Change evolves as professionals connect, construct meaning together, and engage in conversations that deepen their knowledge and their relationships.

Knowledge is not extended from those who consider that they know to those who consider that they do not know. Knowledge is built up in the relations between human beings.

Paulo Freire

We are collaborators working toward a sea of change in public education.

Maxine Greene

All too often in our schools today, students, parents, teachers and administrators feel a deep absence of authentic relationships in which they are trusted, given responsibility, spoken to honestly and warmly, and treated with dignity and respect.

Poplin & Weers
Contributors
This collection represents the work of many NCTE leaders. We extend our thanks to the following educators for generously sharing their work.

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NCTE Commission on Reading

Study Group & Coaching Resources 2 Copyright © 2004, NCTE
No road leads the way.

The road follows behind.

_Takamura Kotaro_

Welcome to this set of NCTE resources to support coaching and study group leadership. The majority of this collection has been extracted from NCTE journals, books, and from across the NCTE Reading Initiative (RI) topic-focused professional development curriculum. While our publications and the full RI curriculum include a broader range of professional learning experiences, these in particular support the work of coaches and study groups. Each experience engages both literacy content and literacy leadership, targeted to a study group setting. Advice and vignettes from experienced coaches and study group leaders rounds out the collection.

As the quote above observes, there is no single blueprint to support and develop literacy coaches. At the same time, there are structures and experiences that have served school systems well. Successful study groups have taken time to develop a set of operating principles: _How will we work together?_ They use student data to define goals for their work: _How can we use data to become better “kidwatchers”?_ They take time to reflect and make changes, based on their new learning: _What changes will we make in our group, in our classrooms, at our school?_ The notebook is organized by these commonly-asked questions, and others:

1. How can our group members get to know more about each other & literacy?
2. How do we want to work together? How will our group be organized?
3. What “big visions” of literacy learning have supported the work of other groups?
4. How can our own literacy experiences inform the learning of our study group?
5. How can we use data to become more effective “kidwatchers”?
6. What can I read to learn more?
7. What issues are on our minds? What are we interested in learning more about?
8. How can we collect and preserve our ideas and new learning?
9. I’m visiting a colleague’s classroom. How can we be helpful to each other?
10. How will we share what we have learned?
11. Now what? What changes will we make in our group, in our classrooms, at our school?
The experiences are not meant to be used sequentially; but rather, based on need. We expect educators to select those experiences that reflect a particular group’s interests and issues. If you will be using this collection in a leadership role, we advise that you begin by browsing through the all of the experiences and professional reading with post-its in hand, marking each that you predict will have value for your group. The plans that others have made can also support your planning.

You may notice in the Overview that the thumbnail description of each experience is followed by a code; these codes correspond with the initials of the inquiry study in which the experience originally appears, i.e. Are We Collegial or Congenial? D1 EV was included as the first demonstration in the study, Exploring Visions of Literacy Learning. This information may be incidentally of interest and does not impact the use of the experiences as they appear in this collection. The information does, however, provide a window into the NCTE RI curriculum for readers who have limited knowledge of the program and might want to know more. If interested, see http://www.ncte.org/profdev/onsite/readinit/faqs/107784.htm or call 800/369-6283.

**NCTE Reading Initiative Inquiry Studies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EV</td>
<td>Exploring Visions of Literacy Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USR</td>
<td>Understanding and Supporting Readers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AR</td>
<td>Supporting Development of Adolescent Readers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AW</td>
<td>Supporting Development of Adolescent Writers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLA</td>
<td>Critical Language Awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISW</td>
<td>Improving the Quality of Student Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP</td>
<td>Literacy Portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EL</td>
<td>Early Literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CR</td>
<td>Reading Content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CL</td>
<td>Critical Literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELL</td>
<td>English Language Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Inquiry into Inquiry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Supplemental Materials**

Models/Tools/Strategies  
Site Leader & Coaching Resources (this collection)
How to Get Started

Who is this collection intended for?
K-12 educators who are working with colleagues to look more closely at literacy learning and teaching will find value in the collection. Professional learning time allocated outside the instructional day—study group meetings, early release days, or informal meetings with colleagues—is required. Those who work in systems that include a coaching component will find resources to support their work both inside and outside of classrooms. All of the experiences can be adapted to more closely address the needs of specific teaching levels or subject matter.

