

Evidence-Based Facilitator Guide: Improving Intermediate Literacy

Idaho Regional Training for Increasing Literacy in Intermediate Students

September 2020

CCNETWORK
Comprehensive Center Network



REGION 17
Idaho
Montana



Materials checklist and notes

| Item | Consumable Y or N | Quantity | Notes: |
|---|----------------------|----------|--------|
| Computer | | | |
| Projector | | | |
| Clicker | | | |
| PowerPoint presentation on flash drive or computer | | | |
| Handouts | | | |
| Chart paper and pens | | | |
| Sticky notes | | | |
| Agenda | | | |
| Sign-in forms | | | |
| Evaluation form | | | |
| Articles to be read | | | |
| Miscellaneous | | | |

Presenter's Facilitation Agenda

Outcomes

- Understand design and structure of intermediate literacy training materials
- Identify key factors for marrying training content with instructional delivery
- Explain the importance of productive language opportunities for active learning
- Describe 10:2 theory and how it can be used for planning effective professional development sessions
- Identify grouping types and engagement structures for active learning

Slide 1: Welcome

Introduce yourself, colleagues, and participants.

Note that they are here because they are not only seen as effective educators but also as leaders in their schools and districts. As such, it will be up to them to take the information they learn today regarding intermediate literacy to their schools or districts. They will be receiving detailed facilitator guides for each of the training topics for vocabulary, comprehension, discussion, and motivation. However, the content for today's training is only part of the puzzle. How to deliver the training in engaging and motivating ways is another.

Because it will be up to them to take this information back to staff, we will begin today by going over trainer tips and tricks for providing effective professional development. Teaching adults often looks very different from teaching children. We must always be sure to honor the experience teachers bring to the table, while also structuring training in a way that motivates them to grow in their learning and instructional practice. The purpose of this tips and tricks presentation is to provide recommendations for delivery of a professional development session that is engaging and meaningful for adult learners.



Slide 2: Objectives

Take a moment to go over the objectives for this portion of the training:

- Reflect on the features of high-quality professional development
- Understand the design and structure of intermediate literacy training materials
- Identify key factors for marrying training content with instructional delivery
- Explain the importance of productive language opportunities for active learning
- Describe the 10:2 theory and how it can be used for planning effective professional development sessions
- Identify grouping types and engagement structures for active learning and their connection to effective professional development



Slide 3: Grouping types

Direct participants to **Handout 1: Engagement Structures for Active Learning**. Note the description of grouping types at the top of the chart. Explain that we will use several different grouping types throughout the day to help facilitate participant interaction with the content. They will also use these grouping structures as they facilitate their own trainings. These grouping types are as follows:

- Individual: Individual reflections are often done in writing.
- Structured partners: Explain that one of the most effective and flexible engagement strategies validated in both research and practice is the use of structured partners. Partnering is the most reliable way to engage **all** participants in the learning activities (speaking, writing, and doing) called for in training. The key idea here is to **structure** (model, practice, scaffold, provide feedback) whatever cognitive, linguistic, and social tasks you want participants to engage in.
- Table groups: Table groups will be another important grouping structure for the training. They will be especially important for tasks that require a larger group to share out ideas to learn from each other.



- Pairs to square: This format is the same as the one used for structured partners, except it expands the conversation by prompting a pair to form a square (group of four). These groupings work best if the questions or prompts are open ended.

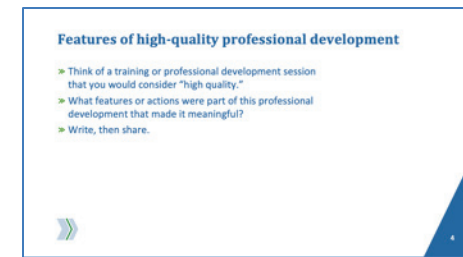
These varied groupings help keep things interesting but most importantly provide participants ample opportunities to reflect, practice, and apply new learning through productive language opportunities. Our job is to present not only new content but also new methods for engagement that teachers can then carry over to their own classrooms.

