

# Reflective Coaching Conversations: A Missing Piece

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Examining real-life literacy coaching interactions can provide insight on the elements of coaching conversations that are the most effective in fostering teachers' reflection on their instruction and on students' reading and learning.

Literacy coaching is a critical component of many major schoolwide reading improvement efforts in our nation today. Under Reading First alone, more than 5,600 schools have hired full-time literacy coaches as a way to provide job-embedded learning for teachers (Moss, Jacob, Boulay, Horst, & Poulos, 2006). Many authors and current publications promote the use of literacy coaches for professional development and reading reform. Neufeld and Roper (2003) wrote, "When coaching is integral to a larger instructional improvement plan that targets and aligns professional development resources toward the district's goals, it has potential to become a powerful vehicle for improving instruction and, thereby, student achievement" (p. 26). Joyce and Showers (1995) stated that teachers need to have opportunities to learn about new strategies and techniques, to observe demonstration of strategies, and to practice and receive feedback on the strategies in their own classroom setting. Uzat (1998) considered coaching a practical and systematic approach to ongoing teacher improvement by engaging teachers in focused reflection on teaching methods.

As compelling as these recommendations may seem, there is little empirical evidence that having literacy coaches in schools leads to growth and achievement in students' reading. Some of the

reasons for this are that the use of literacy coaches for schoolwide reading improvement and professional development is a fairly new phenomenon, there is little uniformity in the role of coaches from site to site, there is a lack of data linking coaching directly to changes in teacher practice and student achievement, and there is limited documentation of what actually occurs during coaching interactions. Deussen, Coskie, Robinson, and Autio (2007) found that the role of the literacy coach looked very different from school to school and covered a variety of responsibilities other than coaching. They stated, "Simply knowing that literacy coaches are in schools does not imply anything about how those individuals are spending their time—there is a difference between being a coach and doing coaching" (p. iii). When surveyed, coaches reported that many non-instructional tasks overshadowed their work with teachers and students.

For example, in a study by Bean and Zigmond (2006), 100 coaches in 161 Reading First schools documented how they used their time by completing a weekly log three times during the year. Coaches reported that they spent less than 3 hours a week in each of the following: observations (1.8 hours), coaching conferences with teachers (1.8 hours), modeling (1.5 hours), and coteaching (0.5 hours). The coaches also documented more than 4 hours a week devoted to each of these noninstructional activities: attending meetings (4.4 hours), planning (4.1 hours), and attending professional development sessions (4.1 hours). Clearly, coaching activities accounted for only a fraction of time during coaches' work weeks. When literacy coaches do work with teachers in a coaching capacity, there is little documentation of what they do, how the coaching affects teacher performance, and ultimately how the coaching of

teachers stimulates students' growth and achievement in reading.

The purpose of this article is to document and describe actual coaching conversations between literacy coaches and teachers in elementary schools that were seeing important gains in students' reading achievement. Examining real-life coaching interactions may provide insight on the elements of coaching conversations that are more effective in fostering teachers' reflection on the impact of their instruction on students' reading and learning. These examples may contribute to our understanding of how to help teachers modify instruction to increase its effectiveness and to sustain these practices in their daily teaching of reading. Perhaps these examples will also inspire schools that do not foster teacher reflection to consider the importance of establishing a climate of continual learning and collaboration as a means to reading reform.

With the coaching conversation model used in the Minnesota Reading First Professional Development Program, a literacy coach observed a teacher's reading lesson and collected data on the observed instruction. These data may have included a count of the number of students that were on task at various times throughout the lesson, information on teacher-student interaction patterns and the use of grouping patterns or materials, as well as concrete examples of other critical elements of instruction during a specific lesson (i.e., higher order questions, comprehension strategy instruction). The coach then used these data to ask questions to support the teacher in a process of self-reflection and conversation about her teaching practices and students' reading performance.

Coaching for self-reflection is a collaborative model in which the coach and the teacher work in partnership to make more effective decisions about classroom instruction. The ultimate goal of working with a literacy coach is to deepen the teacher's understanding of how students learn by facilitating self-reflection to bring about change in classroom instruction, which has the potential to lead to increased student achievement. Rodgers and Rodgers (2007) wrote,

By supporting and fostering conversations about teaching...the coach has the opportunity to provoke not only deep reflection but also action regarding teaching. Through careful analysis, teachers have an opportunity to enhance practices that work, reform practices

that don't work as well as they could, and abandon practices that seem to hinder what works. (p. 13)

In this model of coaching, a critical component of coaching conversations was the use of concrete data on the teacher's instruction to facilitate self-reflection and change. This critical component is often the missing piece to reading reform efforts.