Why teacher study groups? Why literacy coaching?
To be effective, scores of researchers say, professional development must be ongoing, deeply embedded in teachers' classroom work, specific to grade levels or academic content, and focused on proven practices. After years of disappointing results from conventional PD efforts and under accountability pressures, many districts are reorganizing their professional development offerings to include coaching and study group work. Literacy coaching involves “lead learners” knowledgeable about literacy theory, practice and teaching strategies, knowledge garnered through looking carefully at their own teaching, working closely with small groups of teachers to analyze and improve classroom practice. School-based coaching and study group learning address standards set forth by the National Staff Development Council (NSDC), the nation’s largest professional organization dedicated to improving teacher professional development. Recommendations in the latest NSDC standards, adopted in 2001, include:

- the organization of educators into "learning communities" that have clear goals consistent with school and district goals;
- effective leadership to support "continuous instructional improvement";
- the application of research to school and classroom strategies and decision-making;
- support for teacher collaboration

What philosophy underlies the materials and professional reading?
The NSDC standards mirror effective professional development as identified by the Center for English Learning and Achievement (2002), to include experiences that:

1. Encourage teachers to be reflective practitioners, engaging in a continuous process of questioning, planning, trying out, and evaluation of their teaching and student learning;
2. Work toward establishing a professional community in which teachers rely on the collective expertise and mutual support of colleagues to inform their day-to-day judgments;
3. Provide opportunities for teachers to strengthen both their knowledge of research and theory (conceptual tools) and their repertoire of classroom strategies and approaches (pedagogical tools).

Literacy coaching as represented in these materials is conceived of as a collegial coach/teacher relationship, where the primary role of the coach is to support teachers to become more reflective, to refine what they are doing, and to set goals—to share with others their least successful instructional attempts and to work together to address them (Riddle Buly et al, 2004). This work is accomplished one-on-one in classrooms, as well as within the larger study group setting.
These conceptual underpinnings come out of the research on teacher learning and school change. Key ideas include:

- We have substantially more information about what good practice looks like than we did 20 years ago. There is an increased need for professional development to support the teacher change that learner-centered practice demands. A knowledgeable teacher is the most significant factor leading to increased student success. Linda Darling-Hammond

- Change does not happen in generic ways. We must focus on individual school contexts, or “improving schools from within.” Creating community is central to change. Roland Barth

- Only 5% of traditional professional development ever results in classroom change. Implementation can skyrocket to over 90% when teachers have the opportunity to direct their learning and professional growth. Joyce & Showers

- To significantly change teaching and learning, teachers must become learners again. Quality professional development promotes continuous inquiry and improvement embedded in the daily life of schools. Grennon, Brooks & Brooks; National Center for Research on Teacher Learning; The National Foundation for the Improvement of Education

Finally, the literacy learning knowledge base that teachers explore in their work together is generally represented in the text, *Building a Knowledge Base in Reading* (NWREL, 1997), and in brief, represented in Figure 1.
Changes in Literacy Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>An increase in …</th>
<th>A decrease in …</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus</strong></td>
<td>reading, writing, conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theories of Learning</strong></td>
<td>strategy-based process across the day learning as inquiry, interrogation, analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role of the teacher</strong></td>
<td>understanding literacy learning, and the development of literacy strategies; awareness of and responsiveness to learners’ current inquiries and understandings; demonstrating one’s own literacy processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role of the Learner</strong></td>
<td>actively pursuing inquiry questions taking responsibility for learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grouping</strong></td>
<td>flexible grouping that promotes social interaction, based on interest and current need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>extended work periods; learners engaged in different experiences structure, routines and changes developed and revised within the classroom community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Materials</strong></td>
<td>using broad range of texts and text sets, notebooks; connections to the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment</strong></td>
<td>developing in-process strategies; including habits, attitudes, understandings, needs to document key learning exploring, shaping and documenting thinking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1
Vasquez & Egawa (2003)
Adapted from Best Practices (Daniels & Zemelman, 1998)
How do I get started?
We suggest that you schedule several hours for an initial review of this notebook. Pull together any pertinent district or school goal documents to reference during the review. Mark the experiences and articles that you predict will have value for your group with a highlighter pen or post-its. You can then go back to schedule which experiences to engage first and which to save for a later time. The next section shows you the plans of several group leaders.

How have others used these materials?
Here are excerpts from the plans of several Reading Initiative leaders. One is a coach of coaches, and the others are coaches or leaders of school-based study groups. The numbers next to the experiences relate to the section in this notebook in which the fuller descriptions are located. This glimpse into leader planning helps illustrate the range of possibilities to get teacher study groups going. The most successful leaders make initial plans and continually rework them in relation to the interests and needs of the group.

