

Title of Action Research Project:
Increasing Teacher Efficacy Through
Instructional Rounds

Creston Middle School

Principal: Chad Reedy

Email: creedy@warren.k12.in.us

Team Member's Names

Matthew Wojas and Elisa Stanfill

Background Leading to this Inquiry

After analyzing data from an HR Level 2 survey, we realized that there were two indicators that drew our attention: Leader Indicator 2.1 and 2.6.

-Indicator 2.1.1 focus: The school leader communicates a clear vision as to how instruction should be addressed in the school.

-School Leaders and teacher leaders have developed a written document articulating our school wide model of instruction

Feedback: Teacher's responses revealed that there wasn't not a clearly developed written document that articulated a school-wide model of instruction (13 of 34 teachers)

-Indicator 2.6 focus: Teachers have opportunities to observe and discuss effective teaching.

-I have opportunities to engage in instructional rounds.

Feedback: Teacher's reported that they have very few opportunities to engage in instructional rounds and observe other teachers (16 of 36 teachers)

In addition, one teacher leader is a language arts department chair and her department was adopting a new curriculum called StudySync. The department was feeling overwhelmed because they had to adjust and adapt to the new instructional structure and online-based content.

Purpose of This Inquiry

The purpose of our inquiry was to start small with building an instructional model on a smaller scale with the language arts department and then use instructional rounds to provide teachers a process to see the new program in action and provide them opportunities to debrief and discuss their observations.

Our Wondering

With this purpose in mind, our wondering became:

Could a clear instructional snapshot used in connection with instructional rounds increase teacher efficacy?



Our Actions

Round 1: Skill Lesson Focus

- Cross Grade Level PLCs
 - Change in Practice
 - Identified Focus: Skill Lessons
 - Purpose of Instructional Rounds
- Identified Model Teachers
- Instructional Rounds
 - Held during prep periods (allowed 7th grade teachers to observe 8th)
 - Teachers had an observation form to guide their reflections
- Debrief Discussion
- Google Form Survey
- Grade Level planning meeting apply learning

Skill or Strategy Routine

Teacher: Room 18 _____ Date/ Time: _____

Observer: _____

+/-	Routine Components	Comments
	<input type="checkbox"/> Clear routines and procedures for reading instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Shared Text <input type="checkbox"/> Skill or Strategy (circle one) <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching Point: <input type="checkbox"/> Modeled for students <input type="checkbox"/> Guided practice/ independent practice	

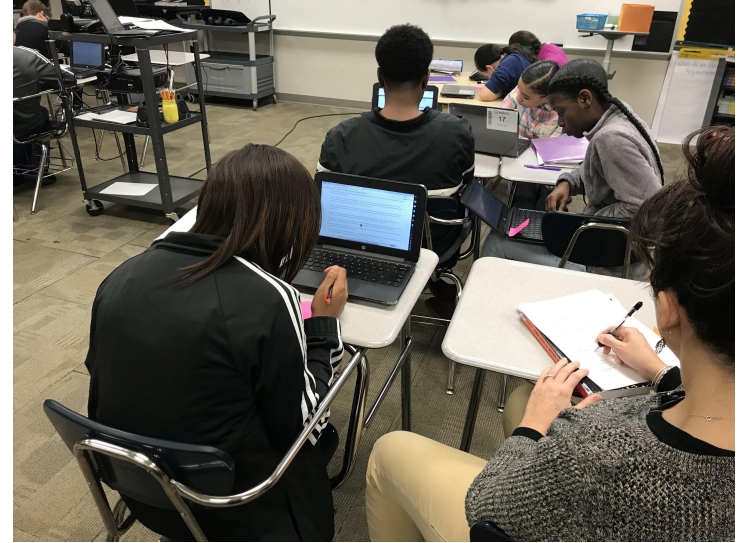
Additional information:

Student comment:

Our Actions

Round 2: Close Reading Focus

- PLCs
 - Change in Practice
 - Identified Focus: Close Read
 - Stop, Start, Continue, Revise
 - Need for Close Reading Framework
 - Notice & Note Strategy
- Identified Model Teachers
- Instructional Rounds
 - Held during prep periods (allowed 7th grade teachers to observe 8th)
- Debrief Discussion
- Google Form Survey
- Grade Level Planning to apply learning



