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TRANSFER OF SKILLS OF A LITERACY STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

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Andree M. Grey
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As I look back over the past three years, I am humbled by the support and encouragement I have received from my family. To my husband, Brian who has always unselfishly put my dreams first. Your confidence in me has allowed me to pursue new challenges. You will always be my Prince Charming. To my little Madison who understood when Mommy needed the computer. I hope you will also follow and accomplish your dreams.

My deepest gratitude to my mom and dad. You have always provided needed encouragement and unconditional love. Thank you for believing in me. I always knew that whatever path I chose you would be proud of me.

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TRANSFER OF SKILLS OF A LITERACY STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
This study was designed to measure the effectiveness of a two-year, multi-layered staff development program in the area of literacy in Temecula, California. The program was created to provide teachers with research about comprehensive reading programs, strategies to implement including guided reading, collaborative-refinement opportunities, and on-going support needed to successfully transfer skills to the classroom. Data was collected by the assistant principal at the school site during formal and informal observations, as well as interviews with teachers. Results appeared to demonstrate the transfer of skills was very successful.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

At this time it is necessary to assess the effectiveness of recent literacy staff development at my school site in order to assist teachers and to plan future professional growth opportunities. As an administrator it is important that teachers become life long learners who are always improving and reflecting on their practice. One way of accomplishing this is to be reflective in analyzing the transfer of skills that takes place after staff development and how that information can be utilized in future planning.

The Temecula Valley Unified School District has completed a two-year staff development program to help teachers be more effective in meeting the various reading levels of students in their classrooms. The investment by the district to have all teachers trained in the analysis of reading inventories, the planning of guided reading, and the coaching of student readers has been substantial. However, the measurement of success in this area is elusive, therefore we broaden our devices for determining
mastery. Traditionally, success has been measured through student achievement on standardized tests, however this is problematic because it is a small snapshot in the complex world of a child’s learning. We must also include affective measures which allow us to see the love of reading, the use of reading strategies that are applied in new situations, and the use of reading to gain information. It is expected that guided reading has transferred into the classroom to accommodate the diverse needs of readers, and that students are becoming more strategic in their reading. The determination of the program success will help validate the staff development efforts of the district and pinpoint areas that were particularly significant in the transfer of skills into the classroom. This research will act as a gauge to determine what has transferred into the classroom and what still needs to be addressed in terms of literacy staff development for addressing various reading levels in the classroom.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The nation has watched as the pendulum in education has made major shifts in reading theories, from strict
phonics to whole language and now to a more balanced approach. In many ways, we saw a more phonics-based approach in our district in the mid 1990's as we struggled to please the public and political interests by incorporating programs such as Project Read and Modern Curriculum Press Phonics (1998). This overcompensation, we would later learn, contributed to our program being more focused on decoding and less focused on gaining meaning from print.

The Temecula district had schools create literacy plans in 1996-1997 to help determine how student needs in the area of literacy would be addressed. The School Board was strongly in favor of reviewing ways to increase student achievement so that students were reading and writing more proficiently. The Director of Elementary Education, Gina Bishop, reviewed the literacy plans, observed the best teachers of reading in the district, surveyed teachers, analyzed test scores and held discussions about the teaching of reading with school site staffs. The information gathered served as a basis for developing a comprehensive, multi-year plan for staff development.
From the information she gathered, Bishop (2000) concluded that the district as a whole was strong in the area of decoding strategies, however reading comprehension was noted as an area of need. Considering the dynamics of the district and previous successes with staff development, Bishop decided that an outside consultant would be used. (Bishop, 2000) Their role would be to work with individual school sites to assist the staff in evaluating where they were as a staff in the teaching of reading, where they wanted to go, and how they could best get there.

Janine Batzle was selected as the consultant because she had already been well received by teachers in previous trainings, and her philosophy fit well with the direction the district was heading. In the first year of the staff development plan, she met with school literacy leadership teams made up of one teacher per grade level and the principal to share research on school-wide effective language arts programs and current methodologies in the teaching of reading. After each session leadership teams went back to their sites to gather information, evaluate
their programs and set goals in the area of reading. Batzle visited sites, observed and interviewed students and teachers, reviewed the plans and gave feedback. She went to school sites twice during the first year of the plan and modeled guided reading for grade levels, and facilitated staff meetings. Every school was a little different depending on the area of need from the assessment. For example, my school site needed a larger emphasis placed on the use of a variety of text structures as most teachers only focused on story elements and the use of fiction. Other sites needed more assistance with the use and analysis of running records to plan instruction. Also during the first year, Saturday sessions were offered at each grade level for teachers to attend and be paid by the district. Seventy-three teachers attended the first Saturday session, and ninety-seven attended the second. Evaluations collected were very favorable. Overall, the Saturday sessions were viewed as successful.

In the second year of the plan, the dialogue continued through one more site visit that included coaching of teachers by Batzle. At Vintage Hills Elementary, one
teacher from each grade level did a guided reading lesson while other teachers from his/her grade level watched. After the lesson Janine coached the teacher and facilitated a dialogue between the teachers regarding the lesson. This collaborative refinement process allowed teachers to reflect and analyze lessons together. She also presented six after school sessions for teachers in third through fifth grades; teachers who attended were paid. It was decided that these teachers had the greatest need as they had previously received less training in the area of reading than other grade levels. Each school in the district has a full-time Literacy Specialist who works with at risk readers, as well as provides support, training, and resources to teachers and staff members. Literacy Specialists from each site went to six all day trainings that focused on how to assist teachers in the implementation and how to provide staff development at the school site.

HYPOTHESIS

This study predicts there is a high level of transfer of guided reading strategies into the classroom due to the multi-layered approach that was used. However, it is
anticipated there is still some resistance from individuals. Many teachers resist change which is a normal reaction. Questions to answer are as follows:

- To what degree has implementation occurred?
- What have teachers found to be the most influential in their implementation?
- What has made some teachers willing to implement and others resistant?
- What should be the next steps?

**CLARIFICATION OF TERMS**

The term **guided reading** is meant to label small group reading instruction where students read at their instructional level and the teacher coaches the child in specific reading strategies. These groups can be homogeneous reading levels or various levels of readers who are all in need of a particular strategy.

**Differentiated Instruction** relates to teaching students at their own level. It allows for multi-levels of students needs to be met simultaneously.
Transfer of Skills refers to the implementation of strategies and techniques learned through staff development. It refers to the transfer of learning from staff development to its use in classroom practices.

Collaborative-Refinement Process involves teachers at each grade level observing a peer teach a lesson with an outside expert present. Teachers participate by observing and questioning as the expert facilitates coaching and reflection about the lesson.

LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS

For the purpose of this study, I looked at guided reading in third through fifth grades at one elementary school in the Temecula district. As the assistant principal at the site I was interested to see to what extent transfer had taken place. The results are relevant to this particular school site only and thus are not to be generalized to other settings. However, it is expected that the findings will add important insights to staff development literature.
CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL VIEW OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Staff development has been an important element of schooling since the beginning of public education. The idea behind staff development has always been the improvement of teaching; however, the look and nature of staff development has evolved over time. Its significance has also changed. At times the emphasis was minimal, now it is at the center of every major educational reform, transformation, or school policy. The current emphasis on staff development is quite different than "education's neglected stepchild" of the 1970's (McLaughlin and Marsh, 1978, pg. 72).

