

Professional Development Guide:

Introductory Session & Module 1, Session 1

Relationship Building and Collaboration



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Introduction

It is **strongly recommended** that the sessions are completed in sequential order as content from later sessions builds on knowledge gained in earlier sessions.

Background and Purpose

In the winter and spring of 2021, new domains and standards for literacy coaching were drafted by experts from across Florida and Florida Department of Education staff and approved by the Florida Department of Education. This Literacy Coach Program Professional Development is a course that was developed by the Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR) to meet those domains and standards.

In 2023, ExcelinEd partnered with FCRR to advance national efforts to leverage literacy coaches in policy and practice and support the professional growth of educators. To date, 26 states have adopted this strategy with varying approaches to implementation; therefore, it is ExcelinEd's goal to build upon Florida's Literacy Coach Program Professional Development course to ensure that research and best practices in literacy coaching are accessible to all.

The purpose of this course is to engage you in collaborative learning experiences to increase the knowledge and ability to carry out the role of a literacy coach, as defined by a high-quality literacy coaching program.

Overview of Modules and Sessions

There are six modules, and each module includes two to four sessions for a total of 16 content sessions. Sessions range in time from 120 minutes to 175 minutes. There is also one 60-minute introductory session to orient participants to the program. The first five modules are aligned with one domain from the Florida Department of Education Literacy Coaching Domains and Standards. Module 6 is for those charged with planning for and implementing coaching efforts at the state, district, or school level.

- **Module 1 addresses Domain A:** Applying Principles and Practices that Foster a Positive Culture
- **Module 2 covers Domain B:** Applying Effective Pedagogy and Andragogy
- **Module 3 covers Domain C:** Collecting Data on Instructional Practices to Inform Professional Learning
- **Module 4 covers Domain D:** Planning, Implementing, and Analyzing Standards-Based Literacy Instruction
- **Module 5 addresses Domain E:** Growing Professionally
- **Module 6 addresses Planning and Implementing Coaching**

There is a required Bridge to Practice project assigned at the completion of each module. Rubrics are included for these projects so facilitators and participants will understand expectations prior to completing each project.

The timeline for completing the sessions is determined by the facilitator and can be flexible. If the recommended minutes for each session are not available based on scheduling demands, our recommendation is for the facilitator to complete the content that can be covered within the time available and then pick up where you left off the next time you meet.

These sessions may work best as part of monthly literacy coach meetings within a district or consortia of districts if that is an option.

You can record the date of each of our sessions in the **Modules and Sessions Table** below.

Modules and Sessions Table

Module	Topic	Session	Minutes	Session Date
1	Domain A: Applying Principles and Practices that Foster a Positive Culture	Intro	60	
		1	120	
		2	150	
		3	150	
2	Domain B: Applying Effective Pedagogy and Andragogy	4	120	
		5	120	
		6	165	
3	Domain C: Collecting Data to Inform Professional Learning	7	150	
		8	140	
		9	170	
4	Domain D: Planning, Implementing, and Analyzing Literacy Instruction	10	175	
		11	135	
		12	165	
		13	130	
5	Domain E: Growing Professionally	14	120	
		15	120	
6	Planning and Implementing Coaching	16	120	

Bridge to Practice Module Projects for Coaches


A Bridge to Practice project after each module will provide evidence that coaches are able to apply the knowledge and skills they developed in this course in their schools. Coaches will:


- **Module 1:** develop a principal-coach partnership agreement;
- **Module 2:** develop a needs assessment for professional development on evidence-based instructional practices and complete an **ADDIE model** for planning this professional development;
- **Module 3:** develop and describe planned implementation of a professional learning action plan;
- **Module 4:** create a video that reflects coaching to help teachers plan, implement, and analyze standards-based literacy instruction;
- **Module 5:** complete a reflection on the course, including plans for continued professional growth;
- **Module 6:** choose one teacher with whom you have seen significant growth as a result of coaching support and complete a reflection on what worked, why it worked and which areas of growth were most evident.


A rubric is provided at the end of each module for the corresponding Bridge to Practice project.


Process for Course Sessions


A process for collaborative learning is used for every session. The process was adapted from Wald and Castleberry's (2000) five stages of work for groups engaging in a collaborative learning cycle. This framework will provide a predictable structure for sessions and support the time devoted to learning together. As the process is described below, notice the associated icons. Those icons will be noted on slides when we begin to engage in that part of the process.

During the **Debrief** , participants will discuss participant reflections about the content and self-study experiences since the previous session.

During the **Define and Discuss Session Goals and Content** , the facilitator will summarize previous session's goals and this session's goal—a sort of “where we've been and where we're going.” The facilitator will also share foundational and background information while participants engage in discussions or activities that support the self-study activities completed prior to the session.

During **Learn and Confirm** , participants will look closely at and explore new practices and compare them to current practices. Here is where participants will access and build background knowledge and experiences related to the topic of the session through, for example, models, videos, and discussions.

Participants will engage in activities that support the session's goals and content in pairs or small groups during **Collaborate and Practice** .

Finally, during **Reflect, Plan, and Implement** , participants will reflect on what was learned during the session. Participants will continue building knowledge by reading an article that addresses the topic of this session. They will also complete self-study activities that will allow the application of knowledge and skills in the local setting after each session.

The Path for Meeting the Purpose and Goals of the Course

At the conclusion of the course, participants will have:

- Completed more than 36 hours of seat time in sessions;
- Read at least 15 research articles on various aspects of coaching related to the domains and standards of the coaching program;
- Viewed more than 20 videos of coaching conversations, interviews, and strategies for coaching;
- Completed self-study assignments to enhance their knowledge of the domains and standards of the coaching program; and
- Completed a culminating project after each module, for a total of five projects, to demonstrate knowledge of the domains and standards of the coaching program and their ability to apply that knowledge.

The videos and research articles selected for inclusion in this course were publicly available when this course was developed and intended to be used as information or examples helpful in meeting the purpose and goals of this course.

This is a rigorous, competency-based course that will require seat time, self-study, and application of learning in between sessions. By the time participants have completed this course, they will have engaged in multiple learning opportunities, including working with colleagues in sessions, reading a variety of research articles, viewing videos related to various aspects of coaching, completing self-study reflections and assignments, and developing a culminating project for each module. Literacy coaches will have enhanced their knowledge of coaching and their ability to serve as a literacy coach. Finally, they will have demonstrated that they have met all of the standards and domains in the literacy coach program.

Fundamentals of Literacy Coaching

Professional Development Modules

Introductory Session



Purpose of these Literacy Coaching Modules

To increase the participants' knowledge and ability to carry out the role of a literacy coach.

Goals for the course: *Literacy Coaching Modules*

To understand the evidence-based roles of coaches and to have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be able to successfully fulfill those roles.

3

Define and Discuss Session Goals and Content

Goals for Today

- Overview the introductory materials and organization of the course.
- Become familiar with the materials for Session 1.
- Gain an understanding/rationale for the benefits of coaching.

4

Definition of a Literacy Coach

A literacy coach is an instructional leader with specialized knowledge in the science of reading, evidence-based practices, English Language Arts state standards, as well as the knowledge of how to work with educators as adult learners. The coach provides collegial, job-embedded support to ensure literacy instruction is data-informed and student-centered. Coaches accomplish this by collaborating with leaders and teachers, engaging in practices such as co-teaching, co-planning, modeling, reflective conversations and data chats with teachers to build teacher and school capacity to improve student achievement for all.

Handout 1 on next page

Handout 1: Definition of a Literacy Coach

Retrieved from [FDOE Literacy Coaching Definition, Domains and Standards](#)

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A literacy coach is an instructional leader with specialized knowledge in the science of reading, evidence-based practices, English Language Arts state standards, as well as the knowledge of how to work with educators as adult learners. The coach provides collegial, job-embedded support to ensure literacy instruction is data-informed and student-centered. Coaches accomplish this by collaborating with leaders and teachers, engaging in practices such as co-teaching, co-planning, modeling, reflective conversations and data chats with teachers to build teacher and school capacity to improve student achievement for all.

Domains and Standards: Literacy Coaching

A. Knowledge of and ability to apply principles and practices that foster an inclusive and collaborative culture. Coaches will be able to:

1. Identify and apply systems that foster an inclusive and collaborative culture (e.g., trust, confidentiality).
2. Identify and apply strategies that build effective teams.
3. Identify the strengths and needs of colleagues to engage in effective collaboration.
4. Identify and apply appropriate practices to communicate across lines of difference (e.g., critical reflection, negotiate and clarify meaning, constructively challenge each other's thinking).
5. Determine and use appropriate strategies for facilitating dialogue that ensures equitable participation in small and large group settings (e.g., protocols that ensure all participants contribute to discussion and reflection).
6. Determine and apply strategies that promote collective responsibility for student and professional learning (e.g., Professional Learning Communities, collaborative planning, lesson study).
7. Establish a coach/teacher partnership agreement.
8. Establish a principal/coach partnership agreement.

B. Knowledge of and ability to apply effective pedagogy and andragogy. Coaches will be able to:

1. Identify and apply foundational principles of how students learn.
2. Identify and apply foundational principles of adult learning theory.
3. Select and apply appropriate methods (e.g., co-planning, collaborative teaching, modeling, etc.) to support effective teacher practice and growth in a variety of settings, including elementary self-contained and departmentalized classrooms, secondary classrooms, and content area classrooms, prioritizing English Language Arts and reading.
4. Identify and apply scaffolding strategies that address the strengths and needs of individual teachers (e.g., differentiation of coaching support based on strengths and areas of growth).
5. Identify and apply appropriate strategies and resources for planning, facilitating, and evaluating professional learning (e.g. use of Florida's Professional Learning Standards) aligned with school and district goals.
6. Identify and apply scaffolding strategies that address the strengths and needs of individual students and small groups (e.g., differentiation of instruction for individual students and small groups based on strengths and areas of growth).

C. Ability to effectively collect and use data on instructional practices to inform and implement professional learning opportunities. Coaches will be able to:

1. Determine appropriate area of focus based on observational data aligned to goals (e.g. school goals, coaching goals, learning goals, teacher goals).
2. Identify and apply appropriate student progress monitoring instruments and assist with data analysis after students are assessed.
3. Evaluate data in addressing specific goals.
4. Identify and apply appropriate data collection methods that assist colleagues in developing action plans.
5. Identify and apply appropriate data collection methods that measure the effectiveness of professional learning.
6. Observe classroom instruction and active student engagement to collect data that informs the analysis of teaching and learning.
7. Analyze and interpret data to identify trends and patterns.
8. Collaborate with administration, instructional leaders, and teachers to develop a professional learning action plan that is informed by data analysis.
9. Facilitate the implementation of an action plan based on data analysis.
10. Analyze and evaluate school, teacher, and student outcomes to determine follow-up actions.

D. Knowledge of and ability to apply effective methods for planning, implementing, and analyzing standards-based literacy instruction based on the science of reading and evidence-based practices. Coaches will demonstrate their abilities in and understanding of:

1. Instructional design and planning strategies that support teachers in developing engaging, effective, standards-aligned lessons (e.g., stacking benchmarks, curriculum mapping, vertical progression of the standards).
2. How to align instruction and intervention to a logical scope and sequence of reading skill development.
3. The application of standards-aligned systematic instruction and intervention for language and literacy development.
4. The stages of language and literacy development for all students.
5. The strategic use of evidence-based instructional practices grounded in the science of reading.
6. Literacy learning processes and language development of English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities in collaboration with English for Speakers of Other Languages and Exceptional Student Education departments.
7. Multi-Tiered System of Supports and evidence-based practices, programs, and interventions.
8. How to use student data to make instructional decisions.
9. The role of student motivation and active engagement in developing literacy.
10. How to analyze the effectiveness of lessons, instructional materials, and assessments using a variety of techniques (e.g., lesson plans, formative/summative assessments, and student work samples).
11. How to observe and analyze the implementation of instructional practices and determine the effectiveness of teaching and learning in order to provide instructional support.
12. Developing a plan for effective coaching conversations informed by observations, data analysis, and classroom artifacts.

