Professional Development Plan:

Utilizing and Comprehending Informational Texts

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Overall Plan

I. Topic and Intended Audience

Informational texts surround adolescent and adult literacy (Hall & Sabey, 2007, p. 261). 75% of school readings by sixth grade include non-narrative texts, and most adult reading, whether it be professional or personal reading, is informational (p. 261). Incorporating informational texts in literacy instruction was once thought to be an effective instructional strategy only for middle and high school classrooms. Traditionally, primary classrooms have only focused on teaching students how to “break the code”, whereas higher grade levels focused on comprehension and reading to learn (Moss, 2005, p. 48). Now, educators are encouraged to utilize instructional texts in the early elementary grades (p. 46).

This professional development plan will be implemented at Brehms Lane Elementary School, a Pre-K through 5th grade elementary school within Baltimore City Public Schools. The school is a Title 1 school with around 750 students. There are 3 Pre-K teachers and 4 to 5 teachers per grade level. Each grade level has a combination of experienced and beginning teachers. Currently, there are 8 teaches that are considered beginning teachers since they have 3 or less years of teaching experience. The school has 2 self-contained classes, one containing 1st-3rd graders and another containing 4th-5th graders. There is also a special education teacher for each grade from 1st to 5th grade. The intended audience for this professional development plan is for all Pre-K and elementary teachers. The elementary teachers were asked what they would like information on regarding utilizing informational texts through e-mail. They responded that they wanted more knowledge in how to choose appropriate informational texts for their grade level. In addition, the elementary teachers at the school also wanted more knowledge in instructional strategies that they can use to effectively teach informational texts. This professional
development plan will meet the needs and interests of the general elementary teachers at Brehms Lane.

II. Timetable of Plan

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<td>Whole Group Presentation, Poster Session, Reflection, Accessing Student Voices</td>
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September

**Topic:** Assessing interests and needs of general faculty members

**Mode(s) of Sharing:** Small Group Meetings, Accessing Student Voices

**Description:**

During September, the literacy coach will meet with a few students per grade level to assess student voices. The literacy coach will ask students about their opinions on using informational texts and when they would like to use informational texts. Materials and visuals of informational texts will be provided for younger students to help them express their thoughts and opinions.

When the faculty members initially meet, they will be split up by into small groups by what grade they teach: Primary (Pre-K to 2) and Intermediate (3-5). The small group meetings will begin with a pre-assessment/opening activity. The teachers will work with a partner or two to construct a list of the benefits to using informational texts in the classroom, as well as the challenges teachers face when trying to incorporate informational texts into their lessons. From here, the teachers will discuss how they are currently choosing appropriate informational texts for classroom use, utilizing instructional texts in their classrooms, and what questions and needs they would like to explore further throughout the professional development session. The literacy coach will also present the information that evolved from the meeting with the students. As a minute reflection at the end of the session, the teachers will write down a goal or objective that they would like this year-long professional development to meet. All the information shared during this session will serve as a pre-assessment for the literacy coach.
October

Topic: Research behind using informational texts in elementary grades

Mode(s) of Sharing: Whole Group Presentation, Small Group Meetings

Description:

Prior to this meeting, teachers will receive the article “Young Children’s Limited and Narrow Exposure to Informational Text” by Ruth Helen Yopp and Hallie Kay Yopp. Teachers will be expected to read the article in its entirety prior to the meeting, but each grade level will focus on and become experts in specific sections of the article:

- Pre-K and K Teachers: Introduction
- 1st Grade Teachers: Informational Read-Alouds
- 2nd Grade Teachers: Why an Emphasis on Life Sciences?
- 3rd Grade Teachers: Increasing the Number and Breadth of Informational Texts
- 4th Grade Teachers: Using Informational Texts in the Classroom
- 5th Grade Teachers: Expanding Opportunities/Take Action!

In the whole group setting, the literacy coach will begin by giving a pre-assessment to the teachers. The following prompts will be presented to teachers in the front of the room.

- The amount of research you know of to support using informational texts in your classroom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A lot of research knowledge</th>
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<tr>
<td>No research knowledge</td>
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- Your understanding of the benefits to using informational texts in your classroom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I know a lot of the benefits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am not aware of the benefits</td>
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</table>
• Your level of comfort in you using informational texts in classroom.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>High level of comfort</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>

Under each prompt, there will be a line in which the teachers can place a post-it note that represents where they feel they fall on the line in response to the question.

The literacy coach will present research on why past teaching practices have focused heavily on using narrative texts, benefits to incorporating informational texts, difficulties when using informational texts with elementary level students, and some case studies that focused on incorporating informational texts in a classroom context. Research articles that the presentation will be based on are “Focus on the Facts: Using Informational Texts Effectively in Early Elementary Classrooms” (Hall & Sabey, 2007), “Elementary Informational Text Instruction: A Research Review” (Marinak & Gambrell, 2008), “Making a Case and a Place for Effective Content Area Literacy Instruction in the Elementary Grades” (Moss, 2005), “Exploring the literature of Fact” (Webster, 2009), “Primary Students & Informational Texts” (Yopp & Yopp, 2006), and “Informational Texts as Read-Alouds at School and Home” (Yopp & Yopp, 2006). This information will be shared to teachers through a PowerPoint presentation.

Following the presentation of the research, the teachers break into small groups based on grade level. They will first work with colleagues who focused on the same section of the article in order to debrief what was read. Later, the teachers will mix groups and meet with colleagues who focused on other parts of the article. Teachers will share their expertise about their sections of the article with their colleagues. At the end of the session, the teachers will complete a minute
reflection based on what was learned from the research. The minute reflection will include the following prompts:

- Write about one idea from today’s session that was reinforced.
- Write about one idea from today’s session that was new learning for you.
- Write about one idea from today’s session that you are still wondering about.

The teachers will also visit the pre-assessment and move their post-it notes accordingly to how they now feel after the session.

November

**Topic:** Choosing appropriate texts

**Mode(s) of Sharing:** Small Group Meetings, Explicit Instruction

**Description:**

As a pre-assessment/opening activity, the teachers will partner up in small groups and be given an informational text. Informational texts that will be provided to the teachers are *Bats* (Wood, 2000), *Fishy Tales* (Lock, 2003), *Big Bugs* (Simon, 2005), *Super Storms* (Simon, 2002), *Seymour Simon’s Book of Trucks* (Simon, 2000), *Incredible Sharks* (Simon, 2003), *Danger! Earthquake* (2002), *Chameleon, Chameleon* (Cowley, 2005), *Mud, Mud, Mud* (Meharry, 2001), *The Bird Alphabet Book* (Pallotta, 1987), *The Best Book of Volcanoes* (Adams, 2001), *Bugs, Bugs, Bugs!* (Reid & Chessen, 1998), *Ants* (Berger & Berger, 2002), *Bees* (Berger & Berger, 2002), *Butterflies* (Berger & Berger, 2002), and *Waiting for Wings* (Ehlert, 2001). The teachers will collaborate and discuss how they would currently evaluate that the informational text was a good choice for their students in their classrooms. Following the opening activity, the teachers will be introduced to research to support how to choose appropriate texts based on the grade
level they teach and the needs of the learners. The research will be based on the article “A Quick Guide to Selecting Great Informational Books for Young Children” (Stephens, 2008) The five features that will be presented to the teachers on how to choose appropriate texts are the cover of the text, topic or content of the text, illustrations of the text, organization of the text, and font size and type in the text. The information will be presented to the teachers in the form of a PowerPoint presentation. The teachers will then have the opportunity to work with grade-level colleagues to practice evaluating and choosing appropriate informational texts. They will use a checklist based off of the research in order to evaluate these texts. The teachers will begin by working with the text they evaluated previously and now evaluate it based off of the research and checklist. There will be time to evaluate several different texts. Teachers will also be informed prior to this session that they are welcome to bring their own informational texts from their classrooms to look through. The literacy coach will be available to guide discussion and answer questions. The teachers will complete a minute reflection at the end of the session that includes the following prompts:

