A CASE STUDY EXAMINING TEACHER COLLABORATION

A CASE STUDY EXAMINING TEACHERS' COLLABORATIVE PRACTICES

WITHIN READING WORKSHOP

BY

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION
A Case Study Examining Teachers' Collaborative Practices within Reading Workshop
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Studies have shown the benefits of teacher professional communities as a way of structuring reforms in order to develop instructional improvement (Curry, 2008).Yet despite this, within the broader literature there have been few studies to examine the content of teachers' interactions through their collaborative efforts around artifacts and conversations within communities. As such, this study applies communities of practice theory to expand the existing literature on teacher collaboration through case study methodology that examines the collaborative efforts of one grade level team.

The purpose of this study was to examine the interactions between teachers on a grade level literacy team in one public school. Under investigation was how they made decisions, used artifacts of their practice, and planned their lessons together within a new reform: Reading Workshop. The focus was on the collaborative efforts and interactions among teachers.

Study participants included all five teachers on a grade level literacy team at the school site. To document teacher collaboration, teachers were observed during their team meetings as they interacted around Reading Workshop and the artifacts and materials they routinely used. These interactions were audio-recorded during observations of team meetings to capture all of the teachers' interactions. Additionally, field notes were taken of anything significant. The teachers also participated in audio-recorded, semi-structured interviews to understand their views on the collaborative effort over time.

Three major themes emerged from the research: (1) the norms of the group did not support shared decision making. Questioning, conflict, and thoughtful dialogue around planning were not promoted and there was often a one-sided sharing of artifacts and ideas; (2) teacher practice was privatized where the experienced teachers held all of the artifacts and lesson plans from their past years and their thinking did not become public. Legitimate peripheral participation did not occur, and the learning was not transferred to the novices; (3) perceptions of competence by colleagues – the experienced teachers were often the only ones deemed competent enough to bring in artifacts or ideas, and they often didn't value the artifacts brought in by the novice teachers.

Implications that arose from this study include: (1) conceptualizing and creating norms for interaction and helping teams of teachers at the school site navigate through essential differences and tensions. In this manner, teachers can learn to address conflicts directly with one another, and more experienced teachers can bring novice teachers into apprenticeship through joint work and shared repertoire, (2) the use of protocols can guide teachers in developing norms that encourage making teaching public and thinking out loud about their practice. Additionally, providing novice teachers with pedagogical support around best instructional practices can help them navigate the challenges of Reading Workshop. This study shows the importance in studying teacher interactions to understand the nature of teacher collaboration and raises the need to find ways of building stronger communities where teachers learn together.

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Dedication

To Matt - without you, this would never have been possible

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Statement of the Problem

Research on collaboration within teaching communities has shown a picture of teachers often being autonomous and isolated from other teachers (Coburn, 2001; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Levine & Marcus, 2009; Little, 1990). The norms of interaction demonstrate that even as teachers do interact, they are congenial and often avoid conflict (Achinstein, 2002; Little, 1990). As a result of this dynamic, researchers have discussed the importance of strengthening teachers' professional community as a way to foster collaboration and learning. To improve professional community, the norms of the group must focus on promoting learning and making changes to the core of educational practice (Coburn, 2001; Curry, 2008; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2001; Levine & Marcus, 2009; Little, 1990; Little, 2002; Printy, 2008).

Fostering more collaborative communities in schools where teachers improve content and pedagogy has been linked with student achievement. Researchers argue that teachers benefit from inquiry and reflection to improve their practice. Critical inquiry based communities are places where teachers turn to one another and feel accountable and responsible toward the better good, which fosters learning and better teaching practice. In this way, professional teaching communities can become a mechanism for change in creating a climate of learning in a school (Curry, 2008).

One of the most common ways to understand collaboration is through professional learning communities which can be defined as configurations of teachers working together and exhibiting shared values and norms within their practice with the collective goal of teacher learning to improve practice. This might include collaborative teaching teams or inquiry based

professional learning communities (Curry, 2008).To build professional learning communities, teachers must learn to solve problems of practice collectively as a way to transform their individual practice and impact student learning. As they struggle through the same problems together the result can be improvement of their practice and a collective responsibility for student achievement (Curry, 2008; Elmore, 2002).

When teachers are involved in professional community it can make a critical difference in their ability to learn together and build the knowledge they need to foster inquiry and student learning (Coburn & Russell, 2008; Cosner, 2009; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Gallucci, 2008; Kerr, Marsh, Ikemoto, Darilek, & Barney, 2006; Newman, King, & Youngs, 2000; Youngs & King, 2002). Feiman-Nemser (2001) argues for professional learning opportunities that are (1) connected to teachers' classroom work, (2) help deepen teacher subject area knowledge, (3) strengthen interactive strategies, and (4) build inquiry. Professional learning diverges from staff development that favors dissemination and does not deepen the knowledge required to learn and improve teacher practice. In particular, professional learning differs because it focuses on empowering teachers to transform their "knowledge, understandings, skills, and commitments, in what they know and what they are able to do in their individual practice as well as in their shared responsibilities" (p. 1038).

Teachers need to interact with one another as well as with the materials surrounding teaching in order to do this. Solving problems by critically reviewing the artifacts of teaching and student learning collaboratively helps teachers to create interdependencies and become less isolated in their practice (Curry, 2008). Using data to solve problems of practice has also been shown to benefit teachers' instruction if they use data collectively for critical reflection, analysis, and inquiry (Kerr, March, Ikemoto, Darilek, & Barney, 2006). Specifically, analyzing and

opening up discussions about test scores, writing pieces, lab reports, and benchmark exams together can help teachers fine-tune instruction. Using this type of data in collaborative groups can help teachers solve problems of practice as they make decisions around when to individualize instruction, how to align instruction to the standards or to a new reform or curriculum, and how to adjust courses and resources to accommodate improved learning opportunities for more students (Kerr, March, Ikemoto, Darilek, & Barney, 2006). In using data this way, student work helps to guide instruction as it promotes discourse and collaboration. In this way, teachers' belief systems and skill levels improve as they learn more about their students' abilities and needs (Young, 2006).

In two decades of research the suggestion has been that teacher collaboration and professional community are important indicators of teacher learning. However, there has been little research that looks in detail at a specific community to understand the up-close types of interactions that can aid and detract from learning. As a way to address these concerns and be capable of designing teachers' joint work and collaborative efforts, it is necessary to support effective teacher collaboration and assess how it is working to improve practice.

This study addresses the concerns of teacher collaboration using detailed observations of behavior in a case study format in one school. At this school, district leaders adopted Reading Workshop and trainers came to the school from Teachers College Columbia University the year before I became principal. The teachers told me when I arrived that the trainers were very strict and regimented about the implementation and program design. We continued the training the year I arrived. Some key features included monthly training in a lab site classroom. In the lab site the trainer modeled a sample lesson in one classroom while the teachers on that grade level observed. Next, the trainer debriefed the lesson with the teachers in another room. As part of the

debriefing, the trainer also systematically reviewed the parts of the program that teachers must begin implementing, helping guide the curriculum and the instructional planning process. Some examples of key strategies teachers needed to learn to implement included: reading conferences, strategy groups, guided reading lessons, read-alouds, mini-lessons, running records, and book clubs. The training was sequential and allowed teachers to slowly infuse new strategies into their curriculum and discuss any instructional problems with the trainer. Although the design was methodical, lesson planning and teaching in the workshop model was very different from what teachers were accustomed to in the anthology-based approach they had previously used.

Compounding the problem, the administrators who brought in Reading Workshop did not create buy-in with teachers first. When I came in as a new principal, I had not been a part of the program selection process. Teachers informed me that when initial concerns were raised, the administrators did not listen to their concerns or offer teachers support. Therefore, the problem framing this study was that teachers faced changes in planning and teaching within the workshop model. They were required to have both theoretical and content knowledge around Reading Workshop in order to provide their students with access to the reading skills they needed to make academic gains. This created a turbulent environment where some of the teachers became resistant to the change, lacking the tools to address their students' diverse needs within this new reform (Young, 2006).

Furthermore, teachers were challenged by the enormous change related to the core technology of schools: teaching and learning. Since they were not part of the change process, this created program resistance and made it difficult for teachers to collaborate and develop into a professional community that might enable them to work together on this problem of practice.

Purpose of the Study

Despite an increase in pressure on teachers to reform instructional practice, they are often not brought into the change process which can negatively impact implementation of a reform. Giving teachers an opportunity to collaborate and become comfortable with planning and learning together helps teachers buy-in and gain comfort with instructional reforms. Teachers need to interact with one another as professionals in a social context as well as with the materials surrounding teaching and through the context of their usual activities. At the same time, effective collaboration is a construct that promotes interactive dialogue while fostering interaction as teachers work collaboratively. Helping teachers to improve how they learn together as they engage and participate in discourse around their practice will help them develop into a teaching community. This means that teacher collaboration should foster this interaction by stimulating discussion and helping teachers think deeply about their curriculum while extending knowledge in their subject. Openness and dialogue will further extend teacher learning if teachers can look for evidence of student learning together and work out problems of practice. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine:

A. The interactive processes involved in teacher collaboration, including:

- Structures and routines
- Artifacts/tools
- Contexts for interaction

B. The value teachers attach to these interactions

C. The collaborative practices that influence teachers to improve their comfort with Reading Workshop.

The purpose of this study was to examine the interactions between teachers on a grade level literacy team in one public school. Under investigation was how they made decisions, used artifacts of their practice, and planned their lessons together within a new reform: Reading

Workshop. The focus was on the collaborative efforts and interactions among teachers. This is a critical area of study because collaboration and professional community have become important pieces of school reform and professional development (Baker-Doyle & Yoon, 2010). In particular, it is difficult to study people's interactions and patterns of socialization. This study attempts to contribute as it offers detailed contextual data about one group of teachers. The use of case studies has been recommended as a tool for examining teachers' perspectives because of its use of in-depth interviews and observations (Blase & Blase, 1999). In this school, the reform was top down from its inception. I am trying to transform teacher professional community in this school so that teachers can learn through discourse and inquiry as they collaborate and work to improve their practice.

The nature of collaboration supports or hinders substantive teacher learning. The teachers have not established themselves as a learning community partially because this reform began as a top-down effort with little teacher buy-in. Therefore, as the teachers have tried to reconceptualize the reform to make it work in their classrooms, the focus of this study was on the following questions:

> How do teachers conduct their collaborative work as they take on a new practice?
> - What are the features, structures, and processes that characterize their work?
> - What type of learning is produced?
> - What are the central practices, norms, and sharing of experience that impact the nature of that learning?

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Figure 1: DIMENSIONS OF TEACHER COLLABORATION
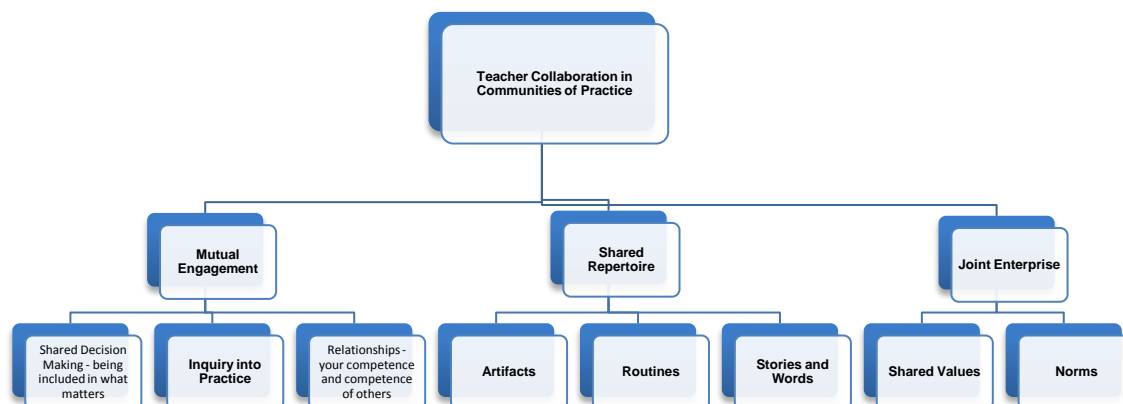
Conceptual Framework

This study is grounded in communities of practice theory which looks at where learning occurs and how communities can transform their practices within the social context and interaction between people. As teachers interact through joint enterprise, they develop common practices through their relationships with one another. Wenger (1998) asserts that there are three fundamentals specific to communities of practice: mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire. I use figure 1 to break each of these three tenets into specific areas that spread over my study and helped to guide my analysis.

To begin with, mutual engagement refers to active involvement with one another through the experience of daily work. This piece relates to the interaction of teachers with one another around curriculum, planning, and instruction. Engagement means sharing the decision making to include participation of all members and negotiating understandings of the work with one another. In this regard, mutual engagement does not suggest tacit agreement, but rather ongoing

interaction, knowledge building, and inquiry into practice as developing a shared learning (Coburn & Stein, 2006).

The second element, joint enterprise, refers to how the community responds and negotiates an understanding of their practice and what they expect to accomplish together (Wenger, 1998). As such, the norms of interaction and shared values are at the root of this construct as community members respond to situations by negotiating through their responses and adapting to changes in the organizational environment.

The final dimension of shared repertoire means the routines, policies, specific concepts, and ways of doing things that define participants' interactions with one another. For teachers, this includes reifications in the form of tools of instruction: lesson plans, curricula, assessments, or the artifacts of practice (Coburn & Stein, 2006).

Communities of practice theory is particularly applicable to this study because of its emphasis on the learning that occurs within shared work. This theory describes how teachers meet together to negotiate meaning in their practice. Communities of practice form from people mutually engaging around a situated experience. Through interaction with one another and with the reifications that can include tools and artifacts of their work, teachers begin to negotiate meaning and develop connections and identity together.

Building communities of practice where teachers can examine, inquire, and develop their knowledge together can represent a shift in their work that can help teachers develop together professionally. Learning through this type of community can help teachers transform their practice as they find new modes to interact through mutual engagement, participation, and reification (Coburn & Stein, 2006). As such, they have the opportunity to become a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as

they interact regularly through a well-honed shared repertoire (Wenger, 1998). I use

communities of practice theory in this study as the overarching conceptual framework.

Professional learning communities offer concrete evidence in support of the theory as a

framework and implementation of the theory in schools.

Given my focus on teachers' practices and participation in their grade level team,

communities of practice theory offers a good framework for this study as I used it to guide the

initial layer of my analysis and what I was looking for in the teachers' collective work. As I

analyzed detailed contextual data using this framework, I was better able to understand the

shifting nature of the teachers' collaborative work and shared practices.

Review of Literature

Communities of practice research espoused by Wenger (1998) supports learning efforts

that occur in teachers' daily practice and contribute to the quality of teachers' learning.

Additionally, these communities have the potential for change and innovation as teachers

develop shared values and create meaning together. Building strong teacher community that

centers around collaborative practices can facilitate improvements to teacher practice and student

learning (Levine & Marcus, 2009). The goal is to move teachers out of isolation and privatized

practice into a collective engagement with their peers around curriculum and instruction (Little,

1990). This concept derives from the notion that learning is a collaborative activity where

teachers must struggle together on problems of practice and learn together to improve student

outcomes (Elmore, 2002). As such, I begin this study with a review of the relevant research

around: (1) teacher collaboration and professional learning and, (2) what takes place when

collaboration and professional learning is thriving, (3) what takes place when there are obstacles

to collaboration and professional learning. These three lines of inquiry are particularly informative for understanding teacher collaboration around learning in schools.

Collaboration is defined by Little (1990) as joint work that is collective where teachers engage in making decisions and prioritizing their work around their practice together. The research shows three important points regarding this construct. First, it points to the need for schools to develop professional learning communities with collective goals and academic expectations (Achinstein, 2002; Gates & Watkins, 2010; Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2001; Kruse & Louis, 1997; Louis, Marks & Kruse, 1996; Printy, 2008). Second, research points to the need for fostering critical reflection and inquiry (Achinstein, 2002; Gates & Watkins, 2010; Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2001; Kruse & Louis, 1997; Louis, Marks & Kruse, 1996). Finally, research points to specific obstacles that get in the way of creating a professional community (Coburn, 2001; Curry, 2008; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2001; Levine & Marcus, 2009; Little, 1990; Little, 2002; Printy, 2008).

The focus on collaboration is about generating professional learning among teacher groups. Professional learning is rooted in the notion that when teachers are involved in a professional community that fosters inquiry within their practice this ultimately promotes learning. When teachers can align their vision toward learning, it can make a critical difference in their ability to build knowledge (Coburn & Russell, 2008; Cosner, 2009; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Gallucci, 2008; Kerr, Marsh, Ikemoto, Darilek, & Barney, 2006; Newman, King, & Youngs, 2000; Youngs & King, 2002). I detail some central work that informed the present study below, beginning with teacher collaboration.

Teacher Collaboration

The research on teacher collaboration points to the need for schools to develop

professional learning communities with collective goals and academic expectations (Achinstein,

2002;Gates & Watkins, 2010; Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 200; Kruse & Louis, 1997;

Louis, Marks & Kruse, 1996; Printy, 2008). The emphasis in this research is primarily on

building an intellectual learning environment that focuses on teachers collectively solving

problems of practice as they develop their content knowledge together in teaching communities.

Successful school change is shown to occur in schools where strong learning communities are

evident (Coburn & Stein, 2006; Levine & Marcus, 2007; Little, 2002). In this section, the key

practices laid out around teacher collaboration point to: (1) teachers learning together and

collectively solve problems of practice, (2) building knowledge of content and pedagogy, (3)

building capacity and expertise in their own classrooms, and (4) the use of common artifacts.

To begin with, as teachers work together on problems of practice in their learning

communities, they make critical changes in their own classroom settings as they build capacity

(Elmore, 2002). The shared sense of responsibility and collective action gained, helps them to

prioritize what's important in their instruction through the collaborative analysis and discourse

(Curry, 2008). Further benefits include creating curricular coherence and reducing teacher

isolation through shared commitments to student learning (Curry, 2008).

Another key component involves building teacher knowledge around content and

pedagogy as a way to guide teacher learning and problem solving to improve student learning

(Elmore, 2002). Similarly, trainings and staff development must be supported in teachers'

physical locations of learning and their everyday work so that they remain close to where actual

teaching and learning occur (Little, 2002). The typical staff development strays far from

fostering critical reflection around content and pedagogy and must go further to ask teachers to

reflect and construct their own learning (Curry, 2008). Furthermore, effective professional development is used as a way to address teachers' learning needs and should be organized around teacher instruction, learning, and collaboration to help teachers construct rigorous lessons around their content area together. This helps teachers become more interconnected within their professional community and more capable of designing the kinds of lesson plans that will assist all students (Odden & Archibald, 2009).

Opportunities for learning are enhanced when teachers engage in discourse and analysis around their content area, focusing on text-based matters, research-based and data-based reforms as strategies for improving instruction. Increasing teachers' awareness of best instructional practices in their content helps them gain pedagogical support that benefits their professional community as a whole (Curry, 2008). Structuring teachers' collaboration in their professional community to focus on improvements to instruction and giving teachers opportunities to learn through protocol-guided collaboration yielded more conversation around content and instruction (Levin & Marcus, 2009).

Moreover, the examination and use of common artifacts is embedded within each of these constructs. If you are gaining knowledge about something and working on a problem of practice to gain capacity, working with artifacts must be central to practice. Therefore, it is essential that the problem of practice is centered around items like tests, data, and curriculum. The artifacts within your practice ground some of the collaborative work of a professional community. In this manner, the research on teacher collaboration rests on the notion that building professional community requires teachers to learn together through examinations of artifacts and data that help build their knowledge around content and pedagogy.

One important factor that cuts across all of these in building towards a community of practice is critical reflection and inquiry. Therefore when collaboration is working you start to see some positive effects such as teachers taking collective responsibility for one another, the development of trust and teacher leadership, and the creation of norms and protocols to guide critical discussions.

When Collaboration and Professional Learning Thrive

Within teacher collaboration and learning, the research points to the importance of fostering critical reflection and inquiry (Achinstein, 2002; Gates & Watkins, 2010; Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2001; Kruse & Louis, 1997; Louis, Marks & Kruse, 1996). When critical reflection helps teachers the most, it occurs naturally in a flexible dialogue that helps teachers think more deeply, and make better instructional decisions (Young, 2006). Shaping the work to promote deep conversations around everyday instructional practices helps teachers build strong team interactions and collaborative norms. Furthermore, evidence suggests that for learning to occur it should happen inside the school so that teachers collaborate and the learning is situated in teachers' practice. This type of learning helps break down the barriers and promotes ongoing discourse and dialogue that is focused on the specifics of teaching and learning (Grossman, Wineburg & Woolworth, 2001).

Inquiry-driven collaborative work is founded on the notion that teachers are collectively responsible and accountable for one another and they must be dedicated to the same cause of furthering student learning through instructional improvement and reform (Curry, 2008). This collectivity requires agenda setting to help establish norms of interaction so that teachers develop the skills to critically reflect and engage in inquiry around relevant materials. Encouraging interdependent joint work and examining the values teachers share helps to establish an inquiry

based community where teachers forge meaning and identity together through mutual support and obligation towards one another.

In Marnie Currie's study of teacher professional communities (2008), she discussed the design of professional inquiry groups that encourage participation and reflection. Her research on Critical Friends Groups found that building inquiry groups is best done through designing protocol structures to guide conversation and using tools and structures that help explain the inquiry process and establish a way for teachers to discuss sensitive topics in a critical manner. By creating specific routines and procedures for discussion teachers were able to elevate the quality of their conversations to a joint analysis level. As teachers maintained critical conversations about their practice, they encouraged collective review of artifacts of their students' learning. In this way, they were able to deprivatize their practice and overcome the usual norms of noninterference and cordiality. Protocols encouraged teachers to challenge one another with critical questions and offer instructional input where they felt it was needed.

Another way that collaboration and learning thrive within a professional community is when an atmosphere of trust is developed. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) describe five facets of trust in building a collaborative school environment: (1) benevolence, (2) reliability, (3) competence, (4) honesty, and (5) openness. This means teachers must trust their colleagues as they build collaborative relationships that will enable them to share and reflect openly. Collaboration requires time and effort; as teachers share resources and build relationships around their practice that center around discourse and inquiry, there must be a level of trust to remain committed to a collaborative group (Tshannen-Moran, 2001). More importantly, since critical reflection often challenges the status quo, for teachers to have a stake in this, they must feel a

sense of connectedness to the group which can be fostered through trusting, caring relationships (Achinstein, 2002).

Along the same lines, teacher collaboration and learning thrives through the participation of teacher leaders who can invite others into the decision making and encourage learning through building shared values and norms (Lord, Cress, & Miller, 2008; Gates & Watkins, 2010; Harris, 2003). Stretching the leadership over teachers in this way helps to engage others in activities that foster interaction around tasks such as curriculum development (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004). Instructional conversations develop out of learning communities and the collaborative environment has a great influence on instruction and peer collaboration.

Additionally, teacher leaders can help the others in a community handle conflict rather than always seek consensus by helping the group negotiate through the essential tensions that arise from teacher autonomy and privatized practice. Teacher expertise becomes a central way to guide the collaborative work towards best practices and help the professional community craft and adjust instruction to student need (Gates & Watkins, 2010). As teacher leaders engage in discussion with those who are knowledgeable in a subject or a pedagogical practice they can help the group to incorporate what they learned with their own thinking and bring this into their practice. Leading by modeling instructional practice and sharing the tools of planning is an important step in opening up their practice to less experienced teachers (Lord, Cress, & Miller, 2008). In this way, a vision of teacher leadership becomes embedded within the vision of collaboration (Datnow & Castellano, 2010; Levine & Marcus, 2007).

Other members of a professional community can become informal or formal leaders as well. Around instructional leadership, informal advice and support more often comes from peers rather than supervisors (Supovitz, 2006). A formal teacher leader might be willing to work with

other members of the faculty and provide links for direct help in the classroom in areas where

they know someone has expertise. As a result, teacher leaders can link together to improve

student performance through improvements to classroom practice and collegial relationships

(Kruse, Louis, & Bryk, 1995).

Conversely, teacher leaders also face obstacles in their work. The skills to work with

other teachers include the ability to work with adults, having content expertise, and managing

conflict and the politics of schools (Kruse, Louis, & Bryk, 1995). Teacher leaders can also get

stuck offering superficial feedback that does not help move others along in their practice as they

must give "..hard feedback referring to instances where a teacher leader's honest critique of

classroom practice is issued even though the critique actively challenges the teacher's preferred

practice and may lead the teacher to professional discomfort" (p. 57). Offering more tactful and

less controversial feedback can be a result of their leadership as they try to preserve trust and

maintain relationships. This is hard work for teacher leaders who may have content or

pedagogical expertise, but may not have the type of leadership knowledge that would help them

offer honest feedback. Negotiating through conflict and overcoming the professional norms that

favor autonomy, privacy, and politeness are significant undertakings (Grossman, Wineburg &

Woolworth, 2001).

Furthermore, in order to build true learning communities, schools must foster critical

reflection and inquiry and help teachers build trust in one another enough that they are willing to

share and open up their practice to the deep thinking and input of their colleagues. An important

part of establishing trust and helping teachers critically reflect on their work together, is

involving teachers in professional learning and helping teacher leadership to emerge and flourish

in order to create a professional community. Yet when the key practices enumerated in this

section on teacher collaboration and learning are not put into place, the research enumerates

many obstacles that impede teacher collaboration.

Obstacles to Teacher Collaboration and Learning

The literature on teacher learning points to the need for professional learning

communities that help contend with the obstacles to collaboration while also addressing what to

do when there are signs that a group is in trouble (Blase & Blase, 1999; Cosner, 2009; Curry,

2008; Datnow & Castellano, 2010; Elmore, 2002; Gallucci, 2008; Leech & Fulton, 2008; Levine

& Marcus, 2009; Little, 2002; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004; Youngs & King, 2002).

Grossman, Wineburg, and Woolworth (2001) describe teacher communities as going through the

following stages: (1) formation of group identity and norms of interaction, (2) navigating the

fault lines, (3) negotiating the essential tension, and (4) communal responsibility for individual

growth. In this model, first communities of teachers gel together distinctly as a group and begin

to view themselves as responsible for one another. The next stage is critical as it deals with how

the group handles conflict and differences among members. They begin to navigate group

tensions and develop norms for active engagement in conflict as a way to create a context for

learning. Following this stage, the group begins to negotiate through conflicts and delve into

issues of student learning and their own curriculum and teaching. Finally, teachers become

responsible for one another's growth and learning as the ultimate potential for change through

unity and collaboration.

In order to create conditions for substantive professional learning, removing the obstacles

that stand in the way of teachers engaging with one another is critical. Some of these obstacles

include: (1) The culture of isolation and privatized practice; (2) The norms of avoiding conflict;

(3) The lack of situated training to promote learning and improvement.