Historically, traditional staff development was a "sit and get" session where teachers learned from an expert. The expert imparted their knowledge and the teacher was to go back into the classroom and apply their new methods (Sparks, 1997). It was usually a one shot deal where staff development was seen as an event, rather than a process. The workshop was often the culmination of a
sequence of events. Researchers conducted studies, trainers evaluated the research, and staff development was designed by the district (Sparks, 1997). The role of the staff developer was to organize and orchestrate these trainings for teachers. In just a few months after the staff development "event", little evidence could be found in the classroom of implementation, therefore the transfer of skill was negligible to non-existent.

In the early 1970's the Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM) came into the staff development arena (Loucks-Horsley, 1991). In this model, staff developers needed to have a systemic view of change to adapt their behaviors in order to support teachers through the change process. A systemic view of change involves looking at how systems act and react to change. One needs to know how to support each person depending on how they act or react to change. The CBAM model allowed for the individual differences and stages of teachers. It describes the following stages of concern for people going through the change process: awareness, informational, personal, management, consequences, collaboration, and refocusing. CBAM is still around today, but it is considered to be a small
piece a multi-faceted approach to staff development. This was an important improvement over the one time "sit and get" methodology.

Since the mid 1980's, the administrator's role in staff development has shifted to instructional leader or principal-teacher (Sergiovanni, 1992). At about this time, we see the role of staff developer also changing to a facilitator or consultant. In the 1980's we saw many staff developers hired as trainers in the areas of instruction (Sparks, 1997). Along with Total Quality Management (TQM) and site-based management, the responsibilities of professional growth among teachers became more widespread. It was expected that teachers take control and ownership of their own professional development according to their own needs. The role of the staff developer also became one of facilitator or consultant rather than someone who came in with a ready to implement program.

**STAFF DEVELOPMENT AS PART OF REFORM**

The United States Department of Education increased the incentive for state and local reform plans through GOALS
2000: Educate America Act, a voluntary program that Congress established in 1994. Professional development has progressively played a more important part in any reform effort (Guskey, 1995). Teacher development is viewed as an integral component of long-term reform, rather than a passing fad. The goal is for professional development to be aligned with student content standards and be designed as a career long process. Goal 4 of Goals 2000 created by the U.S. Department of Education defines teacher professional development:

- Focuses on the teacher as central to student learning;
- Focuses on individual, collegial, and organizational improvement;
- Nurtures intellectual and leadership capacities;
- Reflects best practices;
- Enables teachers to develop further expertise;
- Promotes continuous inquiry and improvement embedded in daily life;
- Includes planned collaboration;
- Requires time and long-term planning;
• Is evaluated ultimately on the basis of its impact on teacher effectiveness and student learning; and this assessment guides subsequent professional development efforts.

If we are going to expect teachers to teach to higher expectations and to endure the variety of challenges facing today’s classrooms, then we are going to have to help them acquire new knowledge and skills to do so (U.S. Department of Education, 1996).

STANDARDS FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The National Staff Development Council drafted and adopted standards for best practices in the area of staff development (NSDC, 1998). According to the standards, good staff development takes a variety of approaches. The standards call for the alignment of staff development with school and district goals to improve education. They require established priorities on what issues to address using student data. The standards call for follow-up and support as the need for quality education for all children, regardless of race, ethnic background, gender
or special needs are addressed through staff development. The NSDC outlines the importance of emphasizing a challenging, developmentally appropriate core curriculum based on content and outcomes established by schools, parents, and the community. Finally, parent and family involvement in education should be promoted through staff development.

The standards provide an important framework for staff development models. There are a variety of models that districts could incorporate when working with teachers to improve instruction.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT MODELS

Hirsh (1998), monthly columnist for the Journal of Staff Development, addressed the standard supporting a variety of staff development approaches to accomplish the goals of improving instruction and student success. She reiterated that all staff members do not have to learn the same way just as we do not expect our students to all learn the same way. She outlined 5 specific models of staff development that are quite different than the “sit and get” approach of the past. The five models are: 1)
individually designed/guided, 2) observe and assist through peer or supervisory coaching, 3) involvement in the improvement process through problem posing and solving, 4) training through theory, demonstrations, trials, feedback and coaching, and 5) inquiry or action research.

PARADIGM SHIFTS IN STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Major paradigm shifts in the area of staff development are detailed by Hirsh and Sparks (1997) in their book, *A New Vision for Staff Development*. Staff development has gone from being just about individual development to individual and organizational development (Sparks, 1997; Guskey, 1995). In the past, staff development was part of fragmented, piecemeal improvement efforts. Now staff development is usually driven by a clear, coherent plan. Whereas previously staff development was district-focused, currently staff development goals are being set by individual school sites. It used to be that teachers determined what they needed in terms of staff development, now we see the focus being on what the students need. "This shift recognizes that the ultimate criterion against which systemic change efforts must be
judged is their effect on student learning” (Sparks, 1997, pg. 23). Staff development has moved from an orientation toward the transmission of skills to the study of teaching and learning by teachers. Staff development is now directed at everyone involved with affecting student learning. The major shift has been from training conducted away from the job, for example conferences and workshops, to multiple forms of job-embedded learning (Sparks, 1997; Hirsh, 1998; Wood, 1999). According to Sparks (1997):

The shifts described are essential to the creation of learning communities in which everyone—students, teachers, principals, and support staff—are both learners and teachers (pg.47).

**JOB-EMBEDDED LEARNING**

A physical shift in the staff development program is also evident. “The old style, passive workshops featuring lectures by experts are being replaced by team oriented approaches”(Sachs, 1999, pg.21). Job-embedded learning has many advantages. There is less time taken away from the job. There is an immediate application of learning. For the most part, it cost less than consultants and is
in accordance with what we know about adult learning (Wood, 1994). Learning should be embedded in the daily work of educators. The National Staff Development Council recommends that one fourth of a teachers work time should be spent on professional study and collaboration (Sparks, 1999).

In his research of job-embedded learning, Wood (1999) describes several approaches. Study groups are an effective way for teachers to collaboratively learn. Common practice is to choose a topic of interest or need, the study group reviews literature and possibly a model program is examined. The study group develops a plan for their site, and after implementation is underway, there is time for reflection and discussion. The purpose is to solve a specific area of concern. This provides a clear, concise direction for a group while giving participants a chance to take ownership in the solution.

**ACTION RESEARCH**

Action research is another a staff development model. Educators are involved in the analysis of data in target areas (Sachs, 1999). Questions are raised, literature is
studied and research is conducted. From the research and data, an approach that tends to be more practitioner friendly is selected. The approach is field tested the results reviewed and analyzed for success and refinements. Action research builds collegiality and collaboration and increases self-confidence (Sachs, 1999); it empowers educators to take ownership of their learning (Wood, 1999; Sachs, 1999).

**REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONERS**

Reflection is a valuable tool for all educators as we look at professional growth. In Wood's (1999) description of reflective logs, educators record key events and what they have learned from them. This has very broad applications. Reflective teachers think about their work. They think about what they are doing and why, what they might do or ought to do and why. Sharon Oja (1991) states, "Cycles of experiences applying new learning, followed by examination of and reflection on those experiences, will promote development (pg. 33)."