- What are three things that you learned from today’s session?
- What is a strategy or idea that you learned that you could use in your classroom tomorrow?

December

**Topic:** Strategies for implementing informational texts

**Mode(s) of Sharing:** Small Group Meetings, Explicit Instruction

**Description:**
As a pre-assessment/opening activity, teachers will be asked to bring in a lesson plan that they have previously taught that utilizes an informational text. In a small group, teachers will work with colleagues to review the lesson plans and make notes about parts that were effective and parts that could be strengthened. Following this activity, teachers will be introduced to research to support various strategies to use when implementing informational texts in the classroom during this session. Models that will be introduced to the teachers are teacher-directed instruction, scaffolded student investigation, shared reading, independent student investigation. Specific strategies that will also be introduced to the teachers are Preview-Predict-Confirm, Ten Important Words, and Found Words. These strategies and research behind the strategies will come from the articles “Models for Using Nonfiction in the Primary Grades” (Palmer & Stewart, 2005), “Primary Students & Informational Texts” (Yopp & Yopp, 2006), and “Shared Reading: A Model for Linking Literacy Instruction and Informational Text” (Borba, 2009). The teachers will be set up in smaller groups to become experts about their strategy. Then, new groups will be formed so that each teacher in the group is the only expert of their strategy. The literacy coach will then describe further how to use the strategies when planning lessons and implementing lessons. Checklists will be provided for each of the strategies. The teachers will then have the opportunity to work with grade-level colleagues to practice using the strategies and incorporating them in lesson plans. Teachers can either revise their past lesson plans to include a new strategy, or can create a new lesson that focuses on a new strategy. The literacy coach will be available to guide discussion and answer questions. The teachers will complete a minute reflection at the end of the session that includes the following prompts:

- What is an idea or strategy that you learned that you plan to implement into your classroom?
• What obstacles may keep you from implementing what you have learned?
• What do you need further instruction on?

January

**Topic:** Utilizing informational texts in the classroom

**Mode(s) of Sharing:** Small Group Meetings, Modeling

**Description:**

Prior to the meeting, the literacy coach will choose an appropriate text for a primary and intermediate classroom lesson. The literacy coach will complete and videotape a lesson done with a primary level classroom and an intermediate level classroom. The teachers will meet together based on whether they teach primary or intermediate students. As a pre-assessment/opening activity, the teachers as a whole group will create a list of what an effective lesson that utilizes informational texts looks like. During the small group meetings, the teachers will watch the video that reflects the grade range that they teach and have the opportunity to discuss and reflect upon what they saw. They will use a checklist in order to note the components of an effective lesson using instructional texts present in the video. The teachers will complete a minute reflection at the end of the session that includes the following prompts:

• An idea that I had never considered before:

• In the future, I plan to:

February

**Topic:** Creating lessons that incorporate informational texts

**Mode(s) of Sharing:** Small Group Meetings, Coaching, Critical-Friends Group
Description:

The teachers will meet in small groups (by grade level) in order to work together to create some lessons that utilize informational texts. The literacy coach will also be present in order to give support and feedback to the teachers. Together, the grade level teachers and literacy coach will look at the instructional goals and needs of the students and develop appropriate lesson(s). Later in the month, a Critical-Friends group will meet together. Each group, who will be randomly assigned colleagues from both primary and intermediate levels, will give feedback to teachers about their lesson plans prior to implementation. All previous checklists will be provided to teachers to ensure that they are choosing appropriate texts and creating effective lessons. The teachers will complete a minute reflection at the end of the session that includes the following prompts:

• An idea or strategy that is currently part of my teaching practice:

• How this will change because of today’s session:

March – April

Topic: Implementation

Mode(s) of Sharing: Independent Application, Observation

Description:

The literacy coach will be able to observe each elementary teacher as they implement choosing and utilizing informational texts in their lessons. In addition, the teachers participating in the professional development will be given the opportunity to observe a lesson of another teacher during the March – April implementation period. The teachers will be able to choose the teacher that they would like to observe. They will observe on the same day as the literacy coach.
The teacher observing will have an observation checklist to complete that will be used as feedback for the teacher being observed. The literacy coach will debrief with the teacher following the lesson in order to review the strengths of the lesson, as well as suggestions for future implementation. A blog will be set up for the teachers online to reflect on how they felt their implementation went, strengths of the lesson, and what they would want to change for future instruction. The teachers who observed the lesson will be invited to comment and share their observations on that specific teacher’s blog.

**May – June**

**Topic:** Reflection

**Mode(s) of Sharing:** Whole Group Presentation, Poster Session, Reflection, Accessing Student Voices

**Description:**

The literacy coach will meet with the students that participated in the beginning of the professional development in order to ask them how they now feel about using informational texts in the classroom after their teachers have gone through the professional development. The literacy coach will film the student responses and compile an iMovie to share with the teachers when they meet later.

The teachers will come together for one last final meeting to celebrate their successes with implementing more informational texts within the classroom. The teachers will prepare presentations on PowerPoint (or other similar visual) in order to share their success and student work with other teachers. At the end, the teachers will have the opportunity to reflect and evaluate the year-long professional development in order to make improvements for the future. The teachers will be shown the student film that the literacy coach filmed earlier of how they
now feel about using informational texts. In addition, the teachers will review back to the first session of the professional development in which they assessed their interests and needs for the topic. They will reflect about whether their goals and objectives were met, as well as what future instruction needs to take place. All teachers who participated in the professional development will fill out a professional development evaluation that will later be analyzed by the literacy coach.

IV. Implementation

During this course, I will be presenting an abbreviated version of this plan to a select group of teachers. I will be working with primary teachers at Brehms Lane Elementary School that are currently in the mentoring program there. They are the newest teachers to the profession and school.

The first activity I plan to implement is the November portion of my professional development plan. This portion will give teachers the research background of how to choose appropriate texts, as well as strategies for choosing appropriate texts. The teachers will also have the opportunity to work with their colleagues to practice evaluating and choosing appropriate informational texts.