Summer Coaching Institute, led by Coach of Coaches Diane DeFord
This institute is taken after the first year of participation with the South Carolina Reading Initiative. The first year includes classroom teaching with a partner teacher, and coursework like Foundations of Language and Literacy, Methods of Teaching Reading and Writing, and Literacy Assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#9 Coaching Coaches during “coaching rounds”</td>
<td>Teacher/coaches make videotapes of specific classroom engagements (read aloud, shared reading, etc.) during their first year of participation with SCRI that they then bring into the coaching course to use in “coaching rounds” - groups of 6-8 people, one of whom is a regional coach with experience in coaching already. Groups of two people volunteer to be a coach/teacher pair, engage in a pre-conference interview, observe the “teacher’s” videotape, the “coach” coaches while observing the tape, and then debrief. &lt;br&gt;The regional coach and others in the coaching class observe this experience as a “fishbowl” experience. Once the debriefing is over, the regional coach leads the group of observers in raising questions, offering suggestions, and synthesizing the experience they’ve just observed. This is the cornerstone of the coaching course because everyone has the experience of being in the coach’s seat AND being in the teacher’s seat. They learn empathy, communication skills, critical observation, and the stance of co-learner rather than supervisor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9 Coaching Coaches “behind the glass” demonstrations</td>
<td>“Demonstration behind the glass” (BTG) is directly from Reading Recovery. We go to a school with a glass, and ask RR teachers to teach lessons with kids for us. While the coaching group observes, I lead them in talking about the skilled instruction they are seeing from RR teachers. By pairing close observation and talking about demonstrations of skilled teaching, I’m helping them see what teacher decision making looks like, and I’m helping them develop a way to question and talk about teaching that really comes from their own inquiry rather than a &quot;feedback&quot; model. School folks attend these conversations, too (Principal, Curriculum Specialists, teachers, etc.) and really appreciate the supportive and analytical discussions that take place about the children from their school. &lt;br&gt;A second BTG experience is planned in the last half of the course that asks a RR teacher to teach some basic information; this experience is much like what coaches will do when they work with teachers and the teacher wants to &quot;see&quot; a practice in action. This allows them to develop a vision for &quot;how to do&quot; something. The focus is on decision-making again: what the children learned, what might be done to follow up with student needs, etc. I still guide the talk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BTG, but after the teaching session is over, the teacher comes into the room and the group handles the debriefing (I've rehearsed them a bit on what information they might need, what questions they might want to ask, how they can approach what may be "difficult" issues, etc.). This teaching on the edge of their own practice brings them into the lead learner stance and they learn how much they are learning from observations of teaching/learning, and what an authentic problem-solving discussion with teachers feels like from both sides of the coach/teacher perspective. They also see how I work the group, how I lead from behind, how we end up talking about possibilities (not certainties!), and how I ALWAYS work from a positive stance that values the teacher's goals, their intentions, and the refinement of practice that is tied to what the teacher values (rather than my agenda).

Jean Martorana, High School Reading Teacher and Study Group Leader

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introducing the idea of a school Reading Initiative team</td>
<td>The summer of 2003 I attended the Reading Initiative Summer Institute with Carolyn Burke, Jerome Harste, and many passionate teachers from all over the US focused on improving literacy teaching and achievement at their schools. The vice principal and I discussed how to bring back this new information to our school and teachers. We knew we had to form a RI study group, what we call the “reading group.” Our school chose to ask one teacher from each subject area to be involved. After our initial meeting, we ended up with eleven members who are to this day active in the group. Our school is fairly new, seven years old, so the teachers are highly competitive and motivated. Our principal is our biggest cheerleader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#1 Getting to Know You Literacy Dig</td>
<td>We decided to have a kick-off meeting for the entire faculty. The team and I spent three paid summer days putting together a day of information and fun. We held three of these kick-offs so all faculty members could attend. They began with a Literacy Dig with faculty grouped by content area. We read from the research included in the RI Adolescent Literacy binders as well as additional sources on informational texts, then shared two good articles with them. Everyone left the meetings psyched about our new commitment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2 What Teachers Need Defining Our Roles</td>
<td>I would have to say it wasn't just one powerful experience but within two meetings we discovered we liked each other, had a job to do, and wanted to be successful. We were willing to meet and to work together. Norms established were monthly meetings, copies of information sent to members as well as administration. As team leader I maintain a computer disk with notes from meetings. I also check with each teacher before making a move so everyone involved is happy with our decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2 Setting Group Goals</td>
<td>We made posters to hang in each department reminding teachers to use sources other than the textbooks. I created a survey to give to our faculty about their opinions on literacy in their content area. We have compiled this information in a bar graph and presented it to the teachers, then identified four areas to concentrate on over the next couple of years, like studying vocabulary. Our May meeting will be a discussion of what area to study next year. We believe we will study vocabulary and how students learn best. So far the research is indicating there is no one way is best way to learn vocabulary. We will continue to research.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
#5 Seeing what’s there: Analyzing data

Inspiration came from the data collected from our feeder middle schools and our HS testing. We decided to test 9th, 10th, and 11th graders with a reading assessment and to organize the information on a chart as to gender, culture and reading level. This information gave us the opportunity to graph student information and utilize the results in a variety of ways. We also looked at Stanford 9 results, district tests, and our state standards. Our students must pass the AIMS (state test) to graduate; AZ is also looking at a 10.3 grade level of reading or higher to graduate. I’ve learned that data is desperately needed and not really that difficult to obtain in order for a school to learn about the issues in literacy that it’s facing.

#9 Sharing what we do best

The last time our full faculty met we asked one teacher from each content area to bring an idea or an actual reading strategy they used in their class that was successful or not successful and share the information with the administration and the rest of the faculty. Every subject area came through! It was a glorious day for our reading team!

One team member and dance teacher took a strategy that we had discussed after reading Kylene Beers’ book *When Kids Can’t Read*. Using the poem “The Journey” by Mary Oliver, she read the poem once and asked students to read along; she then read it a second time and asked students to highlight words that had a particular meaning to them. The third time through a student read the poem while each dance student performed a movement to the words and phrases they had highlighted. Beers states that rereading is valuable and that “even without consulting outside resources, comprehension will probably improve” (Beers 113).