E. Ability to grow professionally. Coaches will be able to:

1. Analyze individual performance data to determine and engage in professional learning to broaden personal coaching and instructional knowledge.
2. Seek and demonstrate understanding of current evidence-based instructional practices.
3. Seek, determine, and utilize appropriate collaborative partnerships with professional learning groups to expand knowledge and improve coaching practices.

End of Handout 1

Literature Review Aligned with the Domains and Standards

Researchers at the Regional Educational Laboratory Southeast, part of the Florida Center for Reading Research at Florida State University, completed a literature review aligned with the Florida Literacy Coach Domains and Standards. Review **Handout 2: Literature Review for the Literacy Coach Domains and Standards** in pairs or small groups. Share and discuss important findings from your review with the group.

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Handout 2 on next page

Handout 2: Literature Review for the Literacy Coach Domains and Standards

Literature Review for the Literacy Coach Domains and Standards

A. Knowledge of and ability to apply principles and practices that foster an inclusive and collaborative culture.

Coaches will be able to:

1. Identify and apply systems that foster an inclusive and collaborative culture (e.g., trust, confidentiality).
 - Kennedy (2016); Kane & Rosenquist (2019); Matsumura, Garnier, Correnti, Junker, & Bickel, (2010)
2. Identify and apply strategies that build effective teams.
 - Kennedy (2016)
3. Identify the strengths and needs of colleagues to engage in effective collaboration.
 - Bean, Dagen, Ippolito, & Kern (2018); Matsumura, Garnier, Correnti, Junker, & Bickel, (2010)
4. Identify and apply appropriate practices to communicate across lines of difference (e.g., critical reflection, negotiate and clarify meaning, constructively challenge each other's thinking).
 - Kane & Rosenquist (2019); Bean, Dagen, Ippolito, & Kern (2018); Matsumura, Garnier, Correnti, Junker, & Bickel, (2010)
5. Determine and use appropriate strategies for facilitating dialogue that ensures equitable participation in small and large group settings (e.g., protocols that ensure all participants contribute to discussion and reflection).
 - Kraft, Blazar, & Hogan (2018); Kane & Rosenquist (2019); Bean, Dagen, Ippolito, & Kern (2018)
6. Determine and apply strategies that promote collective responsibility for student and professional learning (e.g., Professional Learning Communities, collaborative planning, lesson study).
 - Kennedy (2016)
7. Establish a coach/teacher partnership agreement.
 - Kane & Rosenquist (2019); Bean, Dagen, Ippolito, & Kern (2018); Matsumura, Garnier, Correnti, Junker, & Bickel, (2010)
8. Establish a principal/coach partnership agreement.
 - Walpole, McKenna, Uribe-Zarain, & Lamitina (2010); Matsumura, Sartoris, Bickel, & Garnier (2010)

B. Knowledge of and ability to apply effective pedagogy and andragogy. Coaches will be able to:

1. Identify and apply foundational principles of how students learn.
 - Fisher, Frey, & Lapp (2011); Sailors, & Price (2010); Sailors, & Price (2015)
2. Identify and apply foundational principles of adult learning theory.
 - McMaster, Baker, Donegan, Hugh, & Sargent (2020); Gibbons, & Cobb (2017); Ulenski, Gill, & Kelley (2019); Sailors, & Price (2010); Sailors, & Price (2015)
3. Select and apply appropriate methods (e.g., co-planning, collaborative teaching, modeling, etc.) to support effective teacher practice and growth in a variety of settings, including elementary self-contained and departmentalized classrooms, secondary classrooms, and content area classrooms, prioritizing English Language Arts and reading.
 - Fisher, Frey, & Lapp (2011); Ulenski, Gill, & Kelley (2019); Sailors, & Price (2010); Gaudin & Chaliès (2015)
4. Identify and apply scaffolding strategies that address the strengths and needs of individual teachers (e.g., differentiation of coaching support based on strengths and areas of growth).
 - Ulenski, Gill, & Kelley (2019)

5. Identify and apply appropriate strategies and resources for planning, facilitating, and evaluating professional learning (e.g. use of Florida’s Professional Learning Standards) aligned with school and district goals.
 - Gibbons, & Cobb (2017); Ulenski, Gill, & Kelley (2019)
6. Identify and apply scaffolding strategies that address the strengths and needs of individual students and small groups (e.g., differentiation of instruction for individual students and small groups based on strengths and areas of growth).
 - Ulenski, Gill, & Kelley (2019)

C. Ability to effectively collect and use data on instructional practices to inform and implement professional learning opportunities. Coaches will be able to:

1. Determine appropriate area of focus based on observational data aligned to goals (e.g. school goals, coaching goals, learning goals, teacher goals).
 - Vernon-Faegans, Kainz, Hedrick, et al. (2013)
2. Identify and apply appropriate student progress monitoring instruments and assist with data analysis after students are assessed.
 - Ansyari, Groot, & De Witte (2020); Glover (2017); Lembke, McMaster, Smith, et al. (2018); McMaster, Lembke, Shin, et al. (2020)
3. Evaluate data in addressing specific goals.
4. Identify and apply appropriate data collection methods that assist colleagues in developing action plans.
 - Ansyari, Groot, & De Witte (2020); Glover (2017); Lembke, McMaster, Smith, et al. (2018); McMaster, Lembke, Shin, et al. (2020)
5. Identify and apply appropriate data collection methods that measure the effectiveness of professional learning.
 - Kraft, Blazar, & Hogan (2018)
6. Observe classroom instruction and active student engagement to collect data that informs the analysis of teaching and learning.
 - Ansyari, Groot, & De Witte (2020); Vernon-Faegans, Kainz, Hedrick, et al. (2013)
7. Analyze and interpret data to identify trends and patterns.
8. Collaborate with administration, instructional leaders, and teachers to develop a professional learning action plan that is informed by data analysis.
 - Ansyari, Groot, & De Witte (2020); Glover (2017); Lembke, McMaster, Smith, et al (2018); McMaster, Lembke, Shin, et al. (2020)
9. Facilitate the implementation of an action plan based on data analysis.
 - Ansyari, Groot, & De Witte (2020); Glover (2017); Lembke, McMaster, Smith, et al (2018); McMaster, Lembke, Shin, et al. (2020)
10. Analyze and evaluate school, teacher and student outcomes to determine follow-up actions.
 - Ansyari, Groot, & De Witte (2020); Glover (2017); Lembke, McMaster, Smith, et al (2018); McMaster, Lembke, Shin, et al. (2020)

D. Knowledge of and ability to apply effective methods for planning, implementing, and analyzing standards-based literacy instruction based on the science of reading and evidence-based practices. Coaches will demonstrate their abilities in and understanding of:

1. Instructional design and planning strategies that support teachers in developing engaging, effective, standards-aligned lessons (e.g., stacking benchmarks, curriculum mapping, vertical progression of the standards).
 - Kraft, Blazar, & Hogan (2018); McMaster, Baker, Donegan, Hugh, & Sargent (2020); Matsumura, Garnier, & Spybrook (2013)

2. How to align instruction and intervention to a logical scope and sequence of reading skill development.
 - Kraft, Blazar, & Hogan (2018)
3. The application of standards-aligned systematic instruction and intervention for language and literacy development.
4. The stages of language and literacy development for all students.
 - Kraft, Blazar, & Hogan (2018); Brownell, Kiely, Haager, Boardman, Corbett, Algina, Dingle, & Urbach (2017); Matsumura, Garnier, & Spybrook, (2013)
5. The strategic use of evidence-based instructional practices grounded in the science of reading.
 - Glover (2017); Kraft, Blazar, & Hogan (2018); Brownell, Kiely, Haager, Boardman, Corbett, Algina, Dingle, & Urbach (2017); Matsumura, Garnier, & Spybrook (2013)
6. Literacy learning processes and language development of English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities in collaboration with English for Speakers of Other Languages and Exceptional Student Education departments.
 - Matsumura, Garnier, & Spybrook (2013); Olson, Matuchniak, Chung, Stumpf, & Farkas (2017)
7. Multi-Tiered System of Supports and evidence-based practices, programs, and interventions.
 - McMaster, Baker, Donegan, Hugh, & Sargent (2020); Brownell, Kiely, Haager, Boardman, Corbett, Algina, Dingle, & Urbach (2017); Matsumura, Garnier, & Spybrook (2013)
8. How to use student data to make instructional decisions.
 - Ansyari, Groot, & De Witte (2020); Glover (2017); Lembke, McMaster, Smith, et al. (2018); McMaster, Lembke, Shin, et al. (2020)
9. The role of student motivation and active engagement in developing literacy.
 - Kamil, et al. (2008)
10. How to analyze the effectiveness of lessons, instructional materials and assessments using a variety of techniques (e.g., lesson plans, formative/summative assessments and student work samples).
 - Matsumura, Garnier, & Spybrook (2013); Olson, Matuchniak, Chung, Stumpf, & Farkas (2017)
11. How to observe and analyze the implementation of instructional practices and determine the effectiveness of teaching and learning in order to provide instructional support.
 - Matsumura, Garnier, & Spybrook (2013); Olson, Matuchniak, Chung, Stumpf, & Farkas (2017)
12. Developing a plan for effective coaching conversations informed by observations, data analysis, and classroom artifacts.
 - Kraft, Blazar, & Hogan (2018); Olson, Matuchniak, Chung, Stumpf, & Farkas (2017); Sailors, & Price (2010)

E. Ability to grow professionally. Coaches will be able to:

1. Analyze individual performance data to determine and engage in professional learning to broaden personal coaching and instructional knowledge.
 - Kraft, Blazar, & Hogan (2018)
2. Seek and demonstrate understanding of current evidence-based instructional practices.
 - Fisher, Frey, & Lapp (2011); Sailors, & Price (2010); Sailors, & Price (2015)
3. Seek, determine, and utilize appropriate collaborative partnerships with professional learning groups to expand knowledge and improve coaching practices.

References

Ansyari, M. F., Groot, W., & De Witte, K. (2020). Tracking the process of data use professional development interventions for instructional improvement: A systematic literature review. *Educational Research Review, 31*.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2020.100362>

From the abstract: “This paper investigates the evidence on the effects of data use professional development interventions (PDIs) on teacher and student outcomes through a systematic literature review. More specifically, it focuses on the key features of data use PDIs, the practices of data use, and its effects on teacher and student outcomes. To that end, we propose a framework for evaluating data use PDIs that moves from the interventions themselves (input) to the practices of data use (process) and finally the outcomes (output). The framework is used as the theoretical underpinning of this review. The results provide insights into the importance of incorporating some or all key PD features. The process of data use is viewed in this paper not only as an improvement strategy with a three-part interrelated and cyclical process of intentionally using data to inform instruction but as a constructivist learning process as well.

“Data use PDIs have promising results on teacher satisfaction, data literacy, attitudes and beliefs, as well as student subject-related outcomes. However, the findings also reveal that the effects on student outcomes are mediated by teacher outcomes, practices of data use and instructional changes. Overall, despite those findings, there is no evidence in the studies that PD features, teacher outcomes, practices of data use and instructional changes were, respectively, evaluated to support claims on their effects on student outcomes.”

Bean, R. M., Dagen, A. S., Ippolito, J., & Kern, D. (2018). Principals’ Perspectives on the Roles of Specialized Literacy Professionals. *Elementary School Journal, 119*(2), 327–350. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1196261>

From the abstract: “Elementary and secondary principals were surveyed to better understand their perceptions of the roles and impact of specialized literacy professionals (e.g., reading specialists, coaches) in their schools. A 32-question survey was completed by 103 Pennsylvania principals across elementary and secondary school contexts. Findings include distinct differences reported between roles of reading/literacy specialists and coaches, with few differences noted within roles, across elementary and secondary levels. The frequency and type of specialized literacy professional activities aligned with those principals deemed most important to literacy program improvement. Results indicated that surveyed principals viewed their specialized literacy professionals as having an important influence on literacy teaching and learning. The results have implications for those who prepare specialized literacy professionals and those who employ them. These findings corroborate and update earlier studies of specialized literacy professionals that described their multiple roles, including that of sharing in the leadership of the school’s literacy program.”

