

MINI-LESSONS

- 10-15 minutes
- Follow a topic for 1-2 weeks
- Lessons may include
  - Fluency strategies
  - Comprehension strategies
  - Text structure
  - Story elements
  - Literary techniques

INDEPENDENT READING TIME

- 20-30 minutes depending on age level
- Read leveled materials and interest materials
- Complete a weekly reading log
- Respond to a book
- Fill in a graphic organizer
- Extension activity from guided reading

MID-WORKSHOP PARTNER READING

- 10-15 minutes
- Helps motivate readers
- Work with a buddy
  - Read books together
  - Discuss books read
  - Discuss books that will be read

SHARING TIME

- 5-10 minutes
- Share lessons learned during workshop
- Teacher review of mini-lesson
- Students read aloud to class

VIDEO

o http://bcove.me/18s6k1gq

QUESTIONS?

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Appendix G

Power Point Presentation

READERS' WORKSHOP

Easton Elementary School

BUILDING YOUR CLASSROOM LIBRARY

o Video

- http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/video.jsp?
  pID=1649964947&bcpid=1649964947&bckey=AQ~~,
  AAAAAFv844g~,BASb5BU03X8WjmER7xfeMiLfcMp
  AAcRE&bclid=40458095001&bctid=43601098001

CLASSROOM LIBRARIES SHOULD...

o Be organized
o Be labeled
o Have leveled books
o Have interest book
o Always be changing
o Easy to navigate through

GOOD RESOURCES FOR BUILDING YOUR CLASSROOM LIBRARY...

Diller, D. (2003). *Literacy work stations: Making centers work.* Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

Diller, D. (2008). *Spaces & places: Designing classrooms for literacy.* Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

Collins, K. (2004). *Growing readers: Units of study in the primary classroom.* Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

These materials are available for check out!

QUESTIONS?

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