Being a reflective practitioner is a natural component of job-embedded learning where teachers are working and
resolving areas of concern together, thus countering the tendency of teachers working in isolation. Collegiality can foster an atmosphere where teachers are working collaboratively to improve student learning. Both Brandt (1996) and Little (1982) add support for the importance of collegiality in the scope of staff development. Teachers need to engage in professional group post-conferences. This "teacher talk" is important, the collaboration inspires confidence (Brandt, 1996). Little (1982) studied how collegiality was related to instructional effectiveness and identified 4 critical practices of successful schools:

1. Teachers frequently engaged in talk about teaching
2. Teachers regularly observed and critiqued each other
3. Teachers work together to develop curricular materials
4. Teachers teach each other pedagogy.

Collegial interaction was found to be in some cases more effective than clinical supervision (Brandt, 1996).
TRANSFER OF SKILLS

A variety of research has been conducted to determine effective components of staff development. With 75 million dollars of federal money pledged for staff development (Sachs, 1999) it seems reasonable that we would want to closely analyze what seems to have the best results. After all, we want to know what will have long term success. What will truly make a difference in the learning of students? Research by Joyce and Showers (1988) noted the transfer of skills based on staff development methodology used (figure one).

Figure one

TRANSFER OF SKILLS
From research by B. Joyce and B. Showers (1988)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of transfer</th>
<th>Methodology Used to Teach the New Skill</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Study of theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Study of theory with a demonstration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Study of theory, with a demonstration and practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Study of theory with a demonstration, practice, and feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90%</td>
<td>Study of theory with a demonstration, practice, feedback, and ongoing coaching</td>
</tr>
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</table>
The traditional model of an outside expert explaining a theory left the participants with no ability to apply the skill (Galbo, 1998). Figure 1 demonstrates the need for staff development to be ongoing, it can no longer be an event. It needs to be a process (Shields, 1999).

The research of Dempwolf (1993) and Shields (1999) conclude that a variety of learning experiences should be planned to meet the specific needs of learners at each level of adult learning. Galbo (1999) supports Dempwolf's conclusions as he illustrates the importance of looking at the adult needs when determining content and structure of training options.

In his review of the literature, Gusky (1995) discusses the 'optimal mix'. It is the assortment of professional development processes and technologies that will work best in a particular setting. As the context of staff development changes, so too will the 'optimal mix'. The concept of schools as learning communities (Sparks, 1997; Gusky, 1995) support this thinking. We are always going to be involved in the search for new and better ways to
access all students. "As in teaching—what works in one situation may not work for the next" (Gusky, 1995, pg.4).

GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

Gusky (1995) offers guidelines for successful implementation of staff development. This brings together many of the concepts he alludes to in his idea of the "optimal mix". These are not to be considered a checklist, but rather what has been shown to be successful:

1. Recognize change as both an individual and organizational process
2. Think big, but start small
3. Work in teams to maintain support
4. Include procedures for feedback on results
5. Provide support, follow-up, and pressure
6. Integrate programs

Each area is important as we look to bring about the greatest transfer of skills to improve the learning of students. Looking further into the each guideline will provide greater detail. Research on the change process by Barth (1991), Fullan (1991), and others help to
formulate the strategies necessary for implementing change. These can be applied to the individual and the organization. Killion (1999) suggests that staff development is viewed as an innovation by designers when examining both the individual and organizational change literature. She suggests that the implementation won't be successful if individuals are not involved in the design of the staff development content and process. This involvement must not be superficial, but done in true collaboration (Frase, 1994).

Gusky's (1995) second guideline suggests creating long term goals based on a grand vision. Some researchers have concluded that successful programs are guided by a clear vision that sees beyond the individual classroom (Barth, 1991; Clune, 1991; Mann, 1986; Wade, 1984). Moreover, as Sparks (1983) noted, "The most effective professional development efforts approach change in a gradual and incremental fashion, not expecting too much at a time" (pg. 33).

Working in teams to maintain support is the third of Gusky's guidelines. Little (1989) notes that a balance
of teamwork and collaboration with an expectation that all are constantly seeking and assessing better practices is essential. McLaughin (1991) summarized the factors that the Rand Change Agent found to be associated with effective, planned change. Included in those factors was a school climate that fostered good working relationships among teachers. This collaborative relationship enhanced the project implementation and helped to sustain results. According to Christine Jakicic (1994), sharing sessions after workshops where teachers debrief and plan together are beneficial to teachers. Any formalized way for teachers to collaborate—grade level meetings, group sharing, peer coaching, study groups and planning teams—will increase collegiality.

In Gusky's (1995) fourth guideline, he suggests that staff development planners include procedures for feedback on results. If there is no evidence that something is working, new practices will be dropped. "In any implementation, regular feedback is key to the success," (Schmoker, 1996, pg. 78). The results should be in the improvement of student learning. The analysis of student work is a way to see results and schedule planned
collaboration time. This process helps teachers reflect and assess the implementation of new practices. Together they can plan next steps.

The integration of programs is necessary (Gusky, 1995) and can increase opportunities for success. Innovations are plentiful in education and there is always the potential for overload. Each selected innovation should be research-based (NSDC, 1999). It should be part of a framework for improvement, and related to the clear, coherent vision noted earlier. Maintaining this focus maximizes implementation results (Rountree, 1997).

ROLE OF THE SITE ADMINISTRATOR

The role of the principal as instructional leader continues to expand. The administrator is a critical piece in the transfer of skills, as well as the facilitation of an environment which is rich with opportunities for job-embedded learning and collegiality. Agreeing that staff development is a process, Gusky (1995) includes follow-up support with pressure as a guideline, demonstrating that the principal must set up the expectation for transfer of skill. What is not
monitored becomes optional, therefore there must be pressure by administration to continue on the road of improvement. The expectation that the new skill is to be used must be clearly presented to staff members (Shields, 1999). The pressure must be part of a support mechanism where each small step is celebrated (Jakicic, 1999), thus providing learners with needed continuous support. Administrators must prioritize time for this support (Hirsh, 1997). In his research, McLaughlin (1991) found that the support of the principal directly related to whether a teacher would continue a project.

Research speaks to the "evolving role of leaders as facilitators of professional capacity and learning communities driven by a focus on results" (Rountree, 1997, pg.16). Duttweiler (1989) and Mather (1999) note the importance of administrative support. Staff development needs the support of the principal, district administration, and the school board. The support must be genuine and visible.

A key component of site administrator support is the cultivation of intrinsic motivation (Frase, 1994;
Duttweiler, 1989). Participants who see the purpose of the innovation, who are genuinely involved in the planning and design, who feel supported have the intrinsic motivation. Allowing opportunities for choices, involvement and listening to expressed needs (Duttweiler, 1989) are necessary steps.

The principal sets the example for the school. “The principal must similarly be soundly grounded in the teaching and learning processes in both contemporary and traditional patterns of instruction and in validated instructional techniques and strategies,” (Sergiovanni, 1992, pg.105). The principal helps maintain the focus by clearing the school environment of roadblocks that prohibit good teaching and learning (Frase, 1994). Knowing the staff is essential in supporting their growth. According to Barth (1990), there are three types of teachers: 1) the resisting teacher; 2) One who rethinks their practice but who does not allow outside scrutiny; and 3) the self-examiner who reflects and invites feedback. The principal should foster an environment that is not competitive, but is encouraging. Encouraging the teachers who are doing what is right is a
valuable strategy to bring the resistors along (Allington, 1996).

