



## **Book Group in a Bag**

### **Practical Steps to Creating Book Study Groups**

#### **Why do a book study?**

A book study is about a conversation; a conversation intended to stretch thinking and influence practice. Book studies are an effective form of professional development and can be used by educators at all levels for their personal and professional growth.

#### **What steps should be considered before planning a book study group?**

According to Diane Sweeny in *Learning All the Way*, book study groups are most effective when they are:

- Are voluntary;
- Involve participants in the decision-making process regarding content and group norms;
- Reflect regularly on whether the time spent has been productive;
- Include rituals and celebrations;
- Determine norms and procedures as a group;
- Avoid assuming certain participants are experts (all are here to learn); and
- Consider the book study group a time for learning and reflective participation.

#### **How should the group set up the book study?**

- Establish a good physical environment
- Select a facilitator for each meeting
- Use questions in the facilitator's guide to start the discussion
- Create a schedule with timelines.
- Determine goal and objectives. It might be helpful to have some initial goals and objectives and present them to the group. Asking the participants for goals and objectives, again, will draw them into the process.
- Relax, keep it positive
- Snacks and other incentives are always helpful and set the tone for an enjoyable experience.

#### **Other questions to consider:**

- Who will facilitate the meetings? Will the facilitator role be rotated between participants?
- How will the group respect and gain input from people with differing opinions or people who are not actively participating?

- How will PDC points be awarded for this process? The group should keep in mind that participants could work on application and impact level by keeping journals of the process, redesigning data systems, etc.



## **Book Group in a Bag: Facilitator’s Guide**

### **Available for Checkout**

*The Fluent Reader: Oral Reading Strategies for Building Word Recognition, Fluency, and Comprehension.* (2003). Timothy V. Rasinski, New York: Scholastic Professional Books.

### **Book Description**

*The Fluent Reader* is an excellent resource that could be used by regular and special educators who are looking for practical ways to build word recognition, fluency and comprehension in students’ reading. Tim Rasinski offers a research-based rationale for oral reading with many strategies including read aloud, repeated reading and performance reading. This teacher friendly book is full of strategies and activities to build reading fluency within a multi-tiered system of support.

### **Helpful Hints**

In order to facilitate the study group most effectively, a team may want to consider doing the following:

- Using technology to support the book study group. Buildings and districts across Kansas have utilized technology including hot links to make the materials more accessible for teachers. Technology will also allow greater participation to time-strapped staff.
- The text contains short, easy to read chapters that can be used during faculty meetings to engage all staff in discourse about RtI.
- Rotate facilitation of the group. In this way, more people will take ownership of the process. *(Please see the Practical Steps to Creating Book Study Groups” document enclosed in this packet.)*

### **Framing the Context of a Book Study: Powerful Tools for Learning**

Two powerful venues for deepening understanding, impacting student outcomes and contributing to the growth of learning organizations are professional learning communities and communities of practice. One of the most effective ways to make your school a learning organization is to create a professional learning community or a community of practice. The concept of a professional learning community is a powerful influence around the work of restructuring schools. According to Rick Dufour in *Whatever It Takes: How Professional Learning Communities Respond When Kids Don’t Learn*, the fundamental role of schools is “learning, not teaching.”

While Dufour acknowledges that this is “an enormous distinction,” he notes that the emphasis on learning leads those within the school to place their focus and energy on three important questions:

1. What is it we want all students to learn?
2. How will we know when each student has acquired the intended knowledge and skills?
3. How will we respond when students experience difficulty?

Another option for helping schools and districts is to create a community of practice. Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. A community of practice (CoP) makes connections from person to person for mutual inquiry and learning about a practice or issue. Everyone’s voice is needed. Participants develop a shared identity and share a repertoire of knowledge and experiences (Wenger, 2003). Both professional learning communities and communities of practice move system stakeholders from knowing to doing.

