



## Creating and Maintaining Your Professional Book Study

---

- 1) Meet with your professional learning team. Refer to schoolwide educator learning targets to determine your area of study.
- 2) Take time to research relevant books or scholarly authors around your identified focus area. After researching, select one book for your professional book study.
- 3) Decide on the structure of book study group (see p. 5).
- 4) As a team, determine the necessary roles for your group and define them (see p. 6). Decide if members of the team will hold the roles permanently or if the roles will be rotated amongst the members.
- 5) Establish meeting dates that can accommodate all members of the team.
- 6) At the first meeting, establish “norms” for working together (see p. 7).
- 7) It is expected that participants will come to each subsequent meeting prepared to discuss the section or chapter for that day. Participants may come with questions or comments to be included in the conversation.
- 8) Consider using the planning tool (see p. 8) to guide each meeting. Possible meeting topics could include: discussing focus questions (determined by facilitator), discussing applications to classroom practice, and reflecting on what has changed as a result of your new learning on the topic.
- 9) Remember whatever you are discussing should be linked back to how it will affect student learning, including academic and social-emotional development.
- 10) Take time to reflect on and celebrate the successes of your team. Consider presenting your key understandings and new instructional practices to another learning team.





## Professional Book Study Structures

---

- **Chapter by Chapter:**

- ☛ Group reads the book one chapter at a time. The team is responsible for generating questions and discussion topics to discuss from within that chapter.

- **Independent Reading:**

- ☛ Teams read independently and then debrief in pairs on what they have read. Group members work in pairs to generate one thought-provoking question or comment to bring back to the group as a whole. This may work well for larger groups.

- **Applications of Ideas:**

- ☛ After reading a section, the team discusses and directs specific strategies they apply in the classroom. At the next meeting, participants will reflect on the strategies that they applied in the classroom focusing on *what worked, didn't work* and *why*.

- **Protocols:**

The group may choose one of several protocols to guide their discussion. The use of protocols ensures that all voices are heard. There is opportunity for open conversation, dialogue and reflection. Consider using one of the following protocols (see pp. 10–15) from the *School Reform Initiative* ([www.schoolreforminitiative.org](http://www.schoolreforminitiative.org)) to guide your discussion:

- ☛ Text-Rendering Protocol (p.10)
- ☛ The Final Word (p.11)
- ☛ The Wagon Wheel (p. 12)
- ☛ Three Levels of Text (p. 13)





## Roles

---

### **Facilitator:**

- Is a neutral observer whose primary task is to maintain an orderly discussion.
- Gathers information from participants in order to create discussion questions/topics.
- Is responsible for pre-and post-meeting logistics.
- Helps to focus group on the common task.

### **Recorder:**

- Captures the discussion process using the participants' own words and phrases. Consider using the notetaking sheet (see page 9).
- Records decisions and tasks assigned to individuals.
- Provides a clear, legible record of all aspects of the meeting, which must be approved by the participants before becoming a permanent, public record.

### **Reflector:**

- Analyzes the processes of the meeting (did the group follow established norms?).
- Identifies strengths and weaknesses of the process.
- Communicates how well the set agenda was followed.

### **Time Keeper:**

- Reminds group of time limits set to tasks.
- Ensures the group adheres to starting and ending times.





## Establishing Norms

---

### Norms...

- Express the values of the team.
- Form a process to resolve conflict.
- Guide discussion of new ideas.
- Direct the flow of communication.
- Set limits on all team members.
- Define the roles of team members.
- Provide guidance for behavior of the team.
- Help the team to evaluate its performance.
- Support the needs of the team and the organization.

### Sample Norms:

#### It's okay to...

- Ask questions.
- Say “I don’t know.”
- Disagree — as long as it is not an attack.
- Take the time to understand everyone’s point of view.
- Come to consensus.
- Compliment team members on contributions.
- Recognize different strengths in different people.
- Learn from each other and the professional literature.