STAFF DEVELOPMENT IN THE AREA OF READING

As we review the literature on how skills are successfully transferred into the classroom, it is necessary to consider research specific to the area of reading. As we begin to examine the research about assisting teachers in their development of reading instruction, we will add only information that supplements the discussion outlined above. The CIERA (Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement) organization outlined 10 Research Based Principles for Improving the Reading Achievement of America’s Children. According to CIERA, professional opportunities to improve reading achievement are prominent in successful schools and programs. One such opportunity is to participate in on-going communities in which participants deliberately try to understand both success and persistent problems involved in the teaching and learning of reading (CIERA, 1999).
As teachers begin to explore areas of need in reading programs, an approach to remedy the concern must be thoroughly investigated to meet the needs of the school. The outside “expert” can play a useful role in changing the educational practices of a school (Allington & Cunningham, 1996). An outside consultant can be a conversation starter or can give a presentation of research regarding inclusionary models for at-risk readers or other student needs. From this presentation, powerful dialogue can occur that can result in possible solutions and plans to improve student reading. External consultants often have a broader breadth of experiences and familiarity of educational practices from which to speak. “If improving the reading and language arts instruction in a school is an important priority, obtaining the services of a consultant with expertise in that area could make sense” (Allington, 1996, pg.156). It takes a long relationship with a school for a consultant to become a change partner with a staff (although intensity of involvement should lessen across time).
Personal professional reading is a form of staff development that can be effective given the ever-changing research on effective practices in instruction. According to Allington (1996):

"...when personal professional reading is valued we will see professional articles being routed to teachers, see notes about new professional books in daily announcements, and find that some time at each faculty meetings is spent discussing professional reading." (pg. 153).

Similarly, teacher reading groups can meet periodically to review the latest in literacy research.

Just as the outside expert can be helpful, the in-house expert(s) can be valuable. Fountas and Pinnell (1996) focus on the importance of strong literacy teams made up of teachers and specialists as a support for professional development. According to Fountas and Pinnell (1996):

Ideally, this team is nurtured by a school Literacy coordinator who teaches children in classrooms daily but also assists peers. The primary literacy team meets together and mutually takes responsibility for the literacy achievement
of each child who enters the school. They help each other by sharing resources and ideas and providing feedback (pg.191).

Quick fixes like workshops will not make every child a reader. However, collaborative efforts to improve student learning will improve the odds significantly.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, research demonstrates the need for inservice training to be embedded in the school climate. If we expect new behaviors to take place in the classroom, then we must look at professional development as a continuum, life-long process. It is essential that we start with a clear vision with long term goals. Professional growth can take many forms, but in order for true transfer of skills to take place norms must be in place that reward collegial planning, public teaching, constructive feedback and experimentation. Each success along the way should be celebrated. Each staff member should be looked at individually to provide support and multiple options for training. No one way will be the best way for each educator. We must consider the content,
the context, and the climate. The process of change is difficult and complex, but carefully analyzing and planning is essential in order for improvement in the learning of students.

In many ways, the fate of public education may very well be in the backs of excellent staff development programs that can help teachers become professionals with expertise and attitude to make a difference with diverse students. Unfortunately, much of what is currently part of staff development relates more to improving test scores rather than the improvement of learning. The public sees test scores as the most important method of evaluating how we are doing. Therefore, districts have placed an emphasis on training teachers to prepare their students for standardized tests. Teachers spent more time analyzing test scores and preparing plans to help boost them than they do on analyzing students' daily writing. Often school administrators provide time and facilitate conversations about test scores but rarely is the same emphasis given to the analysis of student work.
Our staff development opportunities must become more strategic as we see the number of non-student days decrease to allow for students to be in attendance with the numbers determined by the state. Whereas previously most districts took advantage of up to eight non-student days for staff development, we no longer see those days built into our calendar years. Therefore, we must maximize approaches that allow us to continue professional dialogues, to have job-embedded opportunities for staff development, and to foster teams of learners who are reflective practitioners.
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to determine the effectiveness of the two-year staff development plan to assist teachers in the methodology of guided reading in third through fifth grade classrooms at Vintage Hills Elementary School in Temecula. I am an assistant principal at the school site and would like to determine what has had the greatest influence for the transfer of skills and what would the next steps be. I expect the transfer level has been high due to the multi-layered, long-term approach to the training. The training consisted of leadership team workshops, grade level workshops, Saturday sessions, collaborative-refinements, and after school sessions emphasizing guided reading and strategies to support readers at various instructional levels.

DATA COLLECTION

The data was obtained from a variety of sources. Data collection involved me as a participant observer. As an
assistant principal, I made several observations in classrooms, both formally and informally as part of my assigned duties and responsibilities (Spradley 1980. Through the formal observation process, data was collected through scripting, written anecdotal notes, and formal conference notes. Informal visits to classrooms provided an opportunity to see what types of reading instruction were taking place. A journal was used to record reflections and observations. This journal was also a place for the author to record thoughts about conversations or other sources of information that might be relevant to the study.

Observations were also done strategically during the scheduled language arts time to help give a clear picture of the types of instruction that were taking place in that time period. I visited each classroom of a grade level consecutively during the specified language arts time.

Finally, data was collected through interviews with teachers, the principal, and the Director of Elementary
Education for the district. Interviews were recorded for accuracy and transcribed.

**PARTICIPANTS**

At Vintage Hills Elementary there are eight third grade teachers, five fourth grade teachers, and five fifth grade teachers. Non-probability sampling, specifically judgmental sampling was the method used to determine who would be interviewed. I interviewed several teachers from each grade level. Grade level representatives from the leadership teams were selected first. Then at least two other teachers at the grade level were selected to be interviewed based on availability and convenience. The Director of Elementary Education was selected to be interviewed to provide background on how the plan was developed, and to relate her opinion on the transfer of skills into the classroom. The site principal was interviewed to provide observations from another perspective.

An open-ended interview process was used that started with the broad statement, "Talk to me about guided reading." This was followed up with questions as needed
that would give further insight as to how and why guided reading is being implemented. Sample follow up questions were: 1) When did you first make guided reading a part of your program? 2) What made that happen? 3) What are the results of this in your classroom? 4) What has been influential and what hasn’t? I encouraged the participants to speak freely as the results would only help the school if they were valid and meaningful.

PROCEDURES USED IN DATA ANALYSIS
I transcribed interviews and looked for patterns, categories, and themes in the data. When similar concepts were brought up they were tallied to establish their frequency to help us determine the degree of intensity. Each classroom was also observed for physical evidence of guided reading instruction which helped provide some quantitative data. Each grade level was analyzed separately to help make comparisons and draw conclusions.

THE CONCEPTUAL MODEL
When studying the individual teachers who have had the greatest transfer of skills in terms of quality and
quantity, several characteristics were found in common. In analyzing the interviews with teachers and looking at their teaching, three critical attributes were found to be in common. Figure two shows the three pervasive characteristics found in teachers with the greatest transfer.

Figure two

Reflective teachers are thoughtful about their teaching. The question the reasons why something works or does not work in the classroom. Reflective teachers see a need in their instruction and desire methods to assist learners. Teachers noted that they were frustrated with not being able to meet the needs of their diverse students. Some had resource and GATE children in the same class and knew
that only using whole group instruction was not meeting all their students’ needs. They were primed to accept methodology and research that would help them meet those needs. Reflective teachers were also able to make adjustments as they began implementation. This helped them sustain the aspects of guided reading instruction while also making it workable in their classroom.