Brownell, M., Kiely, M. T., Haager, D., Boardman, A., Corbett, N., Algina, J., Dingle, M. P., & Urbach, J. (2017). Literacy Learning Cohorts: Content-Focused Approach to Improving Special Education Teachers’ Reading Instruction. *Exceptional Children, 83*(2), 143–164. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1125284>

<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1125284>

From the abstract: “Two professional development (PD) models for teachers were compared on teacher and student outcomes. Special education teachers participated in Literacy Learning Cohorts (LLC), a PD innovation designed to improve content and pedagogical knowledge for providing reading instruction to upper elementary students with learning disabilities. The LLC, based on Desimone’s (2009) framework, included 2 days of initial PD with follow-up meetings, coaching, and video self-analysis. A comparison group received only 2 days of PD. Results of independent t tests and analyses of covariance indicated that LLC teachers demonstrated significant change in instructional time allotted to, and quality of, word study and fluency instruction. LLC teachers also made significantly greater gains on the fluency knowledge measure as compared with the comparison group, but they did not differ in word study knowledge. Hierarchical linear modeling analyses showed that students of LLC teachers made significantly greater gains on word attack skills and decoding efficiency than did students of teachers in the comparison group.”

Fisher, D., Frey, N., & Lapp, D. (2011). Coaching middle-level teachers to think aloud improves comprehension instruction and student reading achievement. *The Teacher Educator*, 46, 231–243. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ932604>
From the abstract: “In an effort to improve student achievement, a group of middle-school teachers at an underperforming school developed a schoolwide literacy plan. As part of the plan, they agreed to model their thinking while reading aloud. Eight teachers were selected for coaching related to think alouds in which they exposed students to comprehension strategies that they used while reading. The achievement of their students was compared with the achievement of students whose teachers participated in the ongoing professional development but who were not coached. Results indicate that the coached teachers changed their instructional practices and that student achievement improved as a result.”

Gibbons, L. K., & Cobb, P. (2017). Focusing on teacher learning opportunities to identify potentially productive coaching activities. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 4, 411. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1151178>
From the abstract: “Instructional improvement initiatives in many districts include instructional coaching as a primary form of job-embedded support for teachers. However, the coaching literature provides little guidance about what activities coaches should engage in with teachers to improve instruction. When researchers do propose activities, they rarely justify why those activities might support teacher learning. Drawing on the preservice and inservice teacher education literatures, we present a conceptual analysis of learning activities that have the potential to support mathematics and science teachers to improve practice. We argue that our analysis can inform research on mathematics and science coaching, coaching policies, and the design of professional learning for coaches.”

Glover, T. A. (2017). A data-driven coaching model used to promote students’ response to early reading intervention. *Theory Into Practice*, 56(1), 13-20. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1129819>
From the abstract: “Given the importance of early reading performance as a foundational prerequisite for student achievement, schools have allocated significant attention over the past decade to training teachers to assess and monitor students’ reading progress and to implement instruction or interventions targeting early reading skills (e.g., Fletcher & Vaughn, 2009; Glover & Vaughn, 2010; Parisi, Ihlo, & Glover, 2014). Professional development in early reading has often been provided within the context of a multi-tiered prevention model wherein students’ performance relative to predefined benchmarks is identified through systematic screening; data are used to guide decisions about the appropriateness of evidence-based instruction and Tier 2 (targeted, group-based) and Tier 3 (intensive, individualized) intervention; and intervention planning is adjusted based on students’ progress (e.g., Glover & Vaughn, 2007). Within this context, professional development supports teachers in using data to guide classroom practices to optimize students’ response to early reading interventions (early reading RTI).”

Gaudin, C., & Chaliès, S. (2015). Video viewing in teacher education and professional development: A literature review. *Educational Research Review*, 16, 41–67. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2015.06.001>
From the abstract: “This article reviews the international literature on video viewing in teacher education and professional development. Two hundred and fifty-five articles were collected, summarized and categorized using a conceptualization that includes four aspects: teachers’ activity as they view a classroom video, the objectives of video viewing, the types of videos viewed, and the effects of video viewing on teacher education and professional development. The findings in each of these aspects suggested three main questions that may profitably guide future research: How can teaching teachers to identify and interpret relevant classroom events on video clips improve their capacity to perform the same activities in the classroom? How can we best articulate the diverse objectives of video viewing and the diverse types of videos in teacher education and professional development programs? How can we create a “continuum” between teacher education programs and professional development programs in such a way that video viewing becomes a routine, familiar professional practice able to produce the desired effects over the course of an entire teaching career?”

Kamil, M. L., Borman, G. D., Dole, J., Kral, C. C., Salinger, T., and Torgesen, J. (2008). *Improving adolescent literacy: Effective classroom and intervention practices: A Practice Guide* (NCEE #2008-4027). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc>

From the guide: “Recommendation 4. Increase student motivation and engagement in literacy learning. To foster improvement in adolescent literacy, teachers should use strategies to enhance students’ motivation to read and engagement in the learning process. Teachers should help students build confidence in their ability to comprehend and learn from content-area texts. They should provide a supportive environment that views mistakes as growth opportunities, encourages self-determination, and provides informational feedback about the usefulness of reading strategies and how the strategies can be modified to fit various tasks. Teachers should also make literacy experiences more relevant to students’ interests, everyday life, or important current events.”

Kane, B. D., & Rosenquist, B. (2019). Relationships between Instructional Coaches’ Time Use and District-and School-Level Policies and Expectations. *American Educational Research Journal*, 56(5), 1718–1768.

<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1228113>

From the abstract: “Whole-school reform models frequently include instructional coaching, yet instructional coaches typically spend relatively little time working with teachers on instruction. Using survey and interview data from district leaders, school administrators, and instructional coaches in one urban school district, this mixed-methods analysis asks how district- and school- level policies and expectations were related to coaches’ time use. Coaches accountable to district leaders spent more time working with teachers on instruction than their school-hired counterparts, who devoted more time to administrative and teaching duties. However, all coaches had limited opportunities to work with teachers in ongoing ways. Also, as district accountability systems became more robust, all coaches engaged in more administrative work. Implications for school and district policy are discussed.”

Kennedy, M. M. (2016). How does professional development improve teaching? *Review of Educational Research*, 86(4), 945-980. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1121554>

From the abstract: “Professional development programs are based on different theories of how students learn and different theories of how teachers learn. Reviewers often sort programs according to design features such as program duration, intensity, or the use of specific techniques such as coaches or online lessons, but these categories do not illuminate the programs’ underlying purpose or premises about teaching and teacher learning. This review sorts programs according to their underlying theories of action, which include (a) a main idea that teachers should learn and (b) a strategy for helping teachers enact that idea within their own ongoing systems of practice. Using rigorous research design standards, the review identifies 28 studies. Because studies differ in multiple ways, the review presents program effects graphically rather than statistically. Visual patterns suggest that many popular design features are not associated with program effectiveness. Furthermore, different main ideas are not differentially effective. However, the pedagogies used to facilitate enactment differ in their effectiveness. Finally, the review addresses the question of research design for studies of professional development and suggests that some widely favored research designs might adversely affect study outcomes.”

Kraft, M. A., Blazar, D., & Hogan, D. (2018). The effect of teacher coaching on instruction and achievement: A meta-analysis of the causal evidence. *Review of Educational Research*, 88(4), 547-588. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1185488>

From the abstract: “Teacher coaching has emerged as a promising alternative to traditional models of professional development. We review the empirical literature on teacher coaching and conduct meta-analyses to estimate the mean effect of coaching programs on teachers’ instructional practice and students’ academic achievement. Combining results across 60 studies that employ causal research designs, we find pooled effect sizes of 0.49 standard deviations (SD) on

instruction and 0.18 SD on achievement. Much of this evidence comes from literacy coaching programs for prekindergarten and elementary school teachers in the United States. Although these findings affirm the potential of coaching as a development tool, further analyses illustrate the challenges of taking coaching programs to scale while maintaining effectiveness. Average effects from effectiveness trials of larger programs are only a fraction of the effects found in efficacy trials of smaller programs. We conclude by discussing ways to address scale-up implementation challenges and providing guidance for future causal studies.”

Lembke, E. S., McMaster, K. L., Smith, R. A., Allen, A., Brandes, D., & Wagner, K. (2018). Professional Development for Data-Based Instruction in Early Writing: Tools, Learning, and Collaborative Support. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 41*(2), 106–120. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED598822>

From the abstract: “Few teachers receive adequate preparation to provide effective individualized instruction for children with intensive early writing needs. In this article, the authors describe an attempt to close this learning gap, by developing Data-Based Instruction- Tools, Learning, and Collaborative Support (DBI-TLC), a comprehensive professional development (PD) system that provides tools, learning opportunities, and ongoing collaborative supports for teachers to implement DBI in early writing. They describe the theoretical framework that has guided this work, the teacher population with whom they worked, their approach to assessing important teacher outcomes, and their development process. They highlight key findings that align with their theory of change, and discuss implications for further research and teacher preparation.”

Matsumura, L. C., Garnier, H. E., Correnti, R., Junker, B., & Bickel, D. D. (2010). Investigating the effectiveness of a comprehensive literacy coaching program in schools with high teacher mobility. *Elementary School Journal, 111*(1), 35–62. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ913199>

From the abstract: “Teacher mobility is a factor that impacts schoolwide implementation of professional development programs. In this article, we present interim results of a longitudinal randomized field trial of a comprehensive literacy coaching program (Content-Focused Coaching, CFC) for improving instruction and learning in schools with high teacher mobility. We investigate program effects on 73 new treatment and comparison teachers recruited to replace the large proportion of teachers who left their schools during the first year of the program. HLM analyses indicated that the CFC program predicted significantly higher school-level gains on the state standardized test for English language learners (N = 496, ES = 0.51). By spring, the quality of teachers’ self-reported and observed instruction in the CFC schools exceeded that of comparison teachers. Implications for accommodating new teachers into an ongoing and established coaching program to improve instruction and student learning, and conducting randomized trials in schools with high teacher turnover, are discussed.”

Matsumura, L. C., Garnier, H. E., & Spybrook, J. (2013). Literacy coaching to improve student reading achievement: A multi-level mediation model. *Learning and Instruction, 25*, 35–48. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1003566>

From the abstract: “In a longitudinal group-randomized trial, we explore the key role of the quality of classroom text discussions in mediating the effects of Content-Focused Coaching (CFC) on student reading achievement (2983 students, 167 teachers). Schools in the United States serving large numbers of minority and English language learning (ELL) students from low-income families were randomly assigned to participate in the CFC literacy-coaching program or to continue with the literacy coaching that was standard practice for the district. The findings identified a positive effect of the CFC program on observed classroom text discussion quality. Supporting the theory underlying CFC, the positive effect of the program on student reading achievement was mediated through the quality of classroom text discussions. Students’ language status moderated the direct effect of the program, with stronger effects for ELL students compared to their English-proficient peers.”

Matsumura, L. C., Sartoris, M., Bickel, D. D., & Garnier, H. E. (2009). Leadership for literacy coaching: The principal’s role in

launching a new coaching program. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 45(5), 655–693. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ860704>

This randomized controlled trial investigated the relationship between categories of principal support and frequency of teachers' participation in coaching activities and finds that principal leadership is significantly associated with teachers' engagement with coaches. The study explored the relationship between principal leadership and the variation in teacher participation in a new coaching program. "Principal leadership was significantly associated with the frequency with which teachers conferred with their new Content-Focused Coach (CFC) and were observed by their new coach as teaching reading comprehension lessons. Principal behaviors associated with teachers' increased engagement with coaches included actively participating in the CFC program and publicly endorsing the coach as a source of literacy expertise to teachers. Principal beliefs regarding a literacy coach's role and responsibilities were associated with the frequency with which teachers opened their classrooms to the new coaches" (p. 656). Providing support included behaviors such as attending meetings between teachers and the coach; consulting with the coach about important matters related to the school; and talking with the coach about the coach's work with teachers, including establishing goals for teacher learning, establishing how the goals will be met, and so on.