Slide 4: Features of high-quality professional development

Direct participants to take out a sticky note. Ask them to think of a training or professional development session that they would consider meaningful in their adult learning and “high quality.”

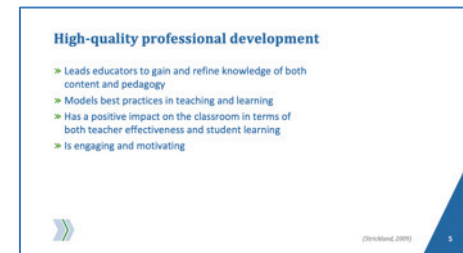
What features or actions were part of this professional development that made it meaningful? Give a moment for participants to brainstorm and write on their sticky note.

When most participants appear to be finished, have them complete a quick “whip around” (i.e., share what they wrote) at the table. Then, call on a few participants to share out to the larger group. Use what is shared to make connections and guide this portion of the training. You may wish to create a list, either on a large poster for everyone to view or a private list for you to reference as you complete this portion of the training.



Slide 5: High-quality professional development

Note the bullets on the slide. Explain that, by focusing our staff development efforts around these key principles, our hope is to expand opportunities for leadership within their schools. The goal is to provide them the tools to plan for, implement, and reflect on high-quality staff development that introduces, models, and encourages teachers’ continuing journeys along the road to more effective literacy practices in their classrooms, ultimately improving student outcomes.



Slide 6: Marrying training content with effective delivery

Content + delivery

The art of teaching is a marriage between two critical components: content and delivery.

Point out that the marriage of content to effective instructional delivery is the magic combination for the success of any training. This concept is a big shift in thinking because it requires us to focus on the *quality* of instruction, not just the quantity of content that is taught.

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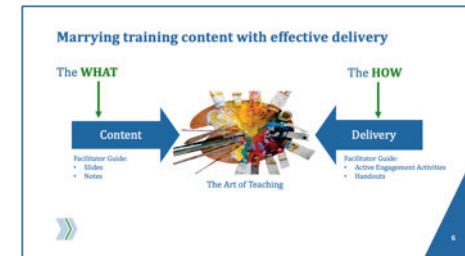
The content is the “WHAT” of a training or lesson. In our case, the content for the literacy training is provided in the facilitator guide slides and training notes.

Effective trainers must study the content and the research behind it and understand it at a deep level. They must provide a rationale for the training to create buy in, ensure the purpose of the training is clear to participants, and ultimately ensure outcomes are met. But content knowledge *alone* is not enough. We’ve all known individuals who are extremely knowledgeable in their field yet are not able to facilitate learning in meaningful ways. This is where instructional delivery comes into play.

(Click.)

The delivery is the “HOW” of the training. An effective presenter not only presents the content but also delivers the content in ways that are engaging and meaningful to participants. They achieve this delivery structure in several ways. They ensure pacing is conducive to high engagement, and they intentionally embed active engagement structures to enhance the content of the presentation so that participants have many opportunities to reflect on new information as well as apply and practice new strategies. Effective presenters provide clear directions for all activities and establish clear signals for getting participants’ attention so that time is well used. In our case, the delivery structures for this training are intentionally planned for in the facilitator guide through active engagement activities and corresponding handouts.

Ultimately, good teachers — whether teaching adults or children — have mastered the dance between content (the what) and delivery (the how). This is the art of teaching.



Slide 7: Training materials and Structure

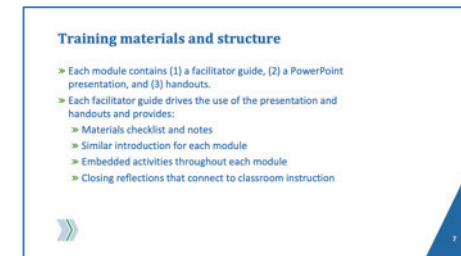
Walk participants through the materials, noting the following:

Each module contains (1) a facilitator guide, (2) a PowerPoint presentation, and (3) handouts.

Each facilitator guide drives the use of the presentation and handouts and provides:

- Materials checklist and notes
- Similar introduction for each module
- Embedded activities throughout each module
- Closing reflections that connect to classroom instruction

Give participants a moment to go through their materials.