One obstacle to professional community is the culture of isolation, autonomy, and privacy that has been well documented in the literature (Coburn, 2001; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Grossman, Wineburg & Woolworth, 2001; Levine & Marcus, 2009; Little, 1990). When teachers close their doors and teach, they lose the opportunity to interact in a social context as well as with the materials surrounding teaching. Professional norms of privacy create an environment where teachers may not learn or become deeply engaged in their practice due to isolation (Putnam and Borko, 2000). When teachers do not reveal their classroom practices, there is no way to develop substantive talk or opportunities for learning the concrete routines and practices that help promote improvements to their work (Levine & Marcus, 2009). Lacking a structure or tools for sharing, such as protocols or agendas to structure the collaboration, teachers likely will not share and if they do, it is often superficial or lacks detail (Grossman, Wineburg & Woolworth, 200).

Likewise, when practice remains private, teachers are isolated from one another and any hopes of developing artifacts and tools used in the classroom is undercut as teachers feel they lack permission to share. Therefore, they may have difficulty taking collective responsibility and focusing together on student learning because important areas of instruction are avoided. Additionally, with this dynamic, teachers do not gain support for teaching their content area. What the literature does not attend to is the detailed inner-workings and relationships among teachers within a collaborative group that lead to this type of isolation. Additionally, when teachers are isolated from one another and they do not share their practice, what changes occur in their relationships? This study contributes to the literature as it delves deeply into teachers' up-close interactions over the course of a school year, examining their detailed dialogue as well as their thoughts and perspectives on collaboration along the way as they come together as a group.

Pointing to another obstacle to collaboration and professional community, the norms of privacy in teaching do not promote teachers working through the differences and conflicts that naturally arise out of collaboration. When differences of opinion surface, teachers need ways to help them mediate through conflict and enable them to discuss differences in their practices to help guide inquiry and reflective dialogue (Achinstein, 2002). When teachers feel they must be polite and congenial, they lose the exercise of exploring their assumptions and articulating their positions. Through the suppression of conflict, teachers lack the forum to live with controversy and don't feel they can openly explore opinions or share ideas. As a result, substantive learning cannot take form (Curry, 2008).

As the norms of privacy and conflict avoidance persist, teachers are less involved in each other's practice through apprenticing or mentoring. It is uncommon for teachers to observe each other in the classroom or to discuss their practice. With norms of behavior in teaching centering around politeness and avoiding discord, barriers are created where new teachers are afraid to ask for help or reveal that they don't know something (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Novice teachers often struggle with making sense of content and pedagogy and they puzzle through planning lessons and delivering instruction that improves student learning (Young, 2006). Yet the persistence of these norms means they are given few opportunities to build knowledge and shared expertise with more experienced teachers. Teachers must continue to grow and keep up with the latest information in their discipline. Having few opportunities to build shared expertise means they cannot define a common purpose and the inevitable result is that they lack the ability to learn together (Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2001).

Moreover, obstacles that inhibit discourse and reflection also hinder the collaborative inquiry necessary to build teacher competence and help them take collective responsibility to

achieve the goals of strong instruction. Without an inquiry orientation to teacher collaboration, teachers have difficulty with reforms that require less prescribed curricula that are less tied to textbooks. As a result, when teachers must implement a reform such as Reading Workshop, knowledge building and shared expertise become critical to the process. With Reading Workshop, the specific approach to literacy depends on deep knowledge from the teacher who must be able to support student learning by diagnosing reading ability and developing lessons that address individual skills through the use of authentic literacy texts (Calkins, 2001; Young, 2006). Teachers must use their own professional judgment to help students who are all on different reading levels. Moreover, new assessments such as running records are part of the philosophy and must be completed to determine students' reading levels. Therefore, analysis of data and developing formative assessments to improve learning are also subjects that require deep knowledge. Consequently, without shared expertise and knowledge building within a professional community, teachers have great difficulty integrating this type of reform (Young, 2006).

Another byproduct of privatized practice and conflict avoidance is that teachers don't learn how to effectively navigate through the inevitable tensions that arise from collaboration. Through collaboration, natural tensions in personalities, values, and how they envision their work with students, can cause teachers to be at odds with one another. Without the use of protocols to help teachers focus the conversation on inquiry and critical reflection, antagonisms can develop as teachers often dismiss each other's ideas, shut each other out, or develop unequal participation levels within the group. When one person is permitted to dominate the conversation and has more turns, inevitable tensions arise inhibiting teachers from negotiating issues,

articulating their positions, and learning from one another (Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 200; Levine & Marcus, 2009).

Complicating matters further, these obstacles to community can also create divisions within a group as some teachers become so frustrated by not having a voice that they break off from the group and become more isolated and alone in their practice, having no one to bounce ideas off of (Curry, 2008). Although the literature does discuss teacher frustration and isolation, what it does not describe is the dynamic that occurred in this study where the norms of teacher privacy and conflict avoidance led to separate factions within the group, which ultimately led to misunderstandings of the reform as it closed off learning and shared expertise. Additionally, studies have not shown how teacher isolation can lead to inflated views of competence because one teacher can isolate themself and not be open to developing shared expertise with the rest of the group. In this way, it can be unclear to a teacher what knowledge they are lacking, especially if

they lack the tools to integrate a reform that requires new learning.

Similarly, for teachers to become competent, their interactions must be around learning and negotiating meaning through participation and developing a shared repertoire (Coburn & Stein, 2006). Obstacles occur when they receive new materials like a new textbook adoption or a reform like Reading Workshop that requires a great deal of preparation and learning. If the adoption falls counter to the approaches teachers usually use to organize their lessons, or uses different learning theories, teachers may feel that it does not fit within the frameworks they believe in. To mitigate this issue, if professional development is not offered to help teachers make sense of the new information to guide their instruction, they will lack the tools needed to promote student learning (Coburn & Stein, 2006). Likewise, if they are not connected with

opportunities to participate together and share expertise and knowledge, or given the opportunity

to air their concerns about committing to a new initiative, they may have difficulty with buy-in

and they may shut themselves off to learning opportunities, even refusing the new reform or

offering superficial adherence to it (Hatch, 2001).

Additionally, efforts to guide teacher learning have historically taken place outside of

schools removing teachers from their practice to learn with others who are not part of their

community (Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2001). Learning is often not on-going and may

take the form of summer workshops when teachers cannot transfer their learning immediately

into their practice. Compounding this problem, often training is optional so that if a teacher does

not volunteer, they are given almost tacit approval not to participate. Unfortunately, often the

teachers most in need of learning are not the ones who volunteer for professional development.

Therefore, the argument for transforming teachers' practice through the development of a

substantive learning community becomes even stronger. Likewise, when training does not

address content so that teachers develop their subject matter expertise and their curriculum, they

are hindered from learning and making changes in their disciplines. District trainings often focus

on pedagogy over content and most do not cover lesson planning, an area of need for many new

teachers (Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2001).

Summary

The themes that appear and echo throughout the literature on teacher collaboration and

professional learning highlight the importance of building professional community as a means of

encouraging teacher learning and instructional improvement. When teachers interact around

problems of practice and take responsibility for one another and for their learning, this helps to

create an open dialogue of reflection and inquiry. To accomplish these goals, teachers need to

develop norms that encourage collaboration through a culture of inquiry. They must be able to struggle through critical issues in their practice and accept that conflict often fosters dialogue and encourages learning.

The literature helps frame my research for this study which centers around examining teacher practices around collaboration with the goal of helping teachers to develop into a professional learning community. Helping teachers to engage with one another and participate in discourse around their practice can help develop a learning community. This means that teacher collaboration should stimulate discussion, extend their knowledge about their subject, and help teachers think deeply about their practice. Openness and dialogue will further extend teacher learning if they can look for evidence of student learning together and work out problems of practice. This study focuses on a community that is trying to take on a reform practice, and as they do so, they face many of the obstacles noted in the research. Watching how they negotiate these obstacles can inform the literature on how teachers adapt to reforms and how reforms get adapted by teachers coming together.

Accordingly, this study expands the literature on teacher collaboration through its use of case study methodology that draws out contextual data about this school. Within the broader literature on teacher collaboration, there are not many studies that examine and investigate in detail the challenges and successes teachers face around a reform practice as they engage around issues as a group and try to negotiate elements of their practice. Additionally, although previous studies have tried to understand teachers' perspectives by looking at their discourse, there has not been much research on how teachers adapt to reforms within one collaborative group within a specific setting, how their relationships evolve, and how they use the artifacts of their practice together to help them with this reform. In this study, I hope to contribute to the field by

describing the teachers' interrelationships and the views they held over the course of this study. Identifying these missing details will help to create an environment of inquiry and build teacher trust and buy-in for a new reform. Overall, this study will help me assist the teachers with making improvements to their professional learning community.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Case study design is used to understand situations and complex phenomena in a particular setting (Yin, 2009). For this research study I used a qualitative case study to explore teachers' joint practices and activities while gathering in-depth data around their collaboration. Data were collected over the course of one school year, which is consistent with a case study approach as it was bound by time and case as I documented the real-life context surrounding teachers' collaboration in one grade level (Yin, 2009). The focus of this study was on investigating teachers' collaboration and their perceptions of that collaboration as a way to discover insights that might support teachers and help them improve their collaborative work. Since the literature supports collaboration as a way to build capacity in schools, (Cosner, 2009; Curry, 2008; Levine & Marcus, 2009; Little, 2002; Printy, 2008; Young, 2006), there was a great need to document and understand the shifting nature of teachers' collaborative work as they tried to develop into a professional learning community to take on the Reading Workshop reform (Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2001). I used a range of data sources, but the most crucial were the audio-taped records of teachers' situated interactions that captured their collective work. These audio tapes of teacher practice did not constitute all of the data used for this study; however, they provided the most thorough look at the collaborative and group work within the team.

I selected my sample in a purposeful manner and kept in mind the specific information that was needed (Creswell, 2009). Additionally, when doing a case study, there are distinct advantages to understanding the uniqueness of the individual and what they are going through. As such, I investigated one grade level literacy team to generate themes and gain an understanding of their collaborative efforts. I gathered data that I used to reflect on the strengths

and weaknesses of their efforts to help guide improvements as they worked within Reading

Workshop. My aim was to elicit rich detail by examining their beliefs, reservations, and past

experiences about collaborative work.

Qualitative researchers collect multiple forms of data, observe behavior, and interview

participants (Creswell, 2009). For this study, I used qualitative methods such as in-depth

interviews, observations of team planning meetings, and analysis of documents that the teachers

co-constructed. I began with a first layer of initial interviews. This first layer of data helped

supply the information that fed the second layer, the observations. I used the analysis from the

observations to guide me into some informal conversations. All prior layers of data analysis

helped inform my thinking as I analyzed the teachers' documents of practice. Finally, all of these

layers of data helped to inform the final interviews. Therefore, I was able to describe and

understand what was happening from the teachers' perspectives, enabling me to explore themes

and difficulties that arose for them around teaching Reading Workshop. In this way, the design

helped me gain an understanding of how teachers collaborated around a specific reform and what

can be done in the future to help them create a stronger collaborative learning culture.

Setting

This study was done in a suburban school in New Jersey. Holmdel Township is an old

farm community in Monmouth County that is now considered suburban. It is located 15 miles

west of the New Jersey Shore. Residents of the community number approximately 16,700 and

average home values are $472,095. The town covers 18.115 square miles. The community is

made up of 66% professionals with a bachelors and/or graduate degree earning an average

income of $115,000, making it a mostly upper-middle class community. The racial makeup of

the township is 77.55% White, 19.16% Asian, 3.7% Latino, and .86% African American (U.S.

Census Bureau, 2010).

This school is one of four schools in the district. With a student population of

approximately 730 students, it houses all of the district's 4th-6th grade students. In addition, the

district houses one PK-3 school, one 7th -8th grade school, and one high school. The district has

received an "I" designation for its district factor group to reflect its high socioeconomic status

(New Jersey Department of Education, 2010). District Factor Groups are used to indicate the

socioeconomic status of citizens living in a district. The designation was updated in 1992 from

census data obtained on demographics in the 1990 United States Census report. It has been used

in New Jersey as a comparative reporting measure for state testing results.

Sample

The sample included the fourth grade literacy teachers totaling five teachers which

enabled me to study one group in-depth. This team was chosen through my observations over the

last two years as their principal for their strong commitment to collaborative work, their desire to

learn together as evidenced by the way they referred back to shared literacy texts as a solid

foundation for planning within Reading Workshop (Curry, 2008), and their ability to withstand

conflict and hash out their ideas collaboratively (Achinstein, 2002). I had hoped that choosing to

work with a more effective team would help me understand what was working in their

collaboration so that I might guide the rest of the literacy teams in the same direction. I

interviewed all of the teachers in the group. Therefore, the sample chosen directly represented

the characteristics needed to address the research questions being posed regarding teacher

collaboration (Patton, 2008). Unfortunately, after I chose this group for my case study, three of

the five teachers left the grade level.

Next I briefly describe the participants in the newly formed group Gillian, Joanne, Sandy, Brooke, and Deborah. Only Brooke and Deborah remained from the original grade level group. Gillian had been part of the Reading Workshop training; however, during the year of training, she was a special education teacher, working with a very needy, cognitively impaired group of students; therefore, she was not practiced in implementing any of the Reading Workshop strategies. Nevertheless, she tried to incorporate some of what she was learning, and she appeared to believe in the philosophy. The next year after the training, she served as a temporary leave teacher in Brooke's classroom where she put into practice the strategies she had learned and worked closely to transition with Brooke before she left on maternity leave. Gillian taught with the original grade level team for six months and became an accepted member of the team.

Joanne was an experienced teacher; however, she was new to the grade level. She taught on the sixth grade literacy team the previous year, a team of teachers who spoke out the most vociferously against reading workshop. As a result, Joanne did not have as much experience embedding the strategies into her instruction or collaborating closely with a team of teachers. During the two training years, she was on maternity leave one year, then she taught basic skills during the second year of training and her participation was sporadic. When she returned to a 6th grade position, I noted as did the language arts supervisor, that she was not infusing Reading Workshop strategies effectively into her instruction.

This was Sandy's first full year as a teacher in her own classroom; however, I hired her to fill a maternity leave position for a highly established and respected teacher on the grade level. Prior to that, Sandy had been a short term leave replacement teacher in a title 1 district. She taught literacy through isolated skill development and a literacy anthology. The teachers on her

team used worksheets and packets with their students and she learned to have a strong reliance on the Common Core standards and to maintain state testing at the forefront of her lessons.

Data Collection

In qualitative research, the researcher tries to make meaning through the participants' stories. The details elicited from this process set the stage for rich data collection and analysis. Individuals' stories and experiences help the researcher understand a culture as well as formulate themes that allow the researcher to build concepts into hypotheses (Seidman, 2006). As a principal, I wanted to understand the approach the teachers in my building took when they collaborated around literacy instruction in Reading Workshop. I also wanted to investigate the current practices in my building so that I could try to assist teachers to learn together within their professional group. I used qualitative methods such as observations of team planning meetings, in-depth interviews, as well as analyzed documents to describe and understand what was happening from the teachers' perspectives. Table 1 shows the sample, the types of data that were collected, the timeframe for collection, and the analysis of the data.

I collected data using the communities of practice as a theoretical lens. I focused on Wenger's (1998) three dimensions that exemplify communities of practice: mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire. I was trying to determine if this grade level of literacy teachers could change their practices by negotiating meaning through mutual engagement and shared enterprise (Wenger, 1998). The unit of analysis was around teachers' engagement with each other and the reifications or tools of their practice. Reification refers to the process of giving form to experiences by producing materials or objects. Wenger suggests that to negotiate meaning, teacher participation and reification must be intertwined. The object can then be negotiated for meaning and used as a tool or implement of practice.

Table 1: DATA COLLECTION TABLE

Type of Data Collection (Measure)	Sample	Data Analysis	Timeframe
First interviews - short, open-ended 20 minutes	Five participating literacy teachers	To create a comparison before observations around teachers' beliefs, reservations, shared experiences around collaboration/collaborative work	Early October, 2013
Observe and audio-record teacher team meetings 4 times throughout the year to observe details around collaboration	Five participating literacy teachers	Analysis of shared decision making, participation in collaborative work	October November December January
Second interviews – long, open-ended 40 minutes	Five participating literacy teachers	To gain a rich understanding of teacher collaborative work	February
Follow up interviews - Short, open-ended 6-15 minutes	Four participating literacy teachers	To add detailed accounts of collaboration when questions arose during data analysis	February May
Field notes taken during observations & informal conversations	Five participating literacy teachers	To gain a rich understanding of teacher collaborative work	Ongoing throughout the year
Artifact collection – lesson plans, instructional handouts, rubrics, and assessments	Five participating literacy teachers	Used for evidence of negotiating meaning, joint enterprise, shared repertoire, and mutual engagement	Ongoing collection in observations of team meetings

Observations. Data were collected at 4 regularly scheduled team planning meetings. As I would normally be an occasional member of these meetings, this was considered part of my regular routine as the building principal, making the study one of everyday educational practice. As teachers become part of a learning community, they begin to share a sense of responsibility as they increase the level of discourse and inquiry (Curry, 2008). Inherent in the community of practice model is teachers' shared sense of responsibility and level of engagement with one another through their practice (Curry, 2008). Teachers negotiate meaning through social interaction that is situated in their practice and demonstrates the interdependencies and

participation of the group (Wenger, 1998). Accordingly, I used these meetings for the purpose of observing the following three things: (a) the development of shared decision making, (b) the participation of teachers in a shared repertoire as they discussed lesson plans and instructional materials, and (c) mutual engagement involving the competence of others and connecting to the knowledge of others through giving and receiving help rather than trying to know everything on their own (Wenger, 1998).

In observing and documenting these three components during the group's interactions with one another I was able to refine my interview questions and gain more detailed information about their collaborative work. Because I was most interested in a detailed examination of the topics discussed, I audio recorded these sessions and also took field notes so that I would not miss critical information. Following each meeting, I immediately analyzed the field notes in a reflective and analytical manner to try to understand the features, subtleties, and specifics of how the group collaborated. The audio recordings provided further description that might have been missed from the field notes. Additionally, the audio recordings were transcribed as a way to extract specific conversations for later analysis.

The purpose of the observations was to gain descriptive information from the teacher participants to identify the details of how they conducted their collaborative work. It is the responsibility of the researcher to try to understand how the participants see things while interpretations should emphasize "the *multiple realities,* the different and even contradictory views of what is happening" (Stake, 1995, p. 12). The purpose of the observations in this study was to note the behaviors and activities of the teachers in their planning meetings. Since I sometimes acted as a participant in teachers' planning sessions, the observations varied from non-participant to a complete participant (Creswell, 2009). Observations took place in regularly

scheduled co-planning meetings in a large conference room or in a teacher's classroom in the building.

      Interviews. Two semi-structured interviews were conducted with each teacher. The first interview occurred before any observations took place. Interviews were conducted in my office to ensure privacy and so that there would no interruptions while teachers spoke to me. Since there were some staffing changes over the summer, the purpose of the first interview was to get a sense of how connected the new team of teachers felt to one another and what their initial beliefs, reservations, and past experiences were prior to working together as a team (Coburn & Stein, 2006). As such, while keeping the central research question in mind, the semi-structured interview protocols included open-ended questions to probe for details about teachers' experiences and viewpoints regarding how the grade level collaboration was going, what was working and what was not working. Participants were asked to provide details and examples to explicate and clarify their experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge about collaborative work.

      The second interviews took place five months after the first interviews when all of the observations were complete. Accessing teachers' thinking after they had engaged together in collaborative work, allowed me to draw on moments from the observations to clarify teachers' thoughts and understand their interactions, participation, and reifications. The interviews were a powerful tool for understanding the teachers' collaborative work, because they helped illuminate the details of experience that the participants were living in within their professional community (Seidman, 2006).

      Four unplanned and unstructured interviews took place following the second interviews. As I began to analyze the audio recordings and transcripts and identify the themes in the study, I

held these interviews as a follow up to specific issues that arose as I analyzed the data. In some cases they were meant to clarify an idea and in other cases, they were used to triangulate the data. All interviews were transcribed as a way to extract specific perspectives and understandings for later analysis.

A key aspect for this study is the unit of analysis for communities of practice: the engagement teachers have with one another through situated and social interactions (Curry, 2008). I therefore asked some of the following questions around joint enterprise, shared repertoire, and mutual engagement:

- Please give me some examples of when team members have helped you? Or where you have divided or delegated tasks?
- What opportunities do you have to forge and maintain collaborative relationships?
- Please describe any additional opportunities that you take to collaborate with colleagues? How useful has this been?
- Please describe circumstances and mechanisms that you feel support you in implementing Reading Workshop?
- In your opinion, what supports and/or collaboration has been most beneficial to you? Why?
- Have you come to any new understandings about your work together? If so, can you tell me about them?
- What decisions do you make when you create documents together?
- What supports and/or professional development would you like to see put into place?

Documents. According to Merriam (1998), qualitative researchers collect personal documents as a data source to aid in understanding a person's attitudes and beliefs about a topic. Therefore, in addition to observations and interviews, the following documents were obtained and reviewed: documents used to aid in lesson planning, unit plans, lesson plans, instructional handouts, graphic organizers, rubrics, and assessments. These documents were collected and reviewed for the following areas: (a) collaborative work, (b) commitment to Reading Workshop, and (c) whether they were created or modified by a member of the team or downloaded off the Internet. The purpose of letter c was to indicate interaction with an artifact as a way of learning.

Within communities of practice, shared repertoire includes participation as members create meaning through discourse and negotiation. Coherence within the group gains form as members practice their work together and learn to interpret misunderstandings and agreements. Shared repertoire includes objects of practice such as documents and artifacts developed together through participation and collaboration (Coburn & Stein, 2006; Wenger, 1998).

Data Analysis

The importance of using multiple sources of evidence and triangulating the data is critical to a case study where the opportunity to view many sources provides depth and allows the evaluator to be more accurate in analyzing the program as the evidence comes together (Yin, 2009). The first layer of triangulation for my study was based on initial interviews and observations. I used the analysis from these data sources to feed into the next layer, the second and third interviews. I also collected and analyzed artifacts to see how mutually constituted they were, as well as my field notes, which helped me to further develop the particular themes.

I used Dedoose to enter the transcript data and help me with the initial layer of coding which focused on joint work, mutual engagement, and shared repertoire. I engaged in this for both the first round of interviews and all observations (See Table 1). The first level of codes were developed across both of these sources. Next, data were organized into conceptual clusters and categories within these clusters (Yin, 2009). All transcripts and documents were analyzed inductively first to search for patterns and themes that emerged from the data. I did this by developing a system of coding the data with key terms, writing memos to highlight interesting findings and noting any questions that required follow up. I used similar procedures to analyze the data from the observations, preparing the data for analysis, exploring the data, analyzing the data, representing the data analysis and validating the data (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007).

Examples of inductive themes that emerged in the first analysis were: (1) core beliefs about

learning are different, (2) novice teachers hold on to Common Core because of lack of

understanding and comfort with Reading Workshop, (3) no joint enterprise occurring, (4)

teachers are positioned differently within the group. From these conceptual clusters, I then

developed subcategories.

I coded by hand and organized the data into categories. I looked for themes across the

three constructs of joint enterprise, mutual engagement, and shared enterprise that emerged from

the data by reading it through and then reading it and looking for specific confirming and

disconfirming evidence. Then I refined the themes and went through the process multiple times

to develop codes. Codes were created inductively to allow the data to emerge into conceptual

categories and descriptive themes that made sense and supported the research question regarding

teachers' collaborative work (Yin, 2009). All of the coding from the initial interviews and

observations fed into and informed the second and third interviews. As such, I applied the same

coding to the second and third interviews using the same method of analysis. Although still using

an open-ended interview process, I was able to hone in on a more detailed examination of

teachers' practices and perspectives related to aspects of communities of practice theory. Some

examples of questions that were asked in the second and third round interviews that were more

specific to communities of practice include:

- Give me an example of a time when you co-planned together. What did that look like? Tell me a little bit about what you did. (mutual engagement)
- Do you think there are leaders in the group? If so, what makes them leaders? Can you elaborate? (mutual engagement)
- Is there someone you turn to more than others in the group? If so, why? (joint enterprise)
- One of the things I've noticed is that during the meetings you have been asking for resources. Where have you been getting the resources that you are using? Have you brought in any resources? What happened when you did? (shared repertoire)

I printed the transcripts that I had also entered into Dedoose and created a physical code

book that I cut and pasted transcripts into. This was divided into subsections using general

headings. In order to begin to develop themes across the data, the codes were established

inductively, enabling me to begin to see patterns emerging in the data. Some of the codes

included how materials were being constructed or co-constructed with colleagues, teachers using

team meetings for handing out artifacts, clearly delineated roles within the team, and leadership

or competence within the group. These examples were also analyzed within communities of

practice theory and helped to build the final themes. Additionally, I was able to generate the

questions for the second interviews and the follow up interviews based on this analysis.

After initial interviews and observations, as a method of member checking, I consulted

with teacher participants and had them help me look at the themes from my analysis to make

sure that this accurately reflected their work together. Using the same data, I also analyzed it

using a deductive approach to generate hypotheses supported by the literature on teacher

collaboration. The analysis of each data source aligned as well with the central research question

and the sub-questions as well as an overlay of communities of practice theory as illustrated in

table 2. Transcripts, themes, and hypotheses were read and shared with my dissertation group

and dissertation chair to validate the data.

Table 2: DATA ANALYSIS TABLE

Data Source	Research question	Analysis
Teacher interview #1 – prior to observations	1, 2	Mutual engagement, shared repertoire, joint enterprise
Observations	1, 3	Inquiry into practice, shared decision making, relationships of competence

Teacher interview # 2	1, 2, 3	Mutual engagement, shared repertoire, joint enterprise
Artifacts	1, 3	Shared repertoire, joint enterprise

Research questions

How do teachers conduct their collaborative work as they take on a new practice?

1. What are the features, structures, and processes that characterize their work?
2. What type of learning is produced?
3. What are the central practices, norms, and sharing of experience that impact the nature of that learning?

Validity. To validate the research, I conducted multiple member checks after I transcribed the data and also as I developed the codes and themes by asking participants to review data from the observations and interviews to ensure the accuracy of the findings (Rudestam & Newton, 2007). In this way, I maintained transparency and checked that I had represented what they said accurately. Since building relationships of trust is something I can consider an important part of my role as their principal, I believe this helped with data collection because it seemed teachers were comfortable offering honest insights and additionally, I could offer insights and context as I analyzed the data. Furthermore, an important part of the study was to create buy-in at the outset and ask for teacher input and reflection as a way to check for accuracy.

Moreover, many different interpretations were considered to build a coherent argument that tied together all of the themes. This helped me as I read through the responses to determine the meanings behind the accounts provided by the participants. Another key aspect of validating the research was to compare all three data sources to find commonalities and themes that existed across all three sources (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). Therefore, the use of (a) comparative

analysis, (b) member checks with the teachers, (c) triangulation of data from interviews, observations, and documents, (d) relationships of trust with teachers, (e) reviewing my analyses of the data with my dissertation group and dissertation chair all contributed to the validity of the study. Despite the small sample being researched, the detailed data and information that was derived helped offset this possible obstacle.

