



★ It's in the Bag ★

Book Study Groups have long been one of the least expensive and most enjoyable ways for educators to grow professionally. Study groups provide structured time for reflection on student work and classroom practice. A book study group can be formed in your school, your district, or even online. The study group method is invaluable in bringing together groups of colleagues who can use the classroom as an arena for studies, discussions and experience exchange and turn it into a “laboratory” for trying out new teaching methods skills and practices gleaned from the books studied. The hallmarks of a successful book study group are teacher engagement, superior use of time, and sustainable changes in student achievement.

Facilitator's Guide

Resources available for Checkout: *Response to Intervention: a Framework for Reading Educators*. (2008). Douglas Fuchs, Lynn S. Fuchs, Sharon Vaughn, editors, Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association

Book Description: *Response to Intervention* consists of five chapters, each by different authors. Each chapter deals with an essential element of RtI: Tier 1 Classroom Instruction, Assessment, Tier 2 Intervention, Tier 3 Special Education, and The Role of the Reading Professionals. Each chapter can and should be studied and discussed as an individual topic, but all five chapters taken together represent the framework of elements that comprise a successful RtI program.

Framing the Context of a Book Study: Powerful Tools for Learning:

Two powerful venues for deepening understanding, impacting student outcomes and contributing to the growth of learning organizations are professional learning communities and communities of practice. One of the most effective ways to make your school a learning organization is to create a professional learning community or a community of practice. The concept of a professional learning

community (PLC) is a powerful influence around the work of restructuring schools. According to Rick Dufour in *Whatever It Takes: How Professional Learning Communities Respond When Kids Don't Learn*, the fundamental role of schools is “learning, not teaching.” While Dufour acknowledges that this is “an enormous distinction,” he notes that the emphasis on learning leads those within the school to place their focus and energy on three important questions:

1. What is it we want all students to learn?
2. How will we know when each student has acquired the intended knowledge and skills?
3. How will we respond when students experience difficulty?

Another option for helping schools and districts is to create a community of practice. Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. A community of practice (CoP) makes connections from person to person for mutual inquiry and learning about a practice or issue. Everyone’s voice is needed. Participants develop a shared identity and share a repertoire of knowledge and experiences (Wenger, 2003). Both professional learning communities and communities of practice move system stakeholders from knowing to doing.

A Book study becomes a powerful tool that these communities can use to engage in powerful, professional discourse. A building or existing PLC or CoP may want to add a book study as another tool to aid in professional development. When your school or team begins planning their book study, keep the above questions in mind as a way to frame all discussions around student learning and school improvement.

Facilitating Successfully:

In order to facilitate the study groups most effectively, a district, school or team may want to consider the following:

- Treat study groups as a school-wide teacher professional development model.
- State the purpose for the book study groups in terms of specific student needs (these needs should be based on an analysis of student data).
- Study groups can be job-embedded, with principals freeing up time during the school day, or during superintendent conference days, faculty meetings, etc.
- Groups should be small and manageable, their work “published.”
- Study groups need support from administrators.
- Work within study groups is built around the participants’ search for knowledge according to their own needs and the needs of their students.

- Members meet regularly and work according to a study plan that they often develop themselves (the plan will include how often to meet, for how long, how many chapters will be discussed per meeting, where to meet, etc.).
- Everyone in a study group is responsible for getting the work done and for achieving the jointly agreed upon goals.
- The goals of a study group can be:
 - To offer a good method for teachers to cooperate more actively in order “to awaken their students’ minds” about sustainable development.
 - To integrate sustainable development into all curriculum subjects.
 - To provide teachers with the opportunity to share both good and bad teaching experiences and to get support from colleagues and professional books.
 - To encourage teachers to work together to solve a problem.
 - To get teachers motivated to pursue education for sustainable development—to make a difference.
- The facilitator should engage in the following behaviors:
 - Be diplomatic – suggest, but don’t subscribe.
 - Act as an advisor.
 - Be respectful.
 - Be professional, relaxed and be present in the situation.
 - Don’t intervene too much – let the group work on what they feel is important.
 - Encourage, inspire and support.
- During the last meeting, ask these questions:
 - What positive outcomes did we achieve?
 - What problems did we encounter?
 - What lessons have we learned that could be useful to other groups?
 - What do we do next?

The following section contains reflection and dialogue suggestions and questions broken out by chapter. These are designed to facilitate thinking and discussion around ***Response to Intervention: a Framework for Reading Educators.***

Chapter 1: Tier 1: Effective Classroom Reading Instruction in the Elementary Grades – Barbara M. Taylor

Overview

This chapter has a dual purpose: 1. to provide a brief review of the “five dimensions of reading” along with appropriate methods for implementing them, and 2. an extensive discussion of the teaching practices essential to their implementation.

