



Staff Development in the Primary Grades

Overview

Welcome to Nancy Fetzer's Staff development. Nancy's inservices primarily focus on reading and writing strategies packed with rigor and best teaching practices. Her researched-based methods are more than theory alone. Nancy provides teachers with "how-to" strategies that work and can immediately be implemented in the classroom.

Nancy Fetzer's staff development is custom-tailored to meet the needs of each individual site. When Nancy visits a school, she not only inservices the teachers, but also demonstrates lessons to your students in your classrooms as part of her instructional model. Her engaging lessons are filled with high-levels of student interactions, systematic direct instruction and metacognitive techniques.



Learning to Read

The Learning to Read inservices target emergent to early and fluent-leveled readers to provide primary-grade

teachers with a continuum of instruction so all students, whether slow-progressing, at grade level, or advanced, receive differentiated lessons to ultimately read independently with fluency and meaning.

Nancy's continuum of reading instruction consists of three unique frameworks that begin with Reading Folders and Pattern Books for emergent readers, continue to leveled books in guided reading groups for early readers, and finally transitional groups and book clubs for expert fluent readers.

Emergent reading groups utilize the Reading Folder and Pattern Books. The Reading Folder is a language experience, student-generated story that is controlled in vocabulary. Pattern Books are comprised of repetitive text and easily recognized patterns that help new readers notice the conventions of print and make meaning of the text.

Early readers use leveled books in small-group reading lessons to learn how to decode unfamiliar text. These reading groups also focus on fluency and comprehension. There are four components in a reading lesson. The first component is a language book walk to preview the story, develop academic language, and also to introduce reading strategies. The second part of the lesson is the word work that focuses on decoding skills and increases sight word knowledge. After the word work is the most important part of the lesson, reading the book with fluency, expression, and meaning. The final component of the lesson is the read-write connection to guide children to write summaries or responses.

Fluent-leveled readers work in transitional groups and book clubs. In the transitional groups, the teacher systematically guides fluent readers to silently read with high levels of comprehension. After the transitional groups, students then work in book clubs. A book club is a small group of students, who independently read, then meet to discuss the text.



Reading Comprehension

The Reading Comprehension Inservices focus on instructional strategies that guide students to understand, analyze, and evaluate narrative and expository text in social studies, sciences, and language arts. Nancy has developed a standards-based reading lesson plan that dove-tails with and enhances any curriculum. Her lesson plan includes three easy-to-use components: Before reading the text or pre-reading techniques, during reading comprehension strategies, followed by after reading high-level thinking activities.

The before reading or pre-reading activities in the lesson plan include Word Masters to Movie Scripts and Lecture Notes. Word Masters is a fast-paced activity that introduces robust vocabulary, while Movie Scripts bridges the vocabulary words to academic oral language utilizing a movie script twist. Another pre-reading activity is Lecture Notes. Unique interactive Lecture Notes utilize narrative and expository text structure elements and sophisticated oral language practice to frontload students with background knowledge to access the language arts, science or social studies core curriculum.

In the during reading part of the lesson plan, Nancy provides a five-level schoolwide matrix that incrementally graduates from basic to advanced reading strategies. This process slowly releases students from direct systematic instruction to independently reading with high-levels of comprehension. Once a level is mastered, students move up the matrix. As students move up these levels they master monitoring and clarifying, predicting and inferring, questioning and evaluating as well as summarizing through sequencing or identifying the most important details.

In the after reading part of the lesson plan, Nancy uses systematic and explicit instruction for teachers to guide their students to summarize the text, followed by a deep analysis and evaluation of the material. Most of these activities include graphic organizers and student engagement techniques for higher-level thinking that result in academic language development and writing across the curriculum.



Writing

The Writing Inservices utilize three components of instruction: 1) teacher write, 2) interactive writing, and 3) writing lessons.

The first component, the teacher write, is a daily five-minute lesson in which the teacher models the writing process and written language strategies of a fluent writer.

The second component of writing instruction is interactive writing. Fifteen-minutes a day, the entire class engages in brainstorming and planning, academic language practice, or written language instruction to write narratives, expository text, descriptions, summaries, or letters. During this activity, different students come up to the classroom whiteboard to write some of the story or information created from the brainstorm. The other pupils interact during the entire lesson utilizing their own whiteboards, or tactile kinesthetic motions. These writing projects are recorded into big books and placed in the classroom library for the children to read all year long.

The third component of writing instruction are the lessons. There are two types of writing lessons: guided writing and whole class lessons. In the guided writing lessons, Nancy works in small groups with emergent and early level writers utilizing her kinesthetic techniques blended with language development and written language instruction. This targeted instruction enables students to build their alphabet knowledge, develop segmentation skills, and master high frequency words. Additionally, pupils learn basic concepts of print like spacing, left-to-right directionality, and finally basic sentence mechanics.

Whole class lessons are for students that can independently write one or more sentences. During these lessons, Nancy demonstrates a model of instruction that emphasizes academic oral language development and systematic writing instruction to plan, revise, and edit writing. This instructional model has a specific design: The teacher begins with step-by-step, explicit instruction that creates a routine of learning. Students then practice the strategy with immediate and corrective feedback from the teacher. After many lessons, the teacher then slowly releases students to independently write.