Researcher role. My role as principal allowed me the opportunity to be a regular member of team meetings as well as to have access to planning documents and instructional materials that related to this study. As a result, I felt the teachers acted as they usually would during the observations. Likewise, since I often had input on the documents they created and the instructional materials that helped guide their lesson planning, the teachers appeared comfortable when I asked them to share documents and offer input. With respect to interviews, I expect that the many honest conversations I had already prior to this study with this group of teachers around Reading Workshop and collaboration, helped set the stage for honest and reflective answers in the interviews.

On the other hand, as the teachers' direct supervisor, I was constantly checking to be sure that teachers were honest in every part of data collection. I sought teachers out during their prep time or in the halls when they had time to ask them quick clarifying questions about the observations and interviews. I was always concerned about continuing to build trust so that teachers would not just tell me what they thought I wanted to hear throughout the study. To mitigate this factor, I reminded the teachers throughout the study that I wanted them to feel comfortable sharing even the negative comments to help create positive change for them in their work together, which I felt led to trust in me. However, since I could not be sure, I used multiple data sources to triangulate the findings.

Limitations of Design

A key limitation of this case was its small scale. The results of this study were meant to describe a phenomenon; however, other researchers will need to make an interpretation about whether and how much this case can be applied to another case. I hoped to offer enough analysis and description of teachers' interactions to make the findings transferrable to other settings and contribute beyond the immediate work with teachers at this school. Using case-to-case transfer, a person in another setting may consider adopting ideas from this study (Firestone, 1993). In considering issues around teacher professional community, the case explicated here was presented as an examination of teacher collaborative practices and the environment created within the context of an instructional reform, specifically Reading Workshop. Beginning with the study of one small group of teachers, the results were meant to provide in-depth information to guide the creation of a professional learning community. Through detailed observation of their practice, I was able to gain insights into what can be shared with other teachers to help other teams begin building a collaborative community.

Chapter 4: Findings

In this study, I explored the connections between teachers' experiences of collaboration and communities of practice. The findings elucidate the significance of communities of practice as a theoretical framework and help point out the importance of participation within a social mechanism that shaped their community. I found that there were many issues at play within this community which compelled me to argue that the group was really operating as a pseudocommunity (Grossman, Wineburg, and Woolworth, 2001). The major themes emerging from my findings were: (1) the norms of the group did not support shared decision making. Questioning, conflict, and thoughtful dialogue around planning were not promoted and there was often a one-sided sharing of artifacts and ideas, (2) privatized practice where the experienced teachers held all of the artifacts and lesson plans from their past years and their thinking did not become public, legitimate peripheral participation did not occur, and the learning was not transferred to the novices, (3) perceptions of competence by the group – the experienced teachers were mostly the only ones deemed competent enough to bring in artifacts or ideas, and they often didn't value the artifacts brought in by the novice teachers. In the sections that follow, I will lay out the context for the Reading Workshop adoption at this school and how this impacted the teachers' implementation of this pedagogical philosophy as well as their community of practice. Next, I will delve deeply into each of the three themes that emerged from my findings.

Context in practice

In order to place the teachers' practice and collaboration in context, there were circumstances that explain what was taking place contextually within the school and what impacted the teachers' ability to plan and implement Reading Workshop effectively, while constraining their ability to act as a community of practice. When this school adopted the

Reading Workshop philosophy to teach literacy and began training its teachers through

Columbia Teachers College, only two of the five teachers from this study were present for all of

the training. Although the demand for meeting new standards within this program created an

uncomfortable and at times volatile environment for the fifth and sixth grade teachers, the team

of teachers that I studied subscribed to the philosophy of Reading Workshop and began to embed

the practices into their instruction much more readily. All of the teachers were given the Units of

Study for Teaching Reading: A Curriculum for Reading Workshop, Grades 3-5 (Calkins, 2010),

as their guiding professional literature to read and use for lesson planning. Along with this

resource, they were concurrently immersed in training from Columbia Teachers College.

In addition to hiring a consultant from Teachers College, the district also hired a literacy

coach for the school. The coach was supposed to work closely with teachers to demonstrate how

to plan lessons and create artifacts, as well as model how to conduct running records, mini

lessons, guided reading, and one-on-one conferences. Although the coach initially appeared to do

the tasks assigned to her, by her second year on staff, she became an unmanageable staff

member, arriving late to trainings and meetings and displaying inappropriate outbursts towards

her supervisors. It became clear that she also lacked knowledge and was ineffective at modeling

the reading strategies necessary to demonstrate high quality practices to the teachers.

Furthermore, the teachers were beginning to complain about her lack of professionalism and her

inability to coach them, stating that she was wasting their time rather than helping them as she

attempted to model lessons and run planning meetings.

Reading Workshop requires teachers to address students' individual needs through small

group and individual instruction using differentiated strategies to organize the lessons. This

approach necessitates a deep understanding of how students learn to read and further requires

teachers to have knowledge in how to assess their students' reading ability. Additionally, they must learn to diagnose any difficulties while integrating the necessary reading skills using authentic literature as the foundation. Philosophically, this represents a shift in thinking for many teachers, as they need to rely on their own reasoning and judgment to integrate learning strategies their students need (Calkins, 2001).

The training for Reading Workshop relied on the expertise and professional development skills of the consultant from Teachers College and his ability to show the teachers how to put these new instructional strategies into practice. At the time of the training, the grade level team was made up of five experienced teachers, only two of whom remained on the team during this study. These five teachers worked collaboratively to make sense of the consultant's professional development; they planned lessons together, created relevant artifacts, and discussed their practice and students' progress in depth. They experimented with implementing running records as a formative assessment tool (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996), and began to see the results in their students as they became more actively engaged readers and also began to move up reading levels, evidence of effective instruction. The teachers looked forward to their sessions with the consultant who helped mold and shape their learning through the debriefing sessions he held with them after each instructional classroom session. As a result, the team began to gel in a positive way. The teachers planned curriculum, had public exchanges through conversation, developed their artifacts of practice, and became interdependent.

The training continued for two years; this was followed by the teachers working as a group on their own to try to implement the strategies they learned the following year. I chose this group for my case study because despite the many obstacles, they remained positive about Reading Workshop as a teaching philosophy, and they had coalesced as a group; they valued

their collaborative team planning time and made use of it each week to divide up the plans and the artifact development.

Unfortunately, after I chose this group for my case study, three of the five teachers left the grade level. Only Brooke and Deborah remained from the original grade level group. One main concern that will be shown in detail was that the novice teachers were confusing Common Core with an instructional philosophy. They searched for a structure in the Common Core that wasn't there because they didn't understand the difference between a theory of instruction and student learning objectives. Without a theory of instruction, such as Reading Workshop, everything looked like discrete skills. It's not just that they didn't understand Reading Workshop, but that they also had no theory of instruction guiding their practice. Additionally, they tended to be overly concerned with what they saw as a lack of alignment of Common Core to Reading Workshop even after the language arts supervisor showed them on several occasions how the curriculum had been methodically aligned to the Common Core by members of their team since Common Core was a state imperative for every district.

Norms of Interaction

Given the context, it's understandable that Joanne and Sandy had minimal understanding of Reading Workshop. Juxtaposed with Brooke and Deborah's expertise, Sandy and Joanne exemplified novice literacy teachers, lacking the expertise to value the same types of artifacts and lesson plans valued by the experienced teachers. Brooke and Deborah were able to spread their expertise in some capacities as was Gillian, despite her status as a novice; however there was more potential and opportunities missed for showing the grade level how to bring the novice teachers along in terms of their expertise in Reading Workshop.

Professional community is predicated on the notion that teachers work together collectively in order to strengthen the quality of their instruction. This is the hope especially for novice teachers who have the potential to gain expertise as they enter a community of practice and learn through apprenticeship to solve problems within their practice (Grossman, Wineburg, and Woolworth, 2001). The norms for the team are important to note as the teachers participate and interact in their everyday life and activities of teaching. In reviewing these norms, I will make the case that this team is operating as a "pseudocommunity", a notion referred to in the research of Grossman, Wineburg, and Woolworth, (2001). They define pseudocommunity as individuals having a "natural tendency to play community – to act as if they are already a community that shares values and common beliefs. The imperative of pseudocommunity is to behave as if we all agree. An interactional congeniality is maintained by a surface friendliness, hypervigilant never to intrude on issues of personal space" (p. 955). This type of community also depends on the containment of conflict.

The norms for the team can be characterized in the following ways: (a) superficial sharing of materials, (b) pockets of collaboration and isolation, (c) lack of shared leadership (d) conflict and disagreement were discouraged.

Superficial sharing of materials. In initial interviews, the teachers all expressed a rosy image of their group work, stating that they shared and collaborated and even benefited greatly from their team meetings. Sandy summarized the feelings of the group.

> Sure we all discuss everything, we all sit down together and say this is what we're gonna do and then as the week goes on, here, I have this material, I created this and we'll give it to everyone and it's like we collect things and you can either use it or don't use it or you modify it to your students, and that helps and it's like a guideline of what to do… It's great to have a whole team of teachers to collect things from.

Yet as I observed the teachers during team meetings, I began to see more of a one-sided barrage of artifacts brought to the group and a superficial sharing of these materials, mostly by the same person. This was exemplified mostly through Deborah. Note that in the following exchange she was handing out materials in quick succession while offering little explanation for each item.

(1) Deborah: I don't know. These are just other things that I had found. I have so much in that library over there and I know you do too and you four do, too. And you do, too. Even though you were in sixth. You probably have all this stuff now.

(2) Joanne: We don't really do story grammar.

(3) Deborah: You probably have all this, right?

(4) Deborah: I'm just ... Then I remember, Brooke? Do you remember we used this?

(5) Brooke: Yes.

(6) Deborah: Which really is not good. This was from my anthology.

(7) Brooke: And you know what, when you keep it simple like that for them, at least they can master it or for a mini-lesson, that's perfect or for a homework assignment.

(8) Deborah: I think, so we did do this last year. I think we did do it.

(9) Gillian: I wasn't here for this.

(10) Deborah: I think we did. I have, I guess I didn't copy the blank, but I have the blank.

(11) Brooke: We used to use that, I did.

(12) Gillian: Did you give this for homework or a test?

(13) Deborah: I think ... no, no. I do have the retest here but I want to show you those tests. Okay so I will share with you quickly too and I know, I think Brooke you have it. Did you do Papa's Parrot? Were you here last year or no?

As Deborah explained in line 1, she had a great deal of artifacts, and she assumed the others in the group did as well. In line 2, Joanne made it clear that since they didn't do story grammar last year, she didn't have these artifacts. Yet Deborah moved on without acknowledging Joanne's lack of knowledge in this area. In line 9, Gillian also made it clear that she was not sure what Deborah was talking about, because she wasn't there last year for this part of the lesson. Then in line 12, she asked for more specifics about how the artifact was used, and Deborah does not answer her question in line 13, but instead says she will share items quickly with everyone. This, even after it was clear that both Joanne and Gillian needed more details and explanations.

It was also common for Deborah to peruse her binder of Reading Workshop materials and bring in artifacts that she used last year with her collaborative team. As such, the other teachers saw Deborah as highly organized, holding the key to the right Reading Workshop materials in her giant binder. Joanne discussed Deborah's organization, "I also think she plays the role of leader. She does take on that responsibility because she has a lot of the materials and she seems organized. I know she has her binders for everything." Yet as organized as the group thought Deborah was, when she pulled items from her binder, her speech was often halting and abrupt, filled with pauses, and she routinely gave no explanations for the artifacts she brought in. Since the norms of the group did not encourage discussion around the materials, the novice teachers often did not understand the conversations between Brooke and Deborah which caused them to experience this as non-participation in the team meetings. This created a peripherality and a marginality that inhibited a community of practice from forming (Wenger, 1998). It was apparent to me as the observer that because these materials were brought in by the experienced teachers, it was already decided that this was what everyone would use. There was no group

decision making or inclusion of other ideas or other directions to go in with their planning, which

removed any power from the novice teachers.

Relevant to this case, the norms of the group did not encourage the novice teachers to ask

deep questions, making it difficult for them to process critical instructional information with the

others. Team planning became a superficial process which the novices found extremely

frustrating. Gillian expressed this frustration to me:

> Sometimes we don't always say how we're going to do [lesson plans], we just know,
> 'Okay. We have three days of reading. This is what we're covering. We have four days of
> writing next week. We're covering this.' Then that's it, and it's up to you to kind of figure
> out how to go about doing that. Sometimes there'll be worksheets and different things
> given like, 'Okay. Here's something you can use for that. Here's something for that.'
> Then it takes time to kind of go through all that paperwork and realize, 'This is worth it.
> This isn't. I need to find this.' That's when Sandy and I sit, and we kind of go through it
> all.

Because there was no authentic follow-up on artifacts or instructional practices brought forth, the

items shared only guided the novice teachers toward a superficial understanding. Additionally,

lesson plans were not developed together and there was little depth to the discussion around

Reading Workshop practice and theory. This was significant because this superficiality was part

of what drew Gillian and Sandy together as a separate team for lesson planning, which I will

refer to in this next section.

Pockets of collaboration and isolation. Since the practice in the group was to speak in

generalities and to merely touch on what they would cover the next week in class, two separate

collaborative groups broke out within the team. Gillian and Sandy felt the need to co-plan more

intensively due to the need to turn in detailed lesson plans to me each week. Also, they found the

team meetings to be filled with an overwhelming volume of information and too many

unexplained artifacts and practices, and they tried to make sense of it all together.

(1) Me: How does it feel when the whole group's together?

(2) Gillian: Sometimes it can add to the overwhelmingness when the whole group is together. It helps to step away and digest it on my own or with Sandy. I think it just gets overwhelming because there's so many ideas. There's different viewpoints on how to do it. Every teacher has their own style. Every teacher has their own philosophy, so that's all coming to the table. Where not everyone's always going to agree, or do it the same way, so that can add, I guess, to making it overwhelming.

Here, Gillian talked about being overwhelmed by the plethora of ideas that were floated during team meetings. She and Sandy depended on one another to make meaning. Additionally, what made an impression on her was the different viewpoints and philosophies on teaching Reading Workshop. I will circle back to this important dynamic later in a discussion of how the novice teachers view Brooke and Deborah as old fashioned in their teaching. In spite of this, the importance of gaining knowledge from Deborah and Brooke cannot be overstated. They held the key to creating meaningful and relevant artifacts and lesson plans that aligned directly with the Reading Workshop philosophy. Gillian was frustrated by the lack of meaning making which caused her and Sandy to plan separately from the group.

Another factor that promoted their separate collaboration can be attributed to the fact that Sandy and Gillian were the only two non-tenured teachers. Sandy discussed this as a reason for their separate planning but explained that it had more to do with her need to break down the lesson plans in order to scaffold her own learning.

(1) Me: I noticed that when you guys plan together you have these very detailed lesson plans that you create. The tenured teachers don't have this or turn [those kinds of plans] in to me. Do you think that is a helpful task that you guys do together?

(2) Sandy: Yes, because it breaks it down for us and it lets us know what we are going to do in detail. It is not like we are going, here is our idea and now let's go figure it out. No. In detail we know what we are going to do from the beginning to the end of a lesson. It definitely helps breaking it down and writing it out.

(3) Me: Do you think that relates to why the two of you are collaborating - like a tenured versus non-tenured thing?

(4) Sandy: I am sure it helps, because we both have to do it. We both have to figure out what we are going to do for the plan. I think that definitely helps, because we have to know. I think it definitely forces us, not forces us to work together, we enjoy working together, but I think that's what helped in the beginning build that friendship or that collaboration together.

In line 2, Sandy talked about the need for breaking things down into details and writing it all down in order to be able to develop her lessons. This was not something that happened in the big planning group. This norm will be explicated further in the theme discussing the teachers' privatized practice and learning not being transferred from the experienced teachers to the novices.

For different reasons, Brooke and Deborah, the experienced teachers, also found it easier to plan independently of the others. They felt there was a level of understanding that came from teaching longer which allowed them to work together more easily and run ideas by each other.

(1) Me: Do you think there's someone you turn to more than others in the group, and if so, why?

(2) Deborah: I guess I would say Brooke just because we've had ... I don't know, actually this year it was interesting and this is a compliment, Brooke and I didn't collaborate as much as we have this year and I don't know if it's ... it could be a couple things. Now we're closer, proximity, because she was in the other wing.

(3) Me: Right.

(4) Deborah: Or it could just be because we are more ... we've been in teaching a little longer so yeah, we... I think both of us would probably say that we both turn to each other more than we have in the past, which is kind of neat. Which is great.

In line 2, Deborah mentioned that she and Brooke didn't used to collaborate as closely on their previous team, but in line 4 she mentioned that their history of working on that team brought

them together, and they tended to turn to each other more this year which made her happy. Since

Brooke and Deborah were part of the original collaborative team, they had very similar

knowledge around Reading Workshop from the history and years of experience that they shared.

Brooke echoed these sentiments and sought Deborah out for separate collaboration as well.

> Me: Do you think there's someone you turn to more than others in the group and if so, why?
>
> Brooke: Probably Deborah just because I know that again, she's done it for a long time. She'll have the materials or an idea and she gets very excited and passionate about it, and I just love to see her excitement and the fact that she has this beautiful organized binder and I can say, 'Oh, I need this.' she can open it up and find it. It's phenomenal. She's just so positive.

Brooke pointed to Deborah's passion, excitement, and longevity in teaching Reading Workshop

as her reasons for seeking her out more than the others. It was ironic that she mentioned the

materials and ideas that Deborah shared easily and readily from her binders, because these same

materials were brought up by several of the novice teachers throughout this study because they

were also viewed as being overly-abundant and overwhelming. Yet Brooke did not find them

overwhelming, perhaps because of the shared knowledge and expertise that they both gained

from the Teachers College training and their years of teaching Reading Workshop in the

classroom. As a result of these factors, they seemed to have an implicit understanding of one

another's planning, ideas, and artifacts.

In the previous year's collaborative team, the teachers would sometimes divvy up the

lessons during weekly meetings, because everyone was at the same knowledge level. Now,

Brooke said when they met as a whole group they would discuss where they were in the scope

and sequence and what they must cover the following week in order to help everyone keep pace.

> Me: You mentioned that you used to co-plan some lessons last year and it worked well. Do you feel like you do something similar this year? How is it different this year?

> Brooke: I think it's a little bit different because I think that we did a lot of co-planning of lessons or divvying of lessons at our weekly meetings as a group. Now, I think we do kind of decide at our weekly meeting what do we want to finish by the end of each week but then I think Deborah and I sometimes meet and say, "Okay, we know we need to get through this unit this date," and so we'll try to meet and plan out how we can accomplish that on the calendar then we'll share that back with the girls and say, "This is our goal and if it works for you, but we want to be out of this unit at this date." I think that's something we both said it's taken us a long time to accept that we just have to keep moving and you want to do your best but if we're going to accomplish all these units, you also need to say by this date, I need to figure out how I can do my best and move on. Especially this unit has been challenging because we have so many goals with the essay and then turning that into a different genre but we came up with a plan to get through essay as quickly as we could knowing that we could revisit during New Jersey ASK prep. Now we need to meet to come up with a plan of what's our end goal for this project that we've never done before. I feel like sometimes it can be accomplished more easily with just two people sitting down coming up with a plan that works for us and then sharing that and saying do what works for you with your time.

In line 2, Brooke discussed the inherent differences between this year's group and last year's. Only she and Deborah had accepted that they must keep moving along instructionally, because there are many units to get through and many goals. They were the two teachers with the history and longevity within the program to understand this. Brooke felt that the way they moved along more quickly alienated them a bit from the rest of the team, which will be shown more in-depth later in the findings. With the large group, they would decide what needed to be accomplished that week to help guide everyone; however, she and Deborah got together to plan more deeply without the whole group and come up with their end goals. This furthered my belief that the two shared a great deal of implicit knowledge, causing them to feel more comfortable when discussing planning in more depth.

While these two separate collaborations were occurring between Sandy and Gillian and

Deborah and Brooke, Joanne planned her lessons in isolation. She mentioned the difficulty of

planning with a lot of people, as well as her need for quiet time in order to be creative.

> Me: It seems like in the team meetings people bring things and share, but they don't really write plans together as a whole group? Can you comment on that?

> Joanne: I think that it's difficult to create with a bunch of people. I don't know. I find that for myself anyway, I'm most creative and I sit down … I need to be alone I guess, with my computer and think about, 'How am I going to approach this? What do I want my students to get out of this lesson,' and then I need to sit and do it myself. I don't know if that's the controlling part of me that's like that, but I know sometimes when we're sitting down to write a unit or something like that, it's difficult because you want to be cognizant of what everybody else's thoughts are so you don't want to take over and start planning it out. I think that that might be something that people worry about.

The norms of the group did not encourage discourse around the materials or the planning of

Reading Workshop. When the novice teachers brought in materials, they were often artifacts

they had found online or in a workbook. The difficulty with planning in isolation was that Joanne

was not able to learn more about Reading Workshop from Brooke and Deborah. Joanne was also

the most vocal in expressing her wish for a binder of ready-made materials to combat this

problem.

> (1) Joanne: I'll send everyone, I bought something recently with those posters that are hanging up, so I'll send all that to you.

> (2) Me: Do you have to pay for that?

> (3) Joanne: Well…yes.

> (4) Joanne: If you want to buy things, some things are free which I only for like two years I only bought, I only got three things. It was this summer I started going on and, oh I think we have a unit for that grade, I'll just buy it and now…

> (5) Brooke: You're out of control (laughing).

(6) Joanne: Yeah, and some things that you buy aren't so great. But some things are like wow, and this was worth it, or whatever.

(7) Deborah: Then the other thing is, I know we're going to be getting into a theme. In fact I have my theme binder, if we have time I'll get another one which I'll share next week.

In line 1, Joanne was telling the others about some posters that she purchased by searching for materials online. During team meetings most of the artifacts she brought in, she found on *Teachers pay teachers*, an online marketplace for teachers to buy and sell their own resources. When teachers download documents from this site, they are in PDF form and cannot be modified. In line 5, Brooke even teased Joanne about how much she relied on these materials, telling her she's out of control with buying as she chuckled about it. In line 2, I asked her if she paid for the materials and she hesitantly replied, "Yes". In line 6, Joanne told the group that some things you find on the site are not so great. None of the other teachers asked for more details or asked questions about what she was bringing in to show any interest, and as was typical of the norms in this group, in line 7, Deborah changed the subject, bringing everyone back to a topic that related to Reading Workshop philosophy, with a discussion of teaching the students about themes. Following this exchange, it seemed that Deborah would not be using this artifact that Joanne brought in because of the way she changed the subject immediately after Joanne's description of purchasing the item, again exemplifying the superficial manner in which they shared materials.

Lack of shared leadership. Clearly defined roles were taken on within the group by the two experienced teachers. Their leadership was not challenged and the sense from the other three teachers was that they had inherited this role because of their longevity on the grade level and their history and comfort with Reading Workshop. Though in the initial interviews the teachers

described feelings of equality within the group, talking about learning from one another and

dividing their tasks out in a manner that promoted sharing and equality of members, once again,

the norms exhibited during team observations were quite different. Gillian gave her impression

of how the role of leadership and equality had changed since the beginning of the year.

> In the beginning of the year it felt very much like we all had an opinion. We all were like, 'Oh, it makes sense to do this.' Now Deborah and Brooke tend to kind of lead it because they've done it, so they know. For Sandy and I, I only was here for the half year last year. Sandy, it's her first year in [the] grade, and it's [Joanne's] first year in [the] grade, so we look to Deborah and Brooke because they've done [this] grade how many years. They know what they've done in the past, so they kind of will say, 'Oh, this time last year we were doing this. This time last year we were doing that.' We tend to listen to them to know what we should be covering.

Gillian felt that there were more opinions shared in the beginning of the year, but Deborah and

Brooke had become the leaders of the group, because they had taught Reading Workshop for the

longest amount of time. Later, in a discussion of perceptions of competence and expertise, this

norm will be explicated further. In fleshing out the teachers' specific roles within the group, it

was Deborah who often set the organizational course, guiding the meetings, bringing out the

scope and sequence to be sure they all adhered to it, and sharing tried and true artifacts that were

usually not discussed in great detail. Again, Gillian gave her impression of these defined roles

within the group.

> Yeah. There are certain roles. I would definitely say Deborah is the one that, she basically leads, I would say. She's taken that role. She kind of like pushes us along. 'Okay. Next, next, next. Okay. We're doing this. We're doing that.' She keeps the pace of the meeting. In general kind of speaks for the group. Brooke could have taken that role, but she doesn't. Partly you can see that she chooses not to do that. I don't know... what else ... That's like the role that I've seen. For the most part that's really... Any other roles, it's not like anyone has a certain subject that they are the person to go to on.

Gillian's perception was that Deborah had taken the role of leader, keeping pace for the group

and speaking for the group. When she talked about how Brooke could have taken that role as

well, but she chose not to, she said it with a wistful tone, as if this was what she wishes would

have happened. Later in the findings, I will show Brooke's interactions within the group in

greater detail and the type of instructional leadership she provided them. Sandy expressed similar

sentiments about the two experienced teachers,

> (1) Me: Do you think that there are leaders in the group? Or a leader?

> (2) Sandy: I definitely think Brooke and Deborah lead everything, but I think that is just because they are experienced teachers to the grade level. They would know the curriculum better than anyone else.

> (3) Me: Just leadership sort of de facto because they are the experienced teachers, not for any other reasons?

> (4) Sandy: No. I think it is just that they are experienced teachers so they know what to do or they know what is coming up the pike I guess. Now I think we are all in the same level field because no one has any idea on this multi-genre unit.

Sandy's notion of leadership within the group in line 2, stemmed from Deborah and Brooke's

experience on the grade level and their knowledge of the curriculum. They knew where to lead

the group next. Both she and Gillian saw Deborah as the one who told everyone what they

needed to cover during each team meeting and stayed on top of the group's progress to ensure

that they got their work done. This part of Deborah's role was spoken about with a bit more

detail by Joanne.

> Me: Do you think there are leaders on the team or a leader?

> Joanne: I used to say that if you asked me that a few months ago, I would probably say Deborah because she'll come in, she'll say, 'Okay girls, let's sit down. What are we going to do today?' Which I can't tell you how much I appreciate her being like that because she gets things accomplished. It's so frustrating to be in a meeting and to walk out and feel like, 'What came of that? What did we get accomplished?' That would be one thing that would be frustrating to me. Luckily, we have Deborah and usually she is that one that keeps us on target which is great. Sometimes though, I do walk out of meetings feeling

like that. Those are the days that you feel like, 'I wish that meeting went a little bit differently.'

In contrast to Gillian and Sandy, Joanne admired the role Deborah played in the group, seeing it as critical to the group's success as she moved everyone along and helped them to be productive. She felt Deborah was the one who kept everyone on target. Brooke's perspective on her role within the team was different from how the novices viewed her. She felt comfortable in the role of leader, and she described her leadership as based on possessing relevant materials, ideas, and lessons that she shared.