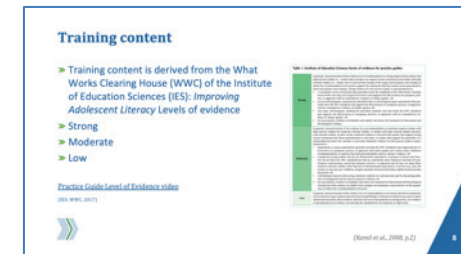
Slide 8: Training content

Explain that materials and activities for the training in intermediate literacy are derived from the What Works Clearinghouse of the Institute of Education Science Practice Guides. These guides provide an overview of evidence-based practices that address a training topic — in our case, the topic of adolescent literacy. They are based on reviews of research, the experiences of practitioners, and the expert opinions of a panel of nationally recognized experts. These guides provide several recommendations on a topic with specific, practical steps to carry out each recommendation, which is assigned a level of evidence that summarizes the rigorous research supporting it.

Direct participants to **Handout 3: What Works Clearing House Practice Guides: Levels of Evidence**. Give participants a moment to read through the handout. If there's time, show the following four-minute video (IES:WWC, 2017), which provides an overview of the practice guides and further explains the levels of evidence designations used in the guides:

<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/multimedia/39>

Make sure participants understand that there are three levels of evidence for recommended practices: strong, moderate, and low. These levels of evidence indicate the strength of the evidence on improving student achievement. In other words, the level



of evidence signifies how confident researchers are that the recommended practice, and not something else, resulted in improved outcomes for students.

Note that each of the modules for the intermediate literacy training addresses a recommendation in the practice guide for adolescent literacy: vocabulary, comprehension, discussion, and motivation. Within each of the recommendations, specific, practical steps are provided for implementation in the classroom.

Slide 9: Key factors for marrying content with delivery

We must consider several key factors when marrying the content of the practice guides with the actual training delivery.

When thinking about the content, we must consider:

- Clear objectives for the session (what is the target)
- The rationale or evidence base (how will it positively impact students)
- Meaningful connection to all disciplines and content areas

When thinking about delivery, we want to ensure participants are actively engaged with the content. This involves:

- Content peppered with active engagement opportunities that incorporate productive language opportunities
 - Numerous opportunities for participants to “RAP” (**R**eflect, **A**pply, **P**ractise)

Key factors for marrying content with delivery

- Content (derived from WWC IES practice guides)
 - Clear objectives for the session (what is the target)
 - Rationale or evidence base (how will it positively impact students)
 - Meaningful connection to all disciplines and content areas
- Active engagement
 - Content peppered with active engagement opportunities that incorporate productive language opportunities
 - Numerous opportunities for participants to “RAP”
 - Reflect
 - Apply
 - Practice

Slide 10: Think and write

Ask participants to think about the last professional development session they attended using the following questions:

1. Who did most of the talking — the presenter or the learners?
2. What type of active engagement techniques were used?
3. Where did the presenter include most of the engagement strategies (beginning, middle, end, or throughout the training)?
4. Think about the key factors for marrying content with delivery (from previous slide):

Think and write

Think about the last professional development session you attended.

1. Who did most of the talking — the presenter or the learners?
2. What type of active engagement techniques were used?
3. Where did the presenter include most of the engagement strategies (beginning, middle, end, or throughout the training)?
4. Think about the key factors for marrying content with delivery (from previous slide):
 - What was incorporated? What wasn't? How did this affect the professional development session in positive or negative ways?
5. How can you use these reflections as you prepare for your own professional development session?

- What was incorporated? What wasn't? How did this affect the professional development session in positive or negative ways?

5. How can you use these reflections as you prepare for your own professional development session?

Use participant responses to connect to the idea of marrying the content (information in the facilitator guide, which is based on the practice guides) to engagement structures that ensure effective delivery of that content. Good trainings—no matter the content—do this.

Slide 11: Training design

Establish structured partners and have partners identify whether they will be a “1” or a “2” during partner work.

Direct partner 1 to read the quotation to partner 2. Then, direct partners to work together to select what they consider to be the “weighty words” in the quotation—the words that carry the most meaning and content.