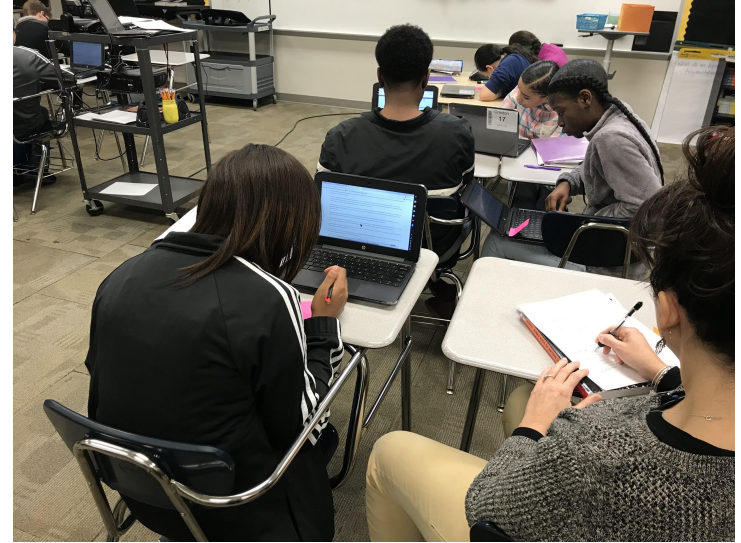
When I think about Close Reading...

Start	Stop	Continue	Revise
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring ways to support students in attending to both their own experience and what is presented in the text. • Building opportunities for exploratory discussion and collaboration. • Selecting a short passage with specific purpose • Asking students about their experience with the text. • "Now I know..." card or journal • Give students opportunities to determine which chunk of the text to close read (after 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rereading the entire passage just to reread it • Assessing just the skills or words on the page without attending to what's happening in the reader's mind when they read those words. • Making a close read a completely independent or teacher driven task. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading with a specific purpose • Annotating thoughts and feelings • Having students write their responses and/or the write tab. • Building student connections from text to self. • Making connections across passages and draw inferences. • Maintaining the integrity of the text • Using outside resources to help students make connections and enhance their reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The length of text we give students to "close read" • Rereading to only a chunk of the text. • The lense through which they read.

Our Actions

Round 2: Close Reading Focus

- PLCs
 - Change in Practice
 - Identified Focus: Close Read
 - Stop, Start, Continue, Revise
 - Need for Close Reading Framework
 - Notice & Note Strategy
- Identified Model Teachers
- Instructional Rounds
 - Held during prep periods (allowed 7th grade teachers to observe 8th)
- Debrief Discussion
- Google Form Survey
- Grade Level Planning to apply learning



KYLENE BEERS & ROBERT E. PROBST

Notice & Note

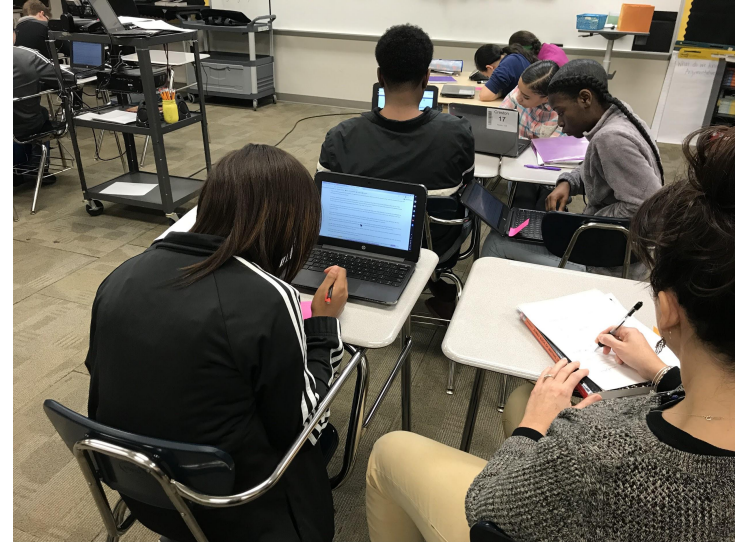
STRATEGIES *for*
CLOSE READING

Holtzman
Illustrations by [unreadable]

Our Actions

Round 2: Close Reading Focus

- PLCs
 - Change in Practice
 - Identified Focus: Close Read
 - Stop, Start, Continue, Revise
 - Need for Close Reading Framework
 - Notice & Note Strategy
- Identified Model Teachers
- Instructional Rounds
 - Held during prep periods (allowed 7th grade teachers to observe 8th)
- Debrief Discussion
- Google Form Survey
- Grade Level Planning to apply learning