(1) Me: What do you view as your role within the team?

(2) Brooke: I feel like we're all partners. I do feel like I'm comfortable being a leader or someone people can ask questions if they want to. I feel confident in what I do so I think people know that they can ask me a question or ask what I did for a lesson or what material … We have so much material but I guess it's more what did you focus on or what did you put on the anchor chart or did you this for the mini lesson or a whole class, even the time structure. Okay, so now I feel like I can really tell people I know we only have two weeks to teach an essay but this is how I did it or this is how I plan to do it and here's the breakdown if it works for you.

(3) Me: Do you think you offer more input on the plan and the timing or more instructional input for people?

(4) Brooke: I think both. If I have an idea for a lesson, I'll share that or if I've done it ahead of somebody else, I'll share either the materials or overall what I did but a big thing for people is the timing and how many days are we going to spend on this and how are we going to get through it so I'll also try to give suggestions on how we can accomplish that.

What Brooke shared with me as she discussed her role as a leader related to her instructional leadership capacity to facilitate sharing materials just as Deborah did, but as she mentioned in line 4, what was different, was her ability to go into greater detail with a lesson or an idea. Even in line 2, the detail she went into offered a window into the instructional support she had the

potential to offer the rest of the team. This dynamic will be examined in greater detail later in a discussion of how Brooke functions within the team and how this relates to perceptions of competence. Based on Deborah's opposing style of bringing in artifacts and ideas quickly with little explanation, it was easy to understand Gillian's wistful tone when she spoke about Deborah's defacto leadership.

Conflict and disagreement are discouraged. Most important was the manner in which disagreements and conflict were handled by the group, thus epitomizing my argument that they were operating as a pseudocommunity. Although there were times when Sandy could be quite vocal in disagreeing with the experienced teachers, she and Gillian both felt that it was disrespectful to state aloud that they would do something differently than the rest of the team. Doing something different or getting into meaningful discussion could create conflict within the team; therefore, they often sat quietly and didn't ask questions about the new ideas brought in.

(1)Me: Yeah. Tell me more about that dynamic [conflict].

(2) Gillian: There is some sort of a push ... There's certain teachers that definitely want us all to be more on the same page. Whereas others we're kind of like, 'Well, as long as we're all teaching the same components, the same points, that's what should matter. How we do it, if it's in the workshop model we're good, but I may use this book and you can use that book, and that's okay.' There is a little bit of pressure to be the same. Kind of like, 'Oh, why did you do it that way?' 'Well, I still taught it, but I just did it my own way.' There is a little bit of that.

(3) Me: sometimes what happens is something's brought in, and lots of questions are asked about it, so then you know that everyone's interested in using it. Other times somebody shares something and you hear dead silence, and it moves on to the next thing.

(4) Gillian: Okay. Yeah, maybe. From personally, if I wasn't jumping in, I may already in my head know I already have a way of doing that or I don't agree with it, but I don't want to maybe rock the boat or make anyone feel bad, so I wouldn't say anything. Because that definitely happens when it comes up, and you're like, 'I don't know if that's the best way.' You have to respect the group, and from my position in the group, I want to listen to the

> veteran teachers, but at the same time I want to contribute and respect them, so I wouldn't ... Sometimes I think, 'Oh, I don't want to do it that way,' but I would never say anything like that. I would just, maybe the next time bring in my own thing. 'Oh I did it this way' or something.

In line 2, Gillian showed that the team must be on the same page, doing the same things, and she felt pressure to comply. This type of pattern did not encourage questions or deep thinking. In a community of practice, the words, routines, and ways of doing things, must be negotiated and described to reflect engagement, as well as to encourage learning for the novice teachers. In line 3, Gillian also made it clear that she was afraid to speak up with questions or doubts, because the norm was not to offend. She saw her position within the team as below the veteran teachers and while she wanted to be able to contribute, she also felt it was disrespectful to tell them she would do something differently in Reading Workshop. This would represent disagreement, so she preferred to remain quiet and just listen. As a result, these sentiments squelched any meaningful discussion from occurring. To Gillian, the most experienced of the novice teachers, just disagreeing or questioning meant she was fundamentally going up against the experienced teachers' philosophies. As such, she learned not to ask too many questions, especially questions that challenged the instruction.

These norms exemplify the concept of pseudocommunity as related by Grossman, Wineburg, and Woolworth (2001), "The maintenance of pseudocommunity pivots on the suppression of conflict. Groups regulate face-to-face interactions with the tacit understanding that it was against the rules to challenge others or press too hard for clarification. This understanding paves the way for the illusion of consensus."

Privatized practice

Another major finding in this study can be characterized in the following ways: (1) thinking was not being made public – the experienced teachers were not explaining instructional

decisions or artifacts with any depth, (2) reliance on the Common Core – the novice teachers

used the Common Core for their planning as a discrete set of objectives unrelated to Reading

Workshop, (3) experienced teachers had their own binders filled with artifacts to use for Reading

Workshop and the novices don't have access to these binders, (4) no apprenticeship of novice

teachers – they were not being brought in and taught how to align teaching practices with the

Reading Workshop philosophy.

Thinking is not being made public. Meetings were generally characterized by materials

being shared around by Brooke, Deborah, and sometimes Gillian and brought into the group en

masse, as previously referenced in the discussion about the group's norms. Deborah often shared

ideas about planning in an incomplete manner so that the group was not really clear on what she

was talking about. In this excerpt, Deborah tried to describe a group activity she did with her

students using a cupcake as a metaphor for establishing different writing groups within her

classroom.

> (1) Deborah: Those two days coming back you can so I just I mean Maureen had suggested instead, we can take the Cynthia Rylant unit and I did put my kids into three groups. I put them into cupcakes, I put them into frosting and I put them into sprinkles. So the cupcakes are the kids that need more work so anyway and I looked at you know obviously the cupcake is more…

> (2) Brooke: Organizational structure.

> (3) Deborah: Then, my frosting is a little more elaboration.

> (4) Brooke: Sensory detail, right.

> (5) Deborah: Yes, and then my sprinkles are really you can add, well they can add more right and maybe get little… suspense But I know not everybody is comfortable with that. So you know I went through the binder this week or last week. I went through and there are so many, in fact we don't even touch on these, back last year, I don't think. There are like for example, personification, and movement over time. Obviously movement over

time I'm going to teach to my sprinkles, okay. Then talking about the leads, the endings…

Deborah had difficulty explaining her ideas fully as seen in line 1 where she tried to explain what she meant by the cupcake work, but in line 2, Brooke jumped in to clarify the instructional strategy being taught with the cupcake activity. Again in line 4, Brooke stepped in to clarify that the frosting equaled more sensory detail. In line 5, Deborah had difficulty completing a thought or a sentence and her explanation was left vague and ambiguous. Following Deborah's explanation, the novice teachers didn't ask detailed clarifying questions, and Brooke moved on to a discussion of assessments. Because the novice teachers didn't appear to understand the cupcake activity, and they were not being brought into the community as learners, it was no surprise that I found out later that they did not attempt to do this activity in their classrooms.

The novice teachers had difficulty sifting through the artifacts brought to the team in order to plan their lessons. They were overwhelmed by the big meetings because as shown in the above excerpt, Deborah often did not explain her thinking or the theories supporting her instruction. In this excerpt, Deborah seemed to understand the practice and the theory intuitively and through the lens of having taught it for several years, yet she didn't know to bring the novices in.

> (1) Deborah: So I just felt like I didn't have enough time to really get into having them start a realistic fiction piece, which we did last year. So we thought we would have them, but I know Joanne I want to and I think Sandy you want to have them do a piece. And I think that's okay, so have them…

> (2) Gillian: Because I figured for story elements, if they're going to write a fictional piece it's incorporating all those Reading Workshop story element lessons now into writing and we're talking about character so I figured they're learning how to analyze character, they can apply that to writing.

(3) Sandy: Joanne just reminded me, I have a bunch of stuff that I had through the last year that people from the state came and gave to us, all about speculative writing that I'll throw through the copier and it has explanatory and speculative writings. So I'll run them through the copier and send them out.

(4) Joanne : If you look at page 5, Gillian do you remember yesterday we were talking about, like how, right… like to maybe even have them do a quick write, where you get to pick, I believe we said like five pots in the middle of the room. One character, setting, problem, climax, solution and picking and randomly putting a story together with the intentions of a good story has to have a problem, it has to have characters, and as we use those to kind of develop the characters further. Then incorporating some of the authors crafts and stuff like that for the kids who can do it. Like you're talking about…

As Deborah talked in line 1 about the next writing piece which was realistic fiction, she was again vague and halting in her explanation; however, in line 2 Gillian expressed a common understanding of Reading Workshop, and therefore more ability to share her knowledge. She used Reading Workshop language in her explanation as she talked about analyzing a character and incorporating story element lessons that would apply to the students' writing. That she mentioned actual lessons she had done within Reading Workshop to get students to this point, was indicative of a deeper level of understanding and ability to embed these practices into her classroom.

Sandy and Joanne, however, lacked this same understanding. In line 3, Sandy contributed by offering materials from the state that she could throw on the copier, meaning worksheets or prompts for NJASK tests of speculative writing prompts. The topic that Deborah initially brought in was about how to develop lessons for a realistic fiction writing piece, not speculative writing for state testing. Similarly, in line 4, Joanne talked about students choosing their story elements randomly from a pot – the setting, character, problem, climax, and solution. Then she talked about incorporating "some of the authors crafts and stuff like that". Within writing workshop which aligns directly with Reading Workshop, students learn about writing fiction by

learning to identify elements of an author's craft, such as narrative elements and literary devices. There are numerous lessons that must go into helping children identify the specific tools to use when they write and they appear in skilled authors' writing in multiple genres. When students learn to write fiction, they must learn about elements like plot, theme, conflict, and point of view as well. All of this is done through Reading Workshop as students become researchers of authors' techniques and devices (Calkins, 2010). In the above discussion, Deborah did not detail any of the lessons needed to teach students to write realistic fiction, and Joanne and Sandy did not have an understanding of the pedagogy and teaching practice that must be embedded in the lessons. Nor did they have the knowledge or history necessary to gain the broader understanding that Reading Workshop is contextualized in.

Deborah and Brooke often shared ideas about planning in this same manner, without details, and the group was not really clear on what they were talking about. An example of an opening in a conversation that did not lead to detailing practice is below. Note the questions from the novice teachers and the level of detail that the experienced teachers responded with.

(1) Deborah: So then, if we want to throw in next week, 'Missing May,' or whenever-begin within the next three weeks.

(2) Brooke: So, realistically next week we'll-

(3) Gillian: We have a ton of ideas.

(4) Brooke: Our goals are to get through the "Halloweener", "Chrysanthemum", and setting.

(5) Sandy: Setting.

(6) Brooke: Yeah. I think that should be our goals.

(7) Joanne: So, 'Missing May' is used to teach what?

(8)   Brooke: We use it as a read-aloud.

(9)   Gillian: So that you model all the?

(10) Brooke: You can model anything with it.

(11) Deborah: And it, that's a couple of weeks. Because it's obviously a fiction book.

In line 1, Deborah offered up that they will be using the text for the next three weeks. In line 7, Joanne asked what they were using *Missing May* to teach and in line 8, Brooke replied with no elaboration, "As a read-aloud". A read-aloud is a strategy from Reading Workshop that is closely tied to the theory that when you read aloud to your students, it empowers them as readers so that they are exposed to varied literature while developing language patterns. The teacher models what proficient reading looks like and helps build a lifelong enjoyment of reading.

Although Brooke mentioned a read-aloud, she didn't offer up any explanation that tied the theory with practice. Based on the level of detail of Brooke's response, Gillian also didn't understand, because in line 9 she asked for clarification, "So that you model all the?" This showed that Gillian really was not clear on Brooke's explanation either. Brooke left out what they were teaching with the text, and the clarifying questions being asked went unaddressed. This was not helpful to the novice teachers, because it added no details about the teaching.

This kind of interaction was typical when a new idea was brought in and ideas were not being made public. The novices asked vague questions because they seemed to not even know what to ask. A detailed response about teaching practice was not forthcoming and surface generality was maintained with practice not being detailed. This did not give the novice teachers access to the experienced teachers' understanding of the artifacts and how to enact them in the classroom, which in turn restricted access to expertise within the group.

Although there were times when Brooke and Deborah tried to explain the direction of their work in more depth, bringing out lessons they did in previous years and describing them, Joanne still needed more inclusion in the process in order to come to a deeper understanding.

(1) Deborah: So we had done this last year, that actually I liked because when we do character one of the lessons I think we talked about doing was – having the students watch as our character changes. So I was going to give this for homework and I wrote a little direction for them. I don't know if we did this last year, somebody wrote this.

(2) Brooke: Develop a theory about your character, look back at everything you marked up and actually develop a theory about that. I think I have the marked up copy of it. Oh, yeah that's right I do have a marked copy, if you need it.

(3) Deborah: Then from this book, I mean there are so many great, just because we're doing Cynthia now there are so many great short stories, so we did copy some last year and used these, actually I'm going to re-make, we had a RARE that we asked about, What type of person is Doris? Do you remember this story, no, anyway I will retype using RACE and if you want to use this I'm just throwing it out there and if you want to use this and you can ask a RACE question about Doris. Do you have it?

(4) Brooke: And it's good for them to see, because we tell them to post it or think while they're reading. But if they can, like you said they don't actually write right on the text, sometimes they prefer to jot a little note and make a star or circle something than actually take out their post-its.

(5) Joanne: So [the book] Stray is good for?

Deborah began by talking about instructional theory that they covered last year. Since the novice teachers were not present last year, they were not privy to this type of learning. Brooke went into a little more detail in line 2 as she brought in the study of "developing a theory about a character". Although Brooke was specifying her practice a bit more, mentioning that she had a marked up copy of a text for them to refer to, if the novice teachers never taught students how to develop theories about a character, there must be more learning involved around this for them to get it.

In Reading Workshop, students must be taught to pay attention to characters in general and to their motivations and struggles throughout a story as they read. They are taught how to develop a theory about a character as they read and then as they read on, they carry that theory throughout the text and reexamine the whole way through. This teaches students insights about other people and about themselves. The many layers involved in teaching how to develop a theory about a character are clearly not detailed in this conversation among the teachers.

Deborah moved to a discussion of RARE and RACE teaching strategies in line 3. These are two acronyms that are used to teach students how to cite evidence for an open-ended question. These types of questions are often used as a follow-up on a concept the class just read in the text. In line 4, Brooke offered more detail, specifically that students should use post-it's and jots, strategies commonly used to notate within the text as students are reading. Joanne appeared to ignore Brooke's more detailed response and asked in line 5: "So [the book] Stray is good for?" showing that Joanne was not quite there with Brooke and Deborah as they explained the RARE and RACE strategies. She was not asking about how to develop theories about characters, the use of post-it's, the think-alouds, or the jots just mentioned by the experienced teachers.

Knowing how to write lesson plans that center around analytical reading skills within Reading Workshop is not an easy task as it means creating instruction that enables the reader to develop insight about a character based on the words, actions, and reactions of the character (Calkins, 2009). It would be difficult for the novice teachers to know how to plan for this type of rigorous instruction without first gaining theoretical knowledge. As they referenced lesson planning, Brooke and Deborah were at an advantage, because they could use the lesson plans they had collected from previous years. They tried to have everyone remain on the plan with

them, but without bringing anyone into apprenticeship first and detailing the theory, there was no

opportunity for group negotiation and the work remained ambiguous to the novices. Joanne

expressed the difficulties with the level of detail when the group was planning.

> Me: What do you think about lesson planning during the meetings?
>
> Joanne: I think that we get to sit down and talk about the following week. But the truth is, it's just not enough. It would take a whole period to plan a lesson, just one little lesson, one period of the day. What happens is we say, "What are we doing in spelling? We're going to go on to the next lesson here. What about Reading Workshop? What are the things that we want to hit on next?" It is what it is, but it is frustrating.

The focus remained on a superficial review of next week's plans. Any type of deep subject

matter discussion fell by the wayside and planning for effective mini-lessons that modeled the

skills of powerful reading and helped students discover what proficient readers do, remained

hidden from Joanne, causing frustration and leaving expert practice private.

Reliance on the Common Core. During the previous summer, when Sandy and Joanne

were selected as new grade level literacy teachers, Maureen [language arts supervisor] asked the

new teachers to read the Lucy Calkins books, because they would act as the guiding principles of

their literacy instruction. She told them the books offered both theory and practice in planning

curriculum. Additionally, she made clear to them that the grade level district literacy curriculum

had previously been written by teachers on the grade level team to create alignment between

Reading Workshop and the new Common Core standards. It was understood that the new

teachers should be embedding Reading Workshop principles into their lesson planning.

However, since the experienced teachers were not showing them how to bring the theory into

practice, they were not comfortable with the Calkins books and tended to not use them for their

planning. This was exemplified when Joanne and Sandy talked about doing research for lesson

planning; they would often mention online searches for materials. In the excerpt below, Sandy

talked about how overwhelming she found the Lucy Calkins books.

> (1) Me: Are there books that you read on Reading Workshop to help you in your lesson
> planning or in your philosophy base?
>
> (2) Sandy: I do a lot of research but I don't want to become overwhelmed. I think that's
> how it was in the beginning. I was trying to plan everything at once so I kind of take it
> day by day. So I'll plan for the week and over the weekend or on Fridays I'll think this is
> what I want so I'll sit and say okay this is what I want and I'll go research different ideas
> and plan for that specific lesson so it's not as overwhelming to just sit. Because I have the
> Lucy Calkins book but it just became too much because you're trying to understand it all
> at once so I had to take a step back and do it one day at a time.
>
> (3) Me: So when you say you do research, what're some things that you tend to do?
>
> (4) Sandy: I'll go to *Teachers pay teachers* or I'll go to *Pinterest*. There're ideas already
> there and I'll kind of modify it to how I know it works for me and for the students to do
> that. Or I'll google Reading Workshop to see what comes up. That's how I did anchor
> charts in the beginning of the year. I found different schools that explained everything
> and had already anchor charts up and they showed the reasoning why they did what they
> did because sometimes Lucy can be a little wordy and that's what I did over the summer
> as well.

When asked whether she read books in order to develop her understanding of Reading

Workshop, in line 2, Sandy responded that she did a lot of research, but she felt too overwhelmed

by the Calkins books provided to her by the supervisor. She explained how she used *Pinterest*

and *Teachers pay teachers* to do her research for lesson planning, websites that are a place for

teachers to find and share lesson plan ideas as well as to download artifacts. However, without an

understanding of the teaching approach, there was no way to know if the materials she was

searching for aligned with the theory. In line 4, Sandy explained that it was easier for her to find

ready-made anchor charts and lessons on these websites than to sift through the multitude of

ideas in the books on Reading Workshop theory that were given to her. Therefore, she spent her

summer looking things up online, rather than reading the books.

Not having an understanding of Reading Workshop theory, Sandy and Joanne felt that

their expertise lay in closely aligning every lesson to the Common Core. They would often bring

in this knowledge to team meetings, making reference to skills and language that their instruction

should focus on. This, despite the fact that Maureen had made it clear in her literacy meetings

that at its core, Reading Workshop was not about teaching isolated skills and that it aligned

directly and naturally with Common Core. Although the experienced teachers were more well-

versed with the Lucy Calkins books, there were times when the novice teachers expressed that

they thought of the experienced teachers as old-fashioned and lacking rigor in their work. In the

excerpt below, Sandy talked about how she felt the experienced teachers lacked knowledge of

the Common Core and were afraid to go out of their comfort zone.

> Me: Why do you think the other teachers don't really adhere to the Common Core stuff
> as much?
>
> Sandy: It's new and it is different. People tend not to go out of their comfort zone and so
> people go with what is comfortable. I think that is a big part of it. It is new to them and it
> is different. People have to change. Even where I was last year for example, Alissa and I,
> she was the girl across the hall from me like Gillian. Her and I worked together on
> everything because we believed, and all of the other third grade teachers were very stuck
> in, I am going to teach with what I know. I am going against it. They refused to call
> writing for argument, writing for argument. They were like it is persuasive, it's
> persuasive, it's persuasive. They were just very stuck in their ways. It's different. You
> have been teaching for so many years and you have to teach a certain way. Then all of a
> sudden here comes something new down the turnpike and it's like wait, I don't know
> how to do it so you are going to go with what you know. You want to do the best for your
> kids. I think that's maybe why. I don't think it's that they don't want to, it is just you are
> being forced to step out of your comfort zone.

Sandy described the experienced teachers as being averse to change and afraid of new things

because of their lack of emphasis on the Common Core. As previously noted, she was confusing

the Common Core with an instructional philosophy, seeing it as the structure she needed because she had no theory of instruction and everything looked like discrete skills to her. However, the Common Core standards were meant as a challenge to raise student achievement by teaching them to learn how to deeply comprehend texts and write in a multitude of genres while learning how to interpret text closely (http://readingandwritingproject.com/resources/common-core-standards.html). These same goals aligned with Reading Workshop philosophy and therefore would not need to supplant Reading Workshop curriculum. Yet Sandy viewed the Common Core as a discrete set of objectives that students must achieve. Because she lacked the broader framework of Reading Workshop and the experienced teachers were not detailing their practice to bring her into apprenticeship, she fell back on the models and structure of the Common Core English and Language Arts standards.

 Like Sandy, Joanne tended to focus on the Common Core in her planning rather than using the Lucy Calkins books to plan her instruction. In the excerpt below, she expressed that she felt the district de-emphasized Common Core and that the experienced teachers were missing things from their instruction as a result.

> Me: Some of the members mention alignment to the Common Core a lot. What does that mean to you?

> Joanne: The one thing that I have to say is that I feel like in all of my professional reading and I do try to keep up with things. Now that I have kids it's a little bit less, but I'm constantly reading everything I can and I'm a big blog reader. I subscribe to a lot of blogs, and Common Core, it's all over the place. I've read a lot of articles about how some districts are even focusing too much on it and misconstruing things and teaching to the standards and I understand all of that. But I do feel like here, it's really not a mention. Nobody really talks about it at all. I'm curious as to why? Maybe we just don't want to get into it where we're so focused on it like some other districts are. But to that same end I do feel like many of the teachers just feel like, "Oh well, this is just something and we have all the standards already infused into everything we do." Really when you look at it, there are things I feel that are missing in some of the things that we're teaching. Even

> when my kids go in to take the Study Island Benchmark, they'll say, "What's this? I never heard the word prose before? What is a preposition?" It's because I haven't taught it yet. It hasn't been and they need to know those things…It was something where I feel like it's not a guide for us as much as it could be. In terms of the standards and our own individual grade [level] literacy group, I feel that Sandy and Gillian do think about the standards. I know probably because I think they have to include them in their lessons. I think that I know about them just because of the reading that I do. We do sometimes bring that up in our meetings, but I feel like the general consensus among Gillian, Sandy and I is that the others don't really care as much. So it's almost like we've given up. Plus I feel like I'm new, so I'm just taking this year to absorb everything. Then maybe once I have a handle on what we teach, maybe next year we can make sure that we did everything, but then I feel bad for this group of students if they're missing something that's important.

Joanne referred to professional reading and indicated that she liked to keep up with things. Yet, like Sandy, she was not reading the Calkins books and she made no reference to reading any other research on teaching reading that might deepen her knowledge of Reading Workshop. She preferred to read blogs on the Common Core and she cited examples of when the experienced teachers fell short, because they did not use words like *prose* or study grammar skills like prepositions. In a sense, it seemed that holding on to the Common Core helped the novice teachers feel grounded and more competent as they referred to discrete skills from a list that they must cover, rather than make any attempts to ground their practice in the theories of Reading Workshop. Since the experienced teachers did not talk about the details of their practice, the novice teachers struggled throughout this study with how to make sense of the abundant resources brought to the group. Moreover, since this approach to literacy required deep teacher knowledge that Sandy and Joanne did not possess, they puzzled at how to absorb the theory and write lesson plans that facilitated Reading Workshop.

Sandy made it known to me that in her former district, the culture was to align her lessons with the Common Core while the focus was on skill coverage and test preparation. Her district

brought in Cambridge Learning, a company that did professional development for the teachers

in unpacking the Common Core standards and creating common assessments (State of New

Jersey Department of Education School Report Card, 2013).

> (1) Me: In one of the team meetings, you mentioned that the state came in and taught you
> something?

> (2) Sandy: Oh, Cambridge. We had a company called Cambridge and they came and sat
> down with us to help us boost our NJASK scores and so as a grade we knew we were
> teaching to the same standards and so that we're all teaching to the same standard as a
> school, as a grade, we had the same idea. They came in to help us create the benchmark
> and figure out how to create it. They gave us a packet for NJASK for how to boost scores
> and to tell us what they tend to look for in state testing.

> (3) Me: Did you tend to use a lot of packets over there?

> (4) Sandy: No, it honestly depended on what style of teaching that they did. Everybody
> except Alyssa [teacher across the hall] and I, they just taught to the test, like they were
> like test test test test test. So everything was test packets. But Alyssa and I were more like
> the kids were moving and it's more interactive and there's worksheets.

Since Sandy's prior knowledge base came from this first teaching experience where there was a

focus on testing and skill and drill through giving students packet work to do, she did not have

much common ground with Brooke and Deborah or an understanding of Reading Workshop.

She fell back on her understanding of the Common Core, because as we see in line 2, she felt

well trained and competent in this area. In line 4 we notice that the teachers around her were

working on test preparation and worksheets, so she would not have had anyone to mentor her in

best practices around reading before she came to our school. Later I will come back to the

notion of the Common Core being very important to her as a list of rules that must be adhered to

and embedded in her practice, and how difficult she found it to learn from the Lucy Calkins

books.

This finding was echoed during one team meeting observation when Sandy and Joanne

were the first to arrive. During the team meeting prior to this one, the experienced teachers had

been talking about planning for the fiction unit and teaching characterization. To teach

characterization within Reading Workshop, teachers show students how to follow characters

into meaning through building theories about characters and citing evidence from the text, as

well as teaching students ways to envision, infer, and predict in order to build knowledge about

characters (Calkins, 2010). The excerpt below shows a typical type of conversation between

Joanne and Sandy. Note their emphasis on the use of specific words around characterization

when teaching fiction.

> (1) Joanne: I bought something that I want to share with everybody. Do you see those posters hanging up there, so it's all character stuff with…? I thought it was really good and I would like to know this and maybe Tali can help us with this. Like is there something in the Common Core?

> (2) Sandy: I was just playing that up, it has examples because I remember looking it up.

> (3) Joanne: I want to know specific wording that we need to teach with character, because…

> (4) Sandy: We don't have a lot.

> (5) Joanne: Dynamic versus static, round versus flat, but do they need to know those terms? Should we be introducing those terms to them, you know I'm just not sure if that's the vocabulary we need to be teaching.