Each and every content area had come up with exciting ways to incorporate literacy into their content area - from children’s literature to graphic organizers. This day of compiling reading information between various content areas and sharing it was a way to have new conversations and promote literacy change.

#6 Creating our professional library: Finders and keepers

The texts that we investigated and read other than articles in the Adolescent Literacy binder were *Teaching Reading in High school English Classrooms* by Bonnie Ericson/NCTE—discovered by our District Literacy Specialist Kate Glenn and passed on to me. *When Kids Can’t Read* by Kylene Beers/Heinemann I purchased after hearing Dr. Beers’ NCTE presentation on reading. Both books are an important addition to any teacher's library, not only those who teach struggling readers.

#8 Collecting and preserving our ideas

Our best artifacts are the notebook we put together for the faculty kick-off event, the books we perused and took strategies from, and the faculty videos and presentations, compiled web-site information, and the NCTE binders from which we read.

#10 Sharing what we’ve learned

We have shared our stories with the other schools in our district, and at a board meeting. We would like to make more videos to show at community gatherings such as freshman orientation night.

#11 What changes will we make?

We look forward to looking at our data in the fall, and in particular new district reading scores and the state assessments. The only change we intend to make next year is the direction of study. We will have to find ways to keep informational texts in the hearts and minds of students and teachers while bringing on board research on vocabulary.
**Lee Newman, Middle Grades Literacy Coach**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>#1 Getting to Know You Strategies</strong></td>
<td>We interviewed one other person and wrote about them, then shared with the group. We also wrote Literacy Memoirs. This enabled us to learn more about each other’s past learning lives. We had writing conferences with two other people…other than the person we first interviewed … All of this began to build community as we found out more about each other. We also responded to professional texts by writing responses to another person in the group. We lived through the learning process as we began our work in the summer…the same experience we want our students to have. Our group learned the value of building community…and authentic learning experiences. Our teachers have become more reflective of their own teaching and have also learned to be reflective about what they observe happening in their classroom…what those observations mean and how they can adapt what is happening to curricular revision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#2 Group Organization</strong></td>
<td>Expectations were set at the beginning. Be 100% present. We set a beginning time, and visited, got coffee and got settled prior to that time. We began each session with a read aloud and reflection…quick writes …this got everyone settled in and focused. The read aloud was always appropriate to our work for the session. Once in a while we started with celebrations/concerns OR What % present are you? These were always before the read aloud and allowed us to clear the air and be focused, if necessary. Then we were ready to begin. We allowed one teacher to rant about an issue that was bothering her…We set a time limit for ranting and then began; it seemed to help that teacher and no one else was bothered by it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#8 Professional Journals #6 Read aloud</strong></td>
<td>Agendas for the session were always given out at the first of the session. Expectations for the next day or month were established in the agenda each day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#2 What teachers need</strong></td>
<td>The vision we set included incorporating these practices: Read Aloud, Shared Reading, Guided Reading, Drama, Writing Workshop, YA Literature, and Theories of Learning. The thing that helped our group get the big picture was the sharing of ideas, experiences, great books, what was working and what wasn’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#3 Creating our own literacy vision</strong></td>
<td>Bringing examples of student work…sharing successes…and great ideas that had worked in the classroom helped make believers of all…We took back the ideas and suggestions and watched them work in our classrooms. We saw our students get hooked on books! We tried using labels to note observations about kids…. easy to use and can be transferred to a class sheet later. Cluster observations where you watch what is happening for several days in a row. Conferencing with kids about observations. Student observations/evaluations… Writing / Reading surveys…letters from students…all kinds of assessment info…all helped lead us in working with the kids.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#5 Seeing what’s there: looking at data</strong></td>
<td>We have a district LA curriculum coordinator in our group…she will help us as we progress - we will keep an eye on the standards as we move our classrooms toward best practice. We read articles focusing on standards-based instruction and responded to those. We discussed ways best practice and standardized testing can coexist.</td>
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### Experience & Purpose

