

PDIG – Final Report

1) Project Description

Following our PDIG in the 2017-2018 school year on how to improve teaching and understanding of Competency 1, our team felt it necessary to partake in a second year to review the ELA Secondary Program and the Progression of Learning with respect to Competency 2 in order to determine essential understandings and expected outcomes by each grade level. Another key focus of the PDIG was to focus on how assessment for learning can inform practice, determine feedback and scaffolding to help move students forward.

Our PDIG took place over 4 days and allowed us the opportunity to not only create new tools to bring back to our department, but it also allowed us the opportunity to share best practices, as well as review and learn about resources available to us from the school board. We enlisted the help of the English consultant at the board, as well as our RECIT consultant and our Library consultant.

2) Project Goals

Goal #1: Creating tools for data collection, checklists to observe reading and listening behaviours as well as a self-reflection form after independent reading or group/class discussions about readings.

With these goals in mind, we were able to create three separate documents:

1) Post About It Feedback Form: Used as a reflection tool after reading a text

- One thing that I took away from this text . . .
- One thing that this text reminds me of . . .
- One thing that I'm still not clear on . . .
- One thing that I noticed the author did was . . .

2) Reading Behaviours Checklist:

- Retelling
- Connecting
- Identifying
- Questioning
- Predicting
- Inferring
- Synthesizing

3) Guided Read-Aloud Form

- As students read, they complete the form and use those observations when discussing the text with others.

Goal #2: Establishing consistency amongst the team members, determine how to teach students how to identify the codes and conventions associated with different types of texts and build a continuum for our department.

With these goals in mind, we were able to create the following documents:

1) Make an Impact Form

- Students would complete the form and submit it with their writing.
- The goal of the form is for students to identify which C&C's they use in their writing, and explain the impact they make to their writing.
- The hope is that the thoughtful completion of the form will impact the quality of the work that students submit.

2) Codes & Conventions Cheat Sheet

- Updated list of codes and conventions for poetry, short story/novel, article, film and notice and note signposts

3) Codes & Conventions Anchor Chart

- List and identify the C+C'S that should be targeted at each grade level

Goal #3: Identify the global skills associated with reads and listens to spoken, written, and media texts, create assessments that address students' abilities to effectively read a variety of texts, identify "best fit" texts for each grade level

With these goals in mind, we came up with:

1) Global Skills Form

- A chart that outlines what tasks/activities/assignments each grade level is using in terms of addressing the reading competency

2) Grade Level Novels*

- Create a list of novels by the different grade levels and identify new texts that we would like to buy

*This is an ongoing discussion.

Goal #4: Review available technology used to support inclusion and protocols for the use of technology in the classroom, review of what digital resources are available to support reading in and out of the classroom, and review the reader response learning continuum (literacy today).

With these goals in mind, we were able to learn about and/or review the following digital resources:

OverDrive/Sora:

- Sora: ebook and audiobook app.
- Teachers can assign texts to students along with assignments

OneDrive: Shelley McDonagh

- Shown how to use OneDrive as a collaborative tool in our classrooms

CommonLit.org:

- Review of resources available on CommonLit.org and how they can be used with the novels we currently own

3. Project Outcomes

By the end of the PDIG project, we not only accumulated new and innovative resources, but we also shared best practices and each took away new teaching strategies to help improve with not only understanding Codes and Conventions, but also new and improved ways to help students identify C&C's, which is an area we found most of our students struggle in.

As a department, we have also been working on Common Formative Assessments. During a CFA, students at every grade level respond to a text, then teachers analyze the results, and classify the results using a red, yellow and green system. As a team, we then identify areas that need improvement and use that to inform our teaching. With our newly created resources, especially the Codes and Conventions Anchor Chart, we are able to help our students achieve their goals and make sure they are achieving their grade level goals.

Overall, we felt that we were very productive during our four days, however, there are still some areas that we did not have enough time to complete (ex: update and add to our list of texts/novels). Although this is ongoing from year to year, we did not have enough time to complete an up to date list.

4. Reinvestment

Our reinvestment plan is to use these new resources in our classroom to help students better understand what is expected of them for Competency 2. We will also distribute these resources to the rest of the English teachers who were not part of our PDIG team, to ensure that we are building a continuum within our department to ensure that our evaluations are common and fair across the board.