

The Coach's Corner

JUST FOR STARTERS

It is so hard to believe that we have been back to school for almost a month! The year is already flying by! I have been seeing amazing things as I visit your classrooms! To be honest, it makes me a little jealous, because I catch myself thinking, "Oh WOW! When I get back to my classroom, I can't wait to try..." Then I remember, "Oh wait, I don't have a classroom anymore." However, on the heels of that thought is this, I have LOTS of other people who could try ... in their classrooms, and I am the lucky girl who gets to see and share all the wonderful things you all are doing! YAY!

As I come into your classrooms, please continue to teach as you normally would. I am only here to observe and gain an understanding of how each of you are working to reach our children. I love coming in and seeing great teachers in action! Please don't hesitate to come to me if you need help with something, or if you simply need an ear or a resource. We have a multitude of resources at our disposal, and I cannot wait to help you make planning more efficient. Teachers have so little time to do so much! I love being able to help you make every moment count!

THIS-N-THAT

Procedures, procedures, procedures! It is critical that we begin our year by firmly establishing our procedures and expectations. Studies have shown that students who spend more time on task are more successful in the classroom. The best way to keep students on task is by laying the groundwork early for procedures and expectations. Our little ones, and big ones too, thrive on structure and consistency.

RESOURCES

We have so many resources that, at times, it can be overwhelming. Hopefully, I can help you use our wealth of resources to make the most of your extremely valuable time. Here are just a few things that we have available.

- * Indiana State Library– The ISL has a very extensive library that we can "order" books from. If you use this link: <http://www.in.gov/library/kits.htm> you can have the ISL send books to you for use in your classroom. You can order individual titles or sets of books for book clubs!
- * Fayette County Public Library– The FCPL also has a great selection of books for your use. Be sure to check them out at www.fcplibrary.lib.in.us

GRADE LEVEL MEETINGS

6th Grade- Tuesday, Sept. 20
5th Grade- Thursday, Sept. 22
4th Grade- Wednesday, Sept. 28
3rd Grade- Tuesday, Oct. 4

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Balanced Literacy Training at Eastview- Wednesday, Sept. 14 at 1:30
- MSV Training at Eastview- Friday, Sept. 23
 - * K & 1- 8:30-9:30
 - * 2 & 3- 10:00-11:00
 - * 4-6- 2:00-3:00



BALANCED LITERACY

What we are looking for in:

Reading Workshop-

- * 90 Minutes
- * Mini-Lesson– 15– 20 minutes, direct instruction with a clear, narrow focus
- * Small Groups– Guided Reading, Book Clubs, or Flex Groups based on student needs
- * Independent Work– With task tied to mini-lesson focus (if possible)
- * Lexia– For students who need the practice. (*Note: Students are not to be on Lexia for the duration of the reading block.*)
- * Conferencing– On days when you are not meeting with groups, be sure to take anecdotal notes
- * Closure– At the end of the lesson, bring everyone back together to share/review what was learned

Writing Workshop-

- * Smekens' book– “Launching the Writing Workshop
- * Mini-Lesson– 15-20 minutes, direct instruction with a clear, narrow focus (*Note: Grammar lessons are a part of Writing Workshop, not a separate entity. Use Writing Workshop to teach and assess how well your students are integrating correct “English/Grammar” into their writing*
- * Independent Work– Task tied to mini-lesson
- * Small Groups/Conferencing– Teacher works with small groups or conferences with individual students. Again, be sure to log your conversations with your students.
- * Closure– At the end of the lesson, bring everyone back together to share/review what was learned

“Who dares to teach, must never cease to learn!” ~John Cotton

GENTLE REMINDERS

- * All F & P Text Level Selection Sheets should be in their appropriate folder in Google Drive by now.
- * Running Records should be completed twice a month on all students who are reading below grade level.
- * Correctly designed learning objectives let students know exactly what they are learning. The focus is on what the student will be able to do successfully and independently by the end of the lesson as a result of instruction.
- * Checking for Understanding– CFU's– should be done in all classrooms, in all grade levels and subjects. Really focusing on the methods and data gathered as you check for understanding, is what improves student learning!

GO MATH!

What we are looking for:

- * 60+ minutes
- * Mini-Lesson
- * Whole group/Small group
- * Gradual Release of Responsibility- I do, We do, You do
- * *Note: Please do not feel that you must assign every problem on the homework page as homework. Homework is only valuable if it is meaningful practice on tasks students can complete independently.*
- * Fidelity to the program– This first year is a learning year for all of us. Make notes, chat with colleagues/coaches/principals and let's learn together what we can do that will most benefit our students.
- * Ongoing Assessment– Don't forget that those “Quick Checks” that are built into the lesson are there to help drive your instruction. Be sure to use those to help with RtI.
- * Closure– This part of the lesson is almost as critical as the mini-lesson. This is where you can really see what your students know!