> (6) Sandy: Well this is what it says; describe in depth a character, setting, or event in the story or drawing specific details in the text, example: characters, thoughts, words or actions. So those are just examples; they didn't say specifically what they need. Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in the story, or drawing from specific details. So that is where they have to go and prove, like I say where they have to go back and prove, well show me where you can describe what the character is thinking, their motivations, whatever.

In line 1, Joanne referred to the deep characterization work that the group had been engaged in as "character stuff" and then turned to me directly in an effort to enlist my support with the Common Core, "Maybe Tali can help us with this. Like is there something in the Common Core?" Although she had my attention since only she and Sandy were in the room, it was telling that she chose to ask me about Common Core, rather than ask information about the theories of Reading Workshop. In line 3, Joanne continued to struggle with the specific wording from the Common Core that she should be using to teach character. Sandy responded in line 4 by reading from the Common Core standards to know what to teach, something she did often in team meetings, rather than referring to the scope and sequence, the district grade level curriculum, or the Lucy Calkins books as the experienced teachers often did. In this way, she continued to place an emphasis on specific skills that must be covered. There was no effort from either Joanne or Sandy to clarify or make meaning of these discussions around the theories of Reading Workshop. Instead, their discussion focused on the vocabulary they should use with students – *round vs. flat, dynamic vs. static*.

    In this next excerpt, Sandy explained to me how she felt about the Common Core in relation to the experienced teachers and why she placed so much value on the standards.

> Me: It sounds like you are describing that when you are with the five of you it is really different and when you are just alone [with Gillian] it's collaborative.
>
> Sandy: I think it's the style of teaching and different beliefs. I know Gillian and I are very strict on the Common Core and I know that others aren't. Others just take what they want and throw standards on to it. I do it the other way. I look at the standard and say how am I going to teach to the standards. We just do things differently. I think that is why Gillian and I just happen to believe the same way that you have to teach to the Common Core. You have to figure out what the standard is and say all right how am I going to teach to that standard then. I think that is where it is different.

Sandy told me about how she and Gillian adhered strictly to Common Core standards in their planning, while she felt the experienced teachers just threw the standards on to their lesson plans. She said she and Gillian just did things differently and they both believed you must teach to the Common Core. They likened Common Core to an instructional theory rather than as an explication of student learning outcomes. In doing this, they showed a lack of understanding of how to move theory into practice within Reading Workshop. Their focus was on skills as seen in the previous conversation when Sandy and Joanne discussed round vs. flat characters and the study of prepositions.

Since Sandy was not reading professional literature on Reading Workshop, her pattern was that she was unaware of how it already aligned closely with the Common Core. She viewed Reading Workshop as a discrete set of skills that she must teach her students, and if she just addressed the skills through the Common Core, she believed she would be teaching everything her students needed. Furthermore, because the novice teachers were not brought into the lesson planning, they lacked the understanding to generate Reading Workshop plans. Therefore, the tendency was for the novices to use the Common Core as an instructional theory to hold on to. They viewed the experienced teachers as unwilling to change with the times because they didn't embed the Common Core into their planning.

Part of the issue was that Brooke and Deborah didn't realize that the novices lacked this understanding. Brooke thought the novices viewed her and Deborah as crazy because of their fast- paced instruction that moved the students forward very quickly.

Me: How do the other three react if you bring that [next piece of instruction] forward?

Brooke: Sometimes I think that they think we're crazy like how can you finish that in two weeks but again it's just something that we've accepted. We never ever got into this point in the year before because we could stay on character all year. We could launch [the character unit] for three months but I think we're finally starting to see that if you do plan

backward to say this is our end date, how can we accomplish this, you just have to do it the best way that you can. I don't know what's right - getting through more or spending more time. I mean obviously you see what the students need more time on, but it is positive, but I think they still think we're a little crazy that we can think we're going to get through it all.

Brooke knew that she and Deborah had a history with Reading Workshop that the others didn't share and she discussed how easy it was to get bogged down teaching character all year. She and Deborah understood the importance of not spending three months launching one unit of study, because there were many other units they must get through during the year. Brooke and Deborah didn't realize that the root of the problem was the lack of interaction around the work and the lack of apprenticeship. They knew they had their own way of doing things, and that they were at an advantage because they taught Reading Workshop before, but they didn't realize that they were not creating opportunities for shared understanding.

Experienced teachers have their own binders filled with artifacts. As previously noted, Deborah was especially known for having binders that were organized around Reading Workshop and filled with relevant handouts, lesson plans, tests, graphic organizers, and other artifacts that helped guide instruction for each genre and unit of study. The novice teachers expressed dismay and frustration at not being privy to her binders. At times I got the sense that they blamed Deborah and Brooke for withholding information from the binders and not sharing them as if they were ready-made materials from an anthology. In this next excerpt, Sandy stated that she wished she could just have all of her lessons plans and materials handed to her in the order in which she should teach it.

(1) Me: You and Gillian at some point have both said that you would love to have unit binders so that you didn't have to recreate the wheel every time you teach. Can you tell me more about that?

(2) Sandy: I think kind of what is being created, there is units being created now. It is frustrating because we get, for example, we went to the meeting. We have the unit, but I still have to read it and still find the materials. I don't have the materials to go with it so that where it leads to, it is not worth the frustration of trying to figure it out. We will look and see this is what we are supposed to teach. Now how are we going to teach it, and we will find our own material instead of going here or going there and stressing out and bothering people. Not that it so much of a bother, because I know no one cares, but it is just easier for us than to look. At the same time, if we do have those materials and if we don't like it, then we have used time looking for it and then agreeing that we don't care for this anyways. Then going and finding someone else. It would be easier just to have, here's day one, here's the lesson and here is some materials that go with day one. Here is day two, here is the materials that go with day two. Not necessarily you have to teach to it, but it is just like a guide. Here is some helpful hints that if you want to, use it. Here is the materials that go with it. This is what we have done, this is what has worked. I think that would be more helpful. Granted it is helpful because we know where to go with it, but it is not the same as, I still don't have the materials that go with it. I still have to find all of them and see how they fit or change it to fit my students. You know what I mean?

(3) Me: Do the teachers creating that unit plan have the materials that go with it? Or they also are in the same boat?

(4) Sandy: They have them. What they did is that they sat down with what they had and created the unit with the materials that they had. They have it, but it is also, again, Gillian and I will sit after school when everyone is already gone. That is hard because wait no one is here to go get the materials.

Sandy's desire for instructional guidance was strong. In line 2, she expressed frustration at having to figure things out on her own and create her own materials and lesson plans when the experienced teachers have it all. She felt the experienced teachers were withholding the knowledge and the materials from both her and Gillian and she was angry that she had to beg to get the artifacts that went along with the unit plan. I will return to this dynamic later to show that the experienced teachers were not even aware of this pervasive sentiment among the novice teachers, furthering the case that conflict and disagreement were being avoided.

Additionally, Sandy conveyed that when she and Gillian did spend time trying to track down the artifacts from the experienced teachers, they hadn't liked what they found and needed to search for artifacts on their own anyway. She was very clear in her wish for ready-made materials when she said, "It would be easier just to have - here's day one, here's the lesson and here is some materials that go with day one. Here is day two, here is the materials that go with day two". Sandy spoke to her desire for ready-made materials, while she neglected the need for understanding the instructional philosophy in order to align, adapt, or choose materials that fit Reading Workshop. As previously noted, Sandy was not trained in Reading Workshop and had taught literacy with teachers who used a lot of test preparation materials, packets, skill and drill, and used the Common Core standards to ensure skill coverage. Since her new team was not engaged in shared repertoire through the documents of their practice, Sandy was left to figure everything out on her own with little experience or expertise.

Joanne expressed similar dismay at having to create lessons and not have them mapped out already for her. The pattern she demonstrated was to read online blogs, download materials from *Pinterest* and *Teachers pay teachers*, while not reading the Lucy Calkins, *Units of study* or other Reading Workshop readings, and it was also common for her to voice frustration at not having ready-made materials.

> Me: You have at certain points said that you'd love to have unit binders so that you didn't have to recreate the wheel. I've heard you say that a few times, every time you teach this in Reading Workshop. Can you tell me more about that?
>
> Joanne: I think it would be great to have something where our lessons would be mapped out for us and they would be wonderful lessons that we all agree are cornerstones to what we're trying to teach. In that binder might be a table of contents that might list the lessons numbered and then the titles. Then when you flip through, the lesson plan would be there, maybe even scripted for some people who need that. I know I always enjoy reading a scripted lesson and then it ends up being something totally different when I do it, but it's nice to have that dialogue in your head and then all of the materials behind that. Any

handouts that you might have and directions specific like, "Oh this would be actually stapled into the reader's notebook or this would be a good handout for the handouts section in their binder," like exactly where to put the materials once they are distributed.

Joanne clearly wished for ready-made, foundational lessons that might even be scripted "for those who need it". However, what she and Sandy wished for so desperately in the last two excerpts did not connect with Reading Workshop philosophy where teachers must build lessons by diagnosing their students' needs as readers. Lessons are aimed at a multitude of strategies with small, explicit, targeted instruction that help build strength and endurance, while also eliciting a personal response to the text (Calkins, 2010). In order to accomplish these instructional goals, teachers must expect complications and build their lessons around the students present in the classroom. This precludes teachers from following a set of prescribed lessons.

In contrast, although Deborah viewed Reading Workshop as a lot of hard work, she had a very different understanding of the type of work that was needed from Sandy and Joanne's understanding. She pointed out that there were no ready-made materials or a set curriculum for reaching your students and helping them grow as readers.

(1) Me: What's different about Reading Workshop from the traditional anthology you used to teach with?

(2) Deborah: The philosophy of the program is that it's the students who drive the curriculum. When you're conferencing with your kids you just make that connection and this is what drives your strategy groups. There's no curriculum for that. Kids need to know how to analyze text on PARCC, the key words now are higher order thinking and analyzing. It all comes from observing and listening to your kids and you say this is where you notice – this kid is low on reading comprehension and then you give them the strategies, they work on retelling, this is what's so challenging for teachers though. You're using materials as a resource to help them get to where they need to be as a reader. The way we used to teach, you were teaching the materials, not the kids. Yes it's challenging because you have to create a lot of the materials, but at the end when you see where they get to, the growth of each individual student, I don't think there's anything

more powerful than that. I work hard, I work on the weekends, I'm committed, and maybe a little overcommitted my husband would say, but you have to invest in the program. It's a process that's going to take time whether you're a new teacher or an old teacher. And collaborating helps keep everyone afloat. The stuff the other teachers download off *Teachers pay teachers* a lot of it is basic, here use this. It doesn't make kids dive deep or work hard and think deeply.

Deborah's remarks conveyed a close alignment with Reading Workshop as she talked about the importance of diagnosing her students' reading ability through observing and listening to them read. She developed her lessons based on the needs of the students and placed an emphasis on analysis and deep thinking work. Deborah explained that she created her own materials, because she knew she must individualize based on her students' needs, and the items you can download off of teacher websites did not serve her students' needs or help them to think deeply. She also spoke about the importance of teaching the student, not the materials, which was what she said they used to do before Reading Workshop. This was in direct contrast to the novice teachers teaching to the Common Core State Standards. Most importantly, Deborah acknowledged that the work was hard and that she took a lot of work home, but that the rewards were great. It was powerful for her when she saw her students' growth as a result of her efforts in Reading Workshop.

No apprenticeship of novices. Because of their previous years of collaboration, their professional development, and their history with Reading Workshop, Brooke and Deborah knew how to do things like create their own artifacts and lesson plans that aligned with Reading Workshop. But this was not an easy task and it required a lot of thinking and background knowledge around the theory and practice of Reading Workshop, which was why they didn't tend to bring the novices in and do this work with the whole team. However, as seen in Deborah's previous comments, they didn't seem to communicate to the others that this work was

difficult and could be frustrating. Similar to Deborah's sentiments, Brooke discussed the

frustration, the struggle, and the hard work:

> Me: What might be reasons why others are still very frustrated, but you're not?
>
> Beth: Maybe just not having done it for a few years. When I first started Reading
> Workshop, I was frustrated and I wasn't comfortable with it, and so some people could
> be at that stage. The most frustrating part for me is the papers, just again like figuring out
> how is the best way to organize this, and there's just constantly more papers; but as far as
> the idea of it, I see the bigger picture, and so I think it's just seeing the bigger picture, and
> not getting wrapped up in the little things that we can't control, and just knowing we're
> all in the same boat and that everybody knows we're in that same boat, and we're doing
> our best, and we're still working toward certain goals, and finding those other resources
> that will help us feel even more comfortable in other components of Reading Workshop.
> Like we're all comfortable in a mini-lesson now.

Because of the lack of apprenticeship, the others were not privy to Brooke's frustrating moments

and the fact that she had been frustrated and uncomfortable with Reading Workshop when she

was new at it as well. The novice teachers thought Brooke was withholding information and

documents from them, while Brooke's view was that even though she had more experience than

the novices, she was also still trying to pull from the overabundant artifacts and figure out what

would serve her students best.

Complicating matters further, Brooke didn't make these frustrations public by talking

about them with the group; she didn't share her practice or guide the novice teachers in creating

artifacts and lesson plans that aligned with Reading Workshop. Therefore, they thought this

process was easy for her and that she just withheld artifacts, materials, and lesson plans from

them as exemplified by Sandy's previous comments about the unit planning binders. Equally

notable was the fact that Brooke and Deborah really saw lesson planning and artifact creation as

building their classroom instruction based on student understanding and skill, while Joanne and

Sandy saw it as Brooke and Deborah just wanting everyone to do the same thing. This was a

major difference in philosophy as they didn't agree that their job was to develop lessons that met

the specific learning needs of their students.

Brooke and Deborah would co-create artifacts because it was easy for them to work

together given that they had a similar level of knowledge and comfort. Specifically, this work

rarely involved the collaboration of the team, nor did they try to make sense of events

collaboratively, which might have helped the newcomers gain legitimacy and engagement.

Brooke indicated that when she created artifacts, it was Deborah she turned to for assistance.

Brooke discussed their work together when they were developing the unit of study to teach

everyday texts,

> (1) Me: Do you guys ever co-construct handouts or lesson plans?

> (2) Brooke: I think we knock ideas off of each other, even today, I was trying to put this everyday text walk, museum walk in my mind over the weekend and how is this going to work so I had an epiphany that we could create some sort of questionnaire that the students would know they had to fill out after they visited the different classrooms and saw the text. I popped into [Deborah's] room this morning and told her my idea. We said we'll either come up with it together at lunch or one of us will do it and we can modify it according to how we want it to work for our kids.

Committing to an activity during their team meeting, the teachers decided they would begin the

unit by asking students to bring in examples of everyday texts for homework, and students would

visit each other's desks to view examples in a makeshift "museum walk". In line 2, Brooke made

it clear that when she ruminated over a concept, it was Deborah she would visit to develop the

concept further. The two of them created a questionnaire as a formative assessment, or a way to

measure student learning and create student accountability. Brooke sought Deborah out because

she knew there was an implicit level of understanding when she talked out her ideas. She didn't

open up her practice and engage in peripheral participation which might have provided access to

the novice teachers.

During a team meeting, Sandy's description of creating an artifact exemplified the

difference in philosophies and knowledge around Reading Workshop. As Sandy brought in an

artifact here, note her emphasis on Common Core links, packets, and *finding* rather than creating

materials that might be relevant for her students.

(1) Brooke: That's good when we get into themes, a lot of those are going…

(2) Deborah: That's what I was thinking too, we could connect with themes.

(3) Sandy: Well I have stuff for nonfiction because I know that's sort of where we're
going next. So it's all Common Core linked; I put them by like little packets, but this is
only a non-fiction practice. Questions that you, like a story you actually introduce, it's
kind of like holiday related I guess. There are different organizers that I found, and then I
found this that I thought was really cool from Scholastic, and it has where they would use
like Time for Kids or any articles like that. I figured we could do it with them to
introduce where they would cut and glue, like the title, heading, diagram, chart, photos,
captions, and there is two of them that there were three sheets or whatnot. I even printed
out, and I have it on file for if you want to put pictures. You could like print it out, and
explain what to do and all that.

(4) Joanne: Thank you.

In line 3, Sandy offered up "stuff for nonfiction". She recommended her sets of ready-made

questions and organizers that went along with some non-fiction articles. Additionally, she

mentioned that students would cut and glue in titles, headings, diagrams, etc. These suggestions,

however, are not in line with what teachers need when they teach a non-fiction unit of study

within Reading Workshop. What was needed when teaching nonfiction within Reading

Workshop was to show students how to identify nonfiction text structures and adjust their

reading by capitalizing on their knowledge of story structure to help them synthesize as they

read. They are taught to ask themselves continually about what they just read so that they can

develop little summaries of what was important. In Reading Workshop, students become the

experts on a nonfiction topic as they learn about the main ideas and supporting details in a text, not memorizing information, but rather learning to create categories and organize and sort the information for true learning. Students are also taught that talking about their ideas is equally as important in order to develop their thinking and hold conversations about what they just learned (Calkins, 2010). The handouts Sandy offered were copied out of a book and linked with skills, packet work, and Common Core practice. Even Joanne's response to Sandy's input was "thank you", showing that she had no questions about what Sandy had brought to the group. Brooke and Deborah did not respond at all, and once again, they did not develop a shared understanding of artifacts.

Likewise, when Joanne talked about artifacts, she did not have the same understanding that Brooke and Deborah did. Note her emphasis on superficial changes to an artifact.

Me: Do you sometimes take an artifact and change it, adapt it?

Joanne: Absolutely, yes. For example, in grammar sometimes the packets that get put together, I always change the cover and that's just something personal for me. I like it to be bright and inviting and something that's just a little bit different, like all kinds of fonts and stuff like that. I might change the cover and also add on to usually what's on in the inside.

This was similar to Sandy's description of changes she made to artifacts taken from the veteran teachers.

Me: Can you give me an example of when you took an electronic version of an artifact and what changes you might have made to it?

Sandy: I am trying to think. I can't think of anything off the top of my head. The RACE thing. Deborah sent us RACE, I might add, I put it into bullet form instead of just having one question. It is easier for the kids to look at visually so they know okay here is one bullet; that is one answer. Here is another bullet; that is a different answer instead of them trying to figure it all out.

In this excerpt, we see that Sandy's description of changes she made to an artifact were also superficial changes made to a RACE document used to teach open-ended response writing.

What the experienced teachers learned about artifacts was that they must be created around student learning and should be used in ways that complement the student. As the teacher researches the reader, teaching occurs around pointing out what the reader is doing well. That is why artifacts are often created by the teacher. An artifact of practice might take the form of a note taking organizer used by the teacher to jot down students' strengths. Later this can be used to scan the students' strengths to create strategy groups for remediating reading skills. Artifacts might take the form of conferring notes to help guide students as they learn reading strategies and behaviors (Calkins, 2010). In Joanne's practice, an important adjustment to an artifact centered around making it bright and inviting and changing the font or the cover.

It was important to note that because the learning remained private between Brooke and Deborah, the other three members had little opportunity for growth. However, they took a strange tack due to the lack of important theoretical connections being made. Ironically, they began to view the experienced teachers' work as old fashioned, lacking in skill and detail, and they concluded that their instruction was not rigorous enough for the students. Since they were not learning from Brooke or Deborah and they had little or no training in Reading Workshop, they didn't know what instruction should look like, and when Deborah or Brooke gave examples of instruction during team meetings, they didn't have any context for understanding. If we circle back to the excerpt from p. 71 where Sandy captured her sense of how she viewed the experienced teachers through a discussion on Common Core, even the example Sandy used to show that a teacher was stuck in her ways had more to do with the use of specific terminology. She labeled the teacher old-fashioned, because she was using an antiquated term for persuasive

writing, which was not a Common Core term. She pointed to the surface level of a teacher's

word choice, not her instruction to indicate that she was not moving with the times. The

examples she offered were not rooted at all in the teacher's instruction and practice.

Another dimension of learning not being transferred to the novices, and the team

meetings not being about joint enterprise or shared repertoire, Gillian and Sandy felt the need to

break off into their own planning group in order to stay afloat. They were obligated to turn in

detailed lesson plans to me each week, which perhaps forced their joint planning in a way that

was not as necessary for the rest of the team.

> Sandy: Gillian and I have both said, the meetings are great, but it becomes
> overwhelming. You have so many things and you are like, wait, I don't know what to do
> with all of it. It has its pros and its cons to it I guess.

Since lesson planning was not carried out with the big group, Sandy and Gillian did this together

and tried to make sense of Reading Workshop together. This was difficult when Brooke and

Deborah held the key to developing and analyzing the quality of the artifacts and kept the

learning private. When the novice teachers were forced to work in this vacuum, their planning

fell short of Reading Workshop philosophy.

> Me: You're the ones that write the very, very detailed plans, because you have to. You
> have to turn in plans to me, and the tenured teachers don't have to turn in plans to me. Do
> you think that that makes a difference?

> Gillian: I don't think so because whether we had to write the plans or not, we have to
> teach the lesson. It's not like back in the day where you'd have a teacher's manual or
> where you could rely on something. Everything has to be created and prepared ahead of
> time. There is nowhere to go for a foundation. That makes it very challenging. That's the
> tough thing about it. I think we would have found each other anyway because we needed
> to figure out, 'Well, how are we teaching our students? What are we using to teach
> them?' It's not like you can go to a textbook or some workbook it's just, you have to bring
> that to the table and that takes time. I think our planning in some ways makes it more
> organized, but I think we would have had to meet to collaborate without planning. I think
> I would have had to have probably written it down that way, but I would have notes that

would say, my mini lesson. These are my teaching points. This is what I'm using. Certainly, because I have to have that.

Gillian expressed frustration at not having a teachers manual to rely on for planning and the need to create everything and figure it all out on their own. Having no textbook meant that they needed a lot of time to develop their plans and organize their teaching points together. Perhaps if they were brought into the experienced teachers' thought processes, the novices would not have found the planning so cumbersome and frustrating.

It is important to note that the artifacts are a critical piece of the daily rituals and routines of Reading Workshop that help heighten students' analytic skills and develop their comprehension as readers (Calkins, 2001). As such, teachers need to be able to generate materials and artifacts, as well as know how to plan for these rich experiences. Since the novice teachers were not learning how to take charge of this process from the experienced teachers, they felt they must figure it out together based on their limited knowledge.

Coupling the norms of the group with the superficial sharing that occurred, the fact that the novice teachers had no common understanding of artifact use was not surprising. It meant that the apprenticeship that might bring the novice group members to become more central did not occur. Additionally, they were not learning how to plan and think deeply about their practice. The experienced teachers didn't understand the need for apprenticeship, and as such they did not make more sophisticated practice accessible to the novice teachers. The process of accepting new members into a group should include legitimate peripheral participation which is characterized by required learning that opens the planning and artifact development to nonmembers. This means that the novices must be privy to mutual engagement with the experienced teachers and to the repertoire being used. Novice teachers must be brought in and provided with an understanding of how the community functions (Wenger, 1998). This meant that Sandy, Joanne,

and Gillian must be treated with legitimacy in order to become active members of the community and gain the competence necessary.

Perceptions of Competence by Colleagues

Another dimension of this community was that the teachers seemed bound by their own differing perceptions of competence about one another. This was experienced when Brooke, Deborah, and at times Gillian, were the only ones deemed competent, each to varying degrees. I will break down this next theme individually, devoting a section to each teacher in an effort to explicate the details that reveal the reasons for the differing perceptions of competence within the group. Additional detail will be offered about each member within the individual teacher's section to create a fuller picture of the interactions among them. At the end of this theme is also a section on the language arts supervisor, Maureen. Maureen contributed to the perceptions of competence among the group members when she asked Brooke and Deborah to work on the unit plan with her, excluding the others from creating artifacts and plans.

Brooke. Brooke was the most instructive in her practice and she took the time to explain to everyone how to work through issues of practice. She often remained quiet during team meetings, but at times would offer some instruction if it was needed. Then she might chime in with deeper explanations. In this example, she showed the others how to teach open-ended questions, a writing skill that helps students develop critical reading analysis into their writing.

(1) Gillian: I have to do the open ended. I went over the multiple choice and I did it with them. I have to do the open-ended pieces so next week, I'll just do that.

(2) Deborah: Which was tricky. The open-ended was very tricky. Didn't you find that?

(3) Brooke: You know what? I showed them on the Elmo the two best citations are right in the second paragraph.

(4) Deborah: In the beginning.

(5) Brooke: I said right here your work is done and they have to realize that if you do that work while you're reading then it shouldn't take that long to do the RACE. It's right there. You just have to write it, but they do have to find them. A lot of them wrote about the 16 compartments. That there are 16 compartments- I said, "Does that prove why it wouldn't be, why it wouldn't sync because there's 16 rooms? Does that matter?" They have to realize what's important to cite and what's not and then they kind of have an "Aha!" moment when they realize it. Some of them just don't understand how to pick the right quote. That's I think the hardest thing for the struggling student.

(6) Joanne: You know this is kind of piggy backing off what you're talking about. While we were in that technology workshop, Karen showed us on samples of the PARCC, but it was from a different company, but it was that you could actually go on and take the sample test result on the computer.

Gillian made it clear in line 1 that she still needed to review the open-ended questions with her students, making it known that she would welcome input on teaching this to her students. Next, in line 2, Deborah said that she found the open-ended questions tricky to teach. This was Brooke's cue to step in. She talked about how she used the Elmo projector to model the open-ended questions for her students, choosing the perfect citations from the text the students were reading to show the evidence needed to answer the question. Guiding in even greater detail in line 5, Brooke explained how she modeled for her students how to choose what was important to cite and what was not and showed them how to choose just the right quote. She shared that this strategy even worked with her struggling students. Sharing how some students even had an "Aha moment" during this particular lesson lent even greater credibility to the practice she was communicating.

What was notable was that Brooke often shared specifics about lessons that took the theories of Reading Workshop to the practical level of classroom teaching. However, equally notable in line 6, was that Joanne changed the subject away from the topic at hand to a discussion of a technology workshop and sample tests to help students get ready for the new state

tests, the PARCC exams. As seen in the theme of privatized practice, it was common for her to interject with input about state testing. She viewed this as helpful and often dropped in these types of comments as the team was discussing details surrounding pedagogy, exemplifying her lack of understanding and competence in this area. Yet it's easy to see that what Brooke is leveraging here is her knowledge of Reading Workshop and because of her competence with the theory and practice, the novice teachers actually defer to her on this.

Brooke could also be instructive when she knew she could answer a question being posed during a meeting. In this next example she offered an explanation of how to do the word sort activity that was new to the less experienced teachers.

