

Implementing the Common Core



THROUGH STUDY GROUPS

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Educational Background



- Villanova University
- Fordham University
 - MS Ed (Curriculum and Teaching)
 - PhD in Literacy, Language and Learning
 - National Board Certification
- Teaching since 1999.
- Taught 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade
- Currently co-teaching in 4th grade

One Promising Approach for Professional Development



- **Study Groups**

- ✦ A study group is a **series of weekly sessions** in which 6 to 8 teachers, including a designated facilitator, voluntarily meet, for a specific period of time, to discuss educational issues.
- ✦ Study groups allow teachers to **take charge of their learning**, and permit them to play a greater role in deciding what they need to learn, empowering their own professionalism (McKenzie, 2001; Stokes, 2001)
- ✦ Study groups allow **teachers to collaborate** with other colleagues in a supportive and **non-threatening environment** to **reflect** on their current teaching practices and beliefs (Tichenor & Heins, 2000)

Steps/Process of a Study Group



- Facilitator (Teacher in the Building)- trained and organizes the sessions
- Time for reading resources/best practices
- Discussions about the reading
- Time to create a lesson
- Teacher Reflection Journal

Possible Ways



- In-service credit for participating in study groups after school
- Districts could offer the option to participate in study group sessions instead of attending PD days in June
- Teachers could be paid a stipend to work after hours



Questions to Consider

How do adults learn best?

How can change be implemented successfully?

What role does reflection play in implementing change?

Theories

- Adult Learning Theory
- Change Theory
- Reflection Theory

Adult Learning



Six Main Principles

1. Learners need to Know
2. Self-concept of the Learner
3. Prior Experience of the Learner
4. Readiness to Learn
5. Orientation to Learn
6. Motivation to Learn

(Knowles, 2005)

Adult Learning and Study Groups



- Provides teachers with information on what they are going to learn, why it is so important for students and how they can use the information to conduct lessons in the classrooms.
- Able to direct their own learning through dialogue on assigned readings and lessons they create.
- Share and gain knowledge from colleagues about the topic they are studying.
- Knowledge they gain in a study group directly applies to their daily teaching practice.

Change Theory



Phases of Change

- Initiation
- Implementation
- Continuation
- Outcome

Necessary Components:

- Mandatory Accountability
- Someone monitoring the innovation being implemented

(Fullan, 2004)

Driving Forces



Positive Forces

- Ongoing PD
- Time to process and reflect
- Resources that mirror what the students are expected to learn
- Funding for Professional Development

Negative Forces

- Implemented too quickly
- Not enough PD
- Resources not being provided early enough to process and understand
- Teachers being assessed and evaluated on how their students perform when they were not given time or proper training

Reflection



- The process of reflection for teachers begins when they experience a dilemma, perplexing event or experience that cannot be instantly resolved (Dewey, 1933).
- Teachers need time to reflect while they are teaching and after their lesson is over.
- Reflection plays a significant role in the professional development process, specifically involving study groups.

Math Modules



Date Modules were Released

- Module 1- May 11, 2013
- Module 2- July 5, 2013
- Module 3- Aug. 30, 2013
- Module 4- Oct. 20, 2013
- Module 5 – Jan. 17, 2014
- Module 6- Feb. 1, 2014
- Module 7- Feb. 1, 2014

Number of Pages/ Lessons

- 256 pages
- 88 pages
- 497 pages
- 268 pages
- 543 pages
- 259 pages
- 241 pages

Days of Instruction



Instructional Days for the Modules Before Assessment

- Module 1- 25 days
- Module 2 - 7 days
- Module 3- 43 days
- Module 4- 20 days
- Module 5- 45 days

- Total Number= **140 days**

Number of Available Instructional Days

- Sept to April = **143 days**
- Factors to consider:
 - Field trips
 - Assemblies
 - Snow Days
 - Re-teach days
 - Review for the test

Suggestions



- Provide Time and Extensive Professional Development in order to adapt the Modules to fit the learners in their community such as study groups.
- Release time once a month for grade levels to work and collaborate together.
- Consider how adults (teachers) learn, and what needs to happen to implement change.

Suggestions



- Allow time for re-teaching when children do not understand.
- Allow time to review the concepts before the state exam.
- Extend the testing date until June- testing Modules 1-5. (Move the remaining Modules to the next grade level.)

Suggestions for Materials



- Allow teachers to use the tests as a learning tool to inform their instruction.
- Provide resources that include many word problems for each topic.
- Provide differentiated lessons with materials for diverse learners (High, Med, and Low).



Teachers are ready for the new challenge and changes, they just need professional development and time to process what they are expected to teach.

“Change is the end result of all true learning.”

(Buscaglia, 2014)