These teachers could also talk about other outcomes of their guided reading program as they had obviously spent time reflecting. For example, several talked about the personal connection they were able to make with their students. Or others mentioned how they are using a more differentiated approach to teaching math because of the impact they witnessed with guided reading. Still other mentioned that they see outcomes like their students being more strategic or using other text structures, demonstrating a process of thinking about their teaching and making adjustments or conclusions.

Teachers who could not or did not reflect on why something wasn’t working did not keep guided reading as part of their classroom and only used the approach when
they were being formally observed. Teachers who were less reflective about their teaching of reading also had the greatest amount of confusion about guided reading suggesting that they did not get the big picture. They took bits and pieces but did not put them together in a meaningful context.

Previous experience played an important part in the transfer of skills. Previous experience related to the type of teacher training program from which the educator graduated and past teaching experience. Teachers who had used similar approaches in the past quickly were able to incorporate guided reading. Some stated they never wanted to get away from it originally, but felt pressured. They were relieved to go back to meeting the individual needs of students. Several new teachers had high rates of transfer as they quickly saw what the district focus was and adapted to the school culture which included guided reading. Teachers whose credential program training emphasized a comprehensive reading program also had less fear of incorporating the desired strategies.
Finally, the idea of collegiality was mentioned in numerous ways by each successful teacher interviewed. Collegiality here is defined as teachers engaging in professional talk about their craft both formally and informally. Each person mentioned a particular person with whom they discussed their teaching that helped them along in the process. Some were involved in team-teaching situations where they planned for each other’s groups of readers and some mentioned the teacher talk that happens in the staff lounge. Teachers who sought out collegiality through grade level representative roles or district committees had high rates of transfer. Likewise, grade levels who spend a lot collegial time together had the most quality language arts programs, particularly fifth grade. These teachers shared reflections and ideas often and sincerely. This was critical in the eyes of teachers new to the school.
INTRODUCTION

The results in this chapter were used in the analysis of data to determine the effectiveness of the staff development program. These results were derived from observations as part of the participant observer model described earlier. For ease of understanding, the results will be outlined by classroom and grade. Names have been changed for confidentiality. Incorporated in each section will be reflections, observations and interview notes if applicable. Quantitative data will be explored following grade level results.

Third Grade

Classroom One

There are eight teachers at this grade level, each will be discussed individually. The grade level representative is Hayden James. He was previously named Teacher of the Year and has been a mentor teacher to many new and veteran teachers. He attended all of the previous
full day workshops. He voluntarily attended five of the after school Batzle sessions. Figure 3 shows the method of instruction observed during informal, unannounced visits to his classroom during his language arts block of time.

Figure three

Classroom 1 Methods of Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>INSTRUCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/29/00</td>
<td>Small group with leveled text. Review of “what good readers do”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/00</td>
<td>Students at small table with teacher. Students reviewing summarizing skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/06/00</td>
<td>Students in small group at reading table using informational text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In an interview the teacher stated that he had taught in similar ways long before the district began to focus on it. He had homogeneous groups when he first started teaching, which made the transition to guided reading instruction easier. He feels that the district has sustained their focus on a comprehensive reading program including guided reading. His colleagues are engaged in more conversation about guided reading and the number of
resources specifically leveled books has increased due to the focus. The Batzle trainings have validated what he is doing. Some of the most helpful information in his opinion has been given to him by the Literacy Specialist at the school site at mini-trainings done during staff meetings.

The need for guided reading was evident to him as he was trying to meet the diverse needs of his students. He has students in class that are several levels below grade level as well as many who are several grade levels above third grade. Guided reading is helping him challenge each child. The most powerful part of guided reading in his opinion is the personal connection he has been able to make with each of his students. He feels he gets to know them much better because of the small group instruction.

Classroom Two

The teacher of classroom two, Melissa Rae, is a math mentor and a veteran teacher in the district. She was a member of the district Language Arts Committee for third
grade as well as being a part of the leadership team who wrote the school plans as part of the first Batzle visit.

She volunteered to do a demo lesson for her peers and Batzle as part of the coaching segment. At that time, she had many of the elements necessary for guided reading including leveled books and meaningful literacy activities for students who were not at the reading table. She received quite a bit of feedback from Batzle including the need for students to read simultaneously aloud during guided reading time. Her students' reactions including their lack of correct reading vocabulary pointed to the fact that this was a new experience for them and not part of their regular routine. Figure four outlines subsequent, unannounced visits to her classroom during her language arts time block.

**Figure four**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>INSTRUCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/11/00</td>
<td>Small groups working on center activities. No reading group with the teacher. Teacher correcting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
She was not interviewed for this study. However, I noted that on each visit to the classroom no physical evidence of guided reading was noted. The back reading table was filled with papers and/or projects. No leveled books were noticed, nor was there any evidence that strategies for reading were a focus.

Classroom Three

The teacher of classroom three, Marie Madison, has taught third grade for several years. She has been teaching five years and is new to the teaching staff at the studied elementary school. She was selected by the Literacy Specialist to work with students during the after school-tutoring program due to her expertise in the teaching of reading. Within the first week of school, there was a reading corner set up in her classroom with a
variety of materials to work with individuals in reading including:
Leveled books, word cards, white boards, posters with strategies, and a chart of student groups. Figure five denotes unannounced visits to her classroom.

**Figure five**

**Classroom 3 Methods of Instruction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>INSTRUCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/7/99</td>
<td>Small group with leveled text during afterschool tutoring. Working on the strategy “developing a mind movie.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/00</td>
<td>Students at small table with teacher. Students are whispering reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/06/00</td>
<td>Teacher doing shared reading of informational text to model strategies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Literacy Specialist has mentioned this teacher’s strengths in the area of reading on many occasions including Student Study Team meetings and Individualized Educational Plan meetings. Specifically her ability to help students with word study. She wanted to make sure that a specific resource student be put in this teacher’s class next year because she would be the best qualified to meet his literacy needs.
I interviewed the teacher. In the discussion she mentioned that in her teacher-training program, guided reading was not covered. The Batzle trainings and trainings done for Class Size Reduction were important in her evolution to differentiated instruction. She noted two teachers that have been especially helpful and stated that the support and expertise of the Literacy Specialist has been amazing. "I can go to her and say I’ve tried this and this with a certain child, and she comes up with even more strategies for me to try. She has pointed out many professional books to me which I have enjoyed” (Four, 2000). She says she now feels she has a real handle on guided reading. The one on one attention she can give kids makes a huge difference in their learning. She noted that she knows there are teachers around her who are not doing guided reading and feels they don’t have yet have the confidence to implement it fully. Janine Batzle in her eyes gave us an idea of what we needed to work on and made everyone focus on strategic reading for diverse students.
Classroom Four

Classroom four is taught by Christine Colt who has been teaching for many years and joined the school two years ago. She attended the trainings last year and voluntarily went to three of the five after school sessions offered. Two visits to her classroom are outlined in figure six.

Figure six

Classroom 4 Methods of Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>INSTRUCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/29/00</td>
<td>Teacher working with a small group at a reading table discussing a reading worksheet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/6/00</td>
<td>Whole class instruction from basal anthology. Students taking turns reading orally.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the second observation, the teacher would select students to read orally. The teacher posed various questions related to the text. The reading table in the classroom showed physical evidence of guided reading including: leveled textbooks and teacher notebook for anecdotal notes. She was not interviewed for this study.
Classroom Five

The teacher of classroom five, Jackson Tyler, has been a teacher for over fifteen years and has been teaching third grade for the majority of those years. He teams teaches with Hayden James. Much of the time you can see them doing the same things at the same time, as they plan their lessons together. He has attended all of the Janine Batzle trainings offered. When walking into his classroom, the observer immediately noticed the many centers set up around the room for students to use during guided reading instruction. Many sets of leveled books are set around the small group reading table as well as charts entitled, "What Do Good Readers Do" and "What Do Good Writers Do." These use the vocabulary stressed by Batzle.