McMaster, K. L., Baker, K., Donegan, R., Hugh, M., & Sargent, K. (2020). Professional development to support teachers' implementation of intensive reading intervention: A systematic review. *Remedial and Special Education*, 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741932520934099>

From the abstract: "Many educators are unprepared to meet the needs of students with the most intensive reading intervention needs. The purpose of this review was to identify how researchers have provided professional development (PD) to support educators' implementation of intensive reading interventions, the extent to which these approaches included essential PD elements, and how researchers have measured implementer outcomes. In the 26 studies reviewed, implementers received initial training, and most received some form of ongoing support. Most studies appeared to incorporate one or more essential PD elements, though many lacked sufficient detail regarding the presence of these elements. Researchers used a variety of fidelity measures and other methods to assess implementer outcomes, which were typically positive. Results of this review indicate the need for researchers to report more detailed descriptions of PD activities, as well as the need for continued research on how best to support teachers' implementation of intensive reading interventions."

McMaster, K. L., Lembke, E. S., Shin, J., Poch, A. L., Smith, R. A., Jung, P.-G., Allen, A. A., & Wagner, K. (2020). Supporting teachers' use of data-based instruction to improve students' early writing skills. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 112(1), 1–21. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1237779>

From the abstract: "We examined the effects of a professional development (PD) system designed to support teachers' use of data-based instruction (DBI) to improve early writing outcomes for children with intensive needs. The PD system, called DBI-TLC, provided tools for early writing assessment and intervention, learning modules including face-to-face workshops followed by classroom application, and ongoing coaching to support DBI implementation. Special education teachers in 19 classrooms in 2 Midwestern districts were assigned randomly to receive DBI-TLC or to a business-as-usual control group. All teachers completed pre- and posttests of DBI knowledge and skills and self-efficacy, and DBI-TLC teachers' fidelity to DBI was assessed. Fifty-three students (2 to 3 from each classroom) completed pre- and posttests of early writing using curriculum-based measures (CBM) and the Test of Early Written Language-3 (TEWL-3). DBI-TLC teachers outperformed controls at posttest on DBI knowledge and skills (Hedge's $g = 2.88$) and reported a more explicit writing instruction orientation compared to controls ($g = 1.63$). DBI fidelity varied (on average, 84% for assessment, 79% for intervention, and 52% for decision-making). Students whose teachers implemented DBI showed a pattern of stronger early writing performance compared to control students on CBM, with effect sizes of 0.23 to 0.40, but not on the TEWL-3 (0.02 to 0.13). We discuss the promise of DBI-TLC to improve teacher practice and student outcomes, as well as the need to continue to explore ways to support teachers' implementation of DBI with fidelity."

Olson, C. B., Matuchniak, T., Chung, H. Q., Stumpf, R., & Farkas, G. (2017). Reducing achievement gaps in academic writing for

Latinos and English learners in Grades 7–12. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 109(1), 1–21. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1125530>

From the abstract: “This study reports 2 years of findings from a randomized controlled trial designed to replicate and demonstrate the efficacy of an existing, successful professional development program, the Pathway Project, that uses a cognitive strategies approach to text-based analytical writing. Building on an earlier randomized field trial in a large, urban, low socioeconomic status (SES) district in which 98% of the students were Latino and 88% were mainstreamed English learners (ELs) at the intermediate level of fluency, the project aimed to help secondary school students, specifically Latinos and mainstreamed ELs, in another large, urban, low-SES district to develop the academic writing skills called for in the rigorous Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts. The Pathway Project draws on well-documented instructional frameworks that support approaches that incorporate strategy instruction to enhance students’ academic literacy. Ninety-five teachers in 16 secondary schools were stratified by school and grade and then randomly assigned to the Pathway or control group. Pathway teachers participated in 46 hours of training to help students write analytical essays. Difference-in-differences and regression analyses revealed significant effects on student writing outcomes in both years of the intervention (Year 1, $d = 0.48$; Year 2, $d = 0.60$). Additionally, Pathway students had higher odds than control students of passing the California High School Exit Exam in both years.”

Sailors, M., & Price, L. R. (2010). Professional development that supports the teaching of cognitive reading strategy instruction. *Elementary School Journal*, 110, 301–322. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0162373715579487>

From the abstract: “In this article, we describe and report on the results of a study in Texas that tested 2 models of professional development for classroom teachers as a way of improving their practices and increasing the reading achievement of their students. To meet this goal, 44 participating teachers in grades 2-8 learned to teach their students cognitive reading strategies through 1 of 2 models of professional development. One group attended a traditional 2-day summer in-service; the second attended the workshop and received classroom-based support from a reading coach. Using a random-effects, multilevel, pretest-posttest comparison group design and a multilevel modeling analytic strategy, we determined the effects of these 2 models. The full intervention group (teachers who were coached) outperformed the partial intervention group (workshop only) in all the teacher observation and student achievement measures. This study demonstrates the potential of coaching as a viable model of the professional development of reading teachers.”

Sailors, M., & Price, L. (2015). Support for the Improvement of Practices through Intensive Coaching (SIPIC): A model of coaching for improving reading instruction and reading achievement. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 45, 115–127. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2014.09.008>

From the abstract: “In this study, we examined one model of coaching, Support for the Improvement of Practices through Intensive Coaching (SIPIC), which draws from both direct and responsive models of coaching with classroom teachers. We found the model to be effective in improving the comprehension instruction of teachers and in raising the reading achievement of students, including students who struggle with learning to read. Additionally, we found that the interactions between coaches and teachers were statistically associated with the instructional practices of the teachers, demonstrating empirically that coaches’ behaviors do influence the professional practices of teachers.”

Ulenski, A., Gill, M. G., & Kelley, M. J. (2019). Developing and Validating the Elementary Literacy Coach Self-Efficacy Survey. *Teacher Educator*, 54(3), 225–243. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1219662>

From the abstract: “This article describes the development and initial testing of the “Elementary Literacy Coach Self-Efficacy Survey”, a new instrument designed and created to assess literacy coaches’ efficacy for coaching-specific tasks. A synthesis of literature on literacy coaching tasks and experts in the coaching field were used to craft the “Elementary Literacy Coach Self-Efficacy Survey” items. Construct validity of the survey items was explored through correlation with other established instruments. Exploratory factor analysis was performed on the survey yielding three factors. Results

indicated a high level of internal consistency, and correlations and factor analyses supported the construct validity of the instrument. The results from this study allow researchers to better understand the beliefs of elementary literacy coaches regarding tasks specific to their roles as literacy coaches. Furthermore, the results provide direction for targeting professional development and training of elementary literacy coaches.”

Vernon-Feagans, L., Kainz, K., Hedrick, A., Ginsberg, M., & Amendum, S. (2013). Live webcam coaching to help early elementary classroom teachers provide effective literacy instruction for struggling readers: The targeted reading intervention. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 105*, 1175–1187. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1054424>

From the abstract: “This study evaluated whether the Targeted Reading Intervention (TRI), a classroom teacher professional development program delivered through webcam technology literacy coaching, could provide rural classroom teachers with the instructional skills to help struggling readers progress rapidly in early reading. Fifteen rural schools were randomly assigned to the experimental or control condition. Five struggling readers and 5 non-struggling readers were randomly selected from eligible children in each classroom. There were 75 classrooms and 631 children in the study. Teachers in experimental schools used the TRI in one-on-one sessions with 1 struggling reader in the regular classroom for 15 min a day until that struggler made rapid reading progress. Teachers then moved on to another struggling reader until all 5 struggling readers in the class received the TRI during the year. Biweekly webcam coaching sessions between the coach and teacher allowed the coach to see and hear the teacher as she instructed a struggling reader in a TRI session, and the teacher and child could see and hear the coach. In this way the classroom teacher was able to receive real-time feedback from the coach. Three-level hierarchical linear models suggested that struggling readers in the intervention schools significantly outperformed the struggling readers in the control schools, with effect sizes from 0.36 to 0.63 on 4 individualized achievement tests. Results suggested that struggling readers were gaining at the same rate as the non-struggling readers, but they were not catching up with their non-struggling peers.”

Walpole, S., McKenna, M. C., Uribe-Zarain, X., & Lamitina, D. (2010). The relationships between coaching and instruction in the primary grades: Evidence from high-poverty schools. *The Elementary School Journal, 111*(1), 115–140. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ913202>

The findings of this mixed-methods study, which used teacher and coaching observation protocols, provide insights on teaching, coaching, leadership, and coaching–teaching relationships in high-poverty schools. The study looked at how coaching influenced instruction in the primary grades, especially in high-poverty schools, and examined how leadership support for coaching was related to changes in teacher practice. “Leadership support for coaching, measured by the frequency of constructive collaborations between the coach and principal, active support for the writing of differentiated 3-week lesson plans, and participation in professional learning, provided the highest number of significant relationships to teaching” (p. 135). Findings from the Coaching Observation Protocol used in the study suggest that the partnership between coaches and principals can create an environment in which teachers continually learn.

End of Handout 2

About ExcelinEd

The **Foundation for Excellence in Education (ExcelinEd)** advances a broad range of student-centered policy solutions that increase student learning, advance equity and ready graduates for college and career. ExcelinEd’s comprehensive approach to improving literacy outcomes includes strategies that support teachers and administrators, students and families.



About FCRR

The **Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR)** is a multidisciplinary research center at Florida State University that was established in 2002 by the Governor's office and Legislature. Drawing from multiple disciplines, FCRR investigates all aspects of reading and reading-related skills. Through rigorous and robust research, innovation, and engagement, FCRR advances the science of reading to improve learning and achievement from birth through adulthood.



Vision

Improving reading through science

Norms for Our Course

Cell phones
on silent



Pay attention to
self and others



Presume
positive intentions



9

ICE
BREAKER

- Introduce yourself.
- Share your background in education and one little-known fact about yourself.

10

Module	Topic	Session	Minutes	Session Date
1	Applying Principles and Practices that Foster a Positive Culture	Intro	60	
		1	120	
		2	150	
		3	150	
2	Applying Effective Pedagogy and Andragogy	4	120	
		5	120	
		6	165	
3	Collecting Data to Inform Professional Learning	7	150	
		8	140	
		9	170	
4	Planning, Implementing, and Analyzing Literacy Instruction	10	175	
		11	135	
		12	165	
		13	130	
5	Growing Professionally	14	120	
		15	120	
6	Planning and Implementing Coaching	16	120	

Bridge to Practice Projects for Coaches

- An activity designed to serve as a Bridge to Practice after each Module will provide evidence that coaches are able to apply the knowledge and skills they developed in this course in their schools. Coaches will complete the following activities:

Module 1	Develop a principal-coach partnership agreement.
Module 2	Develop a needs assessment for professional development on evidence-based instructional practices, and complete an ADDIE model for planning this professional development.
Module 3	Develop and describe planned implementation of a professional learning action plan.
Module 4	Create a video that reflects coaching to help teachers plan, implement, and analyze standards-based literacy instruction.
Module 5	Complete a reflection on the course, including plans for continued professional growth.
Module 6	Choose one teacher with whom you have seen significant growth as a result of coaching support and complete a reflection on what worked, why it worked, and which areas of growth were most evident.






- A rubric is provided at the end of each Module for the corresponding Bridge to Practice project.