The second activity that I plan to implement is the December portion of my professional development plan. This portion will give teachers the research background of different strategies to use while utilizing informational texts, as well as learning how to implement those strategies in the classroom. The teachers will then have the opportunity to work with grade-level colleagues to practice using the strategies and incorporating them in lessons.
When implementing this professional development plan, I may face the challenge of establishing credibility with the faculty members at Brehms Lane Elementary School. I have little teaching experience and am not currently employed within a school district. The teachers may see me as having little credibility to be delivering the professional development. It is important for me to establish a good rapport with the teachers and establish credibility by providing rich and engaging professional development sessions that have a strong foundation in research and theory.

**Research Support of Practice**

*I. Research studies on the topic*

Yopp and Yopp (2006) conducted two studies regarding the exposure of informational texts in the classroom and at home (p. 37). In the first research study, 1,144 preschool through third grade teachers participated. They needed to “anonymously indicate on an index card the grade level they taught, whether they read aloud to their students during the school day prior to a workshop conducted by one or both of the authors, and if so, to provide the complete title of the book or books read aloud” (p. 39). The researchers identified the texts as either narrative, informational, mixed, or other (p. 39). The data showed that out of 1,487 books that were identifiable, 120 books, or 8%, were classified as informational (p. 41). In the second research study, one kindergarten teacher and the families of her 20 students participated (p. 43). The families needed to keep track of monthly reading logs of books that were read aloud to the kindergarten students (p. 43). Similar to the first study, the researchers identified the texts as either narrative, informational, mixed, or other (p. 43). The data showed that out of 1,473 books that were identifiable, 110 books, or 7%, were classified as informational (p. 43).
Webster (2009) wanted to explore in her study the impact of read-alouds of informational texts on first grade students’ science content learning (p. 663). She specifically looked at the students’ drawings and written retellings as a source of information (p. 663). The study, which was conducted in Vere, Clarendon, Jamaica, included a veteran primary school teacher of 37 years and 30 of her first grade students (p. 663). The teacher focused on utilizing instructional strategies in order to support students in making connections, asking questions, and creating predictions when learning about bananas and hurricanes (p. 663). Webster utilized field notes, interviews, and students’ artifacts to collect data (p. 664). When analyzing her data, four themes emerged: “(1) first graders used their own realities to make connections with an informational text about bananas, (2) directed lookbacks enabled students to gather important facts about bananas, (3) teacher read-alouds increased content knowledge and expanded vocabulary about hurricanes, [and] (4) instructional strategies supported the students’ efforts to navigate informational texts” (p. 664).

II. Reading theory supporting topic

Informational texts surround adolescent and adult literacy (Hall & Sabey, 2007, p. 261). 75% of school readings by sixth grade include non-narrative texts, and most adult reading, whether it be professional or personal reading, is informational (p. 261). It has become evident in recent research that it is important to expose children in the early elementary grades to informational texts in order to prepare them for the types of literature they will experience later in their lives (pp. 261). Elementary teachers in the past have focused heavily on narrative texts for multiple reasons (Marinak & Gambrell, 2008, p. 75). First, teachers preferred instruction with narrative texts because they lacked familiarity with informational texts (p. 76). Second, teachers lacked the knowledge of how to support their students’ understanding of informational texts (p.
Third, the teachers did not have enough understanding to effectively teach specific structures (p. 76). However, many literacy experts agree that “by including a wide variety of books (with equal emphasis given to informational texts) a smoother transition may occur between the stages of elementary school reading and intermediate-level content reading” (Stephens, 2008, p. 488).

Educators should become motivated to incorporate informational texts into their literacy instruction for various reasons (Moss, 2005, p. 48). First, having the early exposure to instructional texts will lay the foundation for later learning (p. 48). Second, informational texts can be just as motivating to students as narrative texts (p. 49). Yopp and Yopp (2006) share how informational texts can become a motivational tool to engage learners in a specific topic, especially when learning about science content (p. 23). Third, incorporating informational texts helps students increase new domain knowledge (p. 49). Researchers have also found that teachers who incorporate informational texts in their literacy instruction observe “(a) gains in reading comprehension for both proficient and at-risk readers, (b) the ability to transfer knowledge of informational texts to new learning demands, and (c) enhanced motivation to read” (Marinak & Gambrell, 2008, p. 76).

There are many ways for educators to incorporate informational texts into the classroom, including integrating literacy instruction during content area time, providing access to various text types, and designing instruction to prepare students to be strategic readers and writers of informational texts (Moss, 2005, p. 50-52). Shared reading, a common experience in a literacy program at the elementary level, can also be utilized in order to increase the amount of informational texts that are presented to students in the primary classroom (Borba, 2009, p. 11). Three models have also been developed to “show primary-grade teachers how to scaffold
instruction and answer the question ‘What do I do with nonfiction once I have chosen it?’” (p. 426-427) The first model of instruction is teacher-directed instruction. In this model, educators explicitly instruct students on how to navigate and take away information from informational texts (p. 428). The second model of instruction is scaffolded student investigation. In this model, the students begin taking control over their learning as they start to independently use the reading strategies they learned in the first model (p. 430). The third model of instruction is independent student investigation. In this model, the students have already been gradually released responsibility and are now ready for independent learning (p. 431).

It is important to understand that the message teachers should be taking away from this research is not just on the quantity of informational texts being incorporated into literacy instruction, but also on the quality of the informational texts and how they are being incorporated: “Because informational texts provide important opportunities for children to be exposed to the concepts, vocabulary, and discourses of the disciplines, we must be attentive to not only the number, but also the breadth of the informational texts to which we expose children” (Yopp & Yopp, 2012, p. 484).

III. Relationship between instruction and student achievement

Research studies and articles have demonstrated a relationship between instruction utilizing informational texts and gains in student achievement. Many research studies have recognized gains in reading comprehension for both at-risk and proficient readers when they are familiar the structures within informational texts (Marinak & Gambrell, 2008, p. 76). Elementary aged students who understand the structures within informational texts typically had greater success when “identifying important information and relationships between ideas” (p. 76).
Furthermore, there are many benefits that younger students will experience when including informational texts in classroom instruction. Informational texts:

- Build background knowledge which leads to text comprehension
- Provide insight to young students’ questions about the world around them
- Expose young students to specialized vocabulary
- Offer experiences that familiarize young students with the language involved in informational texts, which provides them the knowledge that is essential to processing informational texts that they will interact with in future content-areas as well as the texts they will engage in as adults (Yopp & Yopp, 2006, p. 37)

IV. Research on professional development supporting carrying out this project.

Research articles on creating and implementing professional development have supported my development of my professional development plan. Perkins (1993) shared how we need to have six priorities in order to teach for understanding: “(1) Make learning a long-term, thinking-centered process, (2) Provide for rich ongoing assessment, (3) Support learning with powerful representations, (4) pay heed to developmental factors, (5) induct students into the discipline, and (6) teach for transfer” (pp. 6-8). As I was developing my plan, I wanted to ensure that my professional development plan met these six priorities as I taught for understanding with my students being the elementary teachers who will be participating in my professional development.

