

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING TEAM REPORT

School Year: 2015-2016

PLT Title

Engaging Students Through Language Centers

Blurb for PLT Conference Brochure

How can we meet the needs of Belmont's diverse student population through language centers? K-12 ESL teachers offer a forum to share their experiences this year with differentiated language learning centers. Let's share strategies about grouping, differentiating, materials, resources, and routines. Whether you want to begin incorporating centers or are a veteran, come share your questions and experiences!

Contact Information *(Write * next to facilitator's name.)*

Name	School	Grade Level or Subject
*Michelle Moeller	Wellington	K-4 ELL
Jane Brandt	BHS/Chenery	5-12 ELL
Lindi DeLorio	Butler	K-4 ELL
Jennifer Ellis	Burbank	K-4 ELL
Megan Marincic	Winn Brook	K-4 ELL
Natalie Ward	Wellington/Winn Brook	K-4 ELL
Grace Yegen	Chenery	5-8 ELL

PLT SMART Goal

We will engage our diverse student population and incorporate differentiated language learning experiences through weekly center activities.

Key Actions

1. Connect with classroom teachers with center experience.
2. Gather research-based center activities for implementation.
3. Identify student areas of need through district assessments to group students.
4. Design centers that are appropriate to developmental needs and proficiency levels.
5. Collaborate to create materials that will be used during centers.
6. Monitor student progress through student work (both informal and formal assessment) and adjust groups accordingly.

Findings

As a whole, we engaged our diverse population and incorporated differentiated language learning experiences through weekly center activities.

Successes:

Engaging

- choice of which center to go to rather than rotating (students are varying their choices well)
- grouping through matching game/student conversation activity
- two days per week: students and teacher know what to expect and know instructions
- students helping students
- address Tier 1 gaps for better student access to classroom curriculum

Differentiating for Diverse Learners

- grouping by level of language proficiency, maturity, ability and/or personality
- finishing classwork
- allows more 1 on 1 teacher time
- access to a multitude of grade and language levels
- multi-sensory approach: listening, speaking, tactile, etc.
- customized 'Tell About It' App questions

Language Learning

Our centers provided language support in:

- oral language development: social and academic
- letter identification
- phonemic awareness
- vocabulary
- rhyming
- phonics and word families
- reading fluency
- idioms
- prefixes
- reading comprehension
- response to literature
- grammar skills
- synonyms antonyms
- homophones
- unit preview/ building background knowledge
- spelling
- sight words
- various genres of writing
- punctuation

Challenges:

Enagaging

- students are getting bored with repeated exposure to centers
- Teacher Challenge: rush to create, observe veteran center teachers, teachers learn as they go rather than anticipate snags
- students want to play with materials or get off task or get loud
- unreliable technology
- space and location
- student accountability-are they completing the task?

Differentiating for Diverse Learners

- need to brainstorm lots of ideas, takes time to create new centers/materials with multiple levels
- not enough iPads/technology for some centers

Language Learning

- Centers can be challenging for students with language-based or physical disabilities
- Various language levels have different needs and goals

*Student level and progress monitoring can be skewed and hard to collect hard data: change centers periodically

* Students are gaining English language progress in regular classroom as well

Recommendations / Next Steps

Address the challenges

Collaborate to collect materials and plan implementation

Prioritize and plan peer observations

Continuously upload center materials onto the shared drive