## Background of the Study

The 24 schools involved in the Minnesota Reading First Professional Development Program (Taylor & Peterson, 2007) were diverse in location (i.e., inner-city, suburban, small town, rural), socioeconomic status (32%–95% of their students received subsidized lunches), and percent of students who were English-language learners (ELLs; 0%–66%). As a part of their ongoing, job-embedded professional development all kindergarten to grade 3 classroom teachers and licensed resource teachers in a school participated in weekly, teacher-led, collaborative study groups to discuss scientifically based reading research, to learn new instructional techniques and to refine their current practices, to examine student data and to adjust daily instruction based on students' progress or needs.

Teachers also shared video clips of their own instruction in their study groups to gain suggestions and insights from their colleagues and to facilitate self-reflection. To assist teachers in this process of learning and reflection, each school had two literacy coaches, one full-time coach provided by the school district and one half-time coach provided by the professional development provider, the University of Minnesota. Coaches were encouraged to work as a team to support the school in its efforts to implement schoolwide instructional reading improvement in kindergarten to grade 3. Coaches had many responsibilities in their schools but were encouraged to spend 80% of their time in classrooms working with teachers on reading instruction.

The 48 Minnesota Reading First coaches were a diverse group of teachers. They ranged in experience from 5 to 30 or more years in teaching, and their educational backgrounds ranged from Bachelor to Doctorate degrees. Some of the coaches had administrative or mentoring experience but the majority of coaches had left regular education classroom teaching assignments to serve as literacy coaches in the

Reading First schools. During 2006–2007, all but one of the coaches were female.

## Training for Coaches

Literacy coaches met approximately every five weeks to engage in professional learning on scientifically based reading research on the five main areas of reading as described by the National Reading Panel Report (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development [NICHD], 2000) including phonemic awareness, phonics and the application of word recognition strategies, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The professional development also provided time for coaches to reflect on and refine their ability to facilitate coaching conversations with teachers at their sites. Included in these professional development sessions were opportunities to view video clips of each other's teaching and then initiate coaching conversations with one another. A third coach was encouraged to observe the coaching conversation so that he or she could provide feedback to the coach.

Coaches also learned to use several protocols designed to collect data on instruction as the basis for their subsequent coaching conversations with teachers. All of the protocols were based on current research on effective reading instruction and a model of reading instruction that maximizes students' cognitive engagement (Taylor et al., 2003, 2005). The Cognitive Engagement Model encourages teachers to consider *how* they teach as well as *what* they teach by asking them to reflect on the following questions:

- To what extent were my students engaged in higher level thinking during talk or writing about text (i.e., connections between the text and their lives, character interpretation, author's message or theme)?
- To what extent am I teaching reading strategies (i.e., word recognition strategies, comprehension strategies) in addition to reading skills?
- To what extent am I teaching reading with a student-support stance (i.e., modeling, coaching, listening/watching/giving feedback) in addition to a teacher-directed stance (i.e., telling, recitation)?
- To what extent are my students engaged in active (i.e., reading, writing, manipulating, and

orally responding with a partner) versus passive responding (i.e., listening, reading turn-taking, oral turn-taking) during this reading lesson?

- To what extent did I clearly identify and explain the purpose of the lesson? How will my lesson help individual students grow in literacy abilities?

Coaches also received training on elements of effective instruction not specifically addressed in the National Reading Panel Report including motivation, culturally responsive instruction, and differentiation of instruction based on student assessment data. The emphasis of the training was to consider ways to provide challenge and rigor for all students.

## Selection of Schools for Further Study

We wanted to capture and describe coaching conversations that were occurring in the Minnesota Reading First schools by observing some effective coaching teams during a normal school day. We selected coaching teams based on three criteria: overall school effectiveness rating, overall school reform effort rating, and students' growth in reading. Each of these will be described below:

1. School Effectiveness Rating—All the teachers involved in the Minnesota Reading First Professional Development program were interviewed by University of Minnesota data collectors in the fall and the spring. Interviews were 30 minutes long and consisted of open-ended questions about key components of the school's reform efforts. These components included collaboration on reading instruction, building partnerships with parents and families, instructional reflection and change, professional development, shared leadership, and schoolwide use of assessment data. All responses were read and coded using a four-point rubric for each of the key components. An example of the four-point rubric for instructional reflection and change can be found in Figure 1.
2. Reform Effort—School artifacts were collected throughout the school year. Artifacts included meeting notes from study groups, whole group meetings, and grade-level meetings looking