Figure seven shows the methods of instruction observed during several unannounced, informal visits to his classroom during his scheduled language arts block of time.
Figure seven

Classroom 5 Methods of Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>INSTRUCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/29/00</td>
<td>Students working on assignments at desks while teacher reads with a group of four students. Students are doing a picture walk to make predictions about the book.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/00</td>
<td>Teacher leads class in discussion of the use of a table of contents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/06/00</td>
<td>Two students working with teacher at back table on reading an above grade level text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This teacher has often been mentioned by his peers as being helpful in assisting them in planning for guided reading. He has spoken in Student Study Team meetings about children’s reading levels and miscues suggesting a close analysis of oral reading strategies used by struggling readers.

Classroom Six

I am the primary evaluator for the teacher of classroom six, Danielle Levine, therefore more time has been spent in this particular classroom. Post conferences were held
following formal observations, some of the comments from those conferences will be reported with her permission. Figure eight denotes some of the observations made.

Figure eight

Classroom 6 Methods of Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>INSTRUCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/12/99</td>
<td>Small guided reading group learning how to use reciprocal teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/7/00</td>
<td>Small homogeneous group with leveled text. Teacher points to poster labeled &quot;what good readers do&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/00</td>
<td>Students at small table with teacher using non-fiction text for their study of habitats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/06/00</td>
<td>Students in small group at reading table using leveled text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teacher began using guided reading right after the first Janine Batzle training two years ago. She agreed with what she heard and had been feeling frustrated with trying to meet the diverse needs of students. She has a Gifted and Talented cluster and a Resource cluster. The process has evolved and improved over time. The lesson in October was the first time she had tried reciprocal teaching, which she learned about from a Batzle after
school session. Her advanced readers were able to show a higher level of comprehension with more difficult text structures. Her struggling readers have been able to feel success in their reading at their instructional level while also becoming more strategic. She now has started using the same time of approach in math where she does quite a bit of differentiation. She feels there is a strong demand from the parent population of the school to make sure their child is challenged. Allowing students to read and progress at their instructional level is a way to keep students on the learning continuum.

**Classroom Seven**

I am the primary evaluator for Julie Maxwell, and the results are from multiple visits in this classroom. The teacher has been teaching for several years in third grade. She works closely with other members of her grade level team. Her classroom is set up with a guided reading table in one corner of the room where a list of student groups is posted. A file box with assessments sits on the floor next to the reading table along with sets of guided reading leveled text. The following figure denotes some of the observations made in her classroom.
Figure nine

Classroom 7 Methods of Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>INSTRUCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/15/99</td>
<td>Small group with leveled non-fiction text. Review of using &quot;mind movie&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/20/00</td>
<td>Students at small table with teacher. Students reviewing creating a summary with beginning, middle and end.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/29/00</td>
<td>Shared reading from basal anthology. Strategy of asking questions stressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/06/00</td>
<td>Students in small group at reading table using newspaper.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

She attended the full day sessions with Batzle and voluntarily attended three of the after school sessions. She has changed from a very rigid center rotation format, to one of flexible grouping time. In centers, students rotate to learning centers that provide independent learning opportunities. Previously in this classroom, students rotated when a bell rang. Time for each reading group was the same daily, which meant struggling readers were given the same time frame as advanced readers. More of her colleagues moved away from center rotations and she followed suit. Many visuals referring to reading
strategies are evident around the room. She uses the vocabulary from Batzle and has engaged in numerous discussions with peers to help create a guided reading program that would work for her.

Classroom Eight

I am also evaluating Barbara Smith who has been teaching for 31 years. She has attended the full day Batzle sessions and four of the after school sessions. She has an area in her room for guided reading although there are many other materials on the table suggesting it is used for a variety of purposes. Figure ten shows methods of instruction observed.

Figure ten

Classroom 8 Methods of Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>INSTRUCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/14/99</td>
<td>Small group with leveled text. Two groups observed: one above and one below grade level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/14/00</td>
<td>Whole group instruction on spelling rules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/06/00</td>
<td>Whole group lesson with basal anthology.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

She was not interviewed for this project.
FOURTH GRADE

Classroom Nine

The teacher for the ninth classroom is Shannon Lawrence, a veteran fourth grade teacher and mentor within the district. Her classroom is very teacher directed. She has a strong reputation for being very academic, and is currently the GATE coordinator for the school. She attended the trainings at our school site last year presented by Batzle. She called in ill for the coaching day that was arranged for each grade level. She did not attend any of the voluntary after school sessions. For her first observation she was required to do a guided reading lesson. She chose to do it on Friday as that is the scheduled day when she meets with small groups. Classroom observations are included on Figure eleven.
Figure eleven

Classroom 9 Methods of Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>INSTRUCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/15/99</td>
<td>Small group with leveled text. Strategy taught was making connections with the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/28/00</td>
<td>Whole group lesson but review of strategies was included.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/02/00</td>
<td>Whole group lesson from basal anthology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/06/00</td>
<td>Whole group lesson writing lesson.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teacher in this classroom has been quite vocal about her negative feelings about guided reading. She has been negative in her assessment of Batzle including not wanting to attend the trainings. Her opposition to guided reading is due to her impression that teachers are already doing a good job and do not to change.

Classroom Ten

This fourth grade teacher, Mary McKenna, has been teaching for a number of years and has been to all of the trainings offered at the school site and has attended two of the voluntary after school sessions. She works
closely with Shannon Lawrence, but has taken a more active role in the implementation of guided reading. In conversations I had with the Literacy Specialist, it was noted that teacher ten had come to the Literacy Specialist on numerous occasions to ask for assistance or to ask for advice regarding reading. Figure twelve gives a sampling of methods of instruction observed on unannounced, informal visits.

**Figure twelve**

**Classroom 10 Methods of Instruction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>INSTRUCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/29/00</td>
<td>Small group with leveled text. Review of strategies before reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/00</td>
<td>Small groups discussing reading from a leveled novel. Using the reciprocal model.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/06/00</td>
<td>One student reading in back with teacher. The rest of the class working on reading activities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I interviewed teacher ten to gain insight as to why she had implemented guided reading when others at her grade level had not. She was eager to talk about it, and openly shared some of her feelings. In her interview, she mentioned that she had taught this way many years ago
but with different labels for the strategies. She showed books she previously used and they were also divided according to students reading levels. When she graduated, she was taught to ability group and that is replicated in the guided reading arena. She felt that the Batzle training helped her break down the reading strategies better. It validated what she believed, and acted as a refresher. She said, “They had to pull me into Whole Language kicking and screaming. This you don’t have to pull me into” (McKenna, 2000).

Students, according to her, are more strategic because of this and they seem to know the lingo better. The common vocabulary has been helpful school wide. As a whole she felt that the trainings were disjointed. She started the guided reading last year after Batzle first came. She couldn’t put a finger on exactly on what she didn’t like about the trainings. She feels that the lower kids need the intense reading training daily, but some people have the wrong message that every kid needs to be seen everyday in small groups. Therefore, they are more resistant to guided reading training and implementation.
Classroom Eleven

The teacher in classroom eleven, Katie Kirks, earned her teaching credential two years ago at a Professional Development School done collaboratively by the district and a State University. The emphasis in Language Arts Methods was on a comprehensive reading program which includes shared reading, guided reading, word study, read aloud, writing, listening, and speaking. She was utilizing guided reading as a student teacher and continued to make it part of her program as a beginning teacher. Figure thirteen denotes observations made informally in the classroom.