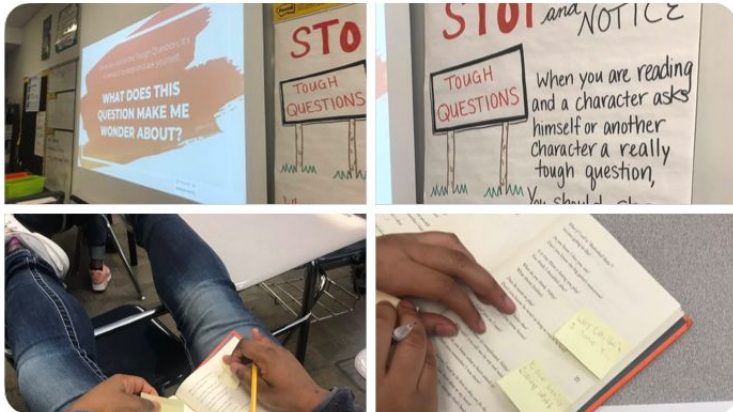
Thread

Kylene Beers Retweeted



Sara Uebbing
@suebbing

Ms. Stanfill knows how to bring the text and reader together. Love seeing @CrestonMS Ss using notice and note tough questions. #WEaretheKEY #closereading



Our Instruction Round Model Lesson was recognized and retweeted by Kylene Beers, the author of *Notice & Note*!



Tweet

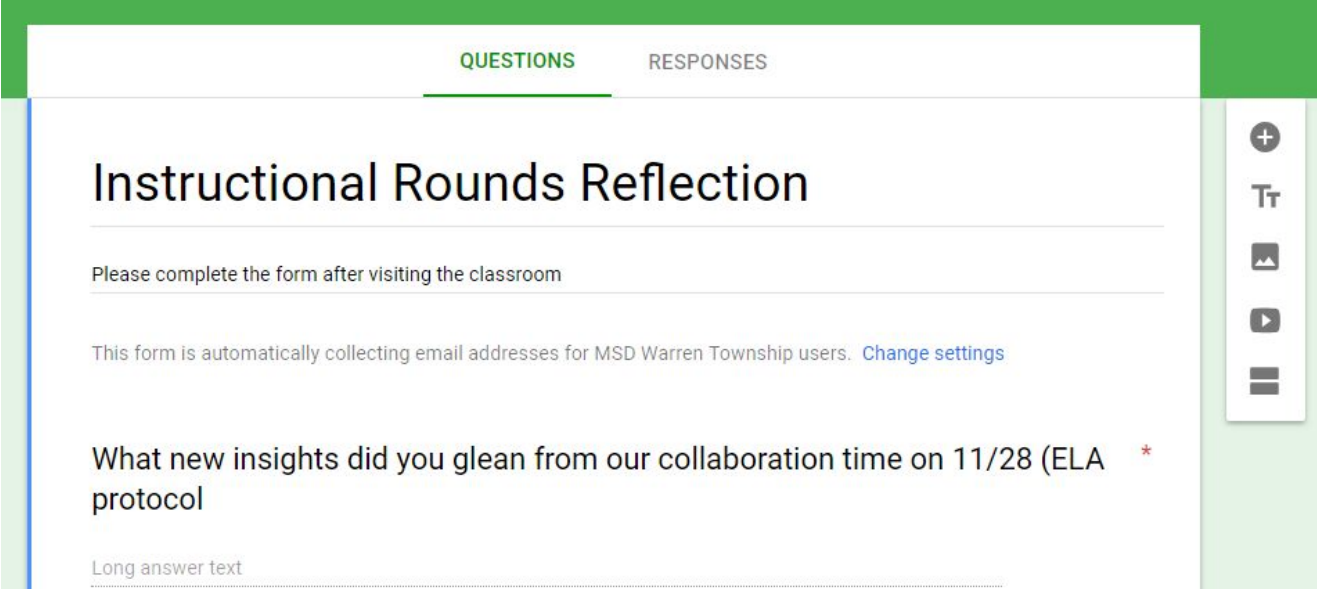


Kylene Beers
@KyleneBeers

Thanks for sharing this! Remember, when kids notice a main character discussing (or thinking about) a tough question, the reader almost always has insight into the character's internal conflict. #NoticeandNote