I also was inspired by Lieb’s 1991 article “Principles of Adult Learning” as I was developing my professional development plan. It was important for me to have my professional development plan meet the unique characteristics of adult learners, including how they are autonomous and self-directed, have accumulated a foundation of experiences, are goal
oriented, are relevancy-oriented, are practical, and need to be shown respect (p. 1). I wanted my professional development plan to not be completely literacy-coach driven, but that the adult learners felt in control of their own learning experiences. I wanted my adult learners to feel that I value their time and the experiences that they bring to the professional development.
References


Reflection: Before and During and After Professional Development

It is important during the implementation of my professional development plan that I constantly and consistently assess the effectiveness of the plan. By examining and reflecting before, during, and after the professional development, I have the opportunity to recognize strengths in the professional development as well as areas that can be further improved. Since I will be implementing this professional development plan throughout the academic year, I can make changes as needed in order to meet the needs of the teachers and the students in their classroom.

Pre-Assessments: Before beginning the professional development, it is important to assess what the teachers know and what they are looking to gain further knowledge on from the professional development. Prior to creating this professional development plan, the elementary teachers at Brehms Lane Elementary were asked what they would like information on regarding utilizing informational texts through e-mail. They responded that they wanted more knowledge in how to choose appropriate informational texts for their grade level. In addition, the elementary teachers at the school also wanted more knowledge in instructional strategies that they can use to effectively teach informational texts. This professional development plan was developed to meet the needs and interests of the general elementary teachers at the school.

During my September session, the teachers will be meeting in small groups to discuss how they are currently choosing appropriate informational texts for classroom use, utilizing instructional texts in their classrooms, and what questions and needs they would like to explore further throughout the professional development session. This will serve as a pre-assessment for me, the literacy coach. Furthermore, many sessions throughout the professional development
begin with a pre-assessment/opening activity. This will help me to see what the teachers know and see how they grow as the session progresses.

Discussions and Session Activities: The teachers in the professional development will be involved in thought-provoking discussions with colleagues and completing motivating session activities. These discussions and activities will provide me with an informal assessment to measure the level of understanding of the teachers. When the participants are engaged with small group discussions or completing a session activity, I will be able to go around to all the groups and participants in order to observe the discussions and work being produced. If I notice that some participants did not fully understand what they were supposed to take away from the session, I will be able work with them directly at this time.

Checklists: Checklists will be utilized throughout the professional development plan in order to support various professional development activities. The teachers will use checklists during the November session on choosing appropriate texts, the January session on utilizing informational texts in the classroom, the February session on creating lessons that incorporate informational texts, and the March – April implementation sessions. Correct use of the checklist will provide me with an accurate snapshot of the teachers’ level of understanding of the previous information that was presented.

Minute Reflections: Minute Reflections will be used throughout all the professional development sessions. They will be used in order to quickly evaluate each participant’s thinking either during or at the end of a professional development session. Since the minute reflections only take a short amount of time to complete, I will be able to quickly review the reflections to see what parts of the session were effective and what I need to further discuss with the participants.
Evaluations: At the end of the professional development, the teachers will complete a short professional development evaluation to share their thoughts and experiences as a participant in the professional development. The evaluation will provide the literacy coach with quantitative and qualitative data about the effectiveness of the professional development. I will be able to take time to analyze the evaluations to find which parts of the professional development were effective and successful, and which parts need further work during the next professional development.

Development of Materials

See PowerPoint presentation

Presentation and Reflection

I. First Draft

Overall Plan

I. Topic and Intended Audience

Informational texts surround adolescent and adult literacy (Hall & Sabey, 2007, p. 261). 75% of school readings by sixth grade include non-narrative texts, and most adult reading, whether it be professional or personal reading, is informational (p. 261). Incorporating informational texts in literacy instruction was once thought to be an effective instructional strategy only for middle and high school classrooms. Traditionally, primary classrooms have only focused on teaching students how to “break the code”, whereas higher grade levels focused on comprehension and reading to learn (Moss, 2005, p. 48). Now, educators are encouraged to utilize instructional texts in the early elementary grades (p. 46).

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This professional development plan will be implemented at Brehms Lane Elementary School, a Pre-K through 5th grade elementary school within Baltimore City Public Schools. The intended audience for this professional development plan is for elementary teachers within the school. After asking elementary teachers what they would like more information on regarding utilizing informational text, it was evident that the teachers wanted more knowledge in how to choose appropriate informational texts for their grade level. In addition, the elementary teachers at the school also wanted more knowledge in instructional strategies that they can use to effectively teach informational texts. This professional development plan will meet the needs and interests of the general elementary teachers at Brehms Lane.

II. Timetable of Plan and

III. Description of Modes of Sharing

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<td>Research behind using informational texts in elementary grades</td>
<td>Whole Group Presentation</td>
<td>Prior to this meeting, teachers will receive an article about informational texts that is related to the teachers’ grade level (primary or intermediate).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Month</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Instruction Type</td>
<td>Details</td>
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<td>Choosing appropriate texts</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>Teachers will have read the article prior the first meeting. In the whole group setting, the literacy coach will present important research to all teachers regarding utilizing informational texts in the elementary grades. In smaller groups, the teachers will first work in small groups with colleagues who read the same article to reflect and debrief what was read. Later, the teachers will meet in groups with colleagues who read a different article. Teachers will share their expertise about their article with their colleagues.</td>
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<td>Strategies for implementing informational texts</td>
<td>Small Group Explicit Instruction</td>
<td>Teachers will be introduced to research to support how to choose appropriate texts based on the grade level they teach and the needs of the learners. Strategies will be presented to the teachers on how to choose appropriate texts. The teachers will then have the opportunity to work with grade-level colleagues to practice evaluating and choosing appropriate informational texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Utilizing informational texts in the classroom</td>
<td>Small Group Meetings Modeling</td>
<td>Teachers will be introduced to research to support various strategies to use when implementing informational texts in the classroom. The literacy coach will then describe further how to use the strategies when planning lessons and implementing lessons. The teachers will then have the opportunity to work with grade-level colleagues to practice using the strategies and incorporating them in lessons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Prior to the meeting, the literacy coach will choose an appropriate text for a primary and intermediate classroom lesson. The literacy coach will complete and videotape a lesson done with a primary level classroom and an intermediate level classroom. During the small group meetings, the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month</td>
<td>Activity Description</td>
<td>Details</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Creating lessons that incorporate informational texts</td>
<td>The teachers will meet in small groups (by grade level) in order to work together to create some lessons that utilize informational texts. The literacy coach will also be present in order to give support and feedback to the teachers. Together, the grade level teachers and literacy coach will look at the instructional goals and needs of the students and develop appropriate lesson(s). Later in the month, a Critical-Friends group will meet together. The group will consist of a few colleagues from both primary and intermediate levels to give feedback to teachers about their lesson plans prior to implementation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March-April</td>
<td>Implementation</td>
<td>The literacy coach will be able to observe each elementary teacher as they implement choosing and utilizing informational texts in their lessons. The literacy coach will debrief with the teacher after to go over strengths of the lesson, as well as suggestions for future implementation. In addition, the teachers will be given the opportunity to observe a lesson of another teacher during this time. They will have an observation sheet to complete that will be used as feedback for the teacher being observed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May-June</td>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>The teachers will come together for one last time a final meeting to celebrate their successes with implementing more informational texts within the classroom. The teachers will prepare presentations on PowerPoint (or other similar visual) in order to share their success and student work with other teachers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the end, the teachers will have the opportunity to reflect and evaluate the yearlong professional development in order to make improvements for the future.