Figure thirteen

Classroom 11 Methods of Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>INSTRUCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/29/00</td>
<td>Whole class read aloud.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/00</td>
<td>Students at small table with teacher. Venn diagram on white board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/06/00</td>
<td>Students working in small groups doing literature circles.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dottie Hargrave also recently completed her credential with the Professional Development School in the district. Therefore, her training was consistent with the philosophy of the Batzle training and current priorities. She was the fourth grade representative for the coaching section of the training done at the beginning of this school year. She also attended two of the after school training sessions. Her classroom is more diverse than others at her grade level. She has a table for guided reading that has a leveled text and poster with "What Good Readers Do." Her small groups also use white boards for instruction and those are available at the table. Figure fourteen shows the methods of instruction observed.

Figure fourteen

**Classroom 12 Methods of Instruction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>INSTRUCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/07/00</td>
<td>Small group focusing on reading with expression.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/28/00</td>
<td>Small group with leveled text. Word families were reviewed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/29/00</td>
<td>Whole class writing instruction.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In an interview with this teacher, she talked a great deal about the training she received from her credential program. Guided reading was one of the first methods she was exposed to so she knew no other way. She wanted to get as much as possible from the trainings since she was a beginning teacher and wanted to add as much to her repertoire as possible. Guided reading allows her to meet the individual needs of her students. It allows her to pinpoint the skills needed and group them accordingly. The trainings have helped a little but she would have liked to see more modeling by the trainer. She feels that the students who were just below grade level have benefited the most. Their learning in the small group has transferred over into many other subject levels.

**Classroom Thirteen**

The teacher in classroom thirteen, Donna Murray, has talked at meetings and has given the impression that her instruction is mostly whole class. She was required to do a guided reading lesson for her first observation.
She reluctantly completed that requirement. Subsequent observations did not provide evidence of differentiated instruction. Figure fifteen demonstrates this.

**Figure fifteen**

Classroom 13 Methods of Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>INSTRUCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/29/00</td>
<td>Students working independently. Teacher walking around monitoring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/00</td>
<td>Whole class reading from core literature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/6/00</td>
<td>Video being shown.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This teacher was not interviewed for the purpose of this research.

**FIFTH GRADE**

Classroom fourteen

Deborah Reese attended a two-day training presented by Janine Batzle prior to the district's two-year staff development plan. She had used similar methods years ago, but after the two trainings began bringing guided reading back into the classroom. She was her grade level representative on the literacy leadership team that met with Janine Batzle last year. She attended four of the
after school sessions offered this year. During the coaching portion of the training this year, her grade level colleagues watched with Batzle. Batzle offered no new suggestions, but had many praises for the teacher and how she had used Batzle’s ideas in her own way. Batzle asked the teacher if she would be interested in writing a section of her upcoming book to explain her program and how it came about. Figure sixteen shows observations made in this classroom.

Figure sixteen

Classroom 14 Methods of Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>INSTRUCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/14/99</td>
<td>Small group with leveled text. Students summarized and questioned text in a reciprocal model.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/10/99</td>
<td>Students in small group at reading table using informational text on Native American tribes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/29/00</td>
<td>Small group reading Hatchet-above grade level text with teacher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In an interview with the teacher she noted that it was because she always knew small group instruction best met the needs of her students that she turned back to it when Batzle presented. She feels that little new information was given to her through the Batzle training but it was certainly validating to what she wanted to do and why. Her philosophy is very consistent with Batzle’s. She noted that some of the outcomes have been more of her colleagues using the strategy, greater resources for the school and a common vocabulary amongst professionals.

**Classroom Fifteen**

This teacher was out on maternity leave much of this year but had attended trainings last year. She also works closely with the teacher of classroom fourteen. Observations in her classroom are noted in Figure seventeen.
Figure seventeen

Classroom 15 Methods of Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>INSTRUCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/29/00</td>
<td>Small group with leveled text. Students use reading logs to summarize what is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>being read outside the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/00</td>
<td>Small group instruction with basal anthology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/06/00</td>
<td>Small group with leveled text. Students use reading logs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This teacher was not interviewed for the purpose of this research study.

Classroom Sixteen

Hank Guidry was new to our school and had previously been a teacher trainer in the Success for All Program in Riverside. Success for All is strictly whole group with a lot of simultaneous involvement. He attended the day long workshops presented for new teachers in the district, new teacher observations, grade level coaching by Batzle of teacher fourteen, and three voluntary after school sessions. Figure eighteen shows a record of observations made in his classroom.
In an interview the teacher stated that the reason behind his use of guided reading was a frustration that he had trying to reach all of the students in his class. His largest influence was the teacher next door (teacher fourteen) and the Literacy Specialist at the site. Specifically the Literacy Specialist helped to create groups and establish goals for them. He felt like there was an obvious focus for the district and it was consistent with what he saw as a need. He felt very supported in this change process. The after school
sessions and staff conversations have been particularly helpful.

Classroom Seventeen

Stephanie Marcon is a new teacher who started at the beginning of the school year. In her teacher preparation program a large emphasis was placed on guiding primary students in reading, but little focus on the teaching of reading in the upper grades. She quickly aligned herself with the other new teacher at her grade level (Hank Guidry). Together they attended the district new teacher activities, observations, Batzle trainings and coaching sessions. They formulated lesson plans together and were able to implement guided reading at similar times. This teacher is evaluated by me and some of the information given was obtained with her permission during post-conferences. An outline of observations in her classroom is noted in Figure nineteen.
Classroom 17 Methods of Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>INSTRUCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/13/99</td>
<td>Small group with leveled text. One group is learning to read non-fiction and the other is reading with expression.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/8/99</td>
<td>Students at small table with teacher. Students reviewing questioning skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/29/00</td>
<td>Students in small group at reading table using affirming predictions as a strategy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In an interview Stephanie discussed the need for individualized instruction for students. She saw patterns of comprehension gaps. Students were good decoders, but could not talk about what they had just read. Deborah Reese was very influential to her, as she openly shared resources and materials. She spent time planning lessons with the teacher as part of her BTSA (Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment) professional development. She observed her twice doing guided reading and the teacher helped her set up a system that would enable her to manage several groups. This teacher felt that the Literacy Specialist has been “phenomenal” as she taught.
two lessons in the teacher’s class. This gave Stephanie a base at which to start implementing guided reading. The trainings she thought were a bit “fluffy”, but the ideas were meaningful. Also noted was her ability to work with other colleagues at her grade level.

Classroom Eighteen

Maria Medved has been with the district teaching fifth grade for over fifteen years. She attended the two day workshop that teacher fourteen did several years ago, as well as all of the district trainings and three after school sessions. She stated at the last after school session that “the information given was too much and there is not enough time to have all of these things going on” (Medved, 2000). She was referring to the new standards for California and the new district curriculum guides which are aligned with the expectations presented by the State. She completed a guided reading lesson at her evaluator’s request. In that lesson, done on October 11th, the group that was being taught already knew the material and the lesson seemed to lack purpose. In a post conference, she noted that it was being taught because it is a fifth grade standard. However, this is
in opposition to the purpose of differentiation. Students obviously had not been in small groups before as they did not know what to do, what to bring to the table, or how they were expected to read. On further examination, the teacher explained that these were literature circle groups that she was calling back to meet with. Literature circles are a part of a program, but not for all students, all of the time. Observations in her classroom are noted on Figure twenty.