> (1) Brooke: This one's nice because you can break it into two sorts to the people nouns and other nouns and show that. Then, we're a little bit behind in word study, but next week, being a short week, instead of actually doing this, of course, we're not doing it, the thought was to put a quick grammar lesson to go with the ER, OR type of thing, and like EST, bigger, biggest, to do a little grammar lesson with these words. Maybe we can just do a little grammar lesson after introducing the words at some point in the next couple weeks.
>
> (2) Gillian: Do they sort by ER, OR, or do they sort by people nouns, other nouns.
>
> (3) Brooke: I would have them do ER, OR, AR, and then I would do maybe another sort. Can we take these, can you notice anything? Which ones are people nouns? Which ones are other nouns? So that they notice that the OR's are all people. But then there's also-
>
> (4) Gillian: Should we have them sort OR people, OR other, or just ER, OR, AR?'
>
> (5) Brooke: I think our main sort should be ER, OR, AR.

Brooke opened in line 1 by explaining how to sort the words into people nouns and other nouns in the word study program. She detailed the grammar lessons that went with certain endings so that everyone in the group understood. Gillian probed for more information in lines 2 and 4 and Brooke patiently answered her questions in detail. She was clearly the expert in this case and the one Gillian was turning to for information.

Similarly, Brooke offered detailed input on the importance of using post-it's to illustrate for students how to understand their texts more deeply.

(1) Brooke: And then Jenna, I'll get it to them, but did you do important vs. interesting details yet?

(2) Joanne: I did some of it, but …

(3) Brooke: Okay. I'll just give you.

(4) Joanne: I'll just take whatever you have.

(5) Brooke: The Really Great Barrier Reef, and these are just my post-its that I made while I was reading Chapter 1 to show them my thinking. These are two lessons on important vs. interesting. We didn't write them but somebody did, and then this is your main idea and details that I gave you for independent practice.

(6) Joanne: Great.

(7) Brooke: And I meant to bring for extending a stop and jot, we talked a little bit about that, and I think Deborah, you gave everyone an example?

(8) Joanne: Somebody emailed something about that. Did you email that?

(9) Deborah: Yes, I made a little cheat sheet for the kids to help them with their starters.

(10) Brooke: So that was for a post-it, and then we did an example of extending a stop and jot without using the circulatory system book, and we read about the heart is a muscle and I wrote like, "Wow, I was shocked to find out that the heart is a muscle," and then we extended that as an example, so if you need the example…

In line 1, Brooke checked in with Joanne to see what progress she had made in teaching students how to differentiate between important vs. interesting details in a nonfiction text. Joanne answered that she did some of it, but not all, and Brooke told her she would help her. Next, Brooke guided Joanne in using post-it's and how to extend a "stop and jot". A "stop and jot" is used as a way to record and then extend an idea to help students grow their thinking as they jot

further thoughts onto their post-it's. This helps them look deeply into their ideas as they read while trying to uncover and understand details in the text using their own initial observations while extending their thinking (Calkins, 2010). Once again, Brooke was deemed competent as she showed Joanne how to teach this Reading Workshop strategy. While there were some examples of Brooke intervening to teach and explain her practice within Reading Workshop, this did not happen enough and became a major issue with the group as a whole as shown within the two previous themes.

  Deborah. As previously mentioned in the subsection on superficial sharing of materials, the novice teachers were confused by Deborah's abrupt style and lack of detail in bringing in artifacts and ideas. She didn't spend enough time sharing her deep knowledge of resources, so as she brought in artifacts, the novice teachers did not know how to use them. Deborah often ran the meetings, taking charge of where to go next in the planning, but since the novice teachers did not understand how to use the artifacts that were central to these discussions, they were not learning or brought into apprenticeship. This left them confused and needing to plan on their own. Yet as discussed in the norms section, on p. 91, we refer back to Deborah's competence especially around artifacts and her binders of materials that were organized around the many genres and units of study that aligned with Reading Workshop philosophy. Deborah had a broad claim to competence even among the novice teachers who deemed her competent for her ability to help everyone focus on the pacing of lesson plans, referring everyone constantly to the scope and sequence and enabling them to complete important units of study. Additionally, Deborah was clearly valued for her broad craft knowledge and knowledge of artifacts that the less experienced teachers were seeking.

In each example below taken from three separate team meetings, Deborah referred to the scope and sequence and redirected the group to ensure they remained on track.

> Deborah: It is fitting it all in, because we have to be done with non-fiction by the end of the month.

> Deborah: Let's do that and then we'll start bats the following week, the first Friday in February.

> Deborah: Okay, a couple more things. I think Sandy I told you, did you do this last year? Where you talked about boxes and bullets, the topic sentence, this was I think in the scope and sequence four or five, less than four or five, and I know Sandy felt bad because you were like, "I don't have any of this material," because you weren't here last year, so I made you a key and I made you a copy of this to take and use as you like.

In the last example, Deborah referred back to the scope and sequence with the group, making note of materials Sandy would need in order to stay on track with the others since she was not there the previous year. Deborah made copies for Sandy to use in order to help her remain with the group. In one final example of this area of competence, Deborah offered instruction in the same brief and halting manner previously described.

> Deborah: That's what we did exactly because then at the back is the polar problem and that's attached too. There are three different passages. So you model with one. We have them do independent with another and then you can have them do homework.

> Gillian : You model and have them do it with like their reading partner.
> Deborah: All right, and then this is also in the scope and sequence.

> Joanne: I love that you would include the answer key because sometimes I second guess myself. I'm like, "Am I doing this right?" and then I hate if the kids see that, that moment of hesitation where I'm like, "Um … That's right."

Although Deborah was not as clear and articulate in explaining her thinking around teaching practice, she was viewed as competent because of her strength in planning and maintaining the focus on the scope and sequence. Yet significantly, the use of the answer key in this example

also exemplified Joanne's lack of confidence when she thanked Deborah for the answer key. She

expressed relief at having it, because she was afraid of her students seeing that she didn't know

something. In this next example from an interview with Joanne, it was clear that she appreciated

Deborah's expertise in helping to focus the group.

> Me: Can you describe circumstances that you feel support you in implementing Reading
> Workshop?

> Joanne: So I think it's important to have a focus and at least one person on that team to
> say, "Ok guys, stop talking, where are we going? Let's talk about what we really need and
> what can we share?"

> Me: Who tends to do that on the team?

> Joanne: You know I feel like we almost all do which is great, but Deborah is really good
> at that. She'll be like, "Ok, enough of this! Let's get going! And we need someone like
> that to get us all moving."

Joanne valued Deborah's ability to keep everyone moving as they planned within the team.

Deborah's specific role of helping them all stay on track was clearly an important one to Joanne.

Deborah's expertise also transcended her work with pacing and the scope and sequence

and moved into creating classroom materials. However, since she tended to share examples of

this mostly with Brooke, as seen in the section on pockets of collaboration and isolation, the

others were not as privy to her thinking around artifact creation, which might explain some of

their desire and expectations for ready-made materials. Deborah and Brooke explained the new

unit plan they developed with the language arts supervisor, which led to some questions from

Sandy.

> (1) Sandy: Are we getting any material before that? Like this is great, but are we like
> going to, I don't know where to get an obituary from other than the newspaper.

> (2) Brooke: Yes, we're finding the material.

(3) Deborah: But you know what? That's where, and it's funny, because as we were saying thank goodness we do collaborate so well together because that's where we can utilize our Tuesday meetings. We can say, "Okay, if you have this type of genre, or if you can find it, let's bring it to the table and share it so that, because we have, what's the word, we don't have a lot of resources for this unit," so …

(4) Brooke: We've never really done it.

(5) Denise: We've never really done it, so it's going to be a lot of this …

(6) Sandy: It's all non-fiction-geared.

(7) Deborah: So it does slide in nicely to where we're ending in the month, and I think once, like Brooke said, once we talk and we discuss the big picture, like really the game plan, I think you're going to say, "Okay, it's not," do you know what I mean? I think that's what you were saying.

(8) Sandy: I need to see like the ending, I need to see the end goal like for because right now I have no idea what's going on.

(9) Brooke: We'll share a lot of the questions that we've brought up and a lot of those other things, but as far as materials, a lot of them are easy to find, like a brochure. You can go to the parks or something and find brochures. For menu, literally we'll show them a menu from a restaurant, but we also need a teacher-created menu to show what we're talking about doing, like for a recipe, have you ever seen a recipe for a good mom or something like that, like a cupful of hugs.

Sandy's expectation in line 1 was that Brooke and Deborah would hand her the materials she needed to teach this unit. Deborah tried to explain to Sandy in line 3, that if they collaborated as a group, they could each contribute to finding examples of the genres they needed to teach and bring them to the meeting to share. She also told Sandy that they never did this unit before which was then confirmed by Brooke in line 4. Since this unit was new to everyone, Deborah's point was that if everyone contributed by looking for the resources needed they would be all set as a group. In line 7 she even reiterated the importance of collaboration when she said "once we talk and we discuss the big picture" letting Sandy know that they could work together on this.

Even after Deborah's pitch for collaboration, Sandy's response in line 8 was, "I have no idea what's going on". Brooke then reassured Sandy that the materials would be easy to find, like a brochure or a menu from a restaurant. However, Sandy's reaction helps us see the difference in philosophies once again as Deborah and Brooke were willing to find materials and do research in order to bring the most effective artifacts into the classroom for their instruction, while Sandy showed her lack of understanding of the philosophy and theoretical perspective underlying Reading Workshop by expecting Deborah and Brooke to provide her with the materials.

Gillian. Similar to Deborah and Brooke, Gillian also exemplified competence within the group. It was common for her to bring in artifacts to share and discuss, or to adapt or create an artifact based on the group's needs. The way she understood the work brought in by others intuitively, demonstrated her understanding of Reading Workshop philosophy. In this next example, Gillian showed how she adapted artifacts she received from Brooke or Deborah.

(1) Me: When Deborah or Beth bring in artifacts or handouts to the group do you use them?

(2) Gillian: I always use them in the sense of like, "Okay. This is what they've done," to kind of give me an anchor, but I don't always necessarily use it verbatim. Just because I like to I guess have my own spin on it. I'm thinking like recently we did a lesson on an interview for multi-genre, and Deborah had typed up something, and I asked her for it digitally because I had gotten it as a hard copy, and then she sent it to me digitally, and I was able to kind of change it for how I felt it was best for my classroom. I'll do things like that where maybe she originated it, but then I make changes.

(3) Me: Okay. Then that was the next question. How do you change it? Can you be a little more specific or elaborate a little bit?

(4) Gillian: It could just be like a language thing, like how she would word something might not necessarily be how I will phrase it in my classroom. Just the actual language of things I would change. Also, sometimes it's like, Deborah and Brooke tend to do things very similarly because they've worked together for how many years, so they've written a lot of the same things. If maybe they had an activity that they did with their students, I

might say, "Okay. They did this activity for text structure." I don't know. I'm trying to think of an example. Then I might not do that activity, but I might say, "Okay, they did an activity for text structure, now what can I do on my own that's text structure based." I do try and do that in my classroom.

They gave a text structure test, and there was a couple versions that went around. One was something that I had given out, and Brooke used that as a test. One was something that Deborah used as a test. Deborah gave that at a meeting, and I liked that, so I used that, but then I found something else because I didn't want to just address text structure. I wanted to see if they were remembering things from the past and a little bit of formative assessment. So I found something that had author's purpose in it as well, which is something that I'm touching on. So I included that also as part of my test. So I took the original, but then I added something from myself, so that's one way I change it sometimes. Sometimes I'll use it. I'll just file it. Keep it as a reference and just find something totally new. Or sometimes I will just use it. When we did main idea and detail, they had a nice article on bats, and I took that straight. I didn't change anything. I did it exactly the same. There are definitely instances where I do it how they had done it sometimes.

Gillian described how she would sometimes make use of a document she received from Brooke or Deborah. In line 2 she discussed modifications she made to the document. The language she used to describe the decisions she made was based on an understanding of Reading Workshop philosophy, such as the lesson on multi-genre study and how she put her own spin on an artifact she obtained digitally from Deborah. In line 4, Gillian talked about a document used to test the students on their knowledge of text structure. However, she decided to modify the test, because it didn't include other areas from her instruction, such as author's purpose. She added a formative assessment that included more elements from her instruction, making direct connections between the artifact and how it got her to develop student reading skills. The way in which Gillian understood the connections to Reading Workshop philosophy enabled her to modify artifacts for use in her classroom, while maintaining the substance of the content.

Moreover, during team meetings, Gillian was able to articulate Reading Workshop philosophy to the rest of the group, and it was apparent that the others valued what she brought in from their responses. In the following excerpt, Gillian brought in artifacts for teaching the nonfiction research unit.

(1) Gillian: Personally, I have a lot. This is from my grad class that I'm in and it's a nice way to present your lesson. You have your objective on the board. Today, I will learn … I will do this by, so how they'll do it … Then I know I got it when … Which I think is the real cool part of that like when they have their aha moment. It's just something if you want to use it. I gave you these. I don't have an extra of that. Here's something on the main idea just like, I was thinking of using it as homework but I'd like the stuff that you gave me Deborah so I don't know but I found this. This is like a quick read and then main idea and the supporting details.

(2) Deborah: This will be a quick check on once we finalize the main idea. Once you teach the different ways of gathering and coming up with the main idea this will be a quick assessment and then knowing okay which kids do I have to pull? I like that. Which leads me, unless you want to

(3) Gillian: This is other main idea and detail stuff that I got from my mom who is a literacy coach in [a neighboring district].

(4) Joanne: This is great.

(5) Gillian: This is for a Common Core and it's related to how the new test will be. This is a passage, non-fiction, as multiple choice and then it has the open-ended. But lets you just focus on the main idea so it's nice because it just like one skill, that's why I like it.

(6) Deborah: We had a test that we had used last year after main idea and detail but this would be good too. Maybe we should give this instead, remember what we gave last year Brooke? on the main idea? Central idea? I have it but maybe we should give this one instead. I don't know, so we can-

(7) Gillian: What's nice is the packet before that has like a guided practice section as you would call it. Where you would read it together and practice because the questions are tough, like finding the main idea from a whole passage. It talks about, not just in a paragraph, but of a whole piece and then it does go into just a paragraph-

(8) Brooke: That's good enough because when we teach them this, you don't know where they are in their book and they need to know how to identify the new chapter or section and then as you're reading, you think about the whole.

(9) Sandy: I was showing Deborah this morning I'm having my kids do the main idea backwards so they're going to find the important details, write them down. What do all those important details have in common? Well, that's your main idea and then we'll do the main ideas that are common and that's your topic. They kind of work . All right, this is the main idea and here's your supporting details.

In line 1, ideas for teaching main idea and supporting details were brought in. Deborah understood Gillian's ideas, because in line 2 she jumped in to add details about finalizing the instruction on main idea by providing a quick assessment to know which students still require assistance. In line 3, Gillian brought in another artifact that she got from her mother who was a literacy coach in a neighboring district. There were many times Gillian would bring in artifacts from her mother and the others responded with further questions about the artifact, or comments to show they valued the artifact. In line 5, Gillian brought in a test for non-fiction. In explaining the artifact, she showed its relevance to their current unit of study as she discussed how it contained one skill and used open-ended questions that focused on the main idea.

Scaffolding the learning in this way helps students draw on information they read previously in the text to help determine the main idea (Calkins, 2010). Deborah's response in line 6 shows that she valued what Gillian was offering so much that she consulted at that moment with Brooke about trading their old test from last year for this new one. It was significant in line 7 that although Gillian referred to a "packet", she was offering details that aligned with Reading Workshop philosophy, such as "guided practice". Brooke showed her approval of Gillian's ideas in line 8 when she said "That's good enough", because Gillian had made a good point about teaching students to determine the main idea not just from reading a paragraph but from reading a whole piece.

In contrast to the way Gillian understood Reading Workshop, Sandy's input in line 9 showed a simplified method she thought students could use for determining main idea by working backwards to find the important details and what they all had in common. She even mentioned that it "kind of works". In this example, Sandy did not understand the broader theory of helping students grow their intellectual ideas by scrutinizing the text and determining the main idea of a passage.

Informal observations of team meetings demonstrated that Brooke and Deborah valued Gillian's input and felt that she brought in materials they could see themselves using for instruction. This was confirmed in my final interview with Brooke when she spoke of artifacts Gillian brought in to the team meetings.

Me: Is there someone's materials that you tend to use more than others?

Brooke: I like some of the materials that Gillian brings from [her graduate school] a book that her mom has for everyday text and non-fiction. I even looked at it when Deborah and I planned with Maureen and not everything in there was useful or would be worth purchasing for our use, but there were certain things that I liked that I pulled and a core curriculum book that she had for non-fiction and everyday text and I pulled some great things. Meeting recently with Rebecca for a Voyagers Meeting [gifted and talented program], we copied an everyday text. It was a workbook of everyday text examples and short little questions that went with it and it's fabulous because there are tons of examples of everyday text that kids probably don't think of that we can do for a quick little assignment just to show them this is everyday text too. We're going to hand it out at our planning meeting tomorrow to these girls.

Brooke described the value she placed on the materials Gillian brought in from her graduate school class. I also could confirm that she appreciated the everyday text and non-fiction books that she brought in from her mother. Examples of everyday text and questioning strategies helped guide their planning in an area that was new to them. Brooke appreciated this new input from Gillian as they worked to adjust their program in this area. She even brought the materials

to the gifted and talented coordinator who helped Brooke confirm that Gillian's materials would

keep them on the right track for this particular unit. Deborah also mentioned using Gillian's

nonfiction examples in the interview. Neither Brooke nor Deborah mentioned using or

appreciating any materials from Sandy or Joanne with any specificity.

Sandy. In attempting to flesh out perceptions of competence by colleagues within the

group, in my final interview with Gillian, I asked her about how artifacts and ideas that are

brought to the group are accepted.

> Me: I did notice that sometimes when people bring things to the group, they don't always get taken up.

> Gillian: Sometimes I think when Sandy mentions things it's not always as accepted.
> Me: Why do you think that is?

> Gillian: I don't know. It could just be because she's new. She teaches so similarly to me that in general, in the beginning of the year they listened a lot because all of the beginning word study when we had to figure out this new word study. We were lost, and she had done it in third grade, so she saved us, introducing that. We all took all her stuff in the beginning. I don't know.

In the beginning of the study, Sandy was new to the group, and Gillian felt there was more

openness to her ideas. As the year went on, however, this dynamic changed. A finding that was

echoed in the section on the norms of the group, if a document or an idea was brought in by

Joanne or Sandy, the response from the more experienced teachers was superficial and polite.

Often the response was, "That's nice", or "Yay", or a quiet movement to the next item or subject

while offering no response at all. In this example, the teachers discussed an item brought in by

Gillian. Take note of the type of input offered by Sandy.

> (1) Gillian: Did you see what I did to the RACE question? I added to the text feature…

> (2) Deborah: Yeah, I loved it. I loved the way you took that. What a great idea.

> (3) Gillian: …to make it a little more like juicy if you want it.

(4) Deborah: No, I loved it. I'm using it, yeah.

(5) Sandy: Cool.

(6) Deborah: I was like, "Oh, this is like what we do". Yeah. I loved it. I thought it was great.

(7) Sandy: Text structure test cards. You can play like a review game with them off of *Teachers pay teachers*, right. There's 32 of them, so there's enough where you can either divide it, put them in groups or copy enough for the class so it's not going to be like, "Oh, I'm done in two seconds and they have," and you can even make enough where they write on it. They have to underline like why it is that type of structure or whatnot, so there's that strength.

(8) Deborah: Yay.

(9) Gillian: Where's the student version of this?

(10) Deborah: We have to make it. I have it.

(11) Gillian: Oh, okay.

In line 1, Gillian described changes she made to the RACE strategy handout she brought to the meeting. RACE is an acronym the teachers use to teach open-ended response writing. In lines 2 and 4, Deborah responded enthusiastically to the changes and made it clear she planned to use the new handout. In line 6, Deborah told Gillian effusively that she did a good job, because she created something that she and Brooke would do with their students, meaning this was precisely how she and Brooke would teach text structure within Reading Workshop. In line 7, Sandy jumps in with something she thought was relevant to the conversation – a text structure test card review game that she downloaded off of *Teachers pay teachers*. Bringing in a skill sheet to test the students exemplified her lack of understanding of the broader theory. Sandy understood artifacts as individual, discrete objects that she brought in, usually downloaded, with no frame of

reference or context. Meanwhile, the others were discussing a handout that would help students

process a reading passage and develop a deep and thoughtful response to a writing prompt. No

questions were asked about Sandy's text structure cards and Deborah answered with "Yay" and

then moved back to discussing the handout Gillian brought in, exemplifying a lack of interest in

Sandy's artifact. This was in direct contrast to the response Deborah gave Gillian when she

brought in the RACE handout.

Sandy was acutely aware of the lack of reception Brooke and Deborah gave to her ideas.

She knew that as a newcomer, she had not been granted the same legitimacy as some of the

others to become part of the community of competent teachers. She offered me an astute

example:

> Me: Has there been a time that you feel like they did take something up that you brought?
>
> Sandy: There was [a time they did take something up that I brought] but… it was funny… I shared something with everyone and then I guess Deborah dismissed it and then she saw it in Gillian's room and was like "oh, I love it." I was like, "But I gave it to you. You had it." She had to like see it I guess. So that was funny, that was one thing that she eventually did use, but she had to see it from someone else. I don't know. It is fine. I don't, I am like you take it, you take it. You don't, you don't. I learned not to take things personally. I don't think she does it intentionally. I think she's like, " I have taught for so many years that I am just going to go with what I know," which is fine. It is what it is. I don't think it is anything vindictive or personal... Sometimes I feel that they'll give but they are not so receptive to my ideas… I don't always feel as included that they are just not receptive. There are things that I'll just do. I had them compare two texts where we did the text structure of compare and contrast. I had them compare and contrast within an article, but then I took it to the next level and I had them compare and contrast between two separate articles. When I brought that to the team, no one seemed very receptive to it. I was like, well it is a standard, they have to know how to do it.

Deborah dismissed Sandy in such an overt fashion that it was clear even to Gillian. Although she

tried to let it roll off her back when she said, "I learned not to take things personally. I don't

think she does it intentionally", she turned some of this frustration outward and began to feel that

Deborah was closed off to new ideas because she had taught for a long time. Additionally, we

saw her turn the lack of reception into an indictment of members of the team when she said, "I

brought that to the team, no one seemed very receptive to it. I was like, well it was a standard, they have to know how to do it." Sandy interpreted the rejection as personal rather than a rejection because her ideas didn't fit with the theoretical perspective of Reading Workshop. Deborah's rejection then became an instructional deficiency because of her lack of adherence to the standards. We saw the same pattern that we had seen previously, that to Sandy, Common Core was a theory rather than a student learning objective. She was focused on discrete skills, not on designing instruction that moved students to the necessary outcome of becoming proficient readers. Since she lacked the broader framework in Reading Workshop, we saw that she did not view Brooke and Deborah as experts, because they did not know Common Core. In this way, Sandy was not even aware of what she didn't know. Therefore, she viewed Deborah and Brooke as old fashioned and missing critical elements of the standards in their instruction.

The reaction given when an artifact or an idea was brought to a team meeting was another way that Sandy's input was not being valued. As we have seen repeatedly, if it was Sandy sharing, there was no response from the group, or someone changed the subject to another topic. Whereas when Brooke, Deborah, or Gillian shared, there were questions or comments that showed interest.

> (1) Gillian: Because I figured we just figured story elements, if they're going to write a fictional piece it's incorporating all those Reading Workshop story element lessons, now into writing and we're talking about character so I figured they're learning how to analyze character, they can apply that to writing.

> (2) Sandy: I found my graphic organizer that I was talking about.

> (3) Deborah: Here I did give you girls, we used this last year to help them formulate a realistic fiction.

> (4) Sandy: Joanne just reminded me, I have a bunch of stuff that I had through the last year that people from the state came and gave to us, all about speculative writing that I'll

throw through the copier and it has explanatory and speculative writings. So I'll run them through the copier and send them out.

(5) Joanne: If you look at page 5, Gillian do you remember yesterday we were talking about, like how, right… like to maybe even have them do a quick write, where you get to pick, I believe we said like five pots in the middle of the room. One character setting problem, climax, solution and picking and randomly putting a story together with the intentions of a good story has to have a problem, it has to have characters and as we use those to kind of develop the characters further. Then incorporating some of the authors crafts and stuff like that for the kinds who can do it. Like you're talking about…

Sandy shared that she had "a bunch of stuff" from the state from her last school in line 4. In a previous team meeting, she told the group that there were people who visited her school last year to show the teachers how to prepare their students for speculative and explanatory writing for the NJASK test. Here, she offered to put the "stuff" through the copier to give to the group. Joanne reacted in line 5 by turning to Gillian to discuss quick writes. No one asked for further information or had any questions for Sandy. They didn't express any interest in receiving these materials from her.

The wording Sandy used when she brought in ideas and materials was also noteworthy. In this example, Sandy offered materials to the group and called them "a bunch of stuff". Her level of detail was superficial and the only detail she did offer referred to test preparation materials. This was juxtaposed with the way Gillian brought in materials using terms like "story elements" and "analyzing characters" as she contributed actively to the conversation around realistic fiction writing. The gap between what Gillian and Deborah offered and what Sandy offered, was wide.

Likewise, in this next excerpt as the teachers were discussing instruction around fiction writing, Sandy's input again missed the mark and lacked Reading Workshop theory and instruction.

(1) Gillian: I have what you're talking about. I have a whole, they're all cut up and I can photocopy where there is like 10 or 12 different setting, supporting characters, main character, problems, solution and setting, it has all the parts. Then you could have them at a table pick there is a story map that goes with this. They have to map their story, so that's their whole planning and then they can go into the writing piece from there and I have that. So I have to just copy them because it was a center that I had from a while ago.

(2) Sandy: We said like the story might be silly, but if you think about it when they get to the NJASK they have no idea, they can't come up with their own, they're going to be thrown a prompt and the prompt is what it is. So it's kind of good practice even though it might be a silly story, they still have to put together whatever the questions asked them.

(3) Gillian: It will be like a generating lesson, to generate ideas and practice.

(4) Deborah: That's great.

(5) Sandy: To kind of give them some like motivation, - they're like oh, this is funny. But they have no idea that's its actually coming all together.

Gillian explained the types of story elements she had her students use to write their fiction pieces in line 1. Notice her use of literary terminology such as developing the setting, supporting characters, problems, and solutions, as well as using story maps. Yet in line 2, when Sandy chimed in, notice her lack of literary terminology. Referring to how it's okay for the students to develop silly stories if they can't come up with an idea on their own, she follows up on this idea in line 5 with the suggestion that the students won't even realize that their stories are coming together. In this regard, Sandy encouraged a lack of self-awareness for her students as they wrote, instead of highlighting instructional elements that might help them arrive at an effective fiction piece.

In this final example, when Brooke explained the multi-genre unit plan she and Deborah developed with the language arts supervisor, as we have seen before, Sandy had some questions. Sandy's difficulty was in the integration of writing with reading during the literacy block.

(1)Brooke: We decided along with Marilyn that it's not necessary after you read the obituary and you model and you talk about what good things, you know this as a reader. It's not necessary to give them an obituary back at their seat. They should continue researching, doing more research for their new project.