Training design

“One of the most important goals in designing a professional development session is to “ensure learners do as much of the cognitive work — the writing, the thinking, the analyzing, the talking — as possible.”

— Teach Like a Champion (Lemov, 2010, p. 92)

Slide 12: Training design: Weighty words

Display the weighty words (it is OK if some of the participants selected words that are different from those highlighted on the slide). Discuss how writing, thinking, analyzing, and talking ensure not only that learners are doing the cognitive work but also that they are engaged.

Make the connection that, when planning a professional development session, the session should be peppered with opportunities for learners to analyze, write, think, and discuss.

Training design: Weighty words

“One of the most important goals in designing a professional development session is to “ensure learners do as much of the cognitive work — the **writing, the thinking, the analyzing, the talking** — as possible.”

— Teach Like a Champion (Lemov, 2010, p. 92)

Slide 13: Vocabulary forms

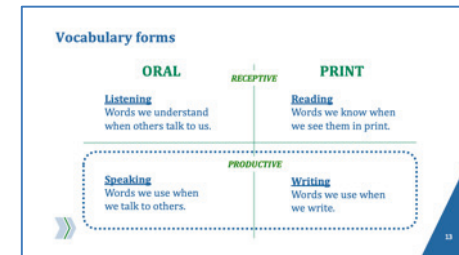
Language takes many forms — listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Words themselves are encountered in two forms: (*click*) oral and print. When we think about oral language, we include words we understand when others talk to us as well as words we use when we talk to others. Print vocabulary includes words we know when we see them in print, or when we are reading, and words we use when we write.

(Click.)

However, these four vocabulary forms can be categorized a little differently by looking at them from a perspective of receptive and productive language. Authentic literacy, as defined by Mike Schmoker (2006), in all content areas involves purposeful reading, discussion, and writing. Many times, the majority of content in trainings or classrooms is presented in ways that only involve *receptive* language for the learner — listening (*lots of listening*) and some reading. To flip this narrative, we need to increase opportunities for learners to interact through *productive* language — speaking and writing. This simply involves providing more opportunities for learners to *discuss* their learning and *write* about their learning.

Setting up the grouping structures discussed earlier helps facilitate discussion. Writing can also be incorporated through quick writes and other processes.

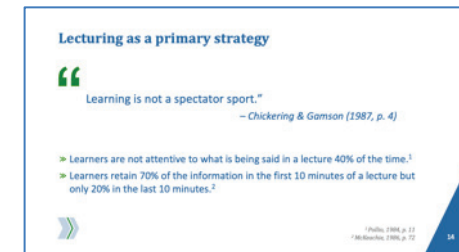
It is important to structure training in ways that incorporate lots of productive language opportunities.



Slide 14: Lecturing as a primary strategy

A 2014 meta-analysis of 228 studies of lectures and active-learning strategies showed decidedly one-sided results in favor of active learning (Freeman et al., 2014). The lecture method of teaching has been around for over 1,000 years—and yet, it is not very effective. Research shows that:

- Learners are not attentive to what is being said in a lecture 40% of the time (Pollio, 1984, p. 11)
- Learners retain 70% of the information in the first 10 minutes of a lecture but only 20% in the last 10 minutes (McKeachie, 1986, p. 72)



Knowing these statistics, we can structure training to ensure learners have opportunities for active learning, which helps facilitate retention of content in long-term memory.

Slides 15, 16: Learning by doing

Direct partner 1 to read aloud the first quotation and partner 2 to read aloud the second and third quotations. Then, direct partners to work together to select what they consider to be the weighty words in each of the quotations — the words that carry the most meaning and content.

Learning by doing

“ Students do not learn much just by sitting in classes listening to teachers, memorizing prepackaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate it to past experiences and apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves.”

— Chickering & Gamson (1987, p. 4)

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Learning by doing (continued)

“ My content is not as important as the audience interaction with the content.”

— Garmston (2005, p. 50)

“ [Lecturing is the] best way to get information from teacher’s notebook to student’s notebook without touching the student’s mind.”