**Figure twenty**

**Classroom 18 Methods of Instruction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>INSTRUCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/11/99</td>
<td>Small group with literature circles. Students already knew the material discussed in small group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/29/00</td>
<td>Students copying spelling words while teacher corrects papers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/00</td>
<td>Students reading in partners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/06/00</td>
<td>Students in small groups with a checklist to complete. (independent of teacher)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In speaking with Maria, she noted that she has not had enough training. When she elaborated on the idea of
guided reading, it was clear that she had several reading components confused. She said she had group kids according to high, medium, and low levels. She picked books that had met those levels. Her current reading program involved students reading those books in groups without teacher support. Her whole class reading involves "popcorn" reading as a read aloud technique. This is the antithesis of Batzle trainings. She mentioned that she often meets with groups, but she was unable to express the purpose of the groups except that she likes to "check in" with them. She is missing the "guiding" piece and the idea of basing instruction on assessment.

QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

Figure twenty-one shows the number of observations recorded and compares it to the number of times evidence of the training for a comprehensive Language Arts program was observed. Finally, the transfer of skills is noted in the last column. In this case, one can say that 73% of observed lessons displayed evidence of comprehensive language arts training.
Figure twenty-one

Transfer of Skills Observed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of lessons Observed</th>
<th>Number of lessons with evidence of Comprehensive Program Training</th>
<th>Percentage of Transfer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From a cursory view of the data, especially the triangulation of different sources, the great majority of teachers appear to be implementing the activities suggested in the Batzle guided reading training. For the most part, many instructional practices in the classroom are consistent with activities suggested by Batzle.
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

As I ponder my hypothesis and original research questions, I am able to draw several conclusions. When considering the data collected, one can surmise that as predicted the two-year staff development program to incorporate a comprehensive language arts program has successfully been transferred into the third through fifth grade classrooms of Vintage Hills Elementary School. The transfer rate of 73% demonstrates a significant proportion of Language Arts lessons are incorporating the concepts taught through the staff development program. I had predicted that one of the reasons for the successful transfer was the multi-layered approach. This did not seem to be as significant in the transfer of skills as was the sustained focus by the district.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

When we consider the transfer rate of 73% we can conclude that the degree of implementation was relatively high. As anticipated, there is still some resistance as
teachers feel overwhelmed with increased demands placed on them by the Content Standards. However, this can also be attributed to a normal reaction to the change process.

In terms of what teachers found to be most influential in their implementation, most noted the support from the literacy specialist or other colleagues as well as the need to meet the diverse levels of their students. When they saw a need, they were more aggressive in their implementation.

I wanted to know what makes some teachers more willing to implement and what makes others resistant. My findings demonstrated the need to consider the three areas addressed in the conceptual model: previous experience, reflective practitioners and collegiality. These areas were significant in the reasons for successful implementation by teachers at this school site. The antithesis of this conceptual model is also true. Teachers who were resistant to implementation, were naturally not reflective in their craft of teaching reading. They were not teachers who had strong
collaborative ties with other teachers at their grade levels.

My final research question asked what would the next steps be. It is now necessary to use the information from this study to make adjustments in what is currently being done, as well as to create staff development plans for the future. Teachers who are not adequately addressing the diverse needs of students through guided reading, must be given additional direction, training, and time to improve their current practices. Using the avenues of collegiality and reflection, we can increase our probability of success. Teachers can be taught to be reflective, however it first must be a part of the culture of the school. This has to be facilitated, modeled and encouraged by the administration. Devoting time at staff meetings for professional dialogue which promotes discussion about teaching helps increase reflection and collegiality. These two elements were critical in the transfer of skills noted in this research. Observing instruction and providing feedback will continue to allow teachers to see the sustained
focus on guided reading as an effective strategy while also providing necessary suggestions for improvement.

Overall, there are two factors that have assisted the success of transfer: a sustained focus by the district and the profile of teachers who have had successful transfer. When the one-shot workshop approach is used, there is little continued dialogue or emphasis placed on the methodology. However, when a district continues to focus on one area for extended period of time the professional conversations continue and the depth of understanding increases. In order for transfer to occur, the multiple layers of staff development should be in place. The program studied was a multi-year effort, it was not expected that a change would take place overnight. With the understanding that teachers, like students, learn differently, many approaches were included in the staff development plan. The following denotes the layers built in to the program:

- Leadership Team Workshop to discuss research and methodology
- Site self-analysis and creation of a site plan
• Site visit by consultant for observations, interviews, and feedback on plan
• Full day workshops for teachers
• Saturday sessions at specific grade levels
• Modeling by consultant in all grade levels at each school site
• Literacy Specialist training in order for sustained support
• Coaching at school site while grade level teachers did demonstration lessons for peers
• On-going conversations at staff meetings
• After school workshops for third through fifth grades
• Administrator/teacher coaching through formal observations

Each of these layers is important, but it is the fact that the focus by the district was sustained over two years that made the transfer of skills successful.

In conversations with principals, teachers, and literacy specialists many noted the notion that there was a clear
message given by the district through the long-term focus. The message was that this was important and essential to increasing student achievement. One such idea came from the fact that the district was willing to pay the cost of the consultant to come several times to each school site, as well as pay substitute time for teachers AND pay for them to attend afterschool and Saturday sessions. Most educators in Temecula could tell you that the district message was on ensuring that all students participate in a comprehensive language arts program.

A way this message has also been communicated to teachers is the increase in resources available to them to use during guided reading. More leveled books were purchased at each site as well as a large number of different types of texts. Teachers now have more to choose from to meet the needs of their various learners. A benefit from this is that teachers are using a larger variety of text structures and are feeling more comfortable with them.

As a result of the district focus, site principals truly became instructional leaders as they guided their staffs
through the change process. Principal support is critical for transfer of skills to occur. Principals were involved in the process all along including the leadership teams, trainings and coaching. Therefore, formal observations and post-conferences were a valuable arena for discussing a comprehensive reading program and for coaching individual teachers. It also became part of staff development done during staff meetings. Principals understood the importance of giving teachers a chance to talk about the process, to refine and reflect together. This articulation between grade levels is a direct outcome of the staff development program. This has helped teachers believe this is not an optional part of their teaching, but one that is expected.

At this time, staff development is one of the most critical ways we can increase student achievement. Therefore, each approach must be a sustained effort based on a need. We must continue to reflect and analyze as we expect our teachers to do. With each learning, we are able to refine and improve. This study points to the importance of sustained, multi-layered approaches to staff development.
The implications for this research point to the necessary components needed when trying to implement systemic reform in teaching. Although, data in regards to student achievement was outside the scope of this study, future studies should analyze the effects of guided reading on student performance. The most important factor in reforming teaching is how it effects student achievement.

It is not only important, but also critical that educators continue to act as participant observers to analyze instructional practices and guide teachers as they implement change to meet the diverse students in the classroom today. If we expect teachers to be reflective, to monitor and adjust, then we too must be action researchers in the arena of staff development. To truly be instructional leaders, we must lead by example, and be willing to diversify our staff development practices.
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