Helpful Hints

Keep in mind the core-reading program currently being used in your school/district, as well as the cultural make up of your school community.

Reflection and Dialogue

1. How well is Phonemic Awareness and Phonics Instruction represented in your core reading program? Have you needed to supplement those elements in your class?
2. Explain why Comprehension Strategy Instruction is preferable to traditional Comprehension Skill Instruction.
3. How can we make informed instructional choices using the materials provided with the core reading program?
4. Create checklists and/or quick diagnostics to monitor ongoing student progress.
5. How can we determine the optimal balance of teacher-directed (student passive) activities with the time allowed for active student response and involvement?

Chapter 2: The Role of Assessment in the Rtl Framework – Lynn S. Fuchs and Douglas Fuchs

Overview

This chapter deals with assessments used in classrooms to measure student abilities, skills and strategies. The focus is on the use of DIBELS screening and using Curriculum-based Measurements (CBM) for monitoring progress, both of which are essential to Response to Intervention (RtI).

Helpful Hints

Have end-of-the-year, high-stakes test data available along with CBM class summary sheets. A brief review of the statistical terms used would be beneficial in the interpretation of the data.

Reflection and Dialogue

1. How can we most effectively implement our DIBELS testing early in Grades K-1?
2. What can we do to minimize errors in the interpretation of DIBELS data?
3. How do the core reading mastery measurements correlate to performance on high-stakes testing?
4. Discuss the difference between mastery measurement and general outcome measurement. Why is general outcome measurement superior?

Chapter 3: The Role of Intervention – Sharon Vaughn and Carolyn A. Denton

Overview

This chapter addresses the following: What is secondary prevention? How is secondary prevention put into practice? How can this intervention be implemented within your school/district?

Helpful Hint

Allow time to discuss what is currently being done for secondary intervention and its efficacy. Provide copies of Tables 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4 for later discussion.

Reflection and Dialogue

1. Compare and contrast the problem-solving approach and the standard protocol approach as tools for identification and intervention.
2. How can we make the most efficient and effective use of our time and personnel in providing Tier 2 interventions?
3. Using Tables 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3, discuss what is currently being done in your school or classroom to meet each objective for Tier 2 intervention and how, if necessary, it might be improved.
4. For each guideline in Table 3.4, decide whether you are currently using the appropriate, effective intervention. If not, how could you affect changes?
5. What can be done to insure the accuracy of our Tier 2 assessment monitoring?

Chapter 4: Tier 3: Why Special Education must be the Most Intensive Tier in a Standards-Driven, No Child Left Behind World – Douglas Fuchs, Pamela M. Stecker, and Lynn S. Fuchs

Overview

This chapter begins with a concise definition of RtI and how it reduces special education referrals. It goes on to explain how to use data-driven goals to guide instruction.

Helpful Hints

Have longitudinal data available as to the number of special education referrals that have been made in your school/district over the course of the last several years.

Reflection and Dialogue

1. Discuss your current philosophy of RtI. Is its primary function to identify special education students or to serve as an intervention/prevention tool?
2. Using your school's special education referrals, correlate the philosophy in question #1 to the actual number of referrals. Has the use of RtI increased or decreased the number of referrals?
3. How might increasing the number of RtI tiers be beneficial? What negatives do you see?
4. The authors support a fewer-tiered approach to RtI. Why?

Chapter 5: The Implications of RtI for the Reading Teacher - Timothy Shanahan

Overview

This chapter focuses on the essential role of reading professionals in the RtI process, both in addressing the needs of the classroom teacher and in meeting student needs.

Helpful Hints

Be prepared to discuss the role of the various reading professionals within your school/district.

Reflection and Dialogue

1. How do we determine the most effective use of our reading/literacy coach?
2. What is necessary to maximize the effectiveness of the “push-in” model of intervention?
3. Can students’ needs be better served outside of the classroom? When?
4. Discuss the four types of reading interventions mentioned in this chapter. How can each of them most effectively be accomplished?



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NYSRRC Book Study Guide Program

Feedback Form

Please provide feedback upon completion of the book study. Return this form in the facilitator guide folder.

1. Was the facilitator's guide useful in leading your discussion of *Response to Intervention: a Framework for Reading Educators*? Why or why not?
2. How can we improve this experience?
3. Would you recommend this to other groups?