IV. Implementation

During this course, I will be presenting an abbreviated version of this plan to a select group of teachers. I will be working with primary teachers at Brehms Lane Elementary School that are currently in the mentoring program there. They are the newest teachers to the profession and school.

The first activity I plan to implement is the November portion of my professional development plan. This portion will give teachers the research background of how to choose appropriate texts, as well as strategies for choosing appropriate texts. The teachers will also have the opportunity to work with their colleagues to practice evaluating and choosing appropriate informational texts.

The second activity that I plan to implement is the December portion of my professional development plan. This portion will give teachers the research background of different strategies to use while utilizing informational texts, as well as learning how to implement those strategies in the classroom. The teachers will then have the opportunity to work with grade-level colleagues to practice using the strategies and incorporating them in lessons.

II. Feedback

Reviewer: Cara Gay

Overall Plan

1. Topic and Intended Audience

   Informational texts surround adolescent and adult literacy (Hall & Sabey, 2007, p. 261). 75% of school readings by sixth grade include non-narrative texts, and most adult reading.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Meeting Type</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Assessing interests and needs of general faculty members</td>
<td>Meetings (Accessing Student Voices)</td>
<td>and what questions and needs they would like to explore further throughout the professional development session. Furthermore, the literacy coach will meet with a few students per grade level to assess student voices. The literacy coach will ask students about their opinions on using informational texts and when they would like to use informational texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>Research behind using informational texts in elementary grades</td>
<td>Whole Group Presentation</td>
<td>Care Gay 10/29/12 1:19 PM: I think this is a great idea. Hopefully teachers can use this information in planning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Comment: I like the organization of this study group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Choosing appropriate texts</td>
<td>Small Group Explicit Instruction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>Strategies for implementing informational texts</td>
<td>Small Group Explicit Instruction</td>
<td>Care Gay 10/29/12 1:23 PM: Will you have these texts available or will teachers need to gather them on their own?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Comment: Do you know the strategies you are going to focus on? Are you going to focus on just a few or cover a lot of strategies?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>Strategies for implementing informational texts</td>
<td>Explicit Instruction</td>
<td>care gay 10/29/12 1:25 PM:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Comment: Are you going to focus on just a few or cover a lot of strategies?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Utilizing informational texts in the classroom</td>
<td>Meetings Modeling</td>
<td>Prior to the meeting, the literacy coach will choose an appropriate text for a primary and intermediate classroom lesson. The literacy coach will meet in small groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Comment: Great opportunity for teachers to put theory into practice. This is a meaningful activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Comment: Videotaping a lesson is a great way to model for teachers so they can see the theory in action.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Review: Erika Conn

Informational texts surround adolescent and adult literacy (Hall & Sze, 2007, p. 261). 59% of school readings by sixth grade include non-narrative texts, and most adult reading, whether it be professional or personal reading, is informational (p. 261). Incorporating school. After asking elementary teachers what they would like more information on regarding utilizing informational text, it was evident that the teachers wanted more knowledge in how to
**PD PLAN: INFORMATIONAL TEXTS**

**September**
- Assessing interests and needs of general faculty members
- Small Group Meetings
- Accessing Student Voices

**October**
- Research behind using informational texts in
  Whole Group Presentation
- Informational texts in elementary grades
  Small Group Presentation
- Informational texts in the elementary grades. In smaller groups, the teachers will first work in small groups with colleagues who read the same article to reflect and debrief what was read. Later, the teachers will meet in groups with colleagues who read a different article. Teachers will share their expertise about their article with their colleagues.

**November**
- Choosing appropriate texts
  Small Group
  Explicit Instruction
- Teachers will be introduced to

**December**
- Strategies for implementing informational texts
  Explicit Instruction
- Prior to the meeting, the literacy coach will choose an appropriate text for a primary and intermediate classroom lesson. The literacy coach will complete and videocase a lesson.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>January</th>
<th>Meetings</th>
<th>Small Group Meetings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creating informational texts in the classroom</td>
<td>Modeling</td>
<td>Coaching Critical-Friends Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Small Group Meetings</td>
<td>The teachers will meet in small groups (by grade level) in order to work together to create some lessons that utilize informational texts. The literacy coach will also be present in order to give support and feedback to the teachers. Together, the grade level teachers and literacy coach will look at the instructional goals and needs of the students and develop appropriate lesson(s). Later in the month, a Critical-Friends group will meet together. The group will consist of a few colleagues from both primary and intermediate levels to observe strengths of the lesson, as well as suggestions for future implementation. In addition, the teachers will be given the opportunity to observe a lesson of another teacher during this time. They will have an observation sheet to complete that will be used as feedback for the teacher being observed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March-April</td>
<td>Implementation</td>
<td>Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whole Group Presentation</td>
<td>The teachers will come together for one last time a final meeting to celebrate their success with implementing more informational texts within the classroom. The teachers will prepare presentations on PowerPoint (or other similar visual) in order to share their success and student work with other teachers. The teachers will then have the opportunity to work with grade-level colleagues to practice using the strategies and incorporating them in lessons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May-June</td>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>整 page</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
III. Second Draft

Overall Plan

I. Topic and Intended Audience

Informational texts surround adolescent and adult literacy (Hall & Sabey, 2007, p. 261). 75% of school readings by sixth grade include non-narrative texts, and most adult reading, whether it be professional or personal reading, is informational (p. 261). Incorporating informational texts in literacy instruction was once thought to be an effective instructional strategy only for middle and high school classrooms. Traditionally, primary classrooms have only focused on teaching students how to “break the code”, whereas higher grade levels focused on comprehension and reading to learn (Moss, 2005, p. 48). Now, educators are encouraged to utilize instructional texts in the early elementary grades (p. 46).

This professional development plan will be implemented at Brehms Lane Elementary School, a Pre-K through 5th grade elementary school within Baltimore City Public Schools. There are 3 Pre-K teachers and 34 elementary teachers at the school. The intended audience for this professional development plan is for all Pre-K and elementary teachers. The elementary teachers were asked what they would like information on regarding utilizing informational texts through e-mail. They responded that they wanted more knowledge in how to choose appropriate informational texts for their grade level. In addition, the elementary teachers at the school also wanted more knowledge in instructional strategies that they can use to effectively teach informational texts. This professional development plan will meet the needs and interests of the general elementary teachers at Brehms Lane.