Data Collection

- Google Form Surveys
- Post Round Debriefs
- Teacher Interviews

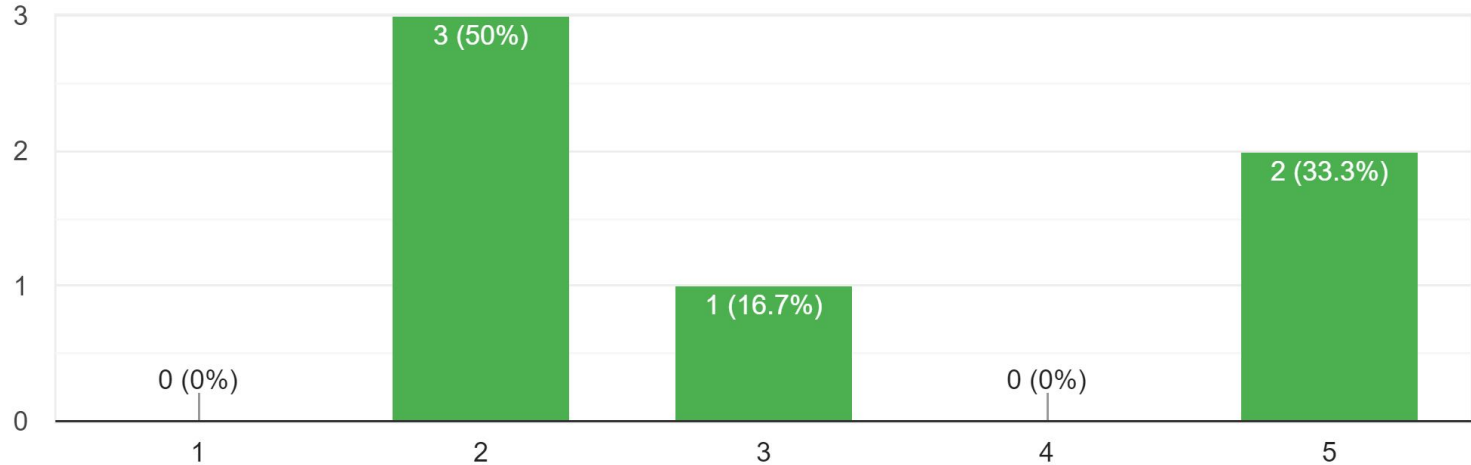


The image shows a screenshot of a Google Form interface. At the top, there are two tabs: 'QUESTIONS' (which is selected and underlined) and 'RESPONSES'. The form title is 'Instructional Rounds Reflection'. Below the title, there is a horizontal line, followed by the text 'Please complete the form after visiting the classroom'. Another horizontal line follows, with the text 'This form is automatically collecting email addresses for MSD Warren Township users. [Change settings](#)'. Below this is another horizontal line, followed by the question 'What new insights did you glean from our collaboration time on 11/28 (ELA protocol) *'. At the bottom, there is a horizontal line with the text 'Long answer text' below it. On the right side of the form, there is a vertical toolbar with icons for adding questions, sharing, embedding, video, and a menu icon.

Our Data: Round 1

How engaging are the skills lessons for students?

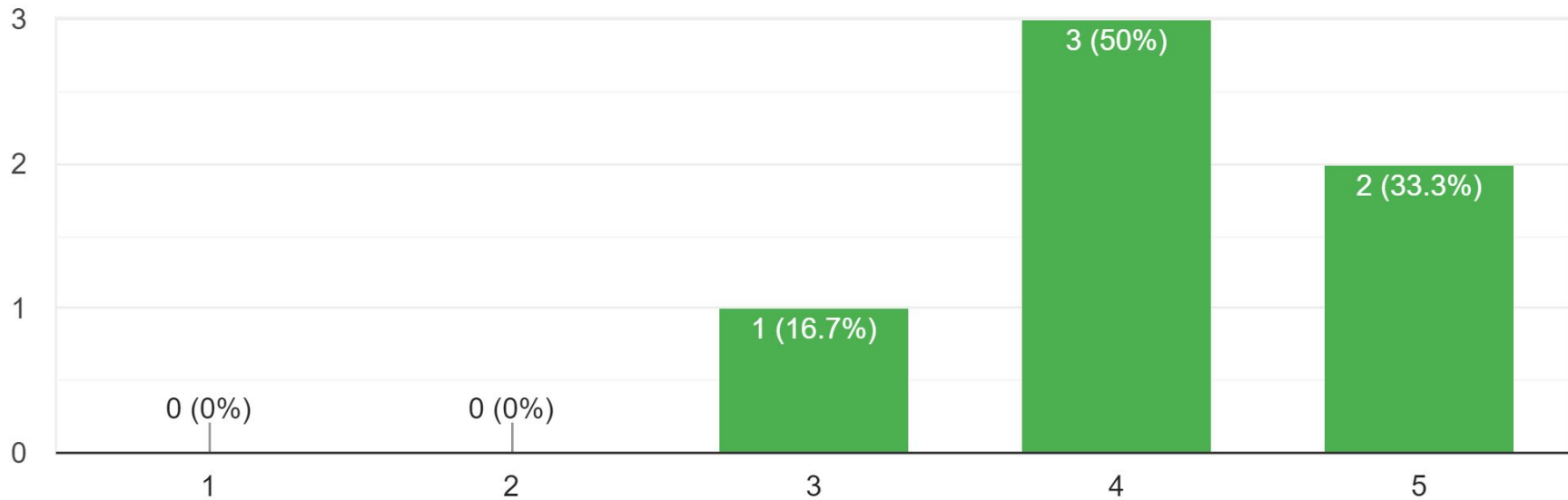
6 responses



Our Data: Round 1

What is your comfort level in delivering a skills lesson?