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>#7 Working with program mandates</strong></td>
<td><strong>#1 Getting to Know You Strategies</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#2 Group Organization</strong></td>
<td>Expectations were set at the beginning. Be 100% present. We set a beginning time, and visited, got coffee and got settled prior to that time. We began each session with a read aloud and reflection…quick writes …this got everyone settled in and focused. The read aloud was always appropriate to our work for the session. Once in a while we started with celebrations/concerns OR What % present are you? These were always before the read aloud and allowed us to clear the air and be focused, if necessary. Then we were ready to begin. We allowed one teacher to rant about an issue that was bothering her…We set a time limit for ranting and then began; it seemed to help that teacher and no one else was bothered by it.</td>
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<td>The vision we set included incorporating these practices: Read Aloud, Shared Reading, Guided Reading, Drama, Writing Workshop, YA Literature, and Theories of Learning. The thing that helped our group get the big picture was the sharing of ideas, experiences, great books, what was working and what wasn’t.</td>
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<td>We have a district LA curriculum coordinator in our group…she will help us as we progress - we will keep an eye on the standards as we move our classrooms toward best practice. We read articles focusing on standards-based instruction and responded to those. We discussed ways best practice and standardized testing can coexist.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### K-6 School-Based Study Group, led by the school Language Arts Coordinator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two-day Summer Meeting w/ full staff</td>
<td>#1 Getting to know you Book Pass</td>
<td>Introductions; see great nonfiction pix books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#2 Are we collegial or congenial? Creating draft set of operating principles</td>
<td>Discuss concept of “text sets” and how they support a range of reading abilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#3 Watch video clip: Literacy at the Manhattan New School</td>
<td>Discussion of how we will work together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#3 Reading and discussion: The schools we have and the schools we need</td>
<td>Look at one successful school’s vision to help inform our own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Allington). Decided to review literacy plan and revise as needed.</td>
<td>Inventory our literacy plan based on Allington’s analysis. Set new goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Team September meetings</td>
<td>#5 Seeing what’s there (each brings learning artifacts from one learner)</td>
<td>Looking closely at identified learners “in need” and discussing how we can better support them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learning from Jevon (White)</td>
<td>Read article by White and identify data that we can collect to better understand identified learners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#5 Bring in new artifacts</td>
<td>What have we learned? What changes can we make?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate Team September meetings</td>
<td>#3 Continue discussion on Allington: experience vs. ability, assigning vs. teaching. What does this mean for our literacy curriculum?</td>
<td>Help view struggling or disengaged learners in new ways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#9 Walk-about Day</td>
<td>Review literacy curriculum for needed changes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Principal and one teacher from each grade level walk around to identify key learning experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October Early Release Day full staff</td>
<td>#5 Analyze state test data in light of literacy plan</td>
<td>Are we on track? Can we expect a change in results based on plan updates?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#11 Choose three literacy curriculum processes we each plan to change</td>
<td>Individual teachers work w/ partner or small groups to plan specific changes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How does this coaching notebook relate to other NCTE professional development resources? NCTE can support your professional development goals with a continuum of resources. Our Web site, www.ncte.org, can serve as your electronic file cabinet of literacy-related position statements, research reviews, curriculum analysis tools, and teaching resources. Many of these are complimentary; others are a benefit of membership and journal subscribership.

COMPLIMENTARY
Position Statements
http://www.ncte.org/about/over/positions

Research and Policy Reviews, i.e.
http://www.ncte.org/edpolicy;
http://www.ncte.org/collections/adolescentliteracy/resources/116836.htm

ELA Curriculum Analysis

Teaching Resource Collections
http://www.ncte.org/collections

FOR PURCHASE OR BY CONTRACT
Our print-based resources include journals, books, topical professional development collections, and yearlong PD curricula. We support face-to-face professional learning through NCTE conventions, institutes and on-site facilitation by leaders from our Professional Development Network. The NCTE Reading Initiative offers an intensive three-year learning experience and includes all of these resources, as well as a summer institute for a school leader. And finally, on-line learning is supported though the NCTE learning platform, CoLEARN, and mini courses.

Visit our Web site www.ncte.org or contact NCTE Professional Development staff at 800/369-6283, extension 3609 or 3627.
Bibliography


# Overview of Study Group & Coaching Resources

## 1. How can our group members get to know more about each other & literacy?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Getting to Know You Strategies</th>
<th>A Metaphor to Know Me By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using 5-6 personal artifacts, teachers and students introduce themselves to other learners in their classroom community as a means to get to know each other, to build community, and to reflect on important experiences in their lives.</td>
<td>Group members share a poem, a musical selection, a visual image, a story, an artifact or object that metaphorically represents who they are as learners. The group considers how the diversity of &quot;learner strengths&quot; can enrich the whole group's learning process. Individuals set personal goals to expand their learning strategy repertoire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I7 EV</strong></td>
<td><strong>E1 EL</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A Learning Museum**

Study group members are invited to bring an object that represents learning in their professional lives. These are displayed so others can "read" them prior to contributors creating curator comments.

**I5 II**

**What Do I Know About My Colleagues?**

Literacy coaches/study group leaders take the time to assess the interests, questions and strengths of the colleagues in their study group so that they are able to build group experiences around that knowledge.

## 2. How do we want to work together? How will our group be organized?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Teachers Need</th>
<th>Learning as Inquiry, or?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group members individually “quick write” about the intellectual, social and emotional conditions they need if they are to become involved in challenging and thoughtful professional conversations during their work together.</td>
<td>Learning as inquiry is one of many different theories about how people learn. Study group members consider past professional development experiences and categorize them by the role teachers and administrators were asked to assume. Listen to the perspective of Reading Initiative leaders on video.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I1 EL</strong></td>
<td><strong>I4 II</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Defining Our Roles**

What is your role as a coach or site leader? What are the principal’s responsibilities? What about the teachers in your group? What about teaching interns or assistants, or families of your students? Take the opportunity to create a fresh set of role descriptions, using several key articles to spur your thinking.