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II. Timetable of Plan and

III. Description of Modes of Sharing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Mode of Sharing</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Assessing interests and needs of general</td>
<td>Small Group Meetings</td>
<td>During September, the literacy coach will meet with a few students per grade level to assess student voices. The literacy coach will ask students about their opinions on using informational texts and when they would like to use informational texts. When the faculty members initially meet, they will be split up by into small groups by what grade they teach: Primary (Pre-K to 2) and Intermediate (3-5). The small group meetings will begin with an opening activity. The teachers will work with a partner or two to construct a list of the benefits to using informational texts in the classroom, as well as the challenges teachers face when trying to incorporate informational texts into their lessons. From here, the teachers will discuss how they are currently choosing appropriate informational texts for classroom use, utilizing instructional texts in their classrooms, and what questions and needs they would like to explore further throughout the professional development session. The literacy coach will also present the information that evolved from the meeting with the students. As a minute reflection at the end of the session, the teachers will write down a goal or objective that they would like this professional development to meet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>faculty members</td>
<td>Accessing Student Voices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### October

| Topic: Research behind using informational texts in elementary grades |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| **Whole Group Presentation** |
| **Small Group** |

Prior to this meeting, teachers will receive one of two articles about informational texts that is related to the teachers’ grade level, either primary or intermediate. Teachers will have read the article prior the first meeting. In the whole group setting, the literacy coach will present important research to all teachers regarding utilizing informational texts in the elementary grades. The research will include why past teaching practices have focused heavily on using narrative texts, benefits to incorporating informational texts, difficulties when using informational texts with elementary level students, and some case studies that focused on incorporating informational texts in a classroom context. This information will be shared to teachers through a PowerPoint presentation. In smaller groups, the teachers will first work with colleagues who read the same article to reflect and debrief what was read. Later, the teachers will meet in groups with colleagues who read a different article. Teachers will share their expertise about their article with their colleagues. At the end of the session, the teachers will complete a minute reflection based on what was learned from the research.

### November

| Topic: Choosing appropriate texts |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| **Small Group** |
| **Explicit Instruction** |

Teachers will be introduced to research to support how to choose appropriate texts based on the grade level they teach and the needs of the learners. The five features that will be presented to the teachers on how to choose appropriate texts are the cover of the text, topic or content of the text, illustrations of the text, organization of the text, and font size and type in the text. The information will be presented to the teachers in
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>December</th>
<th>Strategies for implementing informational texts</th>
<th>Small Group Explicit Instruction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the form of a Prezi presentation. The teachers will then have the opportunity to work with grade-level colleagues to practice evaluating and choosing appropriate informational texts. They will use a checklist based off of the research in order to evaluate these texts. Informational texts will be provided for the teachers to practice choosing texts. Teachers will also be informed prior to this session that they are welcome to bring their own informational texts from their classrooms to look through. The literacy coach will be available to guide discussion and answer questions.</td>
<td>Teachers will be introduced to research to support various strategies to use when implementing informational texts in the classroom during this session. Models that will be introduced to the teachers are teacher-directed instruction, scaffolded student investigation, shared reading, and independent student investigation. The teachers will be set up in smaller groups to become experts about their strategy. Then, groups will be formed so that each teacher in the group represents the knowledge of the strategy. The literacy coach will then describe further how to use the strategies when planning lessons and implementing lessons. Checklists will be provided for each of the strategies. The teachers will then have the opportunity to work with grade-level colleagues to practice using the strategies and incorporating them in lessons. The literacy coach will be available to guide discussion and answer questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month</td>
<td>Activity Description</td>
<td>Meeting/Coaching Details</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Utilizing informational texts in the classroom</td>
<td>Small Group Meetings Modeling Prior to the meeting, the literacy coach will choose an appropriate text for a primary and intermediate classroom lesson. The literacy coach will complete and videotape a lesson done with a primary level classroom and an intermediate level classroom. During the small group meetings, the teachers (grouped by primary or intermediate level teaching) will watch the video and have the opportunity to discuss and reflect upon what they saw. They will use a checklist in order to note the components of an effective lesson using instructional texts present in the video.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Creating lessons that incorporate informational texts</td>
<td>Small Group Meetings Coaching Critical-Friends Group The teachers will meet in small groups (by grade level) in order to work together to create some lessons that utilize informational texts. The literacy coach will also be present in order to give support and feedback to the teachers. Together, the grade level teachers and literacy coach will look at the instructional goals and needs of the students and develop appropriate lesson(s). Later in the month, a Critical-Friends group will meet together. Each group, who will be randomly assigned colleagues from both primary and intermediate levels, will give feedback to teachers about their lesson plans prior to implementation. All previous checklists will be provided to teachers to ensure that they are choosing appropriate texts and creating effective lessons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March-April</td>
<td>Implementation</td>
<td>Independent Application Observation The literacy coach will be able to observe each elementary teacher as they implement choosing and utilizing informational texts in their lessons. The literacy coach will debrief with the teacher after to go over strengths of the lesson, as well</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
as suggestions for future implementation. In addition, the teachers participating in the professional development will be given the opportunity to observe a lesson of another teacher during this time. The teachers will choose another teacher that they would like to observe during their implementation. They will observe on the same day as the literacy coach. The teacher observing will have an observation sheet to complete that will be used as feedback for the teacher being observed.

### May-June

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reflection</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whole Group Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poster Session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessing Student Voices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teachers will come together for one last time a final meeting to celebrate their successes with implementing more informational texts within the classroom. The teachers will prepare presentations on PowerPoint (or other similar visual) in order to share their success and student work with other teachers. At the end, the teachers will have the opportunity to reflect and evaluate the yearlong professional development in order to make improvements for the future. In addition, the teachers will review back to the first session of the professional development in which they assessed their interests and needs for the topic. They will reflect about whether their goals and objectives were met, as well as what future instruction needs to take place by filling out a professional development evaluation. The literacy coach will also meet with the students that part of the beginning of the professional development to ask them how they now feel about using informational texts in the classroom after their teachers have gone through the professional development.
IV. Implementation

During this course, I will be presenting an abbreviated version of this plan to a select group of teachers. I will be working with primary teachers at Brehms Lane Elementary School that are currently in the mentoring program there. They are the newest teachers to the profession and school.

The first activity I plan to implement is the November portion of my professional development plan. This portion will give teachers the research background of how to choose appropriate texts, as well as strategies for choosing appropriate texts. The teachers will also have the opportunity to work with their colleagues to practice evaluating and choosing appropriate informational texts.

The second activity that I plan to implement is the December portion of my professional development plan. This portion will give teachers the research background of different strategies to use while utilizing informational texts, as well as learning how to implement those strategies in the classroom. The teachers will then have the opportunity to work with grade-level colleagues to practice using the strategies and incorporating them in lessons.