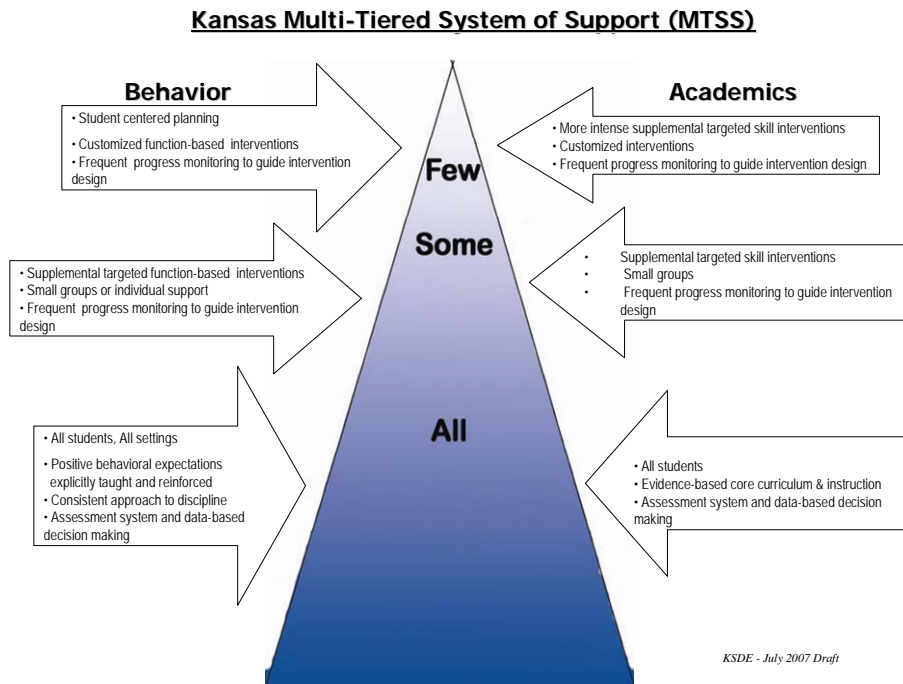
A book study becomes a powerful tool that these communities can use to engage in powerful, professional discourse. A building or existing PLC or CoP may want to add a book study as another tool to aid in professional development. When your school or team begins planning their book study, keep the above questions in mind as a way to frame all discussions around student learning and school improvement.

### **Framing the Context of Discussion within the Kansas Multi-tiered System of Support**

These book studies were created from information and resources gathered by pilot sites who served as early implementers of a Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) in Kansas. These schools and districts recommended several books that pertain to the practices embodied by MTSS. In response to the growing demand for more information about MTSS and what it looks like in Kansas, Project SPOT has developed a series of Book Groups in a Bag. Each book bag can be checked out or purchased. For a list of facilitated Book Group in a Bag titles, please see [www.Projectspot.org](http://www.Projectspot.org).

The facilitator’s guide has been created to frame learning and discussions specifically within a MTSS framework. MTSS is a coherent continuum of evidence based, system-wide practices to support a rapid response to academic and behavioral needs, with frequent data-based monitoring for instructional decision-making to empower each Kansas student to achieve high standards.

Graphically, MTSS looks like this:



The core beliefs underpinning MTSS include:

- Responsibility and leadership are critical at all levels for planning, implementing, and evaluating
- Change at all levels must be intentional, coherent, and dynamic
- Intentional design and redesign of resources are matched to student needs
- An empowering culture creates collective responsibility for student success
- Academic and behavioral performance data are used to inform instructional decisions
- Intervening at the earliest identification of need is necessary for student success (PreK-12)
- Reciprocity between policy and practice is based on research and outcomes
- Collaboration among educators, families and community members is the foundation to effective problem-solving and instructional decision making.

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The following section contains discussion questions broken out by chapter. These questions are designed to facilitate thinking and discussion around *The Fluent Reader: Oral Reading Strategies for Building Word Recognition, Fluency, and Comprehension*.

## **Chapter 1: Overview of Oral Reading: A Brief History and Rationale**

### **Overview**

This chapter is a general overview of the history of oral reading in the United States, with more extensive thoughts in regards to its current use today. Knowing our past helps us understand our present and perhaps, chart the future of oral reading in an informed way.