(2) Sandy: But then that's writing then, so then you're taking away from reading for writing then, or am I missing… I'm just, I'm… reading … I need to like re-say it out loud to make sure I'm understanding it.

(3) Brooke: They're reading but taking notes, and they can be reading more specifics so if they did dogs [for their research projects] and they want to do rescue dogs, they might be reading and doing more specific. The reading and writing is very closely related, and in fact, there's three open workshop days in the unit, you're going to notice, and they're at the end, but Maureen also said you can use those where you decide it's necessary. You're really going to be combining the reading and the writing and you might use that as a writing workshop within your reading time if necessary. There's a specific note-taking thing that we'll be talking about, like how do you know that you have all these notes, what do we really do with them?

(4) Sandy: I don't know, I just feel like you're taking so much. I'm not trying to knock it, I'm just not, I just don't feel comfortable with taking so much away from reading, because they're going to be thinking this isn't reading, then, they're going to think this is writing.

(5) Brooke: But they're still doing their good reading practice. They'll be stopping and jotting, they can still be doing any of these things, finding the main idea of their unit. You can still apply it.

Sandy expressed concern in line 2, because students were being asked to write during the reading segment of the literacy block. She expressed this to Brooke as, "You're taking away from reading for writing". Brooke tried to explain patiently in line 3 that they were writing, but it stemmed from the reading, because they will be taking notes on their research topic. She elaborated on this concept by explaining to Sandy that reading and writing are "very closely related", so it's okay to combine the two since they were both part of literacy. Sandy continued to argue her point stating that she was not comfortable taking so much away from reading because of what the students will think. Brooke redirected the conversation in line 5 back to the

strong literacy outcomes they would be working towards. Students would be stopping and jotting, taking notes, and finding the main idea in the books they were reading for their own research.

Calkins describes writing about nonfiction reading as thinking work. She says students do research not just to collect facts, but researchers also need to think and read critically. As they read, they construct records of their reading and build models about the information they notice in their books. They make individual decisions about what to record and what they think as they read their nonfiction texts (Calkins, 2010). Brooke was echoing this philosophy in trying to explain to Sandy about the relationship that binds reading and writing together. This was why both subjects were covered in a rigorous literacy block. Sandy's difficulty demonstrated her lack of understanding of the important pedagogical connections between reading and writing. We have seen this pattern with Sandy struggling to make sense of the broader understanding that Reading Workshop was based in. In this case, she could not conceptualize or make sense of the multi-genre unit plans that Brooke brought to the group.

Joanne. Similar to Sandy, the types of questions being asked and the type of language used by Joanne played a role in how much she was included in the community. Joanne often asked questions that did not help her gain an understanding of the instruction necessary to help her students become proficient readers. Below is an example of the type of question that was common from Joanne during team meetings.

> Joanne: Are we going to give a test at the end of this unit? Do they have to know the different text structures? How is that going to look? I'm trying to see like how deep do we need to get into it?

In this example, as the team was discussing the types of activities they would teach around text structure within the nonfiction unit, Joanne's question was bundled together in a succession and

concerned testing the students on text structure rather than asking questions related to teaching

text structure. She referred here to the students repeating information back on a test, rather than

any kind of formative assessment that might test for a deeper knowledge or might inform her

instruction. She even ended with "How deep do we need to get into it?"

We get a glimpse of what Joanne viewed as important as she described a classroom

activity that she was particularly proud of to the others.

> Joanne: These are formative assessments and really cute. I used… which one did I use
> today? I used the backsplash today. They had to… using what we did in social studies,
> they created a poster and then just… it was quick. It tells you how to use them too. The
> 'Dear Diary' one I thought was good. It said they can actually write from the point of
> view of a child living during the Revolutionary War.

In this example, Joanne described an artifact that did not relate to Reading Workshop, but rather

related to social studies work. She explained how she had students create a poster that was

"cute". Joanne did not show an understanding of the conversations among the experienced

teachers and she often brought in topics that were unrelated and asked questions that did not tie

in with Reading Workshop instruction. Furthermore, during interviews, Joanne was never

mentioned by any of the other teachers as an active contributor to the group.

Moreover, even when she was most comfortable describing computer assignments and

projects, it was more common for Joanne to outline a technology program that she used with her

students than it was for her to describe pedagogical techniques around Reading Workshop. As

noted in the discussion of Brooke's competence, the teachers were discussing how tricky it was

to teach open-ended writing and we saw that Joanne put in examples of computer-based

programs she was learning how to teach her students, such as Pixie. She also talked about a

technology workshop she attended with our technology coach where she looked through sample

tests for the new PARCC assessments. Since she often had her students using laptops in the

classroom to create computer-based projects, it was obvious that this was an area of comfort and competence for her. Therefore, rather than adding to the conversations about Reading Workshop instruction, or asking questions to clarify the work for herself, she offered input on computer instruction.

In addition to her comfort with using technology in her classroom, we circle back to how often Joanne mentioned to the group that she downloaded materials to use in the classroom. She didn't mention making modifications to these artifacts, but considered them a time saver because they were ready-made materials. As previously noted, when she downloaded items off of *Teachers pay teachers*, they were in PDF form and could not be modified.

> (1) Deborah: We didn't have them answering in RACE, but it was an open ended.

> (2) Brooke: So once they know RACE, they should be expected to do that.

> (3) Gillian: They read it. This was the last time.

> (4) Joanne: We didn't have to come up with it ourselves because it was copy paste from this great website. They read the story or the article and then they have to type in their answer. This was going to help them practice for the PARCC of just having to take there.

> (5) Gillian: That is good.

We see a similar pattern where Joanne offered unrelated input while the others were discussing instruction around teaching students the RACE strategy. In line 4, Joanne offered how she was able to copy and paste something from a website to give to her students. Specifying that she didn't need to come up with the work herself, Joanne once again brought in how beneficial this type of assignment was for test preparation for the PARCC exams. Turning back to Deborah's input from p. 95 of the norms section, her position about Reading Workshop contrasted greatly with Joanne's. The fact that it was a lot of hard work and that there was no ready-made or set curriculum did not make her seek online materials, but rather it guided her to develop lessons

based on the needs of her students. She understood the importance of diagnosing her students'

reading ability, and she would develop her lessons based on their individual needs. She

expressed that she did not seek materials off of teacher websites because this did not address her

students' learning needs or help them to think deeply. The fact that Brooke and Deborah did not

even respond to Joanne's contribution while Gillian merely responded, "That is good", in line 5,

confirmed Joanne's input as not being valued within the grade level team.

Joanne and Sandy pursued ready-made materials constantly during the team meetings. In

this next excerpt, it was easy to sense this, especially in Joanne's comments.

(1) Deborah: But I never want to impose like I know what I'm always doing girls. Just because I have this stuff because I've been here a while, I never-

(2) Sandy: I think what would be helpful for like I don't know, I could be wrong, but for the future taking everything and putting it in a binder with the scope and sequence and saying, "This is lesson one."

(3) Joanne: You would have a way above and beyond and you guys pulling all of this. I mean, nobody here … You don't get paid extra to do this.

Deborah talked about not wanting to impose her materials on Joanne and Sandy. Instead of

Sandy responding with appreciation for Deborah's artifacts, in line 2 she reiterated how much

she would like a binder put together with the scope and sequence and the lessons in order. As we

noted previously in the norms section, Sandy wished she had a prescribed reading program to use

in the classroom with lessons to follow each day. Next in line 3, Joanne made it clear that she

believed what Deborah does was going "way above and beyond" when she had to pull materials

in order to plan. She said, "you don't get paid extra to do this", implying that she believed what

they were being asked to do in planning independently for Reading Workshop went above and

beyond the call of a regular teacher's duties, implying that they *should* be getting paid for all of

this planning.

Since Joanne's input during team meetings did not include Reading Workshop theory and instruction, in keeping with the norms of the group, the experienced teachers did not take up her ideas or artifacts.

> (1) Joanne: Actually, I thought, with this and also with the stuff that Tali had sent us about the other formative assessment ideas, that I just want to create a basket and make all my copies in advance of just a bunch of different exit slips. I already do exit slips but everything is ready to go so you can just pull from it.

> (2) Deborah: Yeah.

> (3) Gillian: Right.

> (4) Joanne: At the end of the lesson on the fly.

In this exchange, Joanne brought up creating a basket to put copies of exit slips in so that she could pull from it automatically and easily. This type of logistical information about where Joanne would store her exit slips did not move the group along in Reading Workshop and is reminiscent of her emphasis on superficial adaptations to artifacts given to her by the group. As was typical, in lines 2 and 3, Deborah and Gillian responded with one-word responses; there were no questions asked and no depth of instruction being discussed. Based on the group norms, members of the group did not call Joanne out on her lack of adherence to Reading Workshop philosophy, because this would create conflict. Instead they redirected as previously seen, or just did not respond to her ideas. Since they did not bring her into apprenticeship by helping her to learn, they ended up continually showing that her input was not valued as competent.

In this final example, Joanne shared with me in an interview what she felt was a great strength for her within her team.

Tali: What do you think you are good at that you bring to the group?

Joanne: I think that I'm good at seeing the big picture and I think I also am good for resources that I might have, just from teaching basic skills for so long, too. I really feel like I have a good grasp of what the kids are capable of and given high expectations for what they can do. We were teaching this essay unit for example, and Brooke and Deborah are like, "On day one we're going to introduce the introduction paragraph and we're going to teach it. Day two we'll do maybe the body." I'm thinking, "Why not just do this all in one day? Show them what great examples of persuasive essays are and then let them figure out what made this so wonderful? Let them pick that out and then that very first day have them try one out." I feel like they move at a little bit of a slower pace and maybe that's because I taught sixth grade that I feel like I can move a little bit faster, but I had, the kids did it. I had samples out and we did a gallery walk and we had all of the kids went from desk to desk reading all of these great essays. At the end we came to the carpet and they were like, "This had a great first sentence," and they shared what the first sentence was. That night for homework, they wrote persuasive essays that blew me away. They got to pick their topic and I feel like I came so far in one period and I'm not sure … I don't know because I wasn't in their class, but the way that they were talking was that they weren't even going to write their first essay until the end of that week. Those are I think things, too, that I feel very free to share my thoughts because I feel like they're so receptive and I know they're not going to shoot me down and make me feel bad. I think everyone's willing to do that though so I don't know if that's a strength or just something that we're all doing?

Joanne shared very proudly that she was able to take an entire persuasive essay that Brooke and Deborah would teach over the course of several weeks and teach it in one day. She felt that she had good resources at her fingertips and that she knew what the students were capable of. If she showed them great examples they would be able to figure it out on their own. Her interpretation was that teaching a persuasive essay in one day meant that she had very high expectations for her students. Whereas her interpretation of Brooke and Deborah's instruction was that they moved at a slower pace while she was able to move faster. She said the essays her students wrote were great and she gave herself credit for her advanced level of instruction.

What Brooke and Deborah understood about writing a persuasive essay was that it required a great deal of scaffolding and modeling in order for students to write an effective essay. They needed to learn the art of argument writing that was balanced in its analysis and that

would persuade the reader to change their beliefs or take action on the topic. In order to do this, students must develop an argument through citing evidence, while gathering and explaining the claims they were making so that their arguments would become more powerful. Students can begin to see this by reviewing persuasive pieces from real texts and analyzing the author's craft and what specific techniques they use to craft their argument.

The goal is for children to learn how to write to persuade people to rally behind a real-world cause that is important to them. In order to achieve this student outcome, teachers must build student learning and incorporate all of the instructional frameworks and structures necessary to walk the students through the writing process sequentially, from drafting, to revising, to conferencing, and eventually publishing. For this reason, in Lucy Calkins' Units of Study for Teaching Writing, one whole book in the unit of seven books is dedicated to persuasive writing and is entitled: Unit 4: Persuasive Writing of All Kinds: Using Words to Make a Change (Calkins, 2013). When I asked Deborah how long it would take her and Brooke to teach a persuasive writing piece, she told me it would take them approximately three weeks. It would be difficult for elementary age students to incorporate all of this learning and write a persuasive essay in one night.

Language arts supervisor. In exploring perceptions of competence by colleagues further, the language arts supervisor, Maureen, called on Brooke and Deborah to work with her throughout the year to create unit plans for the group, making the novice teachers feel that she valued their input more than the others. I knew that this was happening behind the scenes, because the literacy coach was not performing her job responsibilities appropriately and was not helping guide the lesson planning with the team. However, because these were personnel issues, I could not share the need for the unit planning with the team without discussing confidential

personnel issues about the coach. The unit planning led to strong feelings for both Sandy and

Gillian.

> Me: How do you feel about the unit plans being created with Maureen?
>
> Sandy: I think that we should have all sit down together and done it. It is hard because they have this idea but and they are talking and discussing it and then it gets transferred to us, but there is no one I can discuss it with. I don't necessarily agree with how they are doing it either. I know that they are just creating the unit and then throwing standards to it. The standards do not necessarily match. That is also frustrating. I know Gillian and I are very frustrated with the multi-genre unit. We are taking bits and pieces, we are still doing it, but we are trying to make it our own and make it align to the Common Core.

Gillian's feelings on this topic were similar to Sandy's.

> Me: How do you feel about the unit plans being created with Maureen?
>
> Gillian: I think that the unit plans, going back to the standards, it's not ... There are Common Core standards next to the unit, but if you can read the standard, it's a stretch how a lot of the topics are meeting them. I know Maureen plans it with ... in the past it was just Brooke and Deborah, the veteran teachers, which I can totally understand why they would be chosen. That makes sense to me. I think their nature as a teacher is they very much listened to Maureen and I don't think there was that collaborative aspect. I don't think it was a give and take. I think it was more of a listen, okay, we'll do it that way. Not necessarily questioning, "Why should we do it that way? What about this or have you thought about it?" It just seemed to be, "Yes, okay, great." Maybe if there are other voices in there, there could've been more of a back and forth discussion.

In these two excerpts, we notice the incompatible perceptions of competence by colleagues as

seen by the novice teachers regarding the veterans. As we have observed in the previous

sections, Brooke and Deborah could be seen as highly competent based on the input they gave,

the artifacts they brought to meetings, and the comments that were made during interviews about

them. We can also see the repeated sentiment that they lacked adherence to the Common Core

and that Gillian felt they acquiesced too easily to Maureen's wishes in developing the unit plan,

not questioning it enough or lending their expertise to the plan.

Joanne's sentiments about the unit planning were similar to the other two teachers with an interesting twist. Early in my research, I recognized that there was some resentment about the unit plan and heard the novice teachers complaining about being left out of the process. As a result, I asked Maureen to have another member of the team step in. Since Joanne had the most teaching experience of the three others, Maureen asked her to participate as well. Joanne had some strong feelings about the unit planning.

Me: How do you feel about the unit plans being created with Maureen?

Joanne: I have some thoughts on that. I'm still I feel like struggling with the way that they're being put together. I was only for the first time, I was a part of the poetry which was really nice. I felt that it was nice to be a part of that at its roots and its creation. I felt though a little bit that Maureen guided too much and since she was the one typing, it was often her thoughts or her ideas. There were many times during the meeting that I had to say, "Wait, let me back up and get this straight. The first thing we're going to do is this and then you want us to do this?" I would say, "That doesn't make sense. How about, what about this?" Then everyone would talk about that and then it will get changed. For me, I had to put it in my own words and say it again and then we would realize that that might not work in actuality in the classroom. That happened several times during the creation of the poetry unit and I thought, "Boy, I think this is why some of the other units I know a lot of people feel like they're very theoretical-based and a lot of the writing in there, I don't know what she means." It's almost like why have all of these people collaborating when in the end, we're coming out with a document that can't be transferable? I can't hand this to somebody brand-new walking in and they be able to follow it. I think that they would be confused, too, and they would need to go to somebody for help on how to interpret it.

It was important to note that although Joanne felt good about being included in the unit planning, she also felt that Maureen had too much control over the process and that she mostly typed in her own thoughts and ideas to the plan which did not allow for Joanne's input. When she spoke up, she felt that things did change and Maureen did add her ideas; nevertheless, she did not value the plan, because she felt it was too theoretical and had little practical use in the classroom. Based on what we have seen from Joanne, it was easy to imagine that the unit plan would be disappointing

to her since her expectation was for materials and artifacts to be handed to her. The unit plans

were not a daily lesson plan with handouts that went with it, but rather it was a document that the

teachers worked on to interpret the curriculum and set out general directions they should go in

for a given unit. Teachers would still need to develop their daily lesson plans and artifacts based

on the unit plan. Since Joanne had difficulty with the practice and theory of Reading Workshop

she did not show an understanding of how to utilize the unit plan effectively and align her

resources to this philosophy.

Looking across this theme, we see that the experienced teachers are seen as competent

around issues of practice, knowledge of students, pedagogy, and developing useful and relevant

artifacts that align with Reading Workshop. Yet the novice teachers refer to them as not being

competent around Common Core. This appears to be because the only moment we see the novice

teachers staking claim to competence is around Common Core. However, we don't see this

attributed to them by the experienced teachers. We do see that Common Core is like a little

thread for Sandy and Joanne and it seems to represent the only view of competence that they can

hold on to since it's the one area that they feel competent in. Conversely, the other three teachers

have more areas of competence and expertise that they can lay claim to. We see that each of the

three of them, but especially Deborah and Brooke, possess a much broader foundation that their

competence is based upon. Therefore, it's not just perceived competence for Brooke and

Deborah, but rather actual competence and knowledge that they are looked to by the others.

Summary of Findings

Taken together, the problems embodied in this group's interactions suggest that the way

the teachers viewed one another's competence has fibers that appear within each theme.

Perceptions of competence by the group played a large role in the way the teachers interacted

and these notions always lay beneath the surface, helping to generate the norms of interaction within the teachers' community. This was evident through Sandy and Joanne who demonstrated low levels of competence around Reading Workshop theory and practice and whose ideas were therefore less valued by Brooke and Deborah. At the same time, Brooke and Deborah kept their practice private to the novice teachers. Included in this privacy were the artifacts that could have been a vehicle for learning and promoting critical reflection and dialogue; however, without discussion and explanation of how to embed the various artifacts into classroom practice, they became intimidating to the novice teachers who needed to be brought into the learning held by Brooke and Deborah. Consequently, their practice remained a mystery to the others. Since the norms of the group did not encourage open discussion around instruction and in fact promoted superficiality, the teachers did not learn to examine artifacts for meaning or to delve into their practice on a deeper level.

If the norms had allowed the novice teachers to glean learning from the more experienced teachers, this might have permitted them to shift into competence. Teacher improvement within a community of practice occurs when teachers talk to one another and discuss the materials of their practice as they participate, interact, and develop artifacts together. The social structure and norms of the group did not allow for the novice teachers to talk and gain insight into the structures of Reading Workshop and illuminate the practice of the experienced teachers. The concern is that if they are not afforded this type of interaction, they cannot make the shift from apprentice to expert and they are not capitalizing on the core technology of schools – teaching and learning.

Additionally, since open dialogue was not part of the norms, conflict and disagreement were also discouraged, which only served to widen the knowledge gap and force the less

experienced teachers to rely on what they knew best, the Common Core and ready-made

teaching materials downloaded off the Internet. Since the more experienced teachers had a better

understanding of Reading Workshop and how to use and develop artifacts within this

philosophy, and they sensed that Joanne and Sandy lacked competence around Reading

Workshop, this created pockets of collaboration within the group and a lack of shared leadership.

In short, since conflicts were discouraged, the less experienced teachers had no voice and no

vehicle for asking questions and gaining entry into the shared repertoire of the community.

Chapter 5: Discussion of Findings

The purpose of this study was to explore how literacy teachers conduct their joint work, focusing on the structures, processes, and materials that characterize their work within Reading Workshop. By interviewing five teachers and exploring their collaborative practices, I was able to evaluate the group's effectiveness as a community of practice as well as assess the changes that might need to be enacted for them to operate as a more cohesive group in taking on educational reform. In this chapter, I discuss the study's findings with respect to the relevant literature. Next I expand the discussion and consider the implications for practice. The implications call for changes to the teachers' communities of practice and call for interventions within each literacy grade level team at this school. To present a background for the implications that emerge from this study, I start with an overview of the research and findings. Next, I discuss areas for further research, focusing on how this case can be generalized to other cases beyond the immediate work with teachers at this school. Finally, I discuss the impact this study has on the field and on the teachers in this school at all grade levels. I suggest norms and protocols I plan to start building into the teachers' future collaborative work.

Findings

Building on the work of other researchers (Curry, 2008; Grossman, Wineburg, and Woolworth, 2001; Little, 2002; Levine & Marcus, 2009), I have attempted to shed light on the inner workings, structures, and participation within a teacher collaborative community as well as reveal how the norms of their professional practice might increase or decrease the likelihood of inquiry and learning. In this study, I was able to elucidate the dynamics within this community by following and analyzing the teachers' participation over time. Additionally, I am quite

familiar with the teachers' work because I was a part of the Columbia, Teachers College training for a full year. I also have formal background as an English teacher and teaching background in this school site specifically which enables me to offer strategic and contextual value and understand the dynamics in a way that an outside researcher may not be able to. Consequently, I hope to build on and deepen the research that claims that strong professional communities are vital to teachers' learning and ultimately have an impact on student achievement.

This case study showed that although teachers considered themselves to be a collaborative group, they were operating more as a pseudocommunity in several ways: they avoided conflict, their practice remained privatized, there were fractures within the group, and the way they shared materials was superficial (Grossman, Wineburg, and Woolworth, 2001). Illustrated through these interactions is the complex ways that each teacher perceived the competence of the others in the group. These features of the teacher community generated feelings of isolation and division, as the teachers had difficulty opening up their practice and overcoming the norms of the group (Little, 2002).

Such interactions around teacher autonomy and privacy as well as examinations of group norms have arisen in previous research on professional communities (Grossman, Wineburg, and Woolworth, 2001; Little, 2002; Levine & Marcus, 2009). This study contributes to the literature by offering a view of teachers' up-close interactions through their detailed dialogue. The norms of the group developed without a structure or focus to help teachers share their own practice and share the leadership; therefore, professional learning and changes to practice were not able to emerge. For new teachers to gain legitimacy within a group of experienced teachers, the norms must be adjusted to allow opportunities for learning rather than dismissal and exclusion.

Additionally, this study offers a new finding regarding differing perceptions of competence within a teacher group and the impact this has on a group's interactions and their work together. In Wenger's description of legitimate peripheral participation, (1998) he characterizes the way in which a new worker joins a community of practice and is included through various forms of participation that are kept open. In this study, the perceptions of competence by colleagues changed over time and eventually by the end of the study, teachers were solidified into specific roles, which only contributed to the lack of professional community. As the two experienced teachers asserted their leadership and were not able to open their practice to the newcomers, the level of exclusion became more profound, creating pockets of collaboration where the two experienced teachers collaborated separately as did two of the newcomers, with one remaining teacher left out of the process entirely.

The separate collaboration by the two experienced teachers raises the question of tacit knowledge where there seems to have been an implicit knowledge that they shared, causing them to feel more comfortable planning without the others. This raises the possibility that they shared more with each other because of tacit knowledge that they each possessed, but that the others did not. It is unclear whether the experienced teachers were able or unable to detail their practice or whether their knowledge might be stuck inside their heads and could only be accessed by those with shared knowledge and an implicit understanding to talk about it. This could have added another layer to why Brooke and Deborah preferred planning alone, because of the implied knowledge and shared understanding that the others did not possess. When they worked together, they did not have to explain things. It was clearly harder for Deborah to unpack her knowledge and verbalize or express it openly to the group. This might be because the differences in tacit knowledge among experts vs. novices has been shown to relate to amounts of experience and

formal training, as was evident with Brooke and Deborah's levels of training and experience

within Reading Workshop (Wagner and Sternberg, 1985). It can be argued that if Brooke and

Deborah have tacit knowledge, then they have knowledge of how to prioritize their work and the

tasks that are most important, as well as having tacit knowledge about managing their students'

strengths and how to minimize their weaknesses as they plan for Reading Workshop. This

knowledge might have been hard for them express to the others because it was so implicit to

them both.

Examining the perceptions of competence by colleagues as a finding in this study,

connections can be made to the conditions that must exist within a group for it to function

collaboratively and welcome the newcomers effectively. Revealed through their interactions, the

novices in this group needed more help and more exposure to actual practice. Peripheral

participation must provide engagement with the other members and openness to their actions,

how they operate within their practice, as well as to the materials and repertoire they are using.

To be apprenticed, newcomers must be treated as new members and not face rejection, or they

will have difficulty learning the new practice (Wenger, 1998).

Levine and Marcus (2009) have noted that different types of collaboration can produce

very different learning environments for newcomers and that without specifying structures and

goals, the opportunity for collaboration and learning will be missed. This study strengthens the

notion that teacher collaborative communities are often superficial and contrived examples of

collaboration. Privatized practice, a chief threat to group learning, helped create autonomy and

contrived collaboration and substantive talk was held in abeyance. The group's inability to work

through conflict or share the leadership around planning and artifacts, exemplifies the problems

they faced as they could not engage in meaningful conversation or question elements of practice

through inquiry and reflection. This became clear as I watched the experienced teachers run the

meetings and take charge of planning. Since the newcomers told me they were afraid of being

disrespectful, they were not comfortable discussing how they might do something differently for

fear that it would create conflict. So they remained quiet and did not bring up new ideas or ask

questions about the discussions or artifacts being brought in. This dynamic squelched creativity

and innovation and at times created resentment. Likewise, since Brooke and Deborah did not

model inquiry or discourse with one another during the meetings, preferring to hold those

conversations privately, the newcomers did not get to see it in action or become a part of that

dialogue, which was another way that questions and discussion were discouraged.

Thus, if privatized practice is perpetuated, or we consider the possibility that tacit

knowledge contributed to privatized practice, and the newcomers' ideas are rejected, as

happened in this study, a substantive professional community cannot develop. The subtleties in

this group's interactions analyzed through their dialogue and the resulting artifacts they brought

in, demonstrate how opportunities for learning were missed, because the teachers did not

negotiate conflict and because practice and knowledge of content and pedagogy were not made

explicit. Therefore, the newcomers could not gain new knowledge or shift into competence. In

this case, the privatization and superficiality inhibited learning from happening.

Relevant to the findings as well, teachers often misinterpreted levels of competence as a

byproduct of the collaborative work. While an experienced teacher held the leadership reins and

was not able to detail important elements of content and pedagogy, the group's norms of

superficial sharing, pockets and divisions of collaboration, and repressed conflict, led the

newcomers to believe that the more experienced teachers were less knowledgeable on topics like

the Common Core. Lacking theoretical background and knowledge in Reading Workshop, and

not being apprenticed, the newcomers were grounded in these beliefs and held firm to them. In this way, they were also complicit in closing off dialogue and reflection.