When implementing this professional development plan, I may face the challenge of establishing credibility with the faculty members at Brehms Lane Elementary School. I have little teaching experience and am not currently employed within a school district. The teachers may see me as having little credibility to be delivering the professional development. It is important for me to establish a good rapport with the teachers and establish credibility by providing rich and engaging professional development sessions that have a strong foundation in research and theory.
IV. Feedback

Professional Development Conceptualization: Peer Feedback

Professional Developer: Laura Salvatore
Reviewer: Kelly Owens

Read your colleague’s plan and respond to the questions below in detail.

1. What did you like best about this plan? What works really well?
   • Assessing ‘student voices’ great idea, and one I had not yet considered as a part of a professional development plan!
   • The minute reflection at the end of the first session, to establish personal goals and objectives for the PD, also a good idea.
   • I liked the amount of small group work, and collaboration between colleagues
   • Many checklists and opportunities for feedback
   • The organization and scaffolding, there is definitive gradual release of responsibility. You can see the reading specialist is present in each session, but the sessions truly are centered on the participants.
   • Participants seem to take charge of their own learning.

2. How was research used throughout this plan? Do you have any suggestions of how this can be improved?
   • Research appears to be the driving force behind each sessions, it is evident in each session’s plan.
   • Research is presented via PowerPoint, and also through articles that participants read independently.
   • There are great details describing the basics of why the research is being used. I honestly could not find a place where research use should be improved!

3. What will teachers learn as a result of this? What are some new ways of thinking that were introduced in the plan?
   • How to utilize informational texts
   • How to first choose appropriate informational texts
   • How to effectively use instructional strategies to teach informational texts.
   • Participants will hopefully start to incorporate informational texts into their classroom instruction more often, and in different ways, as a result of this PD. Participants may also begin to survey their students to occasionally guide instructional decisions, particularly looking at what new strategies work best for their students.

4. What questions would you ask the professional developer about aspects of this plan that were confusing or unclear to you?
   • What exactly is a Prezi presentation?
   • Will participants only be completing an evaluation at the very end of the PD, as opposed to at the end of each session?
5. Where in the plan would you like more detail?
   • I thought your plan was very detailed and descriptive, there was not a place in the plan that jumped out at me as far as needing more details. 😊

6. Finally, check to make sure the plan has clearly articulated all of the parts required on the rubric:

   - Modeling
   - Explicit Instruction
   - Coaching
   - Independent Application
   - Observation of Effectiveness with Feedback
   - Small Group Study Groups
   - A segment of the plan that can be done during this course and evaluated

**Professional Development Conceptualization: Peer Feedback**

Professional Developer: Laura
Reviewer: Andrea Palmisano

*Read your colleague’s plan and respond to the questions below in detail.*

1. What did you like best about this plan? What works really well?
   • I liked the November session! I think it is great that teachers will not only get information from research about how to choose appropriate text, but will be able to evaluate text. Are you going to be providing the text at this PD? Or are the teachers going to bring text to evaluate the text they already use in the classroom?
   • I like your “critical-friend” group. This is somewhat like a pre-observation meeting. I’m not sure if all schools do them, but my school does. It is where we meet with administration before an observation lesson to review what we plan on doing. This is very helpful. Colleagues can give us helpful suggestions. It is always helpful to have an extra pair of eyes.
   • I like how you validate the students and take their concerns initially and at the end of the PD.
2. How was research used throughout this plan? Do you have any suggestions of how this can be improved?
   • October Session ➔ Teachers will read articles that pertain to their grade level on the benefits regarding utilizing informational text in the classroom.
   • November Session ➔ Introduce to teachers how to select appropriate text. Teachers need to then apply the research by evaluating the text.
   • December Session ➔ Research to support various strategies about implementing informational text in the classroom.
   • Are you going to show teachers how they can use content material in the reading block that is related what they are also teaching in Science class? Or is this just using more informational text throughout the day?

3. What will teachers learn as a result of this? What are some new ways of thinking that were introduced in the plan?
   • The teachers will learn how to choose appropriate informational text.
   • Teachers will learn how to implement informational text in the classroom.
   • What application do you want the students to gain from the increase use of informational text? Do you want more independent application?

4. What questions would you ask the professional developer about aspects of this plan that were confusing or unclear to you?
   • In the September description section I would put a space between the student’s voices section and the teacher portion. It may have been me, but I was confused at first when I read it.

5. Where in the plan would you like more detail?
   • I know I need to do this, but did you add more to the demographics of the school. I think Dr. D. said she wanted to know if it is a Title 1 school, how many new teachers compared to veteran teachers.
   • Dr. D. also said to give the name of the articles you plan on using. What articles do you plan on using for session in October? I know this seems tedious (I’m thinking about doing it myself), but add where your research came from. Like cite one of the articles you will use information from in your research-based lessons. Again in the November session explain if you are giving the teachers books to evaluate, what books you will use. If you are making the teachers select three books to bring than you don’t have too!

6. Finally, check to make sure the plan has clearly articulated all of the parts required on the rubric:
   ➢ Modeling 😊 (video)
   ➢ Explicit Instruction 😊 (strategies need to implement)
   ➢ Coaching 😊 (creating lessons)
   ➢ Independent Application 😊 (implementation)
   ➢ Observation of Effectiveness with Feedback 😊 (literacy coach observes and colleagues observe)
Read your colleague’s plan and respond to the questions below in detail.

1. What did you like best about this plan? What works really well?

   • I loved your overall topic—Common Core is going to focus on adding more informational texts for all grade levels, so this PD will be extremely useful for staff.
   • Allowing teachers to bring their own informational texts from their classrooms to look through and discuss with the literacy coach. This way, teachers can begin effective instruction ASAP using these texts.
   • Your 2 sessions on "accessing student voices." I never even thought of involving students in a PD plan! However, they are the ones who have to read/listen/react to these texts, so it is very important that you have their feedback as well, and take it into consideration.

2. How was research used throughout this plan? Do you have any suggestions of how this can be improved?

   • In October, teachers will read a research-based article about informational texts according to their grade level. (Will these articles be from the ones you used in your annotated bibliography? If not, what articles will they be?)
   • The PowerPoint Presentation will include research including benefits and difficulties using informational text, as well as research from some case studies.
   • During small group sessions, teachers will be introduced to research that’ll support how to choose appropriate texts based on the grade level and needs of students. They will be introduced to more research for strategies to use when implementing informational texts into lessons.

3. What will teachers learn as a result of this? What are some new ways of thinking that were introduced in the plan?

   • Teachers will learn how to choose appropriate informational texts for their grade level.
   • Teachers will gain more knowledge in instructional strategies that they can use to effectively teach informational texts.
   • Teachers will learn that you can choose appropriate texts based on the cover of the text, topic or content of the text, illustrations of the text, organization of the text, and font size and type in the text.
• Teachers do not always have the opportunity to take students opinions into consideration when choosing texts for their classroom, so I think the “assessing student voices” section of this PD will be new ways of thinking for many teachers.

4. What questions would you ask the professional developer about aspects of this plan that were confusing or unclear to you?