**D1 EV**

**Are We Collegial or Congenial?**

After considering Roland Barth’s definition of collegial and congenial relationships, study group members consider how teachers at their school now interact and the role of the principal in supporting collegiality; the group then generates guidelines that will direct their work together.
Conditions for Learning in Study Groups
Educators Laura Robb and Valerie Brown both use Cambourne’s Conditions for Learning to help them think about creating optimal learning conditions for teacher learners. Use their ideas to help establish the conditions under which your group will work.

Setting Group Goals
Group members review the list of what the study group has decided they need to support themselves and each other in professional conversations during this work, revisiting the goals they set. Each writes a brief personal goal statement based on being a learner functioning within a collaborative inquiry group. RA1 EL

Vignette
A Tale of Two Coaches

3 Assessing “visions” of literacy learning.

We assume that learning is an ongoing process and that all teacher study groups benefit from stepping back to look at the “big picture” of what they are trying to accomplish. What does it mean to be literate in the 21st century? How can teachers and students prepare for that work? Here your group is both invited to consider the visions of other educators, and to create your own.

Literacy at the Manhattan New School
NCTE is a community of literacy educators known for making theory both visible and practical. The Reading Initiative curriculum materials introduce such practical visions of literacy learning, including: What does it mean to be literate at the Manhattan New School? I3 EV

Reviewing the Big Picture: A Framework for Thinking About Literacy Curriculum
Using an enlarged copy of the "Curriculum Model for Literacy Learning" as a framework, plot your current literacy curriculum engagements within each of the four overlapping circles. Where do they fit? Is there a balance? I7 EL

Creating Your Literacy Vision
After reviewing the visions of key literacy leaders, study groups look across them to identify commonalities and differences and draft their visions for their classrooms and their school. View footage of an NCTE Reading Initiative group’s vision. I10 EV

Creating a Writing Vision at Your Middle or High School
Group members share their visions for improved writing in their classrooms and schools. A list of websites and an article on whole school assessment are provided to inform the discussion. I7 AW

The Schools We Have & The Schools We Need
The study group “inventories” the literacy learning and support in their own school. What are the strengths? What needs work? Articles by Allington, Moje et al, and a set of evaluative rubrics from Queensland, Australia frame the inventory.
### 4 How can our own reading and writing experiences inform the learning of our study group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All learners, as well as their teachers, come to learning experiences with extensive histories. These are important sources of data that can support study group members as we consider the changes we might make in our literacy teaching and assessment. How do we use literacy on a daily basis? Why is it I love to read but feel very vulnerable sharing my writing with others? How does understanding myself help me create better learning experiences for other teachers and for students?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Literacy Dig</strong> Group members collect literacy artifacts from their homes and list the functions represented by the artifacts; they extend the list to further think about those that represent reading experiences. <strong>18 EV</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exploring Literacy Histories</strong> Study group members share positive and negative influences of early literacy experiences and consider those as they define supportive classroom environments. <strong>19 EV</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Literacy Time Lines</strong> Readers/study group members brainstorm significant positive and negative events and create literacy histories to reflect on current habits and attitudes. The experience helps develop insights into the quality and impact of literacy experiences. <strong>13 USR</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examining Your Writing</strong> Each person comes prepared to share an example of professional or personal writing and discuss his/her writing strategies. The sharing leads to the group collectively creating a list of strategies used by proficient writers, how these strategies relate to what is taught in schools, and writing strategies used in the content areas. <strong>13 AW</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>“Taking Stock” of Literacy Use</strong> Group members collect artifacts from home that represent uses of literacy in their everyday lives outside of school; as they share these, they “take stock” of questions like: how and why their home literacy practices are similar to or different from their school literacy practices; what is missing and why from the range of their home literacy resources; how and why have their literacy practices changed over the years. <strong>E3 EL</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### 5 How can we use data to become more effective “kidwatchers”?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collecting data on our students as learners moves teaching to a new place. Rather than trying to “fix” students who are not yet experiencing success, the focus shifts to getting to know them as readers, writers, and learners. Understanding students from their perspective allows educators to create new experiences that may lead to more success. Different communities of educators have created their own tools for more effective “kidwatching.”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seeing What’s There</strong> Study group members each bring four to six artifacts—a drawing, a journal entry, a report—from one learner that they know well. In discussion groups of 2–4, they swap artifacts and after ten minutes, each person lists the number of things they now know about that language learner, repeating the process several times. The group reads an article by Sharer, addressing the value of collaborative assessment. <strong>13 LP</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning from Jevon</strong> Study group members read the text, “Jevon doesn’t sit at the back anymore.” As they read, they keep track of 1) statements or ideas that stand out and brief responses to why, 2) the questions the teacher asked about Jevon or her teaching, and 3) what counted as data and the tools she used to gather it. <strong>E4 II</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Study Group & Coaching Resources** 19

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Responsive Teaching Cycle: 
Coaching Individual Readers
This theoretical and practical model serves as a 
reflective device that enables teachers to 
document and assess the teaching-learning 
cycle in action. The graphic representation is 
used to note observations from a video clip or 
an article. The group shares observations, 
interpretations, and plans that could support 
elementary learner Devon or middle school 
student Gregg’s literacy growth.