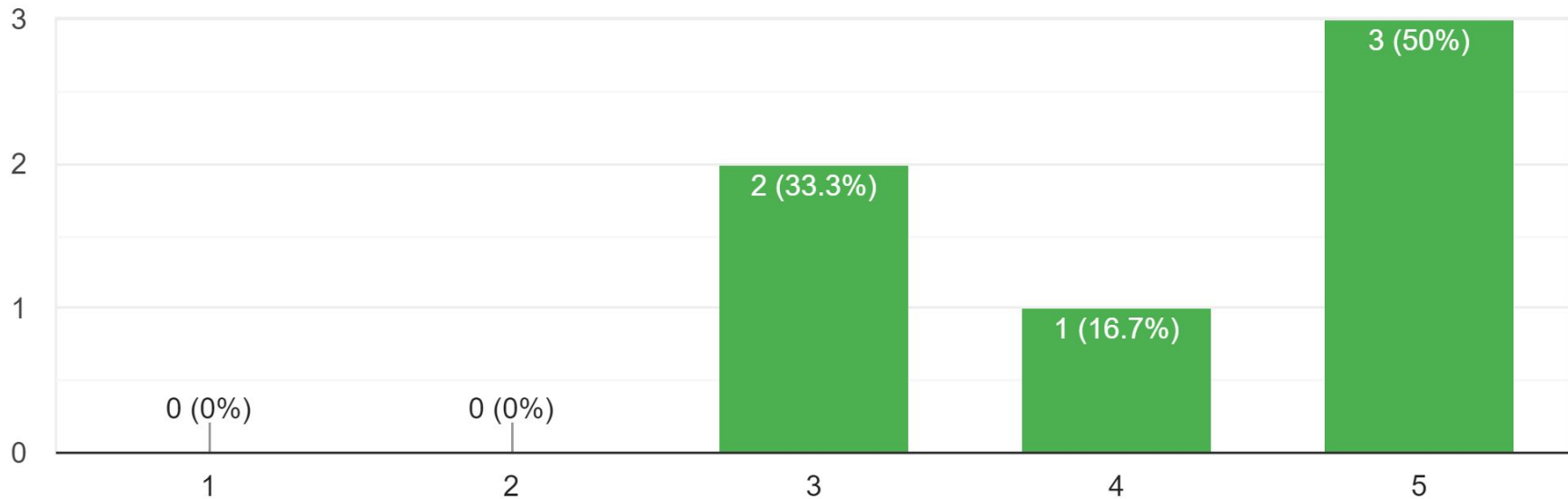
6 responses



Our Data: Round 1

This instructional round has provided me ideas to enhance instruction in my own classroom

6 responses



Our Data: Round 1

What new insights did you glean from our collaboration and instructional rounds?

“Skills Lessons can be customized without losing [the curriculum’s] integrity.”

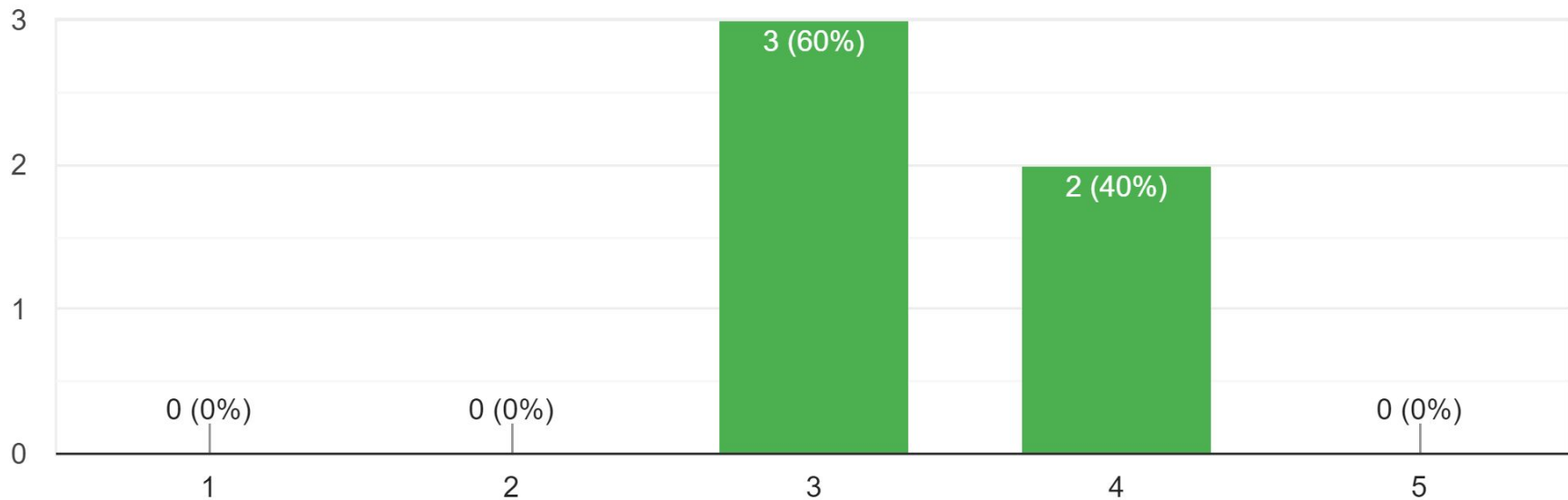
“I can tailor the assignments and instruction to specific classes and not feel I have to be lock-step with the calendar and lessons SS gives.”

