Igniting and Inviting Improvements in Literacy Achievement and Classroom Learning

A Plan for Improving Literacy Skills and Content Area Achievement

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Examine student achievement/work related to reading, writing, and thinking performance, and select improvement targets.	Collect and discuss baseline information about students' reading, writing, and thinking skills and performance.	Provide professional development related to explicit instruction, graphic organizers, and summary frames/templates.	Use explicit instruction to focus on graphic organizers and summary templates, and examine student work in collaborative teams.	Use explicit instruction to focus on explicit teaching of vocabulary, and examine student work comprehension progress in collaborative teams.	Recognize interim progress, make adjustments, and celebrate progress.

My Commitment to Improving Literacy and Content Area Achievement

Name _____Subject _____ Grade _____

During the first 60 days . . .

1. I would like to help my students improve the following reading/thinking skills. Select **two** skills in addition to number 6.

Reading Informational Text and Reading Literature	
1. _____Main/Central Idea	8. _____Problem-solution relationships
2. _____Significant Details/Evidence	9. _____Interpreting and Applying Multi-step Instructions and Processes
3. _____Sequential/order relationships and significant details	
4. _____Comparison relationships	10. _____Author's Purpose, Point of View, Arguments and Claims
5. _____Causal relationships	11. _____Understanding and Using Maps, Charts, and Graphs
6. _____ Knowledge of key terms and phrases	12. _____Literary Analysis
7. _____Generalizations and conclusions	

2. I will use the following **graphic organizer(s)** that closely match the reading/thinking targets above. Examples:
    •Bubble Map for main ideas and details
    •Fishbone Map for cause-effect relationships   •Create your own map (Show Sketch)

Skill: Graphic Organizer	Skill: Graphic Organizer

3. I will use the following **summary frame(s)** that closely match the reading/thinking targets above. Examples:
    Comparison-contrast summary frame for comparison relationships
    MEL-CON for generalizations or author's voice/methods

Skill: Summary Template:	Skill: Summary Template:

4. I will use the following **question prompts** that closely match the reading/thinking targets above.

Skill: Question Prompts:	Skill: Question Prompts

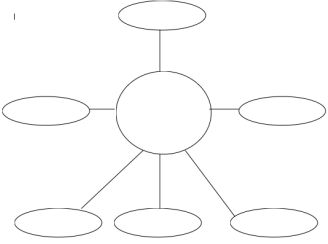Go to http://www.achievementstrategies.org/ela.html   for graphic organizers and summary templates and rubrics 12/15

Explicit Teaching and Guided Practice Process
1. Select an article, text reading, media, or observation where a featured skill can be used.
2. Introduce the skill and strategy to the students along with the content area goals.
3. Activate background information about the topic/text and provide motivation to pay attention.
4. Familiarize students with the pronunciation and meaning of essential words.
5. Teach, model, and reinforce the skill and strategy. •I Do   •We Do   •I Do   •We Do   •I Do   •You Do

Main/Central Ideas
(Identify and summarize explicitly stated and inferred main/central ideas.)

Graphic Organizer	Summary Template	Questions	Hand Signal/ Movement
Bubble Map	The main idea of this passage is _____. The author stated that _____. The passage/article also mentioned that_____. In addition, (another idea)_____. Finally, the passage/article stated _____.	1. The main point of the article is . . . 2. Summarize what you read. 3. The main theme of the story is . . . 4. List the facts regarding . . . 5. The text is about . . . 6. The story/article mainly tells . . . 7. Which of the following best expresses the main idea? A B C D E 8. On the basis of information in the passage, we can determine that . . . 9. What would be the best title for this passage? 10. Which statement best expresses the central idea of this passage? 11. The main idea expressed in this passage is . . .	Hold a fist (main idea) and dangle and wiggle fingers (details).

