

**PROFESSIONAL LEARNING TEAM REPORT
2010-2011**

**EXHIBIT A
2-14-12**

Keywords (for database searching)

Vocabulary, writing

Contact Information

Name	School	Grade Level or Subject
Melissa Crough	Winn Brook	Grade 4
Brie Graber	Winn Brook	Grade 4
Kristin Knutson	Winn Brook	Grade 4
Hester Murray	Winn Brook	Grade 4
Erica Ross	Winn Brook	Grade 4

Guiding Theme

Acquisition of 21st Century Skills

Inquiry Question

How do we implement structured vocabulary instruction to improve student word choice in writing?

Process

1. Pre-Assessment using writing prompt and a 6 +1 Rubric on Word Choice (teacher assessed)
 - a. Prompt: Think about a memorable day you had this summer
2. Intervention - 5 new words are introduced and worked with in a variety of contexts every 2 weeks
 - a. "Definition Schmeffinition" – introduction game where students (in small groups) write their own definitions of the words and then listen to all of the definitions, including a predetermined correct definition, and try to identify the correct definition
 - b. Two activities - to be completed during reading centers each week
 - c. "Word Wizard" – students listen for examples of the words in their lives (conversations, books, situations,) and share what they find on an index card displayed on a bulletin board
 - d. Post-assessment – review of the words from current and previous cycles where students identify contexts appropriate for each word, sentence completions, and multiple choice
3. Biweekly self/ teacher assessment on "Quick Write" (10-15 min. sentence starter) using rubric
4. Midyear Assessment using writing prompt and rubric (teacher assessed)
 - a. Prompt: Think about a time school was closed and you had the day off
 - b. Analyze results to track progress and plan further instruction
5. Continue intervention considering changes necessary based on Midyear Assessment
 - a. We found out that we needed more direct instruction on figurative language so we planned a series of lessons that targeted this aspect of writing
6. End of Year Assessment using writing prompt and rubric
 - a. Prompt: Write about a school memory from 4th grade

Findings

Based on the results of our assessments, Word Choice in our students' writing did improve through the span of our intervention. At the beginning of the year, only 10% of our students scored 4 or higher on the 6 point rubric. In the middle of the year, over 30% of our students scored 4 or higher and there was an upward shift in scores that were below 4 points (many of the students that had scored at 2 now scored a 3). At this point in the year, we have not collected the data for the End of Year Assessment. In addition to the data collected, we anecdotally noticed an increase in word appreciation and awareness.

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Recommendations / Next Steps

We were pleased with our intervention and plan on including this vocabulary instruction in the future. We would recommend including an explicit vocabulary program as part of instruction in the fourth grade classroom. Please note that the intervention we did took up a large amount of class time, but we felt that it was worth it for the outcomes for our students. Looking back on our PLT, we may revise the rubric we used because 'word choice' includes things beyond just vocabulary (like figurative language), which was not initially part of our intervention.