“I need to take a fresh look at the skill lessons and think about how I can create more collaborative experiences for students.”

Our Data: Round 2

Prior to this instructional round, how comfortable did you feel in delivering a lesson using a Note and Notice close reading strategy (signpost)?

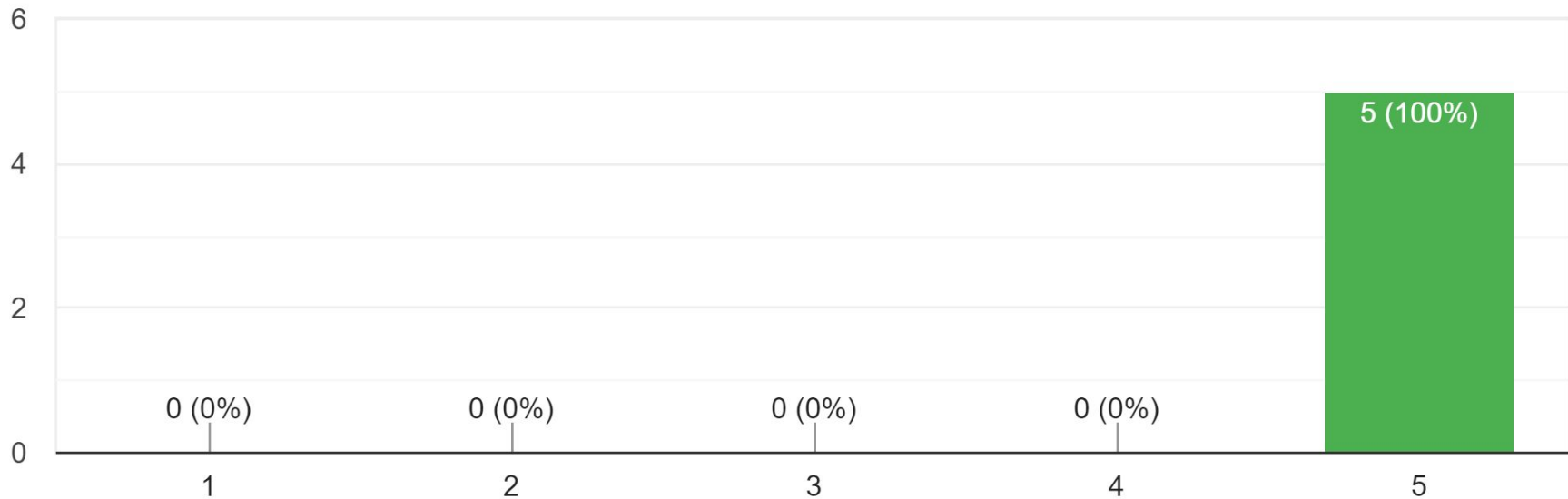
5 responses



Our Data: Round 2

Following this instructional round, how comfortable do you feel in delivering a lesson using a Note and Notice close reading strategy (signpost)?