• During the February PD, I was wondering, after teachers create lesson plans together that utilize informational texts, will they begin using these lessons during the current school year or waiting until the following school year?
• When the literacy coach assesses student voices in September, I am not sure if the Pre-K and Kindergarten students will be able to think of or vocalize their opinion on informational texts. Will there be some topics/books for them to refer to when thinking about their opinions? Or some sort of visual for the youngest students to understand what an informational text is?

5. Where in the plan would you like more detail?

• I thought your plan was very detailed and descriptive. Perhaps, just include a brief description of what a Prezi Presentation is. How is this different than a PowerPoint presentation?

6. Finally, check to make sure the plan has clearly articulated all of the parts required on the rubric:

- Modeling Yes
- Explicit Instruction Yes
- Coaching Yes
- Independent Application Yes
- Observation of Effectiveness with Feedback Yes
- Small Group Study Groups Yes
- A segment of the plan that can be done during this course and evaluated Yes

V. Reflection on Feedback

It was very beneficial to me to be able to share my professional development plan with classmates in order to hear their feedback about strengths and areas to work on further. Since I am not in the classroom currently, I do not have the opportunity right now to be able to work with teachers besides graduate school.
During the first round of review, my group consisted of Cara Gay and Erika Conn. Both of them shared with me strengths in my plan and areas that they felt could be stronger. Cara liked how I gave background information on my topic and the importance of the topic, included accessing student voices during my first professional development session, and provided the opportunity for teachers to put theory into practice during the December session. She also liked how I organized my study groups during the October session, will be videotaping lessons in order to model to teachers how to put the theory they have been learning into action, and wrapped up the professional development by having a poster session and reflection period in order to show progress and reflect on the learning that has taken place. Cara also mentioned how using small group meetings, coaching, and a critical-friends group will help support the teachers as they improve their practice of implementing informational texts into their instruction.

In order to make my plan stronger, Cara suggested that I specify whether or not I will have texts available to teachers during the November session and what strategies I am planning to focus on during the December session. She also was looking for more detail for how I was planning on organizing my March – April sessions when the teachers observe other classroom teachers, as well as what challenges I may face when implementing my two components. When revising my plan, I took Cara’s feedback and was more specific on how I was planning on providing the informational texts to the teachers during my November session, which is when they are learning how to choose appropriate texts. I also wanted to give the teachers the opportunity to review their own texts they already have in the classroom, so I made sure to include that in my plan as well. For my December portion of my plan, I went back to my annotated bibliography and included in my plan specific strategies that I wanted to present to the teachers. I clarified in my March – April sessions how I was planning on organizing the
classroom visits of teachers and wrote about the challenges I think I may face when implementing my professional development plan at Brehms Lane Elementary School.

Erika shared that she liked how I began my overall plan with a statistic, differentiated my September and October sessions so it is relevant for the teachers, and how the teachers were reading articles during the October session. She enjoyed how I was having inter-visitation along with effective feedback in March – April, and how my final session showed off the hard work of the teachers over the course of the year. She also loved how I was planning on videotaping a lesson to share with the staff and how the lessons are based on the students’ needs. Erika thought that the two components that I chose to implement were the two quickest “bang for your buck” topics and that it will give teachers what they need to get started.

Erika wanted more details and clarification in how I surveyed the teachers I will be working with during the implementation stage, how I plan on initiating conversation during my September session, whether I plan on sharing the information I learned from talking with the students in September during the first faculty meeting, and if the teachers were going to be offered planning time after the explicit instruction during my December session. She was also wondering how I plan on establishing the Critcial-Friends Group in February so that it is non-threatening to teachers participating. Erika suggested that I jigsaw the strategies taught in November in order to have teachers delve into a specific strategy, which may influence them to utilize it in their classrooms later. She also suggested that I use an observation checklist during my January session. When revising my plan, I took Erika’s feedback and gave more specifics during each of my descriptions of sessions. This addressed her questions and areas for further clarification. Erika’s suggestion about checklists helped me to begin thinking about different
visuals that I wanted to present throughout the sessions. I revised my plan to include what visuals I thought would make for a more effective professional development plan.

My second round of review included collaborating with Kelly Owens, Andrea Palmisano, and Colleen Jacobs. Kelly shared how she really enjoyed how I accessed student voices, my minute reflection at the end of my first session, the amount of small group work and collaboration I planned throughout my plan, the checklists I incorporated, and how there is a definitive gradual release of responsibility throughout the professional development plan. She wanted more clarification as to what a Prezi presentation was and if the participants would only be completing an evaluation at the very end of the professional development as opposed to at the end of each session. When revising my plan, I decided to change my initial plan of using Prezi presentations to utilizing PowerPoint presentations. I have had much more experience creating PowerPoint presentations, and since I plan on implementing two components at a school I do not currently teach at, I thought it would be more effective to create a PowerPoint presentation that I know could be easily projected without using the internet. I also decided based off of Kelly’s feedback to use some sort of evaluation at the end of every session. It is important for me to assess what information was beneficial for the teachers, what information they still need, and how I could improve the professional development to better meet the teachers’ needs.

Andrea shared how she really liked my November session of my plan, my Critical-Friends group, and how validated the students and talked to them about their views and concerns initially and at the end of the professional development. She wanted more information about whether I was showing teachers how they can use content material in the reading block or just using more informational text throughout the day. She suggested that I put a space between the students’ voices session and the teacher session, add more demographics of the school in my
intended audience portion of the plan, and to be more specific about what research articles and informational texts I plan on using throughout my professional development plan. When revising my plan, I reformatted some of my phrasing to make sure that it was clear to the reader that my goal of this professional development was to promote more use of informational texts throughout the day, whether it be in the reading block or content blocks. I also went through my plan and added specific information about research articles and informational texts that I want to use during the sessions. I decided to contact another classmate about gathering more demographic information about the school I will be implementing my two professional development sessions at.

Colleen shared how she loved the overall topic because of how useful it will be with Common Core being implemented. She liked how I allowed teachers to bring their own informational texts from their classrooms to evaluate and how two of my sessions include accessing student voices. Colleen wanted more information about whether the teachers will begin using the lesson plans they will be creating during the current school year or waiting until the following school year. She also was wondering whether the Pre-K and Kindergarten students would be able to think or vocalize their opinion on informational texts. Colleen suggested including the specific research articles in my plan that I want to utilize and further describing what a Prezi presentation is. When revising my plan, I was more specific on how the teachers will be using the lessons they were working on during the February session during their implementation period in March and April. In addition, I was also more specific on how the literacy coach will bring visuals and materials to help the youngest students in the school to express their opinions on informational texts. Due to Andrea’s feedback, I had previously added in more specific information about research articles and informational texts that I want to use
during the sessions. Also, I had previously changed my Prezi presentations to PowerPoint presentations due to Kelly’s feedback. I have had much more experience creating PowerPoint presentations, and since I plan on implementing two components at a school I do not currently teach at, I thought it would be more effective to create a PowerPoint presentation that I know could be easily projected without using the internet.

Overall, I found all the feedback that my peers have given me over the past few weeks to be extremely meaningful to making my professional development plan stronger.