



Literacy Coaching: What it Takes to Be Effective


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Effective teachers

manage to produce better achievement regardless of which curriculum materials, pedagogical approach, or reading program is selected.

Allington, R. (2002, June). What I've learned about effective reading instruction from a decade of studying exemplary classroom teachers. *Phi Delta Kappan*.



If we can focus our energies on providing this generation of teachers with the kinds of knowledge and skills they need to help students succeed, we will have made an enormous contribution to America's future.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1996). What matters most: A competent teacher for every child. *Phi Delta Kappan*.



The Top Six

Number 6

6. Be able to be organized on the “run”

- Have a method for recording observations and data (student data and teacher goals/action plans).
- Be timely with conferences.
- Know resources and where they are.



The Top Six Number 5

5. Understand the art of observation

1. Take good notes that are not judgmental.
2. Understand the difference between a reflective process and judging the teaching.
3. Ask teachers to observe you and reflect on your teaching.



The Top Six

Number 4

4. Have a deep understanding of the reading/writing process, good teaching, and assessment.
 1. Be grounded in a solid knowledge and research base.
 2. Understand the relationship between teaching and learning.
 3. Develop a repertoire of teaching strategies.
 4. Continue to learn and demonstrate an eagerness to learn new things.



The Top Six

Number 3

3. Understand adult learning and how to work with adults

1. Be aware of teachers' backgrounds (career states, level of commitment, life distractions, concerns about change, etc.).
2. Be respectful of the knowledge of others. All teachers want to be successful.
3. Invest time in getting to know the people you work with.
4. Balance the tight rope walk between supporting the status quo and placing too much stress on teachers.
5. Leave people feeling supported and empowered to grow.
6. Build collaborative relationships



The Top Six Number 2

2. Be a good communicator

1. Develop trusting relationships.
2. Listen, listen, listen.
3. Have good communication skills (acknowledge, clarify, paraphrase, summarize, elaborate, etc.).
4. Have a sense of humor.



The Top Six

Number 1

1. Be a reflective thinker

1. Reflect on and make changes in own teaching using their knowledge and evidence from instruction (an inquiry/action research approach).
2. Engage others in a reflective process.
3. Know how to make a conference reflective and nonthreatening.
3. Don't be defensive.
4. Habituate reflective practice
5. Lead to independence

Facilitator of Reflective Practice

Someone who:

- is inherently curious;
- doesn't have all the answers and isn't afraid to admit it;
- is confident enough in his or her ability to be able to accept challenges in a non-defensive manner;
- secure enough to make his or her own thinking public and therefore subject to discussion;
- is a good listener;
- likes and trusts other people to make the right decisions if given the opportunity;
- is able to see things from another's perspective and is sensitive to the needs and feelings of others;
- is able to let others assume the responsibility for their own learning.

Osterman & Kottkamp. (1993). *Reflective practice for administrators*.
Blase & Blase. (1998). *Handbook of instructional leadership*.

Teacher Reflection

- Attaining *deep reflection* and *free exchange* in conference situations . . . are, at best, difficult to achieve and are profoundly complicated by the participants:
 - **personal orientations**
 - beliefs and feelings about the topic, interpersonal history, and individual agendas
 - **conversational congruence**
 - shared meanings, assumptions, and credibility
 - **position of authority**
 - **situational variables**
 - time, place, resources, and topic control

Blase & Blase. (1998). *Handbook of instructional leadership*.

Resources

- Bean, R. (2004). *The reading specialist: Leadership for classroom, school, and community*.
- Blase & Blase. (1998). *Handbook of instructional leadership*.
- Costa, A. & Garmston, R. (2002). *Cognitive coaching*.
- Crane. T. (2002). *The heart of coaching*.
- Dole, J. (2004, March). The changing role of the reading specialist in school reform. *The Reading Teacher*, 57, 462-470.
- Harris, P. (2004). Taking a look at literacy coaching. *Council Chronicle* (NCTE).
- IRA. (2004). *The role and qualifications of the reading coach*.
http://www.reading.org/resources/issues/positions_coach.html
- Katzenmeyer, M., & Moller, G. (2001). *Awakening the sleeping giant: Helping teachers develop as leaders*.



Lyons, C. & Pinnell, G.. (2001). *Systems for change in literacy education.*

Lambert, L. (1998). *Building capacity in schools.*

Leiberman, A., & Miller, L.. (2004). *Teacher leadership.*

McAndrew, D. (2005). *Literacy leadership.*

NCTE. <http://www.ncte.org/collections/literacycoach?source=gs>

Osterman, K. & Kottkamp, R. (1993). *Reflective practice for educators.*

Toll, C. (2005). *The literacy coach's survival guide.*