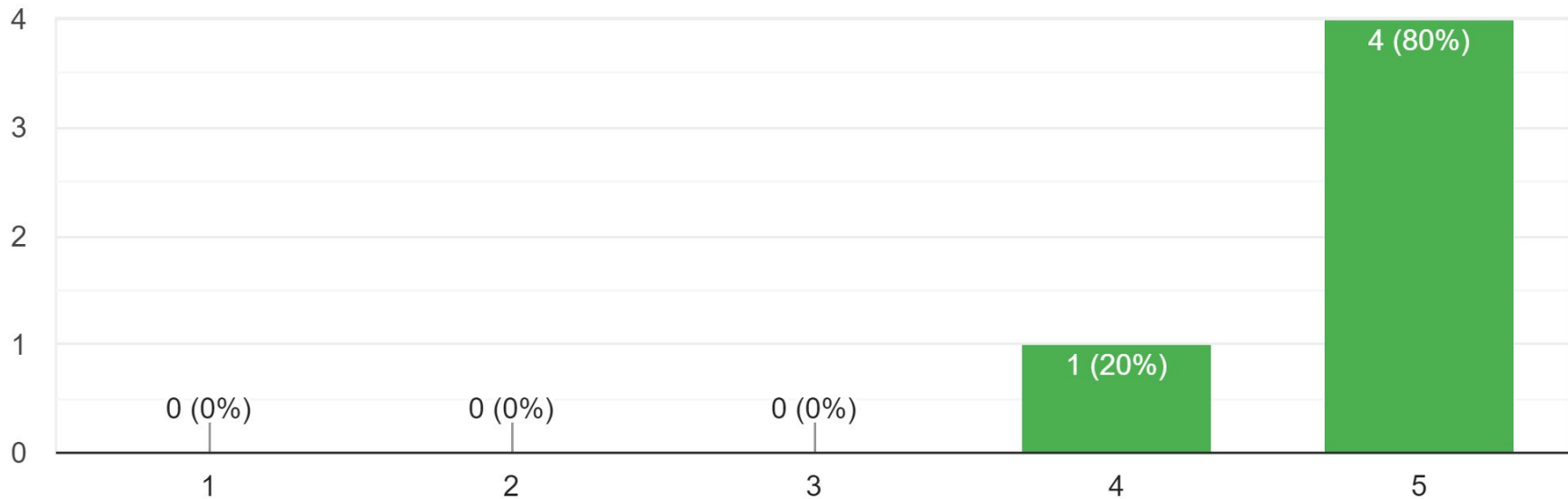
5 responses



Our Data: Round 2

This instructional round has provided me ideas to enhance instruction in my own classroom

5 responses



Our Data: Round 2

During this instructional round what new ideas or perspectives did you gain for delivering a close read lesson?

Creating a specific graphic organizer and anchor chart that goes with the lesson.

It was helpful to go through the planning process. Once I have done one, I think the others will be really easy.

I learned the benefit of a quick check with students using the post-it notes. It is a way to keep all engaged and also to informally check to see if all students are gaining understanding of the text or concept.

Utilize background information

I think that students have gained more confidence in answering questions because of the Notice/Wonder

Our Discoveries

Instructional rounds can easily be embedded with PLCs.

- Collaboration vs isolation



Our Discoveries

Limiting scope of instructional rounds leads to scheduling difficulties:

- Don't wait on instructional calendars to align



Our Discoveries

Action Research revealed that instructional rounds did increase teacher efficacy.

- Google form survey data



Where We Are Heading Next

Growing the Process:

- Use ELA department as a testimonial
- Branch out to other departments using nonfiction text as the common thread.



Bibliography

Beers, K., & Probst, R. E. (2013). *Notice and Note: Strategies for Close Reading*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Marzano, R. J. (2011). The Art and Science of Teaching: Making the Most of Instructional Rounds. *Educational Leadership*, 68(5), 80-82. Retrieved November 3, 2018, from <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/feb11/vol68/num05/Making-the-Most-of-Instructional-Rounds.aspx>



[Increasing Teacher Efficacy Through Instructional Rounds]

Principal Name: Chad Reedy

School Name: Creston Middle School

Team Members' Names: Elisa Stanfill & Matthew Wojas

Principal's Email Contact: creedy@warren.k12.in.us

Background Leading to Our Inquiry (Slide 2)

After analyzing data from a HR Level 2 survey we realized that there were data points in a couple of areas that drew our attention. First, teacher feedback revealed there was not a clearly developed written document articulating a school-wide model of instruction. Secondly, teachers reported they have very few opportunities to engage in instructional rounds and observe other teachers. In addition, one of the teacher leader was a language arts department chair. Her department was adopting a new curriculum (Studysync) that had several different new instructional components. The department was feeling overwhelmed with adjusting and adapting to the many components of the new online curriculum.

The Purpose of Our Inquiry (slide 3)

The purpose of our inquiry was to start small with building an instructional model on a smaller scale with the language arts department and then use instructional rounds to provide teachers a process to observe the new curriculum in action and provide them opportunities to debrief and discuss their observations.

Our Wondering (Slide 4)

With this purpose in mind, our wondering became: *Could a clear instructional snapshot used in connection with instructional rounds increase teacher efficacy?*

Our Actions (Slides 5-11)

Round One: Skill Lessons

Because we were using a new curriculum for Language Arts this year, we spent the first quarter acclimating to the new curriculum. At the beginning of the second quarter, the instructional coach, department chairs, and language arts teachers met as a PLC and identified areas of the instructional routine where teachers had made changes in their practice. After these meetings, the instructional coach and departments chairs decided to focus on skills lessons first as several teachers reported that they were not engaging students.

Before beginning our instructional rounds, teachers were asked to read an article by Robert Marzano on the value of instructional rounds. Then, we identified teachers to model a lesson for the instructional rounds. We utilized prep periods which allowed our 7th grade teachers to observe 8th grade teachers in action and vice versa. Our instructional specialist joined the teachers on the instructional rounds and led a conversation to debrief their observations immediately after. Teachers were sent Google form surveys to share their thoughts regarding the usefulness of the instructional round procedure. Over the following weeks, each grade level team met during common planning time to begin to implement some of the strategies that were observed during the Round 1 of Instructional Rounds.