### **Helpful Hints**

It might be beneficial for the first day of the book study to read this chapter as a jigsaw activity breaking up the chapter individually or with partners. Then go back to the whole group and share main points of each section. Frame the discussion around the following questions:

Based on what you learned in Chapter One, think of how reading fluency is currently being addressed in your school. How has oral reading changed over the past several years? What looks the same?

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Do your students ever read in round robin fashion? Why? What did you think as you were reading the section on the drawbacks of round robin reading?
2. What are the benefits of oral reading? Which activities on pages 26-33 would work best in a core setting? Which would work best in a Tier-2 setting?

## **Chapter 2: Read Aloud: Modeling Reading and Motivating Readers**

### **Overview**

In this chapter, educators will learn about hooking your students through literature. Learning to think through all the important aspects of a good read aloud before ever picking up a book to read in class is addressed. Tips for preparing a read aloud, conducting a read aloud and responding to a read aloud are shared.

### **Helpful Hints**

While reading this chapter, think of the major points educators must consider before, during and after reading an effective read aloud.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Tim Razinski starts this chapter by stating, “Some of my most vivid childhood memories are of being read to by a parent, grandparent, or teacher.” What read aloud memories do you have?
2. How do you incorporate poetry during read aloud? After this discussion, can you think of different ways to incorporate poetry?
3. What factors do you consider when choosing a read aloud for your classroom?
4. We mainly think of read aloud during our core instruction time. How could you implement reading aloud during a Tier-2 time with a targeted focus?
5. What are some effective ways for students to respond to the story being read aloud?

## **Chapter 3: Supported Reading: Providing a Scaffold for Your Developing and Struggling Readers**

### **Overview**

Chapter 3 gives very effective strategies for helping students' transition from modeled independence. A variety of strategies are used to provide "oral support reading".

### **Helpful Hint**

While reading through this chapter, jot down or find example of text that could be used with students for each of the strategies listed in this chapter. Also be thinking ahead of how or with whom you could pair your struggling readers with for effective paired reading.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Rasinski states that, "Scaffolding happens in the gulf between modeling and working independently." (pg. 56-57) Compare this concept to a Tier-2 support.
2. With each variety of "oral support reading", discuss how these can be used for core instruction and in a Tier-2 setting. Compare the emphasis for each setting.
3. Practice the Neurological Impress Method (pg. 70) with a partner. How could this method increase students' fluency?
4. Select 5 of your most struggling readers. Share with group members how you would monitor the progress of these students using a method of supported reading.

## **Chapter 4: Repeated Reading: Implementing a Powerful Tool for Practicing Reading**

### **Overview**

In this chapter you will learn why time invested upfront in repeated reading will actually save time in remediation later. There is much to be gained from reading a text more than once. When repeated reading is done on a regular basis, students' word recognition, reading fluency, and comprehension improve significantly. Repeated reading is a powerful tool.

### **Helpful Hints**

Practicing the piano, football or swimming is essential for improvement. Improving reading also takes practice. While reading this chapter, keep in mind your daily schedule and where you could plug in more repeated readings into your day.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Describe the effect of the theory of automaticity. How would you explain this theory to parents so they understand the importance of repeated reading?
2. Discuss the relationship between decoding and fluency.
3. In radio reading, students take turns reading as they do in round robin reading. Why is radio reading a better method?
4. How would practicing reading words in phrases be more beneficial than practicing high frequency words in isolation?
5. How could the repeated reading log be used as a progress-monitoring tool?
6. Which repeated reading activities would work best for your students in a Tier-2 setting? Why?

## Chapter 5: Performance Reading: Turning Research on Repeated Reading into Engaging and Effective Instruction

### Overview

In Chapter 5 you learn how to motivate your students by performance reading. This could be with student led read-aloud, reader's theatre and poetry. These strategies can be used with all students on the reading continuum.