Introducing the Hypothesis-Test 
Process
A key component of the Reading Initiative is 
to plan specific and helpful instruction for 
targeted readers. This entails the ability to 
carefully gather rich observations and to 
suspend judgment about what behavior might 
seem to mean. The group initially tries out this 
concept on a learner described in one of the 
readings and then considers descriptions they 
themselves have gathered on children.

Lesson Study
Lesson study is a professional development 
process that enables teachers to systematically 
examine their practice in order to become more 
effective instructors. The process asks teachers 
to collaboratively write a lesson, to watch 
students and the connections they make or do 
not make as the lesson is taught, and to revise 
the lesson to better meet the needs of learners. 
The process was originally developed in Japan 
and has been taken up by a number of 
education communities in the U.S.

Tapping Funds of Knowledge
Language educator and researcher Louis Moll, 
in collaboration with colleagues in the 
Southwest, began investigating the “funds of 
knowledge” of students’ families who had 
traditionally not been successful in school. 
Through conducting interviews with students 
and their families, teachers changed their 
impressions and attitudes about the strengths of 
these families and found new ways to link 
them to school learning.

What are my questions and what can I read to learn more?

Documenting one’s own ideas and 
questions, as well as reading the 
ideas and theories of other literacy 
leaders, are key components of 
professional learning. A range of K-
12 issues is addressed in the reading 
included here—from the current 
status of literacy instruction, how to 
schedule group meetings, or 
strategies for taking observation 
notes during classroom visits. All 
participants are asked to take 
responsibility for finding and 
contributing additional resources.

Collections: Finders & Keepers
As one way of making this learning journey their 
own, group members add their “personal 
signatures” from the outset. They use literacy to 
support their own professional learning by 
generating the following collections:
1) Questions about study group leadership and 
coaching;
2) Provocative or puzzling terms which are used 
to describe elements of coaching or leadership 
and that need to be further “unpacked”;
3) 3-5 resources for a group-created text set, like 
books, journals, videos, or articles in the popular 
press.

Bibliography
Key articles that support the work of study 
groups are included here, as well as suggested 
book titles and articles available online to 
CoLEARN subscribers. You can also add your 
own favorite resources. We encourage you to 
share recommendations of “best reading” with 
other leaders in this network. Children’s 
picture book titles are also included, as many 
groups use picture books to begin or end 
meeting sessions or to frame their work for the 
year.
### 7 What are we interested in learning more about?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taking the role of active inquirer is essential for educators. As the field of education offers multiple opportunities to look more closely at issues and our responses to them, we offer several ideas to help you identify key issues in your teaching or community.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Being a Consumer of Literacy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>What are current key issues in literacy? What are the stances people take?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study group members browse through a set of recent literacy journals and professional books, making note of the current topics represented among the articles. Using a double-sided journal, each person identifies issues or topics that reflect his or her own questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inquiry/Action Research Studies</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study group members read, &quot;Working with a Writer's Notebook,&quot; an article about an inquiry conducted by two teachers. The concept of teacher inquiry is considered and members brainstorm topics about which they would like to inquire. The steps in an inquiry study are discussed, and teachers organize themselves into small groups to carry out similar studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What about Program Mandates?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All teachers work with program directives some time over their careers. A rating matrix is used to score features of curricula that have more or less value as determined by the NCTE Commission on Reading. What can you learn from the ideas of peers, which program goals match your own, and how can you work together to address programs that challenge valued goals?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Semiotician Charles Sanders Peirce noted that people come to believe what they believe in one of four ways: 1) Believing what one wants to believe, or tenacity, 2) Believing what someone else says is true, or authority, 3) Believing what one always has and what seems reasonable, a priori, or 4) Believing what one has tested out through investigation: inquiry.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The resources included here focus on inquiry-based learning.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How can we collect and preserve our ideas and new learning?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing and sketching serve as powerful learning tools, as preserving ideas over time helps learners consciously think about changes in their thinking and understanding.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creating Literacy Visions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating a Literacy Portfolio Format</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Literacy Portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quotes That Turn Me On!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit Trail or Learning Wall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit Trail Artifacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Historian or Ethnographer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions about Literacy Visions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey of Pressing Literacy Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interesting Questions Book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue Journals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double Entry Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Portfolio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exit Slips</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9 I’m visiting a colleague’s classroom. How can we be helpful to each other?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coaching—either informally among peers or through collaboration with a designated literacy coach—has gained in popularity precisely because educators have learned that it makes a difference. Elliot Eisner suggests that we can improve the quality of our teaching by gaining access to colleagues’ classrooms. Many have found coaching to be the most significant support in putting new ideas into practice. The tools and vignettes here will get you started. Best coaching resources are also recommended by experienced coaches.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Sharing What We Do Best**  
"Good" teaching is complex to figure out on our own. Group members choose a partner and arrange a visit to the other's classroom to observe an aspect of literacy teaching that the host teacher believes is working well. The visiting teacher videotapes, audiotapes or makes notes/sketches about an observed literacy-teaching episode that caught his/her attention. Both teachers look closely at the process of teaching and the relationship between teaching and literacy learning in the episode. Connections, questions and curricular decisions are noted. | **Framework for Observing Socio-cultural Features of the Classroom**  
Study group partners arrange a series of visits to each other's classrooms to observe and help each other learn more about how learners are positioned within the classroom's literacy curriculum. Rowe, Fitch and Bass's chart is used as a tool to support this kidwatching experience. Critical incidents are written, interpreted and shared with the whole group. |
| **Coaching in Action: Insights from Others’ Practice**  
The benefits of observing others teaching are often underutilized. They are described here, along with four types of observation/coaching strategy recommendations. Different types of observation note taking and forms are provided. | **Walk-About Day**  
Groups participate with their administrator in "walking about" their department or school making observations of the literacy instruction they see in classrooms. The purpose of this activity is to help each other and administrators learn what to observe in quality literacy lessons and encourage discussion of further changes that would improve literacy instruction and student learning. Walk-abouts can be scheduled with other departments to explore how teachers can better support one another's efforts. |
| **Peer Observation**  
Peer observation with the goal of reflective dialogue leading to instructional change is achieved through a cycle of pre-observation conference, observation, post-observation conference and new goal setting. This processed is described in more detail, including observation field note taking strategies. | **Coaching Coaches**  
Key components of one professional development network and continued learning for coaches include: regional support coaches, state department of education liaisons, and coaching coursework that helps develop knowledge about coaching and experience with coaching peers. |
| **Vignette**  
Kicking Up Dust: An Inquiry into Giving Feedback As a Coach |   |
### 10 How will we share what we have learned?