**Figure 1**  
**Sample Four-Point Rubric**

**A. Instructional reflection and change:**

- 0—Little or no reflection on instructional practice is expressed by the individual classroom teachers. There is some talk between individual teachers about what is working in their reading instruction.
- 1—Teachers talk and share with each other about what is working in their reading instruction during formal meeting times (i.e., grade level meetings, professional learning communities).
- 2—Teachers talk and share ideas with each other in study groups or professional learning communities. They may examine student work, reflect on their own instructional practice by sharing videos of their instruction, and read current research on best practices, but most of their discussions focus on sharing what they do in their own classrooms.
- 3—Teachers indicate they are intentionally reflecting on their practice by examining data on their instruction and are seriously working with others to improve their practice (i.e., study groups with action plans and video sharing of their instruction, grade level meetings where teachers look at student data to inform their instruction, discussing observation data with a coach or peer). Discussion within groups is informed by research on best practices and student assessment data.

at student data, calendars, newsletters, and action plans from study groups. The artifacts were read and rated on a 10-point rubric focused on the school's implementation of professional development and the reform process (i.e., meeting weekly for an hour in teacher-led study groups). Schools received 1 point for successfully implementing an element of the reform. They received no points for elements of the reform process that were not evident in their documentation.

- 3. Students' Growth from Fall to Spring in Comprehension—All students in grades 1–3 were given the Gates–MacGinitie Reading Test in the fall and the spring. First-grade students took different versions of the test in the fall and the spring, and one of the schools did not have any grade 3 classrooms, so we selected grade 2 results in comprehension as a common criterion across all schools.

Schools were selected for further study if they scored a standard deviation above the mean for all schools on the total School Effectiveness Rating. Schools also had to score a 10 on the Reform Effort rating, which was the maximum score for that measure. These schools also had student growth in reading comprehension that ranged from 0.46 to 1.81 NCEs higher than the mean for all Reading First

schools. Results from this selection process are summarized in Table 1.

Four schools met all the criteria and still had the same coaching teams in both the 2006–2007 and 2007–2008 school years. School A was an inner-city school where 95% of the students received subsidized lunch and 62% of the students were classified as ELLs. The two coaches at School A were veteran teachers with between 20 and 30 years of teaching experience each. School B was a suburban school with 32% of the students on subsidized lunch and 14% of the students were classified as ELLs. The coaches at this school each had between 15 and 25 years of teaching experience. School C was a small town/rural school where 42% of the students received subsidized lunches and 11% were ELLs. The coaches at School C were both veteran teachers. Each of them had more than 20 years of teaching experience. School D was another small town/rural school with 52% of the students qualifying for subsidized lunch and 16% of the students designated as ELLs. The two literacy coaches at School D had between 10 and 15 years of teaching experience each. All the literacy coaches at these four schools were female. Seven of them were Caucasian and one was African American.

## Data Collection

To learn more about the varying strategies used and the challenges faced by literacy coaches as they

**Table 1**  
**Schools Selected for Further Study**

Schools	School effectiveness rating (Total possible score = 18)	Reform effort (Total possible score = 10)	Grade 2 Gates-MacGinitie comprehension: Average growth from fall to spring
All Reading First schools in 2006–2007	Mean 8.19 (SD 1.80)	Mean 9.08 (SD 1.06)	+ 0.38 NCE
School A (inner city)	10.40	10	+ 1.11 NCE
School B (suburban)	11.87	10	+ 1.83 NCE
School C (small town/rural)	10.00	10	+ 2.19 NCE
School D (small town/rural)	10.82	10	+ 0.84 NCE

facilitated teachers’ reflection on their reading instruction, eight coaches (two per school) were “shadowed” for six to eight hours by one of two observers. The observers were both experienced elementary teachers and literacy coaches. The observers made appointments to visit the schools on days when the coaches had several coaching conversations scheduled with teachers. Coaches had between two and three classroom observations and coaching conversations on the days they were “shadowed.”

The observers attended each session with the coaches and typed as much of the conversations as possible on laptop computers. The observers documented the coaching conversations while remaining as unobtrusive as possible. The observers did not participate in the coaching conversations, give feedback to teachers or coaches, or comment on instruction. The detailed notes of the coaching conversations were then transcribed by the observers. Transcriptions were read multiple times by three researchers who looked for patterns across the four schools and the eight coaches. Patterns that emerged included the following:

1. The eight coaches did use the protocols recommended in their professional development to collect data on instruction and to structure their coaching conversations.

2. The coaches used the data from specific lessons to give concrete examples designed to draw the teachers’ attention to crucial elements of the lessons.
3. The coaches asked questions to elicit conversations with teachers instead of telling teachers what should or should not be done.
4. The coaching conversations built connections between what the teachers were learning in their weekly study groups, their knowledge of their students’ assessment data, and their implementation of research-based, effective reading instruction.

The following clips from coaching conversations are representative of the conversations observed in all four schools. We have selected clips that illustrate the four patterns that emerged from the field notes.