### Helpful Hints

It would be helpful for whoever is facilitating this chapter to be knowledgeable about different sources for scripts and poetry. Assign each person one website found on page 111 to explore before coming to the group. Don't forget the two Reader's Theater Scripts from *Great Speeches in American History* adapted by Timothy Rasinski found in the Appendix.

### Discussion Questions

1. Do you think repeated readings will be helpful for normally developing and advanced readers? Why?
2. Which of the student-led read alouds have you implemented in your classroom? What is another activity you would be willing to try?
3. Have each participant model a "Think Aloud" for their first read aloud for Reader's Theatre that gives a brief mini-lesson on at least one aspect of fluency.
4. Brainstorm ideas of when, where and how your students can perform their Reader's Theatre.
5. Of the activities listed in this chapter, discuss which would work best in a core, Tier-2 or Tier-3 setting.
6. What are the benefits of implementing Reader's Theatre into your classroom or Tier-2 instruction?

## **Chapter 6: Creating Synergy: Lessons That Integrate Oral Reading Activities**

### **Overview**

This chapter provides ideas for combining activities to make it work for your classroom setting whether you are a classroom teacher, reading teacher or providing Tier-2 support.

### **Helpful Hints**

Have educators bring their daily/weekly schedule to brainstorm a plan to implement synergistic lessons. Use oral reading fluency data to determine Tier-2 groups and brainstorm activities for interventions.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Discuss what the term “Synergy” means in respect to oral reading activities.
2. Discuss the steps in the oral recitation lesson. Where would this best fit in a multi-tiered system of support? Why?
3. How can teachers best deal with students who are painfully shy about performing in front of a group?
4. What are some successful ways discussed in this chapter to break the habit of word-by-word reading?
5. How could you begin a “Lucky Listener Club” for school and home?

## **Chapter 7: Oral Reading In and Across the Curriculum: Making Reading Fluency an Everyday Classroom Experience**

### **Overview**

Chapter 7 discusses how to combine effective fluency strategies throughout the day, during both reading instruction and other content areas.

### **Helpful Hints**

It is now time to make a commitment to get started. Have each person in the group decide on 1-3 activities they will incorporate into their school day. Whichever oral reading strategy they choose, have them come prepared to lead that part of the chapter. Choose from the following: Teacher-Led Read Aloud, Poetry Reading, Fluency Development Lesson, Radio Reading, Oral Recitation Lesson, Paired Reading, choral Reading, Reading While Listening, Reader's Theater, Performance Reading of Speeches and Poems, Tape-Recorded Reading Material, Parent Read Aloud or Fast Start.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. How can educators incorporate cross-curricular activities in a Tier-2 setting?
2. Share ideas of how you would incorporate repeated reading in science and social studies in your grade level.
3. Create a plan for educating parents and giving them tools to help their children with oral reading at home.

## **Chapter 8: Assessing Word Recognition and Fluency Through Oral Reading: Effective Ways to Check Students' Progress**

### **Overview**

Chapter 8 encompasses using oral reading to assess students' development in word recognition and fluency. It also addresses analyzing error patterns to help your focus of instruction whether it's whole group, Tier-2 or individual instruction.

### **Helpful Hints**

Depending on the size of the group, tape record a student that has reading concerns or tape record students at different reading levels to practice assessing their reading. Also, while reading through this chapter, be ready to propose or defend the appropriate use of one-minute probes for reading accuracy.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Think of a student who seems to be stuck in the reading process. Describe their strengths and concerns. Use the problem solving process to identify what additional information may be needed to determine the cause of his/her difficulty.
2. In small groups, listen to one of the pre-recorded students. Use the Word Recognition Error Analysis Form on page 168 to record errors. After analyzing the errors, what would you recommend as a focus of instruction for this student. Would the focus change in a Tier-2 setting?
3. Use one of the fluency rubrics, (figure 8.7 or 8.8) to rate a reader's fluency.
4. After gathering data on oral reading fluency, how would you use this information to set groups and decide on a focus of instruction?