I thought that offering the teachers time to work together to plan their lessons and reflect seemed like a commodity that would be valued as a resource. The teachers were struggling with Reading Workshop as a new reform and the previous year's grade level group, given common time for planning, participated in the press for ideas and in articulating their understandings of the theory together. In this new group, however, the teachers quickly resorted to the culture of isolation and privacy. Judith Warren Little has written widely on teachers' privatized practice (1990, 2002).

However, in the literature, differing perceptions of competence by colleagues are not discussed in enough detail. As an instructional leader, it would be important to know how to support the grade level teams in this challenging work. Although my findings align with several studies on building community, this study also raises more questions about the literature in the area of competence, as well as what happens within privatized practice when teachers are misinformed about content and pedagogy as Joanne and Sandy were in this study. They began to believe their work was superior despite the fact that they weren't reading the required literature on how to teach Reading Workshop or seeking out other ways to expand their knowledge. Thus these two results – perceptions of competence by colleagues and the way that privatized practice produced enormous misunderstandings on the part of the inexperienced teachers, were important new findings brought out through this study.

Further Research

The research described here seeks to create a detailed case study to contribute to the field of educational reform and teacher community. In presenting an in-depth observation of the

teachers' behavior as well as interviewing them and reviewing the artifacts of their practice, one

purpose was to describe their interactions and analyze them as a way to make the findings

transferrable to other settings. Therefore, in this study, I tried to garner rich details to fully

describe the teachers' professional community. In this way, using case-to-case transfer, a person

in another setting who may be considering issues around developing teacher professional

community, may consider adopting ideas from this study (Firestone, 1993).

Since the data comes from literacy teachers on one grade level, there is a question as to

how it might apply for math, science, or other disciplines. However, the study findings

explicated here examine teacher collaborative practices and the learning environment created

within the context of an instructional reform, Reading Workshop. Beginning with the study of

one small group of teachers, the results are meant to provide detailed interactional information

that can contribute to the broader literature by documenting teacher challenges and successes as

they engage in collaboration. The goal of this work was to make sense of teachers' experiences

within the communities of practice framework. I argue that the work of principals is to support

the development of teacher community and to guide the next steps to help teachers collaborate

and learn together.

While study findings align with previous research on teacher collaboration through

helping teachers build a learning community, future research might aim to measure teachers'

ability to provide substantive opportunities for learning to their students, linking their own

involvement in rich communities to the impact this might have on student learning. One way

would be to look at the types of discussions teachers promote in the classroom and determine if

there is a correlation between teachers' changing discussions and any changes they make in

curriculum and instruction in the classroom (Grossman, 2001). Another way is to measure the

relationship between teachers' learning in their community of practice and student learning. If we can encourage teachers to study and read together, can a link be made from specific collaborative activities to changes in classroom practice (Levine & Marcus, 2009)? An additional question is, can changes to practice be linked directly to student achievement and if so, what types of assessment should be used to monitor this type of student growth?

Evidence from this study suggests that creating time for teachers to collaborate without pairing this with the structures necessary will not help foster a learning community. Although there is research to suggest the importance of developing the norms through the use of protocols that sanction teachers' requests for help and joint analysis of artifacts, this study has shown the importance of closely helping teachers work through conflict and clarify misconceptions that arise around content and pedagogy. Norms of interaction must guide teachers to talk openly in order to dispel misunderstandings that arise from privatized practice. Such misunderstandings contribute to problems arising because newcomers are not being apprenticed by established teachers. In order to shift the group's norms to become a more substantive community, newcomers need to gain competence through participation, access, and mutual engagement with established teachers.

Additional misunderstandings may have occurred due to the tacit knowledge possessed by the experienced teachers which may have caused them to be unable to detail their practice to the others. This would be another possible area for future research to determine whether this was more tacit knowledge that the two teachers could not talk about, because they understood it so implicitly, or if it's just a matter of helping them understand that the other teachers don't have access to this knowledge. They might require assistance through training in how to access this type of knowledge in order to detail their practice.

Implications

Prior research points to looking inside teacher communities to find answers to the problems of addressing new reforms in education and finding ways to help make student achievement gains (Curry, 2008; Gallucci, 2008; Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2001; Levine & Marcus, 2009; Young, 2006). As such, principals should look to developing a professional culture of learning in their buildings and helping teachers deepen their knowledge as a way to instructional improvement. Creating conditions that develop teachers' expertise and capacity as they engage collaboratively to solve problems of practice can shape an atmosphere of improvement (Cosner, 2009). Social interactions must be at the center of this process and must be a primary mechanism for learning within teacher communities. In doing so, norms of interaction must be established to foster trust and help teachers deal with the natural conflicts that arise from critical reflection and discourse. Protocols can be used to facilitate this work of trust and relationship building as well as to help teachers determine how to prioritize what is important within a new initiative like Reading Workshop.

My research suggests some conclusions from the experiences described in this study and some recommendations to improve teacher community in the school. Studying teacher interactions to understand the nature of their collaboration raised the need to find ways of building stronger communities where teachers learn together. The recommendations I am making can be broken down into three areas: (1) Creating norms for interaction and for making teaching practice public. Helping teams of teachers at the school site navigate through essential differences and tensions in a way that helps them learn to address conflicts directly with one another, while more experienced teachers bring novice teachers into apprenticeship through joint work and shared repertoire, (2) Using protocols to guide teachers in developing norms that

encourage making teaching public and thinking out loud about their practice. By creating

conditions that provide novice teachers with pedagogical support around best instructional

practices, in addition to providing experienced teachers with the direction needed to gain comfort

detailing and thinking aloud about their practice for novice teachers, we can help teachers

navigate the challenges of Reading Workshop and other instructional reforms, (3) Establishing

classroom visits within teacher communities. Developing an atmosphere of openness where

teachers feel comfortable visiting each other's classrooms as a learning opportunity, (4) Training

new staff members on new initiatives by utilizing knowledge of experienced teachers, coaches,

and administrators.

       The first component of community revolves around creating norms for interaction. As

seen in this study, it was all too easy for a teacher collaborative group to become a

pseudocommunity as they interacted in superficial ways. Teachers must learn to talk through

conflicts that arise through inquiry and discourse and learn to address it directly with one another

through open dialogue. For this study, three new teachers were placed on the literacy team,

forcing new people to work together who had never done so before. Meanwhile, the two

remaining members harbored a sense of loss for the teachers who were no longer there, because

their distinct expertise and perspectives on Reading Workshop was gone. In order to keep this

dynamic from recurring on other grade level teams, we must ensure that all new members are

granted legitimacy and are not excluded from the professional community. Since the perceptions

of competence in the group was a recurring theme throughout the study, it is important that new

teachers are brought into apprenticeship by the more experienced teachers and helped to gain

competence so they can contribute and learn. As seen in the literature, teacher leaders must be

taught explicitly how to work with adults. Helping them learn how to handle conflict and how to

offer honest, not superficial feedback can help them lead newer teachers into improvements in their practice (Kruse, Louis, & Bryk, 1995).

In considering ways to restructure collaborative groups so that members begin to feel a sense of responsibility towards one another, it is important to regulate the norms and patterns of behavior within the group. Issues around competence arose because teachers were not making their practice public or negotiating through conflict. Also, the pattern of finite roles that existed within this teacher team, did not allow for any shifting to occur so that novice teachers could gain legitimacy. One way to monitor these dynamics would be for the principal to take a more active role within the group and watch for perceptions of competence by colleagues to shift and address this quickly through agenda setting and deliberate activities that help teachers share their practice and maintain open dialogue and discourse.

Similarly, establishing the norms of the group at the beginning of the year would help move the group to collaborate more effectively. Seeing through the lens of communities of practice as a conceptual framework, teachers must be allowed to openly see each other's practice while helping to bring down the obstacles that create privatized practice (Wenger, 1998). Since opening up the conversation and helping teachers feel comfortable talking, discussing, arguing, and making their practice public was an important finding in this study, teachers must be brought together to establish norms that encourage any issues to be brought to the whole group. This would help mitigate some of the small pockets of collaboration that arose among the teachers. Additionally, when setting the group norms, the experienced teachers must be urged to think aloud with a level of specificity so that novice teachers can see their practices in action and learn how to reproduce them. This practice can become more deeply ingrained if teachers are supported through modeling. Teacher coaches and administrators can model how to think aloud

about one's practice while developing teacher leadership and guiding the leaders to explicate

their practice, can help create a more substantive learning community.

Although teachers can do much to build the norms within their communities of practice,

promoting the use of protocols to guide the meetings would help them overcome some of these

difficult changes. Protocols help by embedding structured activities with reinforced time limits

for each teacher to speak and share as they help guide teachers to articulate their instructional

practice that has remained private (Levine & Marcus, 2009). Improvements to a community must

take place within the team through interaction and articulation. In short, protocols help engage

members in focused conversations about learning while they also give permission to challenge

one another with questions and offer critiques of each other's practice (Curry, 2008). Protocols

should also be used to guide the development of norms and encourage teachers to make their

teaching public so they are not shut down to interactions that revolve around teacher practice.

Using a protocol means there would be explicit instructions to share a problem of practice in

detail, urging teachers to articulate Reading Workshop activities while becoming more

comfortable examining what they actually do in the classroom with students (Levine & Marcus,

2009). Pressing instructional issues would be aired to help teachers engage in focused

conversations that open up their practice to each other while building trust. This recommendation

is grounded in the assumption that divergent thinking and creativity are traits that should be

fostered on a team.

Another positive dimension of deprivatizing practice should involve a shift from using

common planning time as a vehicle for discussing lesson plans to a more pedagogical

conversation centered around instruction and student outcomes as a way to deepen knowledge.

As group norms are established around learning and inquiry-based conversation, teachers should

feel more comfortable bringing in student work to share as evidence of learning. This should be followed by analyzing data collaboratively through strategic protocol activities (Young, 2006).

Sharing common texts is another way to deprivatize practice and bring a group closer while giving everyone a voice and help them embrace the diversity among the voices. As people get to know each other through shared readings, they develop common experiences as a step toward encouraging them to open their practice. Newcomers also gain the opportunity to gain knowledge and hopefully shift competence within the group. As they have a chance to listen to each other, argue, and learn from all members, this leads more naturally to mutual engagement within a community of practice. This would help build a shared repertoire that includes the artifacts of their practice and move toward a negotiated joint enterprise that fosters a mutual sense of responsibility within the community (Grossman, Wineburg, and Woolworth, 2001).

Finally, opening up classroom practice to each other through regular classroom visits would serve as a mechanism for learning both within a community and across communities (Coburn & Stein, 2006). The official purpose is to help teachers learn instructional practices associated with Reading Workshop. However, the goal would also be guidance and apprenticeship of novice teachers as they visit and observe in specific areas that they identify a need. If they are struggling with guided reading or mini-lessons, for instance, they would have a chance to see this demonstrated by a more experienced teacher who has mastered this area of pedagogy. As a way of helping new practices germinate throughout and into other communities, there should be time and place for teachers to observe and then talk about any unfamiliar practices.

Finally, utilizing the knowledge of experienced teachers, coaches, and administrators to help train new teachers in the new initiative would help them receive the guidance needed from

the outset as a way to begin planning lessons and gaining knowledge. Since the new teachers in

this study did not see how Reading Workshop and the Common Core related, it is clear that more

explicit instruction, training, and modeling was needed to help them bridge the gap while

managing the demands and requirements of implementing Reading Workshop (Hatch, 2001).

Additionally, since the new teachers also made it clear that they found the Lucy Calkins Units of

study difficult to read and too theoretical, scaffolding the training and curricular materials and

sitting with new teachers as they learn how to delve into content and pedagogy would help

improve their learning. Most important to this process, developing relationships of trust and

partnerships with more experienced teachers that allow for asking questions and discussing

problems of practice, would facilitate the development of a learning community.

The general insights taken from the type of detailed dialogue and interactions between

the teachers in this study gives us further information about the participation and norms of

teaching practice and opens us to the possibilities of providing a structure for teachers in their

everyday collaborative work. Research on teacher community has more often relied on

interviews and surveys or researcher field notes rather than capturing teachers' natural

interactions and dialogue in their collegial work practices. This is significant because this

research examines problems of teacher collaborative teams using a lens of communities of

practice to make recommendations that would help any teacher professional community outside

of this school. Additionally, this study supports the work of Judith Warren Little (2002) who also

studied the naturally occurring interactions among teachers in an effort to help develop teacher

professional communities and advance school reform.

Impact

While caution should be taken when generalizing these findings, I argue that this work provides a window into ways principals can support teachers within a team, especially when they are faced with a new curriculum or reform, while elucidating how communities of practice theory might promote the healthy functioning of the team. As such, by focusing on the interactions and detailed conversations of teachers, this study offers insight into teachers' interactions and shows how teachers can be obstructed by issues of privatized practice, unhealthy norms, and perceptions of one another's competence.

This study was conducted to examine how teachers on one grade level literacy team made decisions, used artifacts of their practice, and planned their lessons together within a new reform: Reading Workshop**.** The focus was on the collaborative efforts and interactions among teachers. On a local level, I believe this study has had an impact on the teachers who took part in the study in this school. As I discussed the findings with them, one teacher expressed a great deal of interest in learning how to "think aloud" and detail her practice and apprentice the novice teachers on the team. All of the teachers in the study have been drawn in to conversations about improving their collaborative efforts and learning from each other, and they have told me they eagerly await the completion of this study and the recommendations that I have promised to them in the fall.

As next steps, I plan to help teachers build the norms of interaction for their groups through the use of protocols that allow them to discuss instructional concerns and encourage them to speak out loud with more detail about their practice. In this way, I hope to guide teachers to frequently illustrate what they do in the classroom and describe how they use the artifacts of their practice as they dig in to specific areas of their teaching. Protocols can work at framing teachers' meetings and help them open up to explore specific areas that are problems of practice.

These same methods also help experienced teachers to become brokers within the context of

their work. In this way, they can play critical roles for other teachers as resources for providing

learning and feedback to one another (Coburn & Stein, 2006). This is also a way to promote

teacher leadership as brokers can work across communities such as one grade level teacher who

has become adept at analyzing students' running records can then create connections with other

grade literacy team to carry elements of practice to less experienced teachers.

       Additionally, since the inexperienced teachers had difficulty with the Units of Study, the

Reading Workshop theory, and creating artifacts appropriately aligned to this work, my role as

the leader is to take on some of this responsibility to explain the policy initiatives together with

the language arts supervisor. Since the less experienced teachers lacked the training to be able to

unpack the Units of Study and other Reading Workshop materials, I plan to take a more active

role at the building level to offer guidance and assistance, especially in helping the more

experienced teachers unpack their practice to help others see how Reading Workshop and the

Common Core relate.

       Participation with others who were trained previously in Reading Workshop would guide

the necessary training for newcomers. This would give them better access to professional

development that is related to the artifacts and practices of the community. The hope is that

newcomers can begin to shift their practice to become more competent as they align with district

policy in literacy. This would include the use of the Lucy Calkins Units of Study coupled with

training in how to give running records and how to use them to inform instruction. Teacher

leaders familiar with these areas can be employed to work with newcomers to manage and

implement these reforms.

Classroom visits will be another way to help teachers open up their practice to each other and attend to problems of practice together. As another activity structure that can promote collaboration, classroom visits have the potential to engage teachers in multiple aspects of teaching and learning. Identifying the focus first and then developing the structures for classroom visits, as well as giving teachers the time to debrief later, may prove a substantive way to help address emerging learning needs. An added focus on sharing student work and using data is another deliberate way I would help set the stage for teachers to collaborate and openly discuss their practice. Teacher leaders would be employed once again to model and help teachers practice data analysis. Forging new collaborative norms will also help to focus meetings on relevant instructional activities such as joint analysis of student work.

I also plan to include a brief with these ideas laid out for the teachers and the language arts supervisor. This study's impact has also been around increased awareness as the literacy supervisor has eagerly been a part of reading any relevant article that I share with her. We have worked closely and engaged in lengthy conversation around developing stronger learning communities within the school. As we have faced the decision of hiring a new literacy coach for our teachers, we have had six separate meetings, each at least two hours in length, which I have attended with the literacy supervisor and the assistant superintendent, who has also been interested in the results of this study. During these meetings, I was able to bring in insights from the study findings to guide our decision-making. How to approach grade level meetings and change the work of the teachers in the school has been at the root of the conversations. Although this study was of one grade level, the results transcend that specific grade level and can be applied to other teams in the building.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interviews will be conducted individually with each teacher by principal researcher and audio taped.

I. Context for the interview

1. Thank you for taking the time to be part of this study

2. My role: previously a literacy teacher, now principal seeking information to help our school and help support you in your role as literacy teacher, not evaluating.

3. Review confidentiality and informed consent; ask permission to audio tape interview.

4. "Do you have any questions before we begin? Feel free to stop me at any point to ask questions."

II. Questions asked of all five literacy teachers. Probes will be used to follow up on questions to obtain more detail about teachers' experiences and viewpoints. How has the grade level team work been going? What's working, what's not working?

1. Can you give me some examples of when team members have helped you? Or where you have divided or delegated tasks?

2. What opportunities do you have to forge and maintain collaborative relationships?

3. Are there additional opportunities that you take to collaborate with colleagues? How useful has this been?

4. Can you describe circumstances and mechanisms that you feel support you in implementing Reading Workshop?

5. In your opinion, what supports and/or collaboration has been most beneficial to you? Why?

6. Have you come to any new understandings about your work together? If so, can you tell me about them?

7. What supports and/or professional development would you like to see put into place?

After probing for opportunities that support collaboration, I will ask about ways in which their collaboration may have been hindered.

II. Concluding Questions

1. Is there anything that you would like to add about how you understand your own collaborative experiences?

2. Is there anything that I haven't asked you that might be important for me to know?

3. Are there any questions you would like to ask me?

APPENDIX B: CODE BOOK

Table 3: CODE BOOK

Initial Codes	Revised Codes	Themes Related to Codes
Artifacts		
Analyzing artifacts	Analyzing artifacts	Norms of interaction
Sharing artifacts	Sharing artifacts	Perceptions of competence by colleagues
Constructing artifacts	Constructing artifacts	
	Having too many artifacts	
	Taking up and adapting someone else's artifact	
	Finding instead of creating an artifact	

	Not liking someone's artifact and changing it	
Conflict		
Anxiety	Focusing on Common Core	Perceptions of competence by colleagues
Allaying fears	Frustrations	Privatized practice
Focusing on Common Core	Lack of buy-in	
Frustrations	Tension within the group	
Lack of buy-in	Lack of rigor	
Someone not collaborating	Being vocal	
Tension within the group		
Inquiry into practice		
Changes to practice	Changes to practice	Perceptions of competence by colleagues
Desire to learn	Desire to learn	Norms of interaction
Sharing ideas	Sharing ideas	
Taking risks	Taking risks	
	Lack of focus on students	
Joint enterprise		
Answering questions/expert	Answering questions/expert	Perceptions of competence by colleagues
Asking questions/seeking advice	Asking questions/seeking advice	Norms of interaction
Being excluded from offering input	Being excluded from offering input	Privatized practice
Co-planning lesson plans	Co-planning lesson plans	
Decisions about planning – equally together	Decisions about planning – equally together	
Helping each other	Helping each other	
Honesty	Taking charge of what to plan next	
Taking charge of what to plan next	Teaching instructional practice	
Teaching instructional practice	Novice making herself vulnerable	
Novice making herself vulnerable	Novice shares idea but no one responds	
Novice shares idea but no one responds	Referring to scope and sequence	

Referring to scope and sequence	Taking turns	
Taking turns	Teaching supporting info	
Teaching supporting info	Veterans set in their ways	
Veterans set in their ways	Division within the team	
	Feeling included in the joint work	
	How non-tenured practice differs from tenured	
Lack of support		
Resources needed	Resources needed	Privatized practice
Lack of time		
Supports		
PD/Training		
Role of administrator		
Time to collaborate		

Appendix C: BRIEF OF FINDINGS

Often times teacher collaborative groups are thrown together haphazardly and are not structured enough to make it really productive and helpful. This can be especially true when teachers must learn how to incorporate a difficult instructional reform such as Reading Workshop. This study titled "Examining Teachers' Collaborative Practices within Reading Workshop" was designed to examine your interactions with each other through your collaborative efforts and conversations within your grade level team. The focus was on the collaborative efforts and interactions that you shared.

During team meetings and through data that you shared with me in interviews, it was clear that what was happening inside this teacher group helped promote a sense of collaborative community. Some of the excellent things I saw happening were:

- Sharing materials of practice

- Expertise and competence around Reading Workshop being shared

- Desire to learn from each other

- Visiting each other's classrooms

- Practice being detailed

The research shows that to get instructional change that's going to impact student learning, you have to talk about instruction in great detail. Our research together showed that this is even more important when teachers are faced with a new reform. I selected your group, because you are the most collaborative team and even with several newcomers to the group, you were able to share the work and your learning with each other. However, I'm realizing that in order for you to work the best, it would help if there were certain structures for interacting in the meetings to encourage the conversations to move from sharing materials and into instruction and how to use the materials with students.

You have created a great deal of structure already to your meetings, but I would like to help you develop a structure to talk about instruction in enough detail so that newcomers have access to the knowledge of the group. Structures can help teachers in collaborative groups to talk about why they're using a certain artifact, what its relevance is and why it's a good resource. There were times when I heard some of you talk about how overwhelming the meetings could be, and in order for you to learn from each other, there needs to be a better way to explicitly break down practice into the small moments in a lesson. It would help support your instruction if that could become a larger part of the teacher meeting. Drilling down on one lesson and making sure to talk about it out loud in detail would help, because you have all said that the meetings are not enough time to run through the whole week, and for that reason the meetings can become

overwhelming to each of you at times. This way you can talk about the nitty-gritty of instruction in order to support each other's learning.

Since your group welcomed three newcomers to the team, it was really important to me in this study to learn how to help newer teachers learn how to incorporate Reading Workshop into their practice. The best way for this to happen is through making instruction and the artifacts that you bring to the meetings explicit by talking about how they are actually used in practice. In your group, as is common in most teacher collaborative groups, the norms of the group were that teacher practice was not always explicit, and this caused teachers to group themselves off in smaller clusters and have some of these conversations we'd hoped to have in the whole group, between only two teachers. It's really important to bring that conversation back into the group so that everyone can learn together, rather than having just two teachers plan on their own.

This study showed the importance of building strong communities where teachers learn together. Last year when several of you had a chance to make classroom visits, there was a great deal of positive feedback. Establishing classroom visits within teacher communities helps to develop an atmosphere of openness where teachers feel comfortable visiting each other's classrooms as a way to learn new instructional strategies that help foster a learning community. Visiting each other's classrooms is also key, because there is so much expertise within your 4th grade learning community.

One suggestion that might bring structure to the conversations is protocols. Every group needs norms for negotiating conflict and for engaging and talking about instruction and there are protocols for all of that - for talking about student work and for making your practice explicit. I think protocols would help you to develop these norms together to encourage the most learning possible for each other. It was my sincere goal to make things better for you all and for your

students and I know you have always been interested in that too. Below are some examples of

protocols that might help. I've also included a website that has many other examples. It's up to

you whether you decide to use them, but if you decide to give it a try, I would love to help you.

<div align="center">Protocol for Setting Group Norms</div>

<div align="center">Taken from http://www.nsrfharmony.org/freeresources/protocols</div>

We set norms to curtail some behaviors that might not help the group accomplish its goals (for

example, "Don't monopolize the airtime"). We also set them to give ourselves permission to be

bolder than we might otherwise be (for example, "Take some risks here"). And we set them in

order to remind ourselves that people learn in different ways (for example, "Give everybody time

to think"). Norms are especially useful when newcomers are likely to arrive after the work is

already under way. When newcomers arrive, the norms fill them in so that they don't have to

learn them through trial and error. Norms are also useful when "tricky" conversations are likely

(which is frequent in real-life work groups).

Activity 1

1. The facilitator says: "What are your fears and hopes about this meeting?" Teachers are
   encouraged to say anything aloud that they fear. (For instance: they fear the meeting will
   not meet their real needs, or will run in a way that is insulting to their learning…)

2. The facilitator lists all fears and hopes exactly as expressed. The facilitator can also
   participate by listing her own fears and hopes. After the list is complete, the group should
   be encouraged to ponder them. If some things seem to need modification, the facilitator
   should say so and make modifications. If some of the hopes seem to require a common
   effort to realize, or if some of the fears require a special effort to avoid, the facilitator

should say what they think these are, and solicit ideas for generating such efforts. This

exercise will help the group move into norm-setting.

Activity 2

1. The facilitator says: "What norms do we need to increase the likelihood that our hopes

   will be realized and our fears allayed?

2. The facilitator encourages the group to brainstorm all possible norms, and lists the

   offerings on chart paper. However, the process begins with a few moments of silence as

   people consider what they want to offer. The facilitator also participates in the

   brainstorming, adding whatever seems lacking from the list – for example, "We want to

   create a place that is safe enough in order for us to endure discomfort," or "We want to be

   allowed to take a risk."

3. Discussion: The facilitator says, "So far this is just a brainstormed list – we have not yet

   agreed to it. Is there something that needs discussion that you want to question?"

4. Synthesis: In a transparent way, the facilitator synthesizes and fine-tunes: "I think that

   what I'm hearing is…"

5. Consensus: This means that all group members can live with and support the norms, the

   facilitator moves the group to affirm the list.

6. Make clear that we call these "norms", not "rules" to suggest that they can be changed at

   any time. Norms are intended to serve the group over a period of time and should be

   revisited with regularity in order to reflect on them from time to time. Check in with:

   "How are we doing with our norms?" The chart paper with the norms can be carried over

   from meeting to meeting. Reviewing how the norms worked can be a good closing

   activity.

Goal Setting Protocol

Taken from http://www.nsrfharmony.org/freeresources/protocols

Developed by Jay Davis.

This protocol is designed to help groups set agendas for their year of work together. It would

usually occur at the first meeting of the school year, or at the last meeting of the year. Its

objectives are the creation of the following:

1. An overall picture of what the group hopes to accomplish this year.

2. An opportunity to collaboratively identify individual goals for the year.

3. A shared sense of ownership/responsibility for future meetings.

Process

1. Make sure people understand the basic overview of what happens. Remind participants

    that the protocol's structure ensures that individuals can always, in the end, choose their

    own work to bring to the group. (10 minutes)

2. Brainstorm list individually or in pairs or triads. (10 minutes)

3. Discuss list in pairs or triads, 3 minutes per person, talking through the lists   people

    generated during the brainstorm. (10 minutes)

4. Individuals put one choice on chalkboard (put names next to individual work, not needed

    in other two categories). People can write something from their own lists,   or put up

    something that was discussed in their pairs or triads.

5. Once this is completed, individuals put a dot next to the two choices that most   interest

    them." People do not put dots in the "Individual Work" category.

    (10 minutes)

6. With an overhead or on the whiteboard, have people "sign-up" (with the coach

    facilitating) for a meeting and an issue to present. Members can always, of course, pick

    their own individual work issue, or they can select a reading topic or issue that they will

    take responsibility for bringing to the group, with the coach's help. There will be blank

    slots and should be! (10 minutes)