Round Two: Close Reading

At the beginning of the third quarter, the instructional coach and department chairs met again to look at the data and feedback from our first set of instructional rounds. Although all of the teachers had found value in our first round, we felt that we could improve upon our process. During our PLC discussion, we identified Close Reading as our next area of focus. We met as team to identify what we wanted to “Start, Stop, Continue, or Revise” as it related to close reading in our classrooms. We identified the need for a common way to support students in attending to both their own experience and what is presented in the text. The instructional coach and department chairs read *Notice and Note: Strategies for Close Reading* by Kylene Beers and each ELA teacher read several targeted chapters. Our next step was to identify teachers to lead our model lessons and schedule opportunities for instructional rounds. We found this set of instructional rounds to be of more value for our teachers.

Data Collection (Slides 12)

Data collection consisted primarily of survey data collected utilizing google forms that teachers filled out before the instructional round and afterwards during the debrief. The survey asked teachers to rate their comfort levels for the instructional strategy that was being observed. Other sources of data included information and comments made during the teacher debriefs and teacher interviews about the process.

Our Data (Slides 13-20)

The data collected from the action research revealed that Round 1 of the instructional round process had mixed results. While the consensus from teachers was that it was great hear others struggling with the same concepts, there wasn't a large increase in teacher efficacy after seeing a skills lesson in action. Only 4/6 teachers (66.7%) indicated that the instructional rounds provided them ideas to enhance their instruction.

The data from round 2 revealed a much higher rate of return on teacher efficacy from the process. During round 2, more time was devoted to teaching close reading strategies in conjunction with the new curriculum specifically with the “Note and Notice” close reading strategy. Teachers then had a solid framework going into the observation where they got to see a lesson modeled using the specific strategy. The data revealed that 100% of teachers rated their comfort level at the highest level after going through the process.

Our Discoveries (Slides 21-23)

Below are some discoveries that were made through the action research process:

- Learning Statement One: Instructional rounds align well with PLC’s and the sharing of ideas.
- Learning Statement Two: Instructional rounds that are more broad in scope allow more scheduling flexibility
- Learning Statement Three: Our action research revealed that instructional rounds did increase teacher efficacy.

Instructional Rounds are easily aligned with PLC’s and the sharing of ideas: We are currently in year one in our shift to utilizing Professional Learning Communities for our framework for professional development. What we learned is that instructional rounds are easily embedded in the PLC process. Teachers met weekly as a department to discuss ideas and share some of their obstacles with the new curriculum. They would then observe other teachers and debrief with the instructional coach. Observations and reflections from the instructional rounds helped guide the discussion of the PLC’s and determine next steps.

Instructional Rounds that are broader in scope allow more scheduling flexibility: We found that when we focused on looking at one skill for the instructional rounds that we became limited by the instructional calendars and scheduling became difficult. For example, when “close reading” was the focus, there were delays to find the right time in the unit for an appropriate text. Going forward we would not limit instructional rounds to just one specific skill or lesson.

Our action research revealed that instructional rounds did increase teacher efficacy: When we looked at the data from our surveys, it became clear that the overall efficacy of teachers increased with each instructional round. This tells us that this is an instructional strategy that should be continued not only with this department, but expanded to other departments as well.

Where We Are Headed Next (Slide 24)

Our team has learned a lot about the benefits of instructional rounds during our mini action research project. One of the most important benefits of this process is the collaboration and sharing of ideas that occurs when teachers observe other teachers. If the language arts department would have continued to work in isolation with the new curriculum, they would have undoubtedly spent more time at frustration levels and had fewer avenues to overcome those instructional road blocks. Instead, they met regularly with other members of their department to identify concerns and frustrations and collectively come up with solutions. In addition, they got to observe best teaching strategies in action and discuss their observations with their colleagues during that important debrief process.

Going forward, our goal is to expand this process and opportunities to other departments. Our new wondering is “What is the most effective way to embed instructional rounds into the school culture where teachers can learn from each other on regular basis?” Placing learning and professional development in the hands of teachers is not common practice in today’s education landscape for whatever reason. Our goal is provide teachers more of these opportunities to learn and grow from each other.

Bibliography (Slide 25)

Beers, K., & Probst, R. E. (2013). *Notice and Note: Strategies for Close Reading*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Marzano, R. J. (2011). The Art and Science of Teaching: Making the Most of Instructional Rounds. *Educational Leadership*, 68(5), 80-82. Retrieved November 3, 2018, from <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/feb11/vol68/num05/Making-the-Most-of-Instructional-Rounds.aspx>