The Path for Meeting the Purpose and Goals

- At the conclusion of the course, participants will have:
 - ✓ Completed more than 36 hours of professional learning
 - ✓ Read at least 15 research articles on various aspects of coaching related to coaching domains and standards
 - ✓ Viewed more than 20 videos of coaching conversations, interviews, and strategies for coaching
 - ✓ Completed self-study assignments to enhance their knowledge of the domains and standards of the coaching program
 - ✓ Completed a Bridge to Practice activity after each module, for a total of six projects, to demonstrate knowledge of the domains and standards of the coaching program and their ability to apply that knowledge

13

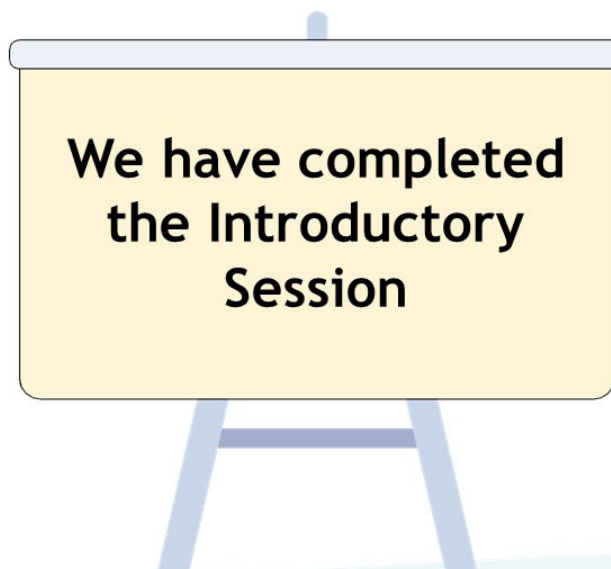
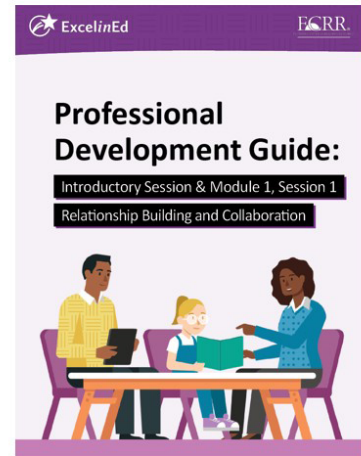
Process for Course Sessions

-  **Debrief**
-  **Define and Discuss Session Goals and Content**
-  **Learn and Confirm**
-  **Collaborate and Practice**
-  **Reflect, Plan, and Implement**

14

Literacy Coach Program PD Guide

- In small groups preview the materials located in the guide for Session 1 of the course.
 - Note any comments or questions.
 - Be prepared to debrief in whole group.



Fundamentals of Literacy Coaching

Professional Development Modules

Module 1, Session 1

Relationship Building and Collaboration



Session 1

Module	Topic	Session	Minutes	Session Date
1	Applying Principles and Practices that Foster a Positive Culture	Intro	60	
		1	120	
		2	150	
		3	150	
2	Applying Effective Pedagogy and Andragogy	4	120	
		5	120	
		6	165	
3	Collecting Data to Inform Professional Learning	7	150	
		8	140	
		9	170	
4	Planning, Implementing, and Analyzing Literacy Instruction	10	175	
		11	135	
		12	165	
		13	130	
5	Growing Professionally	14	120	
		15	120	
6	Planning and Implementing Coaching	16	120	

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Module 6	Choose one teacher with whom you have seen significant growth as a result of coaching support and complete a reflection on what worked, why it worked, and which areas of growth were most evident.

- A rubric is provided at the end of each Module for the corresponding Bridge to Practice project.

Norms for Our Course

Cell phones
on silent



Pay attention to
self and others



Presume
positive intentions



20



Share an experience where, as a teacher, coaching was helpful or not so helpful.

What did the coach say?

How did you receive the feedback?

What would have made the experience better?

21

Define and Discuss Session Goals and Content

Module 1: Applying Principles and Practices that Foster a Positive Culture

Goal: Participants will gain the knowledge and ability to apply principles and practices that foster an inclusive and collaborative culture.

Session 1 Relationship Building and Collaboration

Session 2 Communication

Session 3 Establishing Expectations

22

Define and Discuss Session Goals and Content

Goals for Today

- Gain an understanding/rationale for the benefits of coaching.
- Learn about the importance of building relationships and collaboration through the use of symbolic gestures, selecting locations for interactions, shaping the content of discourse, and understanding how to build effective teams.

23

Learn and Confirm

Improving Teacher Performance Through Instructional Coaching



What is instructional coaching?

Instructional coaching is job-embedded professional learning that focuses both on content and practice — not just one or the other.¹ As instructional coaches work with teachers, they serve as thought partners, guides, and support for the process of experimenting, reflecting, and improving. Professional learning activities such as instructional coaching can affect student achievement by enhancing teachers' knowledge and skills in order to positively impact their instruction and student learning.²



Instructional coaching is:

- a kind of professional learning that happens consistently and in the context of the classroom.
- a partnership with teachers to support them as they improve their instruction so that students are more successful in their learning.
- when evidence-based practices are brought into classrooms and teachers or other school leaders work, over time, to implement these practices.
- an extension of previous training a teacher has received.
- based on collaborative efforts to develop self-reflection and self-sufficiency.
- ongoing and evolving over time into a continuum of support as teachers demonstrate new skills and data supports increased student learning.
- continuously evaluated for effectiveness and efficiency.
- focused on an individual or group.³

Improving Teacher Performance Through Instructional Coaching



How does instructional coaching contribute to the transfer of training?



In the 1970s, evaluations of professional development that focused on teaching strategies and curriculum revealed that as few as 10 percent of the participants implemented what they had learned. Well-researched curriculum and teaching models did not find their way into general practice and thus could not influence students' learning environments. However, through implementing seminars and coaching sessions, results were consistent: implementation rose dramatically. Thus we recommended that teachers who were studying teaching and curriculum form small coaching groups that would share the learning process. In this way professional development might directly affect student learning.

— Joyce & Showers⁴

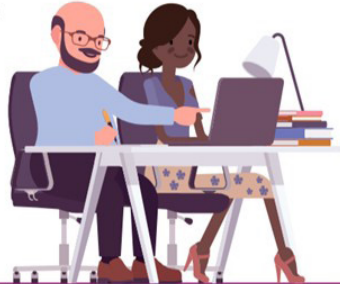
Improving Teacher Performance Through Instructional Coaching



Instructional coaching can take the form of:



Observational coaching, which includes a partner teacher working with a coach so that they can observe and try new strategies and procedures with their own students and get in-the-moment feedback.⁵



Side-by-side coaching, which provides an opportunity for coaches and teachers to learn together by reflecting on the teacher's instruction and co-developing approaches to solve problems.⁶

The strongest coaching programs:

use well-trained, expert coaches. emphasize strategies to improve student engagement. include structured feedback. take more than one year to produce an impact.⁷

How does instructional coaching support teacher instruction and student learning?

Coached teachers:

- practice new strategies more often and with greater skill.
- adapt strategies more appropriately to their own goals and contexts.
- demonstrate a clearer understanding of the purposes and use of the new strategies.
- retain and increase their skill over time.
- are more likely to explain new models of teaching to ensure students' understanding of the models' strategy and purpose.⁸

Improving Teacher Performance Through Instructional Coaching



The Impact Cycle⁹

The Impact Cycle is a process coaches can use to partner with teachers to help them have a positive impact on students' learning and wellbeing, with the three stages of the cycle being central to coaching.

Step 2: Learn:

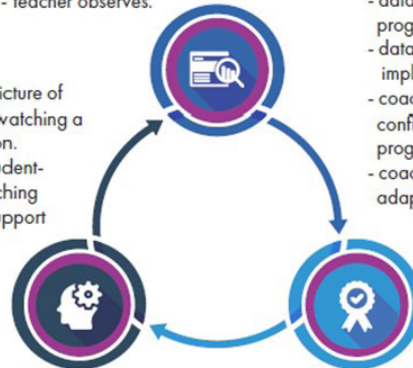
- coach shares different teaching strategies.
- coach prompts teacher to modify practice if appropriate.
- coach provides modeling.
- teacher observes.

Step 3: Improve:

- teacher implements practice.
- data are gathered on student progress.
- data are gathered on teacher's implementation of the process.
- coach and teacher meet to confirm direction and monitor progress.
- coach and teacher make adaptations and plan next actions.

Step 1: Identify:

- teacher gets a clear picture of the present reality by watching a video of their instruction.
- teacher identifies a student-focused goal and teaching strategy to use, with support from the coach.



Instructional Coaching Roles and Responsibilities



The teacher's role is to identify learning goals, provide data, consistently integrate new practices, invite feedback, meet with the coach weekly to reflect, and ask questions.¹⁰



The coach's role is to enroll teachers, gather and analyze data with teachers to create goals, listen and ask questions, explain teaching practices, find resources, provide feedback, and serve as a thought partner.¹¹



The administrator's role is to create a coaching culture for their school and to ensure that policies and systems are in place to support data-driven conversations by finding ways to build interpersonal relationships of trust between teachers, leaders, and coaches to improve instruction.¹²

Considerations for Planning and Implementing Literacy Coaching

Implementing literacy coaching is a complex process that includes several areas for consideration. District and school level administrators, coaches, and teachers may be unaware of what they can do to help ensure coaches are as effective as possible in their role. Presented below are four specific areas shown from the research to be important when planning for and implementing literacy coaching.

Principal-coach partnership agreements

These agreements specify the duties and activities of the coach and how the principal will provide support.⁵ They may eliminate non-instructional duties for the coach and establish criteria used for determining who the coach will work with during the school year.³



Evidence-based practices of the coach

Evidence-based practices include lesson planning with teachers, modeling, co-teaching, engaging in reflective conversations,^{4, 8} and engaging in data chats.³



Considerations for Planning and Implementing Literacy Coaching

Implementing literacy coaching is a complex process that includes several areas for consideration. District and school level administrators, coaches, and teachers may be unaware of what they can do to help ensure coaches are as effective as possible in their role. Presented below are four specific areas shown from the research to be important when planning for and implementing literacy coaching.

Hiring and training practices

Job descriptions and protocols should facilitate the selection of the strongest candidates, establish initial training expectations, and provide for ongoing professional learning.³



Communication

Coaches should communicate data informed responses that are timely,^{2,7} and establish positive relationships with teachers and principals through their interactions.^{1,6,9} It is important for teachers and principals to keep open lines of communication with coaches to help ensure coaches are as effective as possible in their role.



30

Literacy Coach Domain and Standards: Session 1

A. Knowledge of and ability to apply principles and practices that foster an inclusive and collaborative culture. Coaches will be able to:

1. Identify and apply systems that foster an inclusive and collaborative culture (e.g., trust, confidentiality).
2. Identify and apply strategies that build effective teams.
3. Identify the strengths and needs of colleagues to engage in effective collaboration.

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Learn and Confirm

Steps to Building a Teacher/Coach Relationship

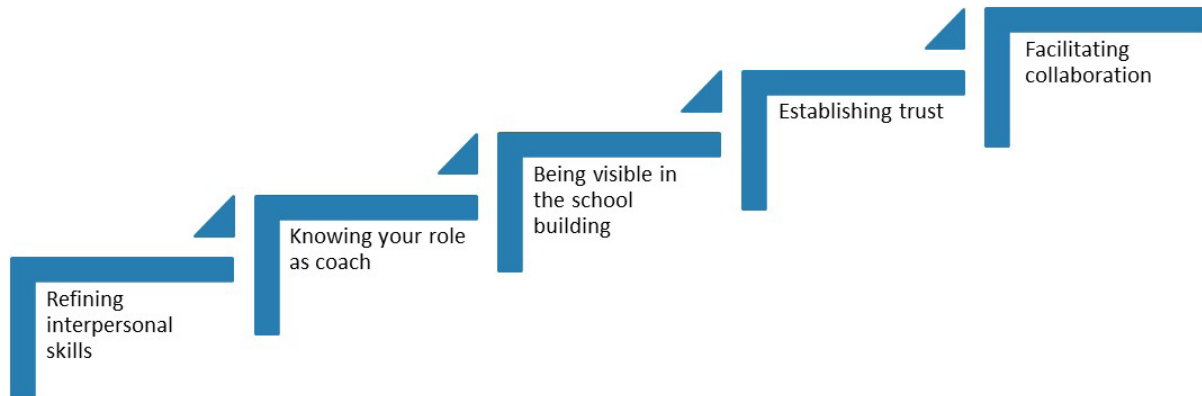


Figure 1. Steps to Building a Teacher/Coach Relationship

Pletcher, 2015

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Steps to Building a Teacher/Coach Relationship



Teachers are the owners of their classrooms, and their classrooms are often second homes – personal spaces where they choose what happens and when it happens. Coaches have to understand that they are outsiders, and even if they have previously been a part of a school’s faculty, they are now serving in a very different role that requires them to enter these personal spaces. It is up to the coach to maneuver this process delicately and seamlessly.