Templates can be found at   http://www.achievementstrategies.org/ela.html

Writing to Learn and Communicate	
1. **Describe it**—How would you describe the central idea, issue, or topic (e.g., color, shape, size, composition, parts, big ideas)? 2. **Explain it**—(Who? What? Where? When? How? How many?) 3. **Trace it or sequence it** (Describe how the topic/issue/process works or happened. OR (Describe the scenes making up the plot of a story.) **Predict it** (Describe what will happen next?) 4. **Compare it** (What it is similar to or different from? Or "It's sort of like") 5. **Analyze it** (Tell how something is made or what it is composed of. OR Break a problem/issue into smaller parts. OR Describe causes and effects.) 6. **Define it** (Tell what a word or phrase means.) 7. **Generalize and Conclude** (Make a generalization or draw a conclusion and support it with evidence.) 8. **Solve it** (Describe a problem and tell how it was or can be solved.) 9. **Teach it** (Teach how something works or how to create something.) 10. **Argue for/against it** (Take a stand and support it. Describe the author's claims about their argument. **Make/Take/Describe** (Explain an author's point of view.) 11. **Interpret it** (Describe what the chart or graph means and support our conclusions with data) **Find it** (Locate information or a place and describe . . .) 12. **Literacy Analysis Prompts** **Trace it** (Describe the scenes/plot of the story from beginning to end.) **Describe and Analyze Traits** (Explain traits of characters and describe their development and significance in the story)	**Identify and Analyze Conflict** (Describe the conflict and goals that drive the story. OR Describe the setting and its significance to the plot and characters.) **Choose the Theme** (Select a theme/message in the story and support choices with evidence from the story. 13. **Research it (QUEST-Question, Understand, Evidence, Synthesize, Tell)** **Q**uestion (Identify the purpose and audience.) **U**nderstand (Use available resources to create a plan to research.) **E**vidence (Collect and organize information from credible sources.) **S**ynthesize (Analyze information and create arguments/claims, central idea/main points.) **T**ell (Develop a product to effectively communicate research to the intended audience.) www.d214.org/services/research_help_big6.apx **General Prompts that can be used for several types of comprehension.** 14. **Apply it** (Tell how something or an idea can be used. How does it help you understand other topics/issues? 15. **Relate it** (How would you relate the issue/topic to yourself personally?) 16. **Create/invent it** (Describe something new that can be done or used related to the topic/issue/thing.) 17. **Associate it** (What does it makes you think of? OR How does the topic connect to other issues/subjects?) **Then have students write multi-paragraph text over longer periods of time to argue/persuade, inform/explain, and to narrate.**

Conversations for Increase Teacher Effectiveness and Student Achievement

Protocol 1: Student Work Gallery Protocol to Discuss Student's Strengths, Needs, and Needed Improvements

1. Each teacher should pass around the student artifacts to their partners for 4-6 minutes. • high middle, and low quality graphic organizers • high, middle, and low summaries 2. Each group member will have two minutes to respond to the question prompts to the right. • Listeners should not interrupt, interpret, paraphrase, analyze, give advice or break in with a personal story or example. • Do not proceed to the next question until each group member responds to it.	1. What were the qualities of student work that made it an excellent, average, or low quality summary and graphic organizer? (2 minutes for each person) 2. What aspects of the graphic organizers and summaries do student need to improve (e.g., key ideas, detail, organizational pattern)? (2 minutes for each person) 3. What is an insight about the student work you observed from other teacher's samples? (2 minutes for each person) 4. Use a go-around to complete the following sentence. During the next two week, I am going to help my students improve . . .

Protocol 2: Survey and Discussion After Approximately One Month of Implementation

Creating and Using Graphic Organizers	Summarizing
1. I used graphic organizers to <u>explicitly teach content and model reading/thinking skills</u> approximately _____ time(s) per week during the last month.	1. I used summaries during <u>direct teaching</u> to <u>explicitly teach content and model reading/thinking skills</u> approximately _____ time(s) per week during the last month.
2. I had students <u>create graphic organizers</u> independently or with partners or small groups approximately _____ time(s) per week during the last month.	2. I had students <u>create summaries</u> independently or with partners or small groups approximately _____ time(s) per week during the last month.
3. I had students <u>reflect about their personal</u> use of graphic organizers and reading improvement progress approximately _____ time(s) per week during the last month.	3. I had students <u>reflect about their personal</u> use of summaries and reading improvement progress approximately _____ time(s) per week during the last month.
4. I have <u>discussed/shared student graphic organizer artifacts with content area and/or grade teams</u> and examined student progress and possible interventions approximately _____ time(s) this past month.	4. I have <u>discussed/shared student summaries with content area and/or grade teams</u> and examined student progress and possible interventions approximately _____ time(s) this past month.

Protocol 3: Discussion After Approximately Two Months of Implementation

Use the **Student Progress Assessment Protocol** to discuss student's strength's and needs and to determine actions for improvement.	
1. Assemble your grade-level team in groups of 3 or 4. 2. Each teacher should silently complete the progress inventory above. 3. Each teacher should reflect about one of the lessons they taught when he/she used graphic organizers and/or summarizing and be able to respond to questions 1-4. 4. One group member should record answers from question 4 and **turn them in.**	**Progress Analysis Assessment Protocol** (2 minutes of uninterrupted time for each person to speak about questions 1-3) 1. The purpose of the lesson was to have students acquire the following concepts and skills. 2. During the time when the students were completing their graphic organizers and/or summaries, I observed the following . . . (e.g., engagement, understanding, behavior. discussion, confidence level) 3. In what way(s) is the quality of this work different from the first samples you saw at the beginning of the reading/thinking improvement initiative? What promising results are you witnessing? 4. Assemble the entire grade-level team and use a go-around to finish the sentence below. •One thing that I need to learn or do better when I use these strategies is . . . **OR** •One student learning challenge that I would like to resolve related to literacy and thinking is . . .