— George Leonard (as cited in Kohn, 2007, p. 114)

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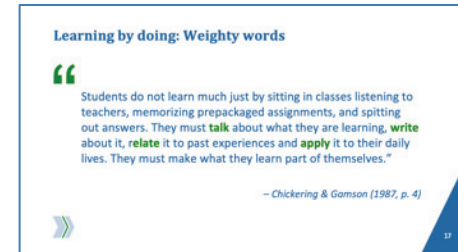
Slides 17, 18: Learning by doing: Weighty words

Display the weighty words (it is OK if some of the participants' selected words are different from those highlighted on the slide). Discuss how providing opportunities for participants to interact with content through talking, writing, relating, and applying enhances retention of the content.

Learning by doing: Weighty words

“ Students do not learn much just by sitting in classes listening to teachers, memorizing prepackaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must **talk** about what they are learning, **write** about it, **relate** it to past experiences and **apply** it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves.”

— Chickering & Gamson (1987, p. 4)

A presentation slide with a blue border and a blue triangle in the bottom right corner. It features a quote in green text about learning by doing, with key verbs highlighted in bold. A double arrow icon is in the bottom left, and the number 17 is in the bottom right.

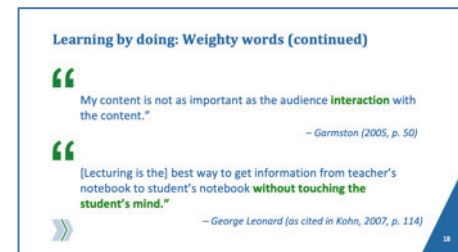
Learning by doing: Weighty words (continued)

“ My content is not as important as the audience **interaction** with the content.”

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“ [Lecturing is the] best way to get information from teacher's notebook to student's notebook **without touching the student's mind.**”

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A presentation slide with a blue border and a blue triangle in the bottom right corner. It features two quotes in green text about learning by doing, with key terms highlighted in bold. A double arrow icon is in the bottom left, and the number 18 is in the bottom right.

Slide 19: Organizing content: Meaningful chunks


Chunking is the practice of breaking up steady streams of lecture content. The practice is informed by the concept of working memory.

Our working memory holds a limited amount of space for processing information. Chunking lecture content accommodates the limitations of our working memory by opening up space through breaks or pauses (Williamson & Schell, n.d.).

Research reinforces the importance of allowing at least two minutes of processing time with every 10 minutes of lecture. Those two minutes support comprehensible output, negotiating meaning, and a risk-free environment to try new vocabulary and concepts — through use of grouping structures.

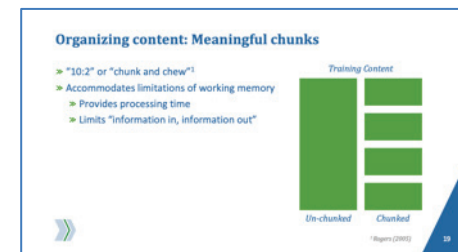
Organizing content: Meaningful chunks

- “10-2” or “chunk and chew”¹
- Accommodates limitations of working memory
- Provides processing time
- Limits “information in, information out”

A diagram showing a large green rectangle labeled 'Un-chunked' on the left and a smaller green rectangle labeled 'Chunked' on the right. Above the 'Chunked' rectangle are four smaller green rectangles stacked vertically, labeled 'Training Content'. A double arrow icon is in the bottom left, and the number 19 is in the bottom right.

Un-chunked Chunked

¹Reiser (2002)

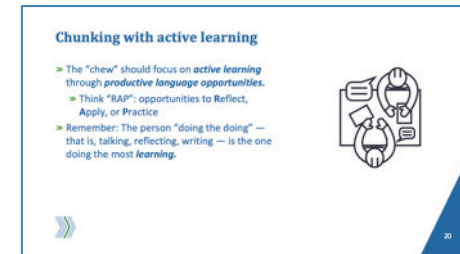
A presentation slide with a blue border and a blue triangle in the bottom right corner. It features a list of bullet points in green text about organizing content into meaningful chunks. A diagram on the right shows a large 'Un-chunked' block and a smaller 'Chunked' block, with the latter divided into four 'Training Content' blocks. A double arrow icon is in the bottom left, and the number 19 is in the bottom right.