**The opportunity to share new learning is often the impetus to go back through notes and data and organize it with an audience in mind. Whether your group shares its experiences at the district or state level, writes a brochure or article together, or presents a session at an NCTE convention, the tension associated with reviewing your learning will be a valuable learning experience.**

Because different group members are learning different things, a more formal sharing experience can remind the group of the strength diversity contributes to the overall learning of the group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Makes a Good School Great?</th>
<th>Creating Communities for Teacher Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group members think across all the experiences of their study and their own individual experiences in schools. They create an initial list of characteristics of what makes a good school great that they are committed to putting into place in their own schools, and then consider using photography or video to help others understand the great school efforts. One such school’s effort is available to view. <strong>Q4 II</strong></td>
<td>Using the Cochrane-Smith article as a springboard, the study group considers the new knowledge it has created and the potential vehicles and audiences they might engage for sharing that knowledge. <strong>RA4 II</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Do’s and Don’t’s of Coaching</th>
<th>Mentoring 101</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina Reading Initiative literacy coach, Trina Randle, pulled together her short list of insights after four years of working alongside her peers. What value does her list offer your work?</td>
<td>Experienced study group leader, Judy Kelly, pulled together ideas she’s refined through working with colleagues. What is most important when mentoring other teachers?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What IS a Literacy Coach</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are different models of literacy coaching. These materials focus on coaching as a collegial relationship where the goal is to help teachers become more reflective about issues they’ve identified in their practice. SC middle grades coach, Marie Crawford, offers a visual representation of her coaching is/is not list.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 11 Now what? What changes will we make in our group, in our classrooms, and in our school?

Reflexivity is evidenced in the new actions learners take as a result of purposeful learning. New action might take place informally—as teachers create new weekly schedules or revise familiar strategies—or more formally—through presentations or the revision of curriculum documents. John Dewey, along with other thinkers of his time, recognized reflection as the hallmark of the examined life, that thought and belief are important in so far as they are preludes to action. (Siegel & Carey, 1989)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Here’s What Literacy Learning Will Look Like in My Classroom</th>
<th>Choose 3 Literacy Curriculum Processes You Plan to Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After documenting the instruction that is already taking place in their classrooms, small groups explore areas of interest and need, i.e. read aloud, guided reading, literature discussion groups, then create drafts of weekly schedules that incorporate additional reading and writing engagements into their schedules. <strong>E3 USR</strong> and <strong>RA1 USR</strong></td>
<td>Group members select 3 literacy processes they feel are inconsistent with the beliefs and values they’ve been developing through their study to date and which they plan to address in their upcoming learning. <strong>RA3 EL</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Teachers Need, Revisited</th>
<th>Vignettes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Your learning community has now worked together for most of a year or more. It is important to take the time to look back over the work together. What went well? What changes are in order? Do you need more time for meetings or to visit classrooms? More books? Tables instead of desks? Different interaction patterns during meetings? Professional development on particular issues? How can the school administration and/or the literacy coach offer support? | **Evolution of a District Language Arts Model**
**Supporting First Year Teaching and Beyond**
**Every Child Learning Every Day**
**The Impact of a District-Wide PD Initiative** |

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**Study Group & Coaching Resources**  
**NCTE Reading Initiative**  
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