

The Main Idea's PD Suggestions for *Active Literacy Across the Curriculum*

Creating a Schoolwide Writing Policy and Rubric

The goal of the PD ideas below is to create a schoolwide editing and revising policy and rubric to be used for *any* writing assignment.

1. To show the *need* for this, bring in a piece of student writing (it could be an explanation of a math problem), and have teachers grade it individually, not just for subject-area accuracy, but also for how clearly the student organizes and communicates his/her ideas. Lead a discussion about the varying grades the teachers assign to this piece of writing and the types of criteria teachers used to judge it. This will show how teacher grading of writing within one school/grade/discipline can vary so wildly.

2. Hand out copies of the Sample K-12 Revision and Editing Policy and High School/Middle School Writing Rubric on pp. 4-5 of the summary (or the full versions from the book on pp.64-6, 71-6) to provide an example of consistent schoolwide writing expectations.

3. To actually create your own Revision and Editing Policy and a rubric to go along with this, you might want to create a committee (with representatives from different subjects and grade levels) since this will take a lot of work. To create these documents, either: 1) Bring in state/national writing rubrics that are used in your school and have teachers bring in the writing rubrics they're currently using. Use these documents to create your own policy and rubric. Or, 2) Bring in samples of student writing (from all grades and all disciplines) and divide these papers into four categories (from 'excellent' to 'poor') for each grade level. Then pull out the skills used for this writing (and this becomes the Revision and Editing Policy) and the criteria used to judge this writing (and this becomes your pool of criteria for your schoolwide writing rubric). This document can be submitted to the entire staff for suggested revisions.

4. Once the committee has come up with these two documents, for a useful follow-up PD session ask teachers to bring in an assignment they plan to use that involves writing. Teachers can give each other feedback in pairs about how well the assignment reflects the school's revision and editing policy. Then, after the students have completed the assignment, at another PD session teachers could collaboratively grade some of the student responses, using the schoolwide rubric to strive for consistency in writing expectations.

Modeling and Practicing Active Notetaking

While many English/language arts teachers have experience with the notetaking techniques in this book, other subject-area teachers may not. To introduce these techniques, first model them, then let those teachers experience these techniques by actually *doing* them. This would be a good opportunity to tap a teacher experienced with these literacy strategies to conduct this PD session.

First, *model* the 'Commenting and Questioning' technique. Choose a one-page reading (perhaps p.1 or p.3 of this summary), copy it onto a transparency, and with an overhead projector, demonstrate how you might "interact" with the text by asking questions and making connections aloud while you use a marker to write these notes in the margins. Or, pass out copies of the reading and use the overhead projector to show how, after drawing a line down the middle of the page, you write key ideas you've extracted from the text on the left and then reactions to those ideas on the right. After modeling these techniques, distribute a new short text and ask teachers to *practice using* these techniques. Consider using a reading from math (a textbook page) or science (a piece of research) since these are subjects where teachers may have less experience with active notetaking. You can also model and have teachers practice the other three notetaking techniques on p.3 of the summary (for example, bring sentence strips for teachers to organize into a sequential outline or bring notecards for teachers to extract categories from a sample text).

Planning for Vocabulary Instruction

To help students continue to learn high-frequency words, it is helpful for teachers to choose which words should be emphasized in which grades. To make sure teachers understand what "high-frequency" words are, distribute the list of 69 high-frequency words on p. 26 of the before the meeting. This list includes the following: *contrast, determine, discern, discuss, elaborate, establish, examine, extract, generate, identify, interpret, justify, organize, prove, reason, refer, reflect, select, and support*. It might be useful to have teachers ask students to translate these words into their own language as a diagnostic tool to see how precisely students understand these words and to make the case for teaching them.

Then, each teacher should come to a PD session with a variety of sources where students find high-frequency words in their particular class: assessments, textbooks, teacher-created tests, and standardized tests. Spend time going through these materials and have teachers identify approximately 50 high-frequency words. This could be done before the PD session to save a lot of time. Then, either by grade level, or grouping grades together (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12), have teachers look at their lists together and choose the high-frequency words each grade or group will focus on for the year. It also may be helpful to have teachers of the same grade level brainstorm and then agree on a common approach to these words: word walls, a list in each student's binder, translation practice, assessment techniques, and other approaches.

Curriculum Mapping

To help teachers use curriculum mapping to support schoolwide literacy efforts, show them sample maps (below, on p. 128, and in Jacobs's other work) and have them note where literacy skills are built in. Then have them bring in their own unit plans and provide a blank template so they can integrate literacy based on: the literacy priorities of your school or literacy gaps they have determined from looking at student work and test results.

Sample of a Calculus Curriculum Map

CONTENT

Essential Questions:

1. How is the equation of a line represented?
2. Why is the graph of a line different from the line of a radical function?
3. Why is the graph of a line different from the line of a rational function?

Content:

Linear functions (applications & graphs)
Terms: slope, function, rational, depreciation, intercept, radical

SKILLS

- Rewrites linear equations in point-slope form, slope-intercept form, and standard form
- Determines slope using slope formula
 - Determines equation of a line given two points
 - Applies depreciation formulas
 - Graphs functions on the T1-83+ calculator
 - Determines the roots of functions
 - Employs terms in written work and discussion
 - Translates directions on all tests and assignments
 - Revises all writing to include precise procedural language
 - Edits all written work for complete sentences

ASSESSMENTS

- Student demonstrations on overhead calculator
- Triad class discussions in small groups reporting out to whole class on linear functions
- Multiple choice quiz on slope and linear functions
- Short answer test on functions and graphs
- Correct use of terms in work
- Accurate paraphrasing of directions
- Circled revisions
- Edited written work