Slide 20: Chunking with active learning

The 10:2, or “chunk and chew,” strategy (Rogers, 2005) is highly effective in supporting learners’ understanding of important concepts. The purpose of 10:2 is to ensure that learners are not inundated with input from the instructor without being given appropriate time to process the information. For example, phone numbers and social security numbers are not presented as a steady stream of numbers — they are chunked.

The “chew” should focus on **active learning** through **productive language opportunities**.

- Use the acronym “RAP”: provide opportunities to Reflect, Apply, or Practice.
Remember: The person “doing the doing”—that is, talking, reflecting, writing —is the one doing the most **learning**.

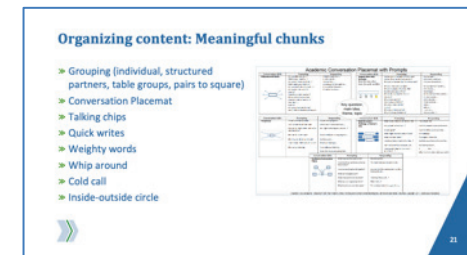


Slide 21: Organizing content: Meaningful chunks

Engagement structures for active learning

Direct participants to **Handout 1: Engagement Structures for Active Learning**. Explain that various engagement structures for active learning are endless, but these are the ones we will use throughout each of the modules. Note that we’ve already gone over grouping. Give participants time to read about each of the following structures:

- Grouping (individual, structured partners, table groups, pairs to square)
- Conversation Placemat
- Talking chips
- Quick writes
- Weighty words
- Whip around
- Cold call
- Inside-outside circle



Ask: What productive learning opportunities have I used thus far in our time together? (structured partners, whip around with table groups, quick write, weighty words)

Direct participants to **Handout 2: Conversation Placemat**. Explain that this handout can also be used as an engagement structure for conversations and discussions. Note that it will be used throughout the intermediate literacy training as an engagement structure. Additionally, it is used as a best-practice teaching strategy for students in the discussion module.

If needed, note that Kagan & Kagan's (n.d.) book on cooperative learning describes a lot of additional partner and small group strategies they could add to their engagement tool kit. (https://www.kaganonline.com/catalog/cooperative_learning.php)

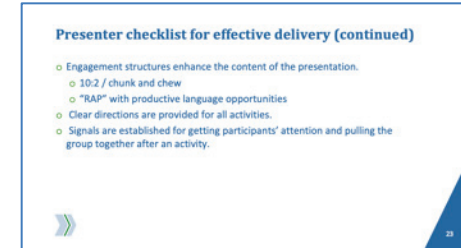
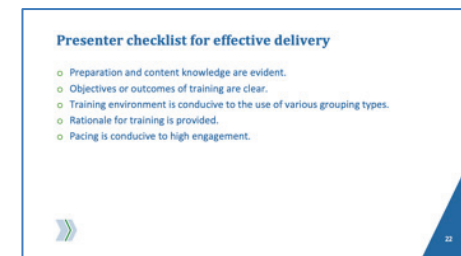
Slides 22, 23: Presenter checklist for effective delivery

When preparing for a training session, there are many things to consider. It is always good to arrive extra early to set up and organize materials. They should check equipment to make sure everything they need is operating smoothly. They should make sure their computer display cable is compatible with the projector they will be using. If they plan to use audio, they should check their speakers and make sure the sound can be heard from the back row of the room. They should have handouts arranged at the tables or organized in the order of distribution.

They can prepare “posters” beforehand on chart paper to hang around the room. These charts should contain any information that they will reference often as an anchor to the learning. Ideas include training objectives, steps of a specific instructional routine, a meaningful quotation, or a parking lot (i.e., place where participants can post questions).

