

Collegial Circle Final Report

Please complete all information on this form. After it is complete, send it to the Teacher Center along with other supporting documentation. Electronic copies are preferred whenever possible.

COLLEGIAL CIRCLE INFORMATION

Title of Circle: **Reading Nonfiction: Notice & Note Stances, Signposts, and Strategies** Standards Area: English, math, science, spec. ed., S.S., music, library

Facilitator: Liesa Ehrlich School(s): CRMS

Beginning Date: 2/5/16 Ending Date: 5/4/16 # of Hours: 6, 7, 5

Please submit copies of the following to this report:

- ✓ Collegial Circle Attendance Log
- ✓ Collegial Circle Meeting Log
- ✓ Samples of strategies implemented, materials created, or student work samples where applicable
- ✓ Collegial Circle Reflection Sheets - completed by each participant

COLLEGIAL CIRCLE DESCRIPTION

What was the anticipated goal(s) of this Collegial Circle?

The goal was to familiarize ourselves w/the stances, signposts, and strategies delineated in Beers's and Probst's Reading Nonfiction with the hope that we could come up with some content (as opposed to disciplinary) literacy language and strategies that can be used across content areas.

What grade level(s) and or subject area(s) will benefit from this Circle?

Our hope is that all middle grade levels/subject areas will ultimately benefit from this circle. Teachers from a variety of content areas took part in this circle, and they have been talking with other colleagues about this work. At this time, participants came from music (choral); 6th and 8th grade S.S.; 8th grade English; 6th grade science and math; special ed. grades 6 and 7, and the CRMS librarian was part of the circle as well.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

Was the goal of your Collegial Circle met? Please explain.

I do feel that our goal was met. Teachers familiarized themselves with the language and strategies put forth in this text; we had thoughtful discussion about and increased our understanding of developmental demands, differences between content and disciplinary literacy, rigor, relevance, and text complexity; we further considered how what we learned might impact our work; and despite the short amount of time relative to all that we learned from the text and through discussion, members also put aspects of what they learned into use in their classrooms.

How did the members of this Collegial Circle assess whether the outcome was met? What evidence was utilized to assess your progress?

This group had rich discussion, and all members reflected on what they read, pushing one another's thinking forward. Our discussion notes provide evidence of this thinking and that the outcome was met.

How did your work impact teaching and learning? [include student work samples, lesson plans, peer reviews, etc.]

As with the Nonfiction BRMS circle, teachers did talk about how reading *Nonfiction Notice & Note* impacted their own reading, and it is worth repeating (as I had mentioned in the BRMS Nonfiction report) that as teachers become aware of what reading with the stances, signposts, and strategies looks like, they will be increasingly comfortable scaffolding nonfiction reading for students.

In addition, in both circles, teachers kept coming back to the notion that we need to provide opportunities for students to practice reading and thinking independently. Participants examined ways in which we (all adults—including text book authors) inadvertently enable our children by telling them too much of what they need to know rather than having students grapple with text and concepts in order to

reach and defend their own conclusions. And—as w/the BRMS circle—participants reported that students were more engaged, and their thinking went deeper, and naturally (without prompting) made more thoughtful connections and asked authentic questions when using the strategies from this text.

Did your work align with the Level of Evaluation you identified in your proposal? Please explain. [Refer to the document, *5 Levels of Professional Development Evaluation*, on the TC webpage.]

Yes. All members acquired new knowledge. Members also adopted some of the language used in the text and most actually began using the Big Questions in their classrooms, pushing their level of participation to the application level.

Please include any additional comments you would like to share with the Collegial Circle Committee. This may include unanticipated outcomes, next steps, new learning, etc.

We covered a lot of ground in a short time. Participants in the *Notice & Note* fiction circles loved the strategies presented, and had asked numerous times about ways to get colleagues from other content areas involved in this work, so I had planned to introduce the non-fiction version as soon as it was available. It took longer than expected for this book to come out, and that meant squeezing meetings into a shorter period of time than I had hoped—at the same time, I felt like this presented an opportunity to get different content teachers together to build shared knowledge around the importance of this work, so I did not want to wait. It is also worth noting that the fiction book was easier to move through—there were fewer “moving parts” since, as the authors point out, they were able to find some common elements that appeared in all adolescent fiction texts they examined, whereas, given the number of purposes for writing (and reading) nonfiction and the number of types of nonfiction, they were not able to come up with a neat list of signposts and anchor questions that would apply to all nonfiction texts. (It is worth noting, however, that the stances could apply to all nonfiction reading.)

Despite the challenges associated with this work, members of this circle were very enthusiastic about what we learned. Participants are in fact hoping to see others learn about and embed the stances, signposts, and strategies into their teaching as well. They love the notion of sharing this work across disciplines, and in both groups, we began brainstorming ways to revisit what we have done in these circles. In addition, we already have a list of colleagues who would like to take part in this circle.