Pletcher, 2015, p. 51

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Steps to Building a Teacher/Coach Relationship

Refining interpersonal skills

Interpersonal skills are paramount to being an effective coach (Casey, 2006; Ertmer et al., 2005; Jay, 2009). When school principals hire for a coaching position, they are looking for someone who works well with everyone. Knight (2004) equates this with being “flexible” and “likable” (p. 35). Being “likable” means something different to each coach and each teacher. This means that the coach needs to learn what each teacher thinks likability is. For one teacher, it may mean that the coach stops in and says hello every day. For others, simply leaving a complimentary note after classroom visits is suitable. And still for others, a smile can go a long way. Although some might argue that coaches do not need to be liked by every teacher, it certainly does not hurt.

Pletcher, 2015, p. 51

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Steps to Building a Teacher/Coach Relationship

Refining interpersonal skills

A significant role of successful coaches is that of a... “**community builder**, defined as the responsibilities for working both within and across teams of people to build or strengthen relationships. To successfully engage teachers in school-wide reform and facilitate changes in practice, literacy coaches spent much of their time creating, or improving, existing communication systems. They were critical in bringing together members of the school’s PLC, serving as bridges among administrators, teacher teams, and external partners (e.g., university, district). In this role, literacy coaches had to build trust among many people and finesse messages so that they made sense to specific audiences.” Knowing educator culture in the school and responding appropriately and equitably to various audiences is an important part of the **community builder** role of the coach.

Weber, Goldman, Raphael, 2009, p. 28

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Steps to Building a Teacher/Coach Relationship

Knowing your role as coach

Plainly stated, a coach is not an evaluator (Hunt & Handsfield, 2013; L’Allier, Piper, & Bean, 2010). This understanding must be in place from the beginning, and the principal, especially, needs to internalize this in order for it to filter down to the teachers. Also, coaches who put themselves in the position of expert will, at some point, let their teachers down. Certainly, expert knowledge about one’s content area and how children learn is part of the job; however, to pigeonhole the coach in this manner reinforces the “banking” model of education (Freire, 1970, p. 72), implying that the coach is all-knowing and only to be used for the acquisition of answers. Coaches have to be careful on how feedback is provided. Questioning techniques are critical to this process.

Pletcher, 2015, p. 52

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Steps to Building a Teacher/Coach Relationship

Being visible in the school building

In addition to informing stakeholders of their various duties, it is imperative that the coach’s work is evident in and around the school. This starts before the school year does, as, during the waning days of summer, the literacy coach walks the halls casually and makes early and easygoing contact with teachers. It is key for coaches to be highly visible, especially in common areas (Casey, 2006; L’Allier et al., 2010), by stepping out into the halls, visiting the teachers’ lounge or taking a walk outside when teachers are out at recess with their classes. They should also note when grade level planning times are and check in with teachers during those moments. Teachers are extremely busy people. It is up to the coach to seek out teachers - not the other way around. These visits should be informal and friendly, and it is important that the coach walks around with a smile on his or her face, rather than a look of constant intention.

Pletcher, 2015, p. 53

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Steps to Building a Teacher/Coach Relationship

Being visible in the school building

As you watch the video, record examples shared and consider how they might benefit collaboration and building teacher/coach relationships.



[Video 1: Being Visible in the School Building](#)

Steps to Building a Teacher/Coach Relationship

Establishing trust

A coach does not automatically gain trust the first day on the job. He or she has to work diligently to lay the groundwork. Trust is a prerequisite to engaging in serious work with teachers (Costa & Garmston, 1994). This involves confidentiality, follow-through, equality, and getting to know teachers. Experts on coaching agree that, in order to gain and keep trust, it is crucial to maintain confidentiality (Bean & DeFord, 2007; Ertmer et al., 2005; L'Allier et al., 2010). There are administrators who sometimes, and possibly with good intentions, choose to use coaches as their eyes and ears in the school. In other words, what happens in coaching conversations should stay in coaching conversations. This is not to say that regular communication with the principal is not necessary, but coaches need to be mindful when sharing observations with administrators.

Steps to Building a Teacher/Coach Relationship

Establishing trust

Another aspect of trust that often appears in the literature on coaching is following through. If a teacher reaches out to the coach, which in some cases may be a huge step on the part of that teacher, the coach is obligated to reply immediately (Bean & DeFord, 2007; L'Allier et al., 2010). Again, once a commitment is broken, even just one time, a signal is sent to the teacher that the coach is unreliable, and the teacher will be less likely to ask for assistance again.

To maintain a trusting relationship with teachers, coaches are to be mindful of treating teachers as equal colleagues who learn alongside one another (Ertmer et al., 2005). Every interaction with teachers should be as positive as it can be, building on a teacher's strengths, just as one would do with students. Also, it takes conscious effort to see teachers through a lens of assistance and empowerment, rather than evaluation.

Pletcher, 2015, p. 54

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Steps to Building a Teacher/Coach Relationship

Facilitating collaboration

Coaches talk for a living. After all, they begin as teachers - figuring out exact language to use to reach students. Communicating with adults requires a different skill-set, and Knight (2009) asserts that a coach must be a "master of effective communication" (p. 511). To strive for this level, coaches have to spend time with teachers throughout each and every school day. This practice will help them become comfortable talking with teachers (Gibson, 2006). As coaches reach a relaxed level of conversation, it is then time to work on what is perhaps the most critical piece of effective communication: listening. Teachers want to know that they are being listened to and that their ideas are respected. This listening involves eye contact, open body posture, and sometimes calls for a nodding of the head, an inserted "mm-hmm," and brief paraphrasing.

Pletcher, 2015, p. 54

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Steps to Building a Teacher/Coach Relationship

Facilitating collaboration

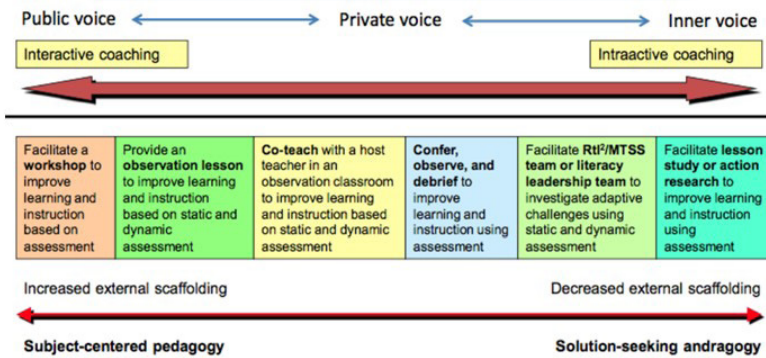
Coaches are in schools to empower teachers and lift them to the next level of teaching. This entails meeting the teacher where he or she is (Bean, 2010). Each teacher is unique in that they have varying interests and are at different places in their learning. An effective coach works to figure out these things and knows when and how to engage in shared thinking with teachers (Ippolito, 2010). This process not only helps to build capacity; it can also “boost teachers’ self-efficacy.” (Shanklin, 2006, p. 2).

Pletcher, 2015, p. 55

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CONTINUUM OF COACHING

Facilitating collaboration



Transformation may occur when teachers or his or her coaches are provided opportunities to observe, co-teach, confer, study, research, and reflect on practices based on behavioral evidence.

Note: The term *observation lesson* has been used to replace *demonstration lesson* to denote the opportunity being provided versus a model lesson to emulate.

Adapted from:
Puig, E.A. & Froelich, K.S. (2011), 2nd ed. *The literacy coach: Guiding in the right direction*. Allyn & Bacon/ Pearson.

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Collaborate and Practice

- Read **Handout 1: How to Build Trust with Teachers: 5 Easy Steps for Instructional Coaches.**
- Summarize your assigned step.
- Share your summary with the group.
- While others are presenting, record a non-evaluative question to ask the presenter that may lead to collaborative discussion.

Handout 1 on Next Page

Handout 1: How to Build Trust with Teachers: 5 Easy Steps for Instructional Coaches

Heather Dowd



Let's get real. Being an instructional coach can come with many of the same beginning of the year anxieties felt by teachers: Will the students like me? Are they learning? Am I doing a good job? How will I facilitate those crucial conversations? The good news is, being an instructional coach is a lot like being a teacher; the biggest difference is your audience. 'And if you have been in the classroom for any length of time, I have a good feeling you understand many of the needs of those you are working with.

One of the first tasks to consider when taking on the role of an instructional coach is to build trust among those whom you are working with. Just as students have a basic need to feel comfortable and safe in their learning environment, instructional coaches need to ensure teachers feel comfortable and safe in their environment as a learner as well – which comes from developing trust. Trust is an important piece to becoming an effective instructional coach because it will determine the amount of value you are able to add to a teacher's professional growth. Instructional coaching is one of those positions within a school system that is complex because though the primary job in supporting teachers is important, instructional coaches often don't possess any authoritative power on the campus. Therefore, it is critical to have willing participants in this process. Trust is a vital component in ensuring the promotion of a growth mindset, rather than merely conducting a series of meetings that aren't beneficial to you or your teachers.

Here are 5 easy steps you can use right away to build trust with your teachers:

Step # 1: Build the Relationship First

Any veteran teacher will know that in order to effectively teach a child, you must build a relationship with them first; after all, kids don't listen to those they don't like. Working with teachers as an instructional coach is no different – you can't just walk into a meeting and dive into feedback and solutions. There must first be a relationship between the teacher and the coach to act as a foundation upon which those feedback conversations can occur.

Consider beginning your first meeting with a personal interview of the teacher. Ask the teacher how their day is going. Ask about their family or their interests. This will help you break the ice with that teacher and give you something to connect with on a personal level. More important than asking these questions, is remembering the responses and taking that with you into future meetings. A great way to organize all of this information is to create a digital note for each teacher on your coaching cycle to keep track of these important details. You'll then be able to remember to ask the teacher how their 4 year old enjoyed their birthday party, take a chocolate bar to that stressed out teacher because you know it's their favorite, or offer to help a teacher set up their new iPhone X because you know they waited in line for it all weekend. These small acts help teachers to see the instructional coach on a more personal level and will help build trust between the two because teachers will understand you are approaching them as an individual and a professional. Once the relationship between the teacher and the coach is developed, the teacher and coach have a better chance at collaborating and working together toward professional growth. Remember, it doesn't matter if you are talking about the football game over the weekend, your favorite HomeGoods store or that TV show you can't seem to stop binging; if the teacher feels more personally connected and appreciated, they will be more professionally motivated.

Step #2: Listen and Empathize

You may have heard the old saying, "You have two ears and one mouth so you should listen twice as much as you talk" – this could not be more true for instructional coaches. As an instructional coach, you will spend most of your time listening to the needs of your teachers and only a small amount of time actually facilitating the discussion. As an instructional coach, or as an instructional therapist as many teachers may end up calling you, the majority of your meetings are a chance for teachers to have their voices heard in ways they may not otherwise. Teachers, especially those who trust their coaches, will be very candid in their conversation and will often illuminate challenges or obstacles unknown to the untrained eye. The instructional coach must first, and foremost listen to understand before speaking to solve. Another integral component of listening is empathizing with your teachers.

Empathy is one of the greatest assets an instructional coach can possess. Think about the number of times teachers are frustrated with administration, district personnel, or policymakers because they are "too far removed from the struggles of the classroom." The teachers you are coaching need to know their instructional coach empathizes with their struggles. Teachers want to know that they are heard and they aren't in the trenches alone as those sent to support them stand by and watch. Teachers like to know that their concerns are heard and their voices valued. Empathizing with them goes a long way in building a trusting relationship with your teachers because they will know you are truly there to support their individual needs and are not just a "one more thing" initiative. In coaching meetings, consider recounting some experiences from your time as a classroom teacher – while some may argue this is an exercise in misery loves company, it is rather a shared experience that builds credibility. Teachers who know their instructional coach has felt the same struggles they are currently feeling and were able to work through them are more likely to follow prescribed feedback and suggestions than teachers who believe their instructional coach is living in an idealistic fantasy land.