Note the following from the slide checklist:

- **Preparation and content knowledge are evident.** Time spent preparing content and practicing delivery will be crucial. When preparing content, it will be important that they read through the notes for each slide and highlight the critical information. Note that there are more details in the notes than a presenter will share with a group. The notes are there to provide background for the presenter, especially if questions are asked. To prepare effectively, they should read through the slide notes in the facilitator guide and highlight key ideas, phrases, or words. Notes should **not** be read. Slides should also not be read. Nothing kills a presentation faster than reading off a deck of slides. It is important to look at the audience, not the slides or note pages.
- **Objectives or outcomes of training are clear.** Well-defined and articulated learning objectives are important because they let learners know the content focus, what is important from the session's learning, and engagement methods they will use to access the content. It provides learners with a clear focus for their learning efforts and



helps them assess their learning progress. Objectives should be displayed before the session begins and at the end of the session, perhaps through the slide deck. It is helpful to have the objectives on chart paper to reference throughout the training as a checkpoint of progress.

- **Training environment is conducive to the use of various grouping types.** The arrangement they choose for the training or meeting will depend on the number of participants, location, and size and layout of the room. If they are looking to have participants engage in a lot of cooperative work, using circle tables is preferable. When they choose an arrangement, they should walk around the room to ensure that they can circulate easily. The best arrangements involve participants sitting at tables that are round or rectangular. A horseshoe shape can also work but doesn't lend itself as well to table grouping activities.
- **Rationale for training is provided.** Teachers need to know why the training is important and how it will benefit them. The rationale provides the why and helps create buy in. Without rationale, teachers may not see the relevance. The best way to provide rationale is through research and evidence as well as personal experience.
- **Pacing is conducive to high engagement.** Pacing involves the extent to which a presenter moves through chunks at an appropriate pace — not too fast and not too slow. They will want to be able to keep learners engaged and on their toes through a “perky pace,” but it can't be so fast that people tune out. It is a careful dance of speeding up and slowing down, based on cues from the audience.
- **Engagement structures enhance the content of the presentation.** When thinking about delivery, it is important to ensure there are active engagement structures. As discussed in the previous slides, this involves ensuring the new content is peppered with active engagement opportunities that incorporate productive language opportunities for learners. These opportunities should allow participants to do one of the following RAP activities: reflect, apply, or practice. These opportunities should be provided in chunks with the 10:2 rule.
- **Clear directions are provided for all activities.** When participants transition, it is best to give logistical directions first, such as materials that are needed, where to sit, and so on, and give academic directions after groups are settled and ready to listen. For more complex activities, it can also be helpful to make directions visual.
- **Signals are established for getting participants' attention and pulling the group together after an activity.** This practice is critical for quick transitions, so time isn't lost. They should establish a signal with their audience early on. When effectively used, attention signals are one of the best tools for management. Without them, learning time is often lost in transition and engagement decreases.

Ask participants if there is anything else that they can think of to add to the checklist. Discuss.

Slide 24: Objectives

Review today's learning. Ask participants to reflect on each of the following objectives by doing the following:

- Take a sticky note and tear it in half to create two small pieces of paper (or grab two pieces of candy from the table or two coins from their purse or pocket, etc.). These are their “talking chips.”
- Direct participants to stand with their structured partner.
- Then, direct participants to “mingle” (walk) around the room. They should take their two talking chips with them. As they mingle, they should stay in close proximity to their partner.
- When you give the signal, they should freeze.
- Once they stop, with their partner, they should find another partner pair next to them to create a group of four. This is their “pairs to square” group.
- With their pairs to square group, they should take turns going through the objectives on the slide and articulating the learning for each of the objectives.
- For example, on the first objective, a person from the group would either reiterate from memory or use his or her notes or the slides to note the features of high-quality professional development that were discussed today. Once that person shares, he or she puts a talking chip into the middle of the group.
- Sharing continues until all objectives have been reviewed and each person in the group has had at least one turn.
- Once a person has used two talking chips, he or she cannot share again until all other talking chips in the group have been used.

Ending with this activity will not only help participants review the objectives and reflect on their learning but also provide them the opportunity to practice the engagement activities of talking chips and pairs to square.



Handouts

1. Engagement Structures for Active Learning
2. Academic Conversation Placemat
3. What Works Clearing House Practice Guides: Levels of Evidence

References

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