

PTC COLLEGIAL CIRCLE:

Final Report to the PTC Policy Board

- I. Members:**
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| Valerie Clarke | Janice Sengillo |
| Dana Quiel | Bridget Bauman |
| Caren Glassman | Cathy Schneider |
| Meg Warren | |

Contact Person: Valerie Clarke

School: Mendon Center Elementary

II. Anticipated Outcome/Goal:

- 1) List of books according to SGM stage will be created for 1st grade teachers to use during their language arts program.
- 2) Teachers will understand how SGMs can fit into their current language arts lesson and will understand how to incorporate the story braid into their lessons to enhance student learning.

III. Beginning Date: 7/21/09 **Ending Date:** 5/29/09 **# of hours** 11.25 hours

IV. Attachments: Please attach copies of the following to this cover sheet.

- Collegial Circle Attendance Log**
- Collegial Circle Meeting Log**
- Log of strategy/strategies implemented**
- Samples of implementation strategies or student work samples (if applicable).**
- Collegial Circle: Reflection Sheets (one for each member)**

V. Final Reflections:

1. Was the outcome/goal of this Collegial Circle met? Explain.

After our initial meetings and beginning to use the story grammar marker, the collegial circle members decided that completing the first goal (creating a book list) was not necessary. This task would have been too time consuming and taken away from time to practice using the story braid with already chosen books/topics. Instead, we found that in the first grade classrooms, teachers would utilize the books they already use with their students. Prior to reading a story to the class (whole group or small reading group) teachers would go through the story to determine the SGM Stage and practice using the story braid when telling the story. Sometimes the teachers found it helpful to write out the story components as a guideline for their lessons or to talk it out with another teacher.

The second outcome was met, with each teacher using the SGM story braid at various levels within their classrooms. Some teachers used it only when reading to the large group, some both when reading to the whole class and in small guided reading groups, and some additionally incorporate it into their writing lessons. The classroom teachers found success in using it with students at all skill levels. For those students at very early stages of reading decoding, the SGM is not used in their small guided reading groups, however, they have gained understanding of it

through whole group lessons. The reading resource teacher (Mrs. Sengillo) found that the books she was reading with her first grade students were too basic to use the SGM. These students, however, gained exposure to SGM in the classroom. In the speech therapy room, the SGM was used by Mrs. Clarke with first graders for story recall/retelling and question comprehension.

2. How did the Collegial Circle assess whether the outcome was met?

The outcome was assessed in two ways.

First, reports from each of the teachers along the way (through meetings, email check ins, and brief check-ins in passing) indicated their increased comfort and skills in using the story braid. In addition, the first grade teachers involved in the collegial circle reported students having success in responding to questions when the story braid was used. Mrs. Glassman shared writing samples showing the expanding writing of some of her top students when they utilized SGM in their writing process. The teachers overall find this to be a good tool to add to their “toolbox” of effective strategies to use in their language arts lessons.

Second, a baseline of narrative skills (story retelling) was taken prior to the introduction of the SGM story braid (9/5/08). 11 students with a range of abilities were read a story and then asked to retell the story. These students were then seen again in May 2009 and asked to retell a different story. The results were then viewed to determine if growth was seen in any of the students’ narrative skills. Through this we found that the level of growth varied. The biggest gain was seen in students who had very weak narrative skills in September. The story braid proved to be an effective tool in prompting the student. Several other students showed little change, but when the story braid was reviewed icon by icon, they were able to “fill in the blanks” adding some of the missing details.

Reflecting on the outcome of this collegial circle, we have found the SGM story braid to be an effective tool to use in our language arts lessons. Taking a mid-year assessment may have been beneficial in gaining further information regarding student progress and areas on which to improve. For example, during the post-assessment, some students still began their stories by stating the character as a pronoun (he) instead of saying his name. Few gave descriptive details beyond stating the character name or calling him, “the boy.” More frequent use of the story braid icons to stress the critical thinking triangle could possibly lead to improved higher level thinking and reasoning skills.

3. How did your work impact teaching/learning? (Include student work Samples, lesson plans, peer reviews, etc.)

Through this collegial circle, we’ve found a new tool to use to assist with question comprehension, recall and story telling. It guided our teaching, reminding us to include all the components of a story in our telling/retelling. This is a multi-sensory strategy that helped those students with weak narrative skills to develop to a level within grade expectations and those students with strong narrative skills a guideline to expand their written language. Overall, each teacher agreed that this collegial circle was beneficial and we will continue to use SGM in our daily instruction.

Further exploration may be done in the following areas:

- Telling stories from different perspectives, not just the perspective of the main character.
- Using the story braid as a tool to assist with problem solving in social situations – feelings and perspectives can be expressed using this.
- Use SGM more to help students organize their writing.