Step #3: Establish Teacher-Coach Confidentiality

Privacy is a huge builder of trust between an instructional coach and the teachers they are working with. As teacher evaluations become more robust and the stakes to perform becomes higher, teachers still need to have a safe space to try new things that may potentially fail. There is a reason doctors and lawyers have patient/client privileges – because what happens in these spaces is highly personal and puts people in a state of vulnerability. The first time an instructional coach makes a recommendation to a teacher, it is likely that teacher will shy away from implementing the strategy or tool depending on the level of unfamiliarity. Teachers do not like to fail, and they especially do not like to fail in front of an audience – whether that be their students, their content specialists, or their administrators. As the instructional coach, it is your job to help teachers through these challenges in a low stakes environment. Conversations that take place between the teacher and the coach should remain between the teacher and the coach – and an instructional coach should never be put in the position to act as an evaluator. If a strategy or tools fails on implementation, the instructional coach’s job is not to evaluate, report or shame – in this moment go back to step 2: listen and empathize. Trust and safety go hand in hand. If a teacher trusts their coach they won’t be afraid to fail, but teachers aren’t afraid to fail unless surrounded by those they trust.

As an instructional coach, it must be abundantly clear that our intent is to support teachers in their professional growth. It takes great courage for teachers to allow a stranger into their classroom and see its inner workings on a daily basis, and coaches need to be cognizant of this anxiety and vulnerability. Do not fall into the trap of teacher’s lounge gossip circles, you need to keep information about meetings and classroom visits between you and the teacher if you want to build a trusting and positive relationship.

Step #4: Meet Teachers Where They Are

In order to be a successful instructional coach, you will need to learn how to differentiate your approach for each of the teachers you work with and meet them where they are. It is likely that some teachers will be ‘high flyers’ and will be well versed in technology, pedagogy and instructional strategies; but there will also be some brand new teachers, teachers that need extra support, and teachers who are a little less apt to change what they’ve been doing for the last 30 years of their career. Part of empathizing with teachers is meeting them on their level.

Again, veteran teachers know all about proximity with students, and getting eye level to have crucial conversations – I’m not saying we need to physically get on our teacher’s level, but metaphorically we do. Not all of our teachers are going to be comfortable with coaching or the tools and strategies we prescribe. We need to understand where our teachers are and let that inform where they will go. For instance, if a teacher has never used technology in their classroom before, you can’t fire right out of the gate with technology tools. You may have to start small, you may have to simplify your vocabulary and walk the teacher through step by step. The more you walk alongside your teachers and guide them, the more trust they will have in you because they can see you aren’t just writing a prescription and walking out, but you are instead seeing the whole process through – you are there as a safety net in times of need.

Teachers know their students best, and should be supported in making decisions that will most benefit those students, rather than imposing a rigid checklist written by someone else. Many times, through coaching conversation, teachers will start coming up with ideas on their own and they take ownership of those ideas.

Step #5: Refrain from Being Judgmental

The final step to developing effective teacher-coach trust is to refrain from being judgmental. It is too easy to walk into someone else's classroom and unfairly criticize what you see because it's not the same way you would have done things in your classroom. Each teacher you work with is a professional; they have undergone training and certification to be where they are now and are experts in their field – they deserve to be treated as such. We know that teachers face a lot of criticism from the outside world so we don't need to perpetuate that as their instructional coach. Remember back to step 2, it is an instructional coach's job to listen and empathize with their teachers, not to judge them.

To prevent this judgement, it is important for instructional coaches to stay up to date on the happenings in the classroom – this is why classroom visits are an essential part of the instructional coaching model. As an instructional coach, you need to assume positive intent from your teachers, and trust that teachers are making the best decisions for their students based on their current needs, whether or not that aligns with your own bias.

Establishing trust with teachers you are coaching is one of the most essential elements to the coaching model and lays the foundation for growth. Teachers who trust their coach are more likely to build capacity on their campuses and promote growth among their own colleagues. Building trust, like any other part of a relationship, may take time, but it's definitely time well spent.

End of Handout 1

Retrieved from: <https://www.edtechteam.com/blog/2019/12/how-to-build-trust-with-teachers-5-easy-steps-for-instructional-coaches/> on 1/04/2024.

Collaborate and Practice

Video 2: 5 Key Roles of an Instructional Coach

Watch this 5-minute video.

- Note any similarities with coaching roles shared previously during this session.
- Debrief and discuss the five key roles.



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Reflect, Plan, and Implement

Post-Session Reflection, Planning, and Implementation

READ Handout 2: Literacy Coaching Advice: Cultivating Healthy Working Relationships with Teachers. This will be helpful for Self-Study 1.

- DO**
- Complete the **Self-Study 1: Steps to Building a Teacher-Coach Relationship**.
 - Reflect on your participation in Session 1 by noting any questions about the content or format on Self-Study 1. Bring this self-study assignment to Session 2.

WATCH [Video 3: Literacy Coaching Interview](#) and complete **Self Study 2: Video Viewing Guide for Reflective Coaching Conversation**. Be prepared to debrief at the beginning of Session 2.

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Questions?



**We have completed
Session 1**

Handout 2: Literacy Coaching Advice: Cultivating Healthy Working Relationships with Teachers

Bethanie Pletcher

Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi

Abstract

This article addresses ways that literacy coaches can form and sustain effective working relationships with teachers. The author has combined firsthand experience as a literacy coach with a review of the literature as it pertains to teacher/coach relationships. There are several common themes that appear in the literature as advice for this aspect of coaching work. It is suggested that coaches begin the process by being approachable and understanding their role in the school and ensuring that others know it as well. Tips for how to be visible, establish trust, and collaborate with teachers are also provided. The “domino effect,” where teachers who were previously resistant to work with the literacy coach begin to see the benefits, is also discussed.

Picture it: Two outstanding teachers are told in August that, starting with the coming school year, they will serve as literacy coaches in their respective schools. They sit across from their principals, in shock about this huge shift in employment. Their minds wander from thoughts of blissfully working with their adorable students to...TEACHERS.

Whether you are an instructional coach in a new school or in a school where you have previously been a classroom teacher, this new role is very different, and carries with it excitement, assumptions, rumors, and everything in between. Hold on though, because before rushing into classrooms, you must build strong coaching relationships with teachers. This step is often overlooked for two reasons: the natural sense of urgency that a new role brings and the misconception that accomplishing this is simple. Coaches might think they just do not have the time to get to know the teachers with whom they will be working; however, it is time well invested that will pave the way for coaching. To meet the challenges of building strong working relationships with teachers, coaches need to know their role, be visible, and create an atmosphere of trust and collaboration (see Figure 1).

Having served as a coach in schools where I was both the new kid on the block as well as a teacher in the same school, I offer this advice.

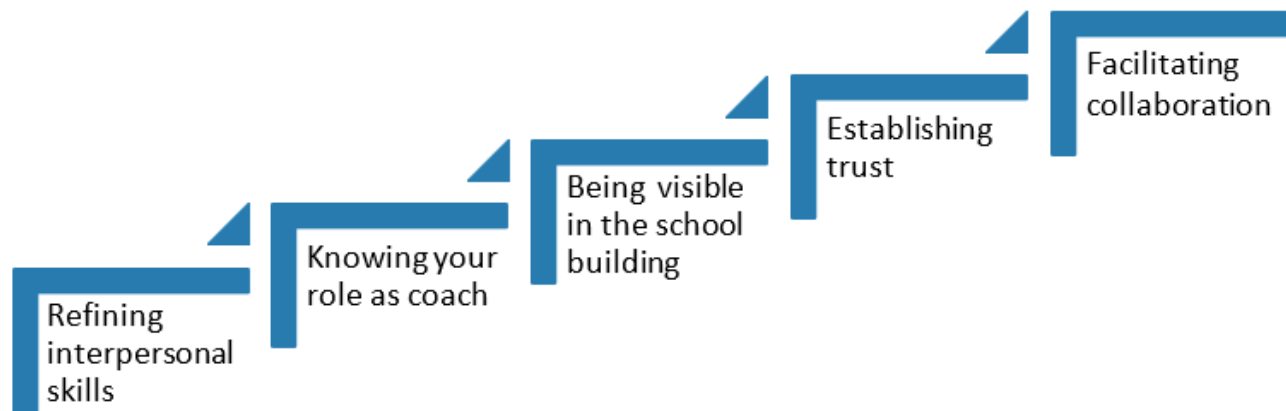


Figure 1. Steps to Building a Teacher/Coach Relationship

Refining interpersonal skills

Becky was a classroom teacher at a school where I had just been hired. She made up her mind not to like me before she even met me. She avoided me at all costs and left me out of conversations during weekly grade level meetings. I tried not to take it personally, but I knew we would not be able to do the work needed at our school if this continued. There is a point when a coach has to accept that perhaps the only way to get through to teachers like this is to be overly kind, which is exactly what I did. By mid-year, this same teacher was asking for my assistance with her literacy teaching.

Literacy coaching requires more than possessing content and pedagogical knowledge. These qualities are desirable, but will only get a coach so far. Hunt and Handsfield (2013) add to these the “emotional aspects and challenges of the work” (p. 73), such as building relationships with teachers, and this work appears frequently in the literature related to successful instructional coaching (Hunt & Handsfield, 2013, Ippolito, 2010; Lynch & Ferguson, 2010). Teachers are the owners of their classrooms, and their classrooms are often second homes – personal spaces where they choose what happens and when it happens. Coaches have to understand that they are outsiders, and even if they have previously been a part of a school’s faculty, they are now serving in a very different role that requires them to enter these personal spaces. It is up to the coach to maneuver this process delicately and seamlessly.

Interpersonal skills are paramount to being an effective coach (Casey, 2006; Ertmer et al., 2005; Jay, 2009). When school principals hire for a coaching position, they are looking for someone who works well with everyone. Knight (2004) equates this with being “flexible” and “likable” (p. 35). Being “likable” means something different to each coach and each teacher. This means that the coach needs to learn what each teacher thinks likability is. For one teacher, it may mean that the coach stops in and says hello every day. For others, simply leaving a complementary note after classroom visits is suitable. And still for others, a smile can go a long way. Although some might argue that coaches do not need to be liked by every teacher, it certainly does not hurt.

Knowing Your Role as a Coach

I accepted a literacy coach position in a school that had not previously had one. I had been a coach before and understood the nature of the work. My principal and the teachers had other ideas. The principal was fond of asking me to “fix” certain teachers, even locating me in a classroom near these teachers so that I could be ever watchful of what was occurring in those classrooms. Some of the teachers confused my role with that of a reading specialist, asking me to “fix” their students who struggled with reading. It took time to help the faculty see me as one who was there to support teachers’ professional growth. I accomplished this by meeting with the teachers and explaining my role and talking transparently with my principal to share our visions for the coaching initiative.

Even in schools where literacy coaches have been fixtures for a while, there are usually questions about the coach’s role. The entire school community needs to understand the coach’s job description. This cannot be emphasized enough, because if this is made perfectly clear before the school year starts, there is a better chance of harmony amongst the staff (McGatha, 2008). In fact, “the role of coach must be defined before [emphasis added] trusting relationship[s] can be formed” (Ertmer et al., 2005, p. 35).

So, what do coaches do and what don’t they do? Plainly stated, a coach is not an evaluator (Hunt & Handsfield, 2013; L’Allier, Piper, & Bean, 2010). This understanding must be in place from the beginning, and the principal, especially, needs to internalize this in order for it to filter down to the teachers. Also, coaches who put themselves in the position of expert will, at some point, let their teachers down. Certainly, expert knowledge about one’s content area and how children learn is part of the job; however, to pigeonhole the coach in this manner reinforces the “banking” model of education (Freire, 1970, p. 72), implying that the coach is all-knowing and only to be used for the acquisition of answers. Lynch and Ferguson (2010) actually advise coaches not to provide feedback to teachers unless they are specifically asked for it. Otherwise, this can be threatening to teachers (Gibson, 2006) and automatically lands the coach the role of evaluator.

Considering the title of this kind of position, “coach” or sometimes “facilitator” provides us with hints of the responsibilities. The International Literacy Association (2007) defines the literacy coach as one who provides teachers “with the additional support needed to implement...programs and practices” (p. 2). This support might include modeling lessons for teachers, providing professional development, and/or observing classroom instruction. Most importantly, the coach’s role is to lift teachers’ thinking about instruction in order to have a positive impact on student learning. This is accomplished through one-to-one conversations where coaches and teachers problem-solve together (Knight, year; L’Allier et al., 2010). L’Allier et al. (2010) suggest that coaches “focus their discussions on how to address the needs of students- rather than on the strengths or weaknesses of a teacher’s instruction” (p. 547).

