

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN DISCIPLINARY LITERACY STRATEGIES FOR
MIDDLE SCHOOL CONTENT AREA TEACHERS

By

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A capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts in
Literacy Education.

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This capstone focuses on exploring how professional development in disciplinary literacy strategies can support middle school content area teachers. I decided to focus on the research question, *How can professional development in disciplinary literacy strategies support middle school content area teachers?* The goal was to create a resource that supports teachers with the texts they already use as well as provide additional resources that teachers can use in each content area that will help them teach their students how to read content area text through research based best practices.

The purpose of the project was professional development design. I created a shared, online resource that addressed adolescent development, literacy strategy instruction, disciplinary literacy strategies, and professional development best practices. The method I chose was to create a shared Google Drive folder organized by research based best practice literacy strategies.

The intended audience of this project are the seventh grade content area teachers at the middle school—specifically teachers of Social Studies, Science, Math, and Language Arts. There are three teachers of each content area. My goal in developing the professional development was for the content area teachers to work as a team on the first Wednesday of every month to determine a literacy goal for the month or unit and use the lesson plan template and resources provided to work towards that goal. Grade-level content area teachers meet every Wednesday morning for a planning period to plan lessons and units of study. Within these grade-level curriculum meetings, teachers can choose which topics would be the most beneficial for the content they will be teaching.

Content area teachers can make a significant impact on students' literacy abilities if they have the training needed to incorporate literacy instruction into the content area classroom.

Therefore, the indirect audience of the project are the seventh grade students in the general classroom. Currently, students are being asked to read and interact with texts on a very superficial level without reaching the depth of understanding needed to reach the highest levels of cognitive functioning. The goal is for teachers to work together to enhance the instruction they already provide by addressing student motivation and engagement through student choice, purpose, and relevance. In addition, setting literacy goals, providing direct instruction of content area literacy strategies, and providing scaffolding are all strategies that can make a positive impact on student literacy through the content area classroom.

Within the shared resource, teachers are provided with a description of a literacy strategy that would apply, a video that models the strategy being taught, and resources for implementing the strategy. While participating in the teacher-led professional development, teachers will create lessons that address students' areas of need such as motivation and social development while using literacy strategies to improve students' content area literacy.

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Literacy in the Content Areas Professional Development Schedule 2018-2019

August 29, 2018	Literacy in the Content Areas Introduction and Rationale
September 5, 2018	Strategy Instruction Methods (Modeling)
October 3, 2018	Strategy Instruction Methods (Think Aloud)
November 7, 2018	Strategy Instruction Categories (Comprehension – Annotations)
December 5, 2018	Strategy Instruction Categories (Comprehension –Close Reading)
January 9, 2019	Strategy Instruction Categories (Comprehension – Discussion)
February 6, 2019	Strategy Instruction Categories (Comprehension – Writing)
March 6, 2019	Strategy Instruction Categories (Text Features)
April 3, 2019	Strategy Instruction Categories (Text Structures)
May 1, 2019	Strategy Instruction Categories (Vocabulary)

Disciplinary Literacy PD Fast Feedback Form

My feelings about the literacy strategy addressed in today's professional development are...

I completely understand the strategy and how to implement it.

I completely understand the strategy, but not how to implement it.

I need further professional development on this strategy.

I found the professional development resources helpful.

I found the professional development resources helpful.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

My discussion and collaboration with my curriculum partner was effective and purposeful.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

The lesson plan template is a helpful resource to ensure developmental goals, content area goals, and literacy goals are being met.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly Agree

I will use the strategy addressed in today's PD in the future because I believe it is beneficial for student learning.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

Is there anything additional you need in order to effectively implement this strategy into your classroom instruction? Please indicate below.