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12 Things Leaders Can Do to Support Efforts to Increase
Literacy Improvement and Content Area Achievement

The Art of Meaning Business

___1. Publish the learning improvement commitments of staff and assure that the staff understands the relationship between the targeted professional learning topics and the success of the improvement initiative.

___2. Expect implementation of the practices that are the focus of the improvement initiative.

___3. Use "walk-throughs" and observations to determine the degree to which the practices and strategies are implemented and the services (e.g., tutorials, correctives, re-assessment opportunities) are provided.

___4. Create and support frequent opportunities for staff members to review student work, solve problems, discuss progress, and celebrate success in collaborative teams.

___5. Talk to each staff member about their students' progress and ask them to show you examples of their students' work.

___6. If you are a teaching leader, you show staff members your students' work, discuss progress, and share your challenges and successes.

___7. Conduct, locate, and support professional learning opportunities that teach strategies and practices related to the staff development initiatives.

___8. Create parent communication and school support activities to teach parents how to support their children's learning at home.

___9. Create portfolios of assignments and artifacts related to exemplary implementation of the targeted improvement practices and strategies.

___10. Support peer-observation opportunities where staff members can observe each other using the strategies and tools that are part of the improvement initiative.

___11. Create opportunities for student leaders (e.g., student council, peer tutors) to assist in the improvement efforts.

___12. Conduct action research projects to determine the impact the targeted literacy practices/ strategies are having on student learning.

A Plan for Improving Literacy Skills and Content Area Achievement

Stage	Objectives	Do
1. **Examine student achievement/work related to reading, writing, and thinking performance, and select improvement targets.**	•Be familiar with student performance on standardized tests and classroom tasks. •Be familiar with indicators/standards for reading, writing, and thinking. •Be familiar with research-supported practices that improve comprehension and summarizing. •Determine student reading, writing, and classroom thinking demands.	•Select a comprehension goal, and compatible graphic organizer and summary frame/template. •Provide a reading, viewing, or listening assignment in the content area and have students create a graphic organizer and write a summary. •Select a high, average, and low quality example from each task above. •Use a group protocol in teams to analyze student work.
2. **Collect and discuss baseline information about students' reading, writing, and thinking skills and performance.**	•Describe the characteristics of high, average, and low quality comprehension and summarizing. •Know a protocol for discussing student work in job/grade/content-alike groups. •Confirm students' greatest areas of need.	•Create/select sample lessons/tasks where students can use selected graphic organizers and summaries. •Select a high, average, and low quality example from each task above. •Use a group protocol in teams to analyze student work. •Commit to a 30-day SMART goal.
3. **Provide professional development related to explicit instruction, graphic organizers, and summary frames/templates.**	•Know how to explicitly teach comprehension using graphic organizers and summary templates. •Apply a protocol for discussing student work in job/ grade/ content-alike groups. •Know how to select reading passages for explicit instruction. •Know how to engage students in self-assessment (i.e., metacognition) and adjustment.	•Frequently utilize lessons/tasks where students use selected graphic organizers and summaries. •Engage students in self-assessment about the use of graphic organizers and summaries. •Select a high, average, and low quality example from each task above. •Use a group protocol in teams to analyze student work.
4. **Use explicit instruction to focus on graphic organizers and summary templates, and examine student work in collaborative teams.**	•Know how to explicitly teach comprehension using graphic organizers and summary frames/ templates. •Apply a protocol for discussing student work in job/grade/ content-alike and cross-discipline/ grade groups. •Know how to differentiate instruction •Know how to create comprehension and writing prompts to match improvement targets and standardized tests. •Apply a problem-solving strategy.	•Frequently utilize lessons/tasks where students use selected graphic organizers and summaries. •Engage students in self-assessment about the use of graphic organizers and summaries. •Select a high, average, and low quality example from each task above. •Match/write comprehension questions for handouts and assessments to improvement targets. •Use a group protocol in teams to analyze student work.
5. **Use explicit instruction to focus on explicit teaching of vocabulary, and examine student work comprehension progress in collaborative teams.**	•Know how to explicitly teach academic vocabulary and vocabulary skills. •Apply a protocol for discussing student work in job/grade/ content-alike and cross-discipline/ grade groups. •Know how to differentiate instruction •Apply a problem-solving strategy.	•Frequently utilize lessons/tasks where students use selected graphic organizers and summaries. •Engage students in self-assessment about the use of graphic organizers and summaries. •Engage students in self-assessment about the use of graphic organizers and summaries. •Select a high, average, and low quality example from each task above. •Select content area vocabulary and apply the explicit teaching strategy.
6. **Recognize interim progress, make adjustments, and celebrate progress.**	•Know how to radically celebrate progress with stakeholders. •Apply a problem-solving strategy. •Utilize differentiation strategies and practices to increase student achievement and teacher effectiveness.	•Frequently utilize lessons/tasks where students use selected graphic organizers, summaries, questioning, and vocabulary skills, and other selected techniques.

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