This signals to the teacher that the coach is interested in acting as a peer and partner, not an overseer.

Being Visible in the School Building

Prior to becoming a literacy coach, I was a classroom teacher and reading specialist, and it was important to me that the teachers with whom I worked saw me as a teacher and that I possessed the passion and skills needed to teach students how to grow as readers and writers. At the beginning of each school year, I made it a goal to get into every classroom as soon as possible. I did this by having teachers sign up for a time for me to read aloud to their classes. When I visited each classroom, I was sure to bring an engaging book, read it aloud in an Oscar-worthy manner, and include a teaching point or two. This was my way in, as many teachers not only appreciated the guest reading, but also commented how they learned something new about teaching through read alouds.

In addition to informing stakeholders of their various duties, it is imperative that the coach's work is evident in and around the school. This starts before the school year does, as, during the waning days of summer, the literacy coach walks the halls casually and makes early and easygoing contact with teachers. L'Allier et al. (2010) mention one successful coach who offers to help set up teachers' classroom libraries. It is key for coaches to be highly visible, especially in common areas (Casey, 2006; L'Allier et al., 2010), by stepping out into the halls, visiting the teachers' lounge or taking a walk outside when teachers are out at recess with their classes. They should also note when grade level planning times are and check in with teachers during those moments. Teachers are extremely busy people. Even if they are told during the beginning of year faculty meeting and through email what times their literacy coach is available, this information may be forgotten. It is up to the coach to seek out teachers- not the other way around. These visits should be informal and friendly, and it is important that the coach walks around with a smile on his or her face, rather than a look of constant intention. In addition to these suggestions, Jay (2009) recommends that coaches make short visits to classrooms and comment positively about what they see. Yet another way literacy coaches can be visible in the school is to attend grade-level meetings and after-school workshops with teachers, thus encouraging teachers to view them as colleagues rather than supervisors (L'Allier et al., 2010).

Establishing Trust

Shortly after beginning my first literacy coaching position, my principal asked me in one of our weekly meetings to report on teachers. Speechless at first, I did my best to address her request and at the same time maintain some confidentiality by focusing on what I noticed the students doing, remaining objective as I discussed instruction. This was a part of the job I was not prepared for and found quite uncomfortable.

How could I expect teachers to allow me to spend hours in their classrooms each week if they knew I was sharing every little thing they did, better or worse, with their administrators?

A coach does not automatically gain trust the first day on the job. She has to work diligently to lay the groundwork. Trust is a prerequisite to engaging in serious work with teachers (Costa & Garmston, 1994). This involves confidentiality, follow-through, equality, and getting to know teachers.

Experts on coaching agree that, in order to gain and keep trust, it is crucial to maintain confidentiality (Bean & DeFord, 2007; Ertmer et al., 2005; L'Allier et al., 2010). There are administrators who sometimes, and possibly with good intentions, choose to use coaches as their eyes and ears in the school. In other words, what happens in coaching conversations should stay in coaching conversations. This is not to say that regular communication with the principal is not necessary, but coaches need to be mindful when sharing observations with administrators. For example, a principal might ask a coach how Mr. Smith is carrying out guided reading lessons in his classroom. The coach might say, "I have been in Mr. Smith's classroom frequently and we are working with his students on vocabulary strategies." This keeps the focus on the students, rather than saying, "I have been in Mr. Smith's classroom and I can tell you that he is not teaching guided reading groups effectively or often enough." Once a teacher hears that her or his coach is sharing everything with the principal, any bond that has been created most likely will be destroyed.

Another aspect of trust that often appears in the literature on coaching is following through. If a teacher reaches out to the coach, which in some cases may be a huge step on the part of that teacher, the coach is obligated to reply immediately (Bean & DeFord, 2007; L'Allier et al., 2010). Again, once a commitment is broken, even just one time, a signal is sent to the teacher that the coach is unreliable, and the teacher will be less likely to ask for assistance again.

Coaches should start building relationships with teachers early and take a step back and get to know teachers as people first by finding out what their interests are. It is important to purposefully make time for casual conversation with teachers and inquire about their families and hobbies. They can also initiate a relationship by doing the teaching, rather than observing, at the beginning of the school year (Jay, 2009). Teachers are usually pleased when a coach asks to try out a lesson with their classes. This also allows the coach to get to know students. Casey (2006) notes that, when teachers watch coaches successfully teach their students, trust is formed. It is also advisable to conduct initial classroom visits empty-handed, because when a teacher sees a coach enter the room armed with notepad and pen, it may be automatically assumed that he or she is there to observe, take notes, and report back to administration. Coaches are urged to save the note taking for later. When fortunate enough to be welcomed into a classroom, they need to reciprocate that with a positive attitude and a delightful presence.

Lastly, to maintain a trusting relationship with teachers, coaches are to be mindful of treating teachers as equal colleagues who learn alongside one another (Ertmer et al., 2005). Every interaction with teachers should be as positive as it can be, building on a teacher's strengths, just as one would do with students. Also, it takes conscious effort to see teachers through a lens of assistance and empowerment, rather than evaluation. When engaging in coaching conversations, it is important coaches remain nonjudgmental, focusing on the facts and the students. Knight (2004) maintains "partnership, at its core, is a deep belief that we are no more important than those with whom we work, and we should do everything we can to respect that equality" (p. 33).

Facilitating Collaboration

When I accepted my second coaching position, I was comfortable with the position, as I had been successful in growing teachers' literacy knowledge and had helped make positive changes in classroom instruction for the benefit of the school as a whole and for the students. What I did not realize is that I did not yet truly understand how to "coach" teachers. What I had been doing, I soon learned, was "consulting." While consulting is valuable, it is quite different from a one-to-one conversation in which the teacher contributes ideas as well. I was fortunate to also have a coach who visited me each week and guided me through explorations of true coaching experiences in which the coach helps teachers reflect and plan. What stuck with me after this experience was the discourse I could use to help teachers come to conclusions that they might not come to on their own.

Coaches talk for a living. After all, they begin as teachers - figuring out exact language to use to reach students. Communicating with adults requires a different skill-set, and Knight (2009) asserts that a coach must be a "master of effective communication" (p. 511). To strive for this level, coaches have to spend time with teachers throughout each and every school day. This practice will help them become comfortable talking with teachers (Gibson, 2006). As coaches reach a relaxed level of conversation, it is then time to work on what is perhaps the most critical piece of effective communication: listening. Teachers want to know that they are being listened to and that their ideas are respected. This listening involves eye contact, open body posture, and sometimes calls for a nodding of the head, an inserted "mm-hmm," and brief paraphrasing.

Often in conferences with teachers, coaches might wonder if they are saying "the right things." Instead, coaches might focus on the kinds of comments they are making and ask themselves a few questions. Are my replies positive? Am I speaking in a way that invites collaborative thinking? What about the way I say things – can the teacher be sure that I am sincere? These experiences are all about perception. If teachers feel they are "under attack, their...reaction is to resist" (Knight, 2009, p. 511).

It is this author's belief that coaches are in schools to empower teachers and lift them to the next level of teaching. This entails meeting the teacher where he or she is (Bean, 2010). Each teacher is unique in that they have varying interests and are at different places in their learning. An effective coach works to figure out these things and knows when and how to engage in shared thinking with teachers (Ippolito, 2010). This process not only helps to build capacity; it can also "boost teachers' self-efficacy" (Shanklin, 2006, p. 2).

The Domino Effect

Let's return to the story I shared near the beginning of this article about Becky, a teacher who was insistent on not working with me, her literacy coach. In addition to being extremely kind to her, I also had another plan. Her teammates were new teachers who were desperately seeking help in their classrooms. So I invested a lot of time planning with them and helping them implement best teaching practices. After Becky had listened to us excitedly discuss what was occurring in their classrooms, she pulled me aside one day and asked me how she could be a part of all this. This is the beauty of the "domino effect."

Anyone who has worked in a school understands the power of words and how fast they travel. Teachers talk to their grade level and content area teammates, they talk to one another in common gathering areas, and they talk to administrators. Coaches need to consider this and decide when teachers talk about them, what will they say?

First off, although it is generally understood that coaches are change agents, it is not a coach's primary purpose to "establish immediate and positive instructional improvement" (Gibson, 2006, p. 315). Nor is it wise for a principal to require all teachers or a select few to work with the coach. The suggested method of creating change is to begin slowly, working with teachers who desire assistance (Bean & DeFord, 2007; Lynch & Ferguson, 2010). This process takes time and involves being visible and getting to know the teachers, as discussed earlier. Which teachers work well with their teams? Who are the extroverts? For this author, a former literacy coach, this search was quite easy. A certain teacher frequently reached out for guidance, igniting a lifelong professional relationship. And eventually, other teachers caught wind of the work this teacher was doing, viewed it as something positive, and wanted to be involved. Eventually, the goal is for a coach to be involved with every teacher, even those who are resistant. Once one or two see the benefits that are attached to working with a coach, word will spread.

So remember: to have a truly successful coaching initiative, you have to invest some serious time and energy up front because "developing trusting relationships is essential to the literacy coach's success" (Casey, 2006, p. 5). I leave you with the words of Greg Mortensen (2007), the author of *Three Cups of Tea* who built both schools and relationships.

Haji Ali taught me to share three cups of tea, to slow down and make building relationships as important as building projects. He taught me that I had more to learn from the people I work with than I could ever hope to teach them (p. 79).

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End of Handout 2

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Self-Study 1: Steps to Building a Teacher/Coach Relationship

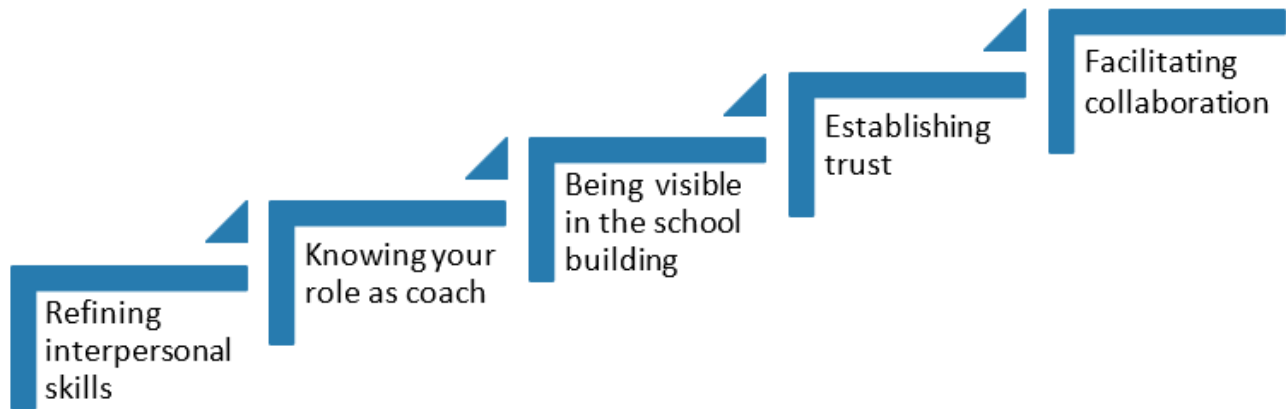


Figure 1. Steps to Building a Teacher/Coach Relationship

(Pletcher, 2015)

Directions: What steps can you take to further enhance relationship-building with teachers at your school? Which steps are currently strengths?

Refining interpersonal skills:
Knowing your role as a coach:
Being visible in the school building:
Establishing trust:
Facilitating collaboration:
Note any questions from Session 1:

Self-Study 2: Video Viewing Guide for Reflective Coaching Conversation

Directions: Watch Homework Video after Session 1– [Video 3: Literacy Coaching Interview](#) and answer the questions below.

Question	Answer
What was the topic of this coaching conversation?	
What was the goal of this coaching conversation?	
Approximately how much time did the teacher talk versus the coach?	
What aspects of collaboration and relationship building influenced this conversation and how?	
What are some of the strengths of this conversation?	
What might have been improved in this conversation?	