## The Use of Protocols for Data Collection and Coaching Conversations

In the first example, a first-grade teacher in School B was modeling how to make predictions during a whole group lesson using a narrative text selection from the basal reader. Her goal was to demonstrate

to her students how making predictions helps readers understand a text. This example of a coaching conversation illustrates how a coach used a simple protocol to help the teacher make reflective decisions regarding the effectiveness of the lesson and to set goals for future lessons. The protocol included these questions:

- What were the children able to do in this reading lesson? What went well?
- What did you as the teacher do to help the students succeed?
- What else could have been done to make the lesson even stronger or to help students be even more successful in reading?

Coach: What were the students doing well as you were working on the strategy of predicting?

Teacher: I could not believe how well they were doing. I couldn't believe their predictions and how they went back and checked their predictions. They were actually able to do this.

Coach: What did you do to make this happen?

Teacher: I think the modeling at the beginning helped the students. They never went on a tangent. I hoped that I modeled how to use predicting throughout the story.

Coach: You were modeling at the beginning.

Teacher: I kept trying to say look at the picture and think about whether or not the prediction came true. That's why I had to go back and check.

Coach: As you stopped throughout the story and asked if they were right about the prediction, you gave them the idea that it was important to go back and check if their prediction had happened. You kept asking, "Why are you saying, 'Oh no?'" You asked students to make predictions at the right time.

Teacher: The students were not able to understand the theme of the story.

Coach: How do you want to address that?

Teacher: We could do the theme of the story on another day. I could not get the children to think about the big idea of the story.

Coach: Perhaps when the students reread the story on their own, you could model how to consider the theme.

The coach used the protocol as she was taking notes about the lesson she observed. This specific information on the teacher's instruction and the students' responses guided the conversation and the teacher's reflection. Together, the teacher and the coach identified the need to provide more support to the students in understanding the theme of the story. The coach suggested that modeling could also be used to support students in this area as well. All the coaching conversations we observed used protocols to structure their data collection and the follow-up coaching conversations.

## Using Data From Specific Lessons to Focus on Crucial Elements of Instruction

In the next example, a first-grade teacher from School C met with the coach for the purpose of reviewing the data from a formal observation conducted by the University data collector during whole-group instruction using informational text. This conversation demonstrates how a teacher used the data to focus on crucial elements of effective instruction. She also used the data to reflect on personal and district goals that she had set for her instruction.

Coach: Here is your goal sheet from last fall listing your goals for this year. You said you were going to work on instruction that would have more active responding from the students and you were going to provide appropriate levels of modeling, coaching, or feedback for students. How are you coming with these goals based on your observation data?

Teacher: I think the active responding has come a long way and the coaching is appropriate from what I can see.

Coach: That is my impression as well. You definitely know when and how to coach students. As you look at higher level questioning, how are you doing with using higher level questioning in your instruction?

Teacher: I was doing a whole group lesson on informational text. We were looking for key words and summarizing the text. The informational text is tougher. How can I use more high level questioning with informational text? This needs to be a new goal for me.

Coach: I see that you have already been reflecting on this area.

Teacher: It is easier to create these questions for narrative text than for informational text.

Coach: I agree. We can always ask lower level questions, but we have to think differently to develop higher level questions.

Teacher: If I am having students do a Think, Pair, Share, is that a higher level question?

Coach: It always depends on the question that is asked and the type of response that is given by the students. You will need to consider this when you are asking questions. Now, looking at your goal sheet, we see that the school goal is to use more informational text. Have you done that?

Teacher: I do use more informational text, but I need to use more higher level questions with this type of text. I need to focus on the type of questions I want to ask as I am preparing my lessons.

Coach: I agree. Your goals for instruction have been embedded into your lessons. Now, you said you are ready to write an additional goal that matches your school goals as well? How will you accomplish this goal?

Teacher: I would like to see you model a lesson with higher level questions for informational text.

Coach: I would be happy to do that. Another way I could offer support is to help you with planning or to give you feedback on your lesson. Once you have thought about and written down the questions, it will be easier to present the lesson.

Teacher: Thank you. I always appreciate your help.

The coach was able to use the observation data to talk with the teacher about the components of the Cognitive Engagement Model. Their discussion

centered on the goals the teacher had set for herself based on scientifically based reading research. These goals were tied to school and district goals as well. As the teacher saw that she was meeting her existing goals, she noted new areas of growth. The teacher's reflection demonstrated her willingness to continuously refine her instruction.

## Coaches Asked Questions to Elicit Conversation

In this next example of a coaching conversation, the coach was talking with a kindergarten teacher in School C about a whole group lesson where the teacher was using a think-aloud with a narrative text. She used the think-aloud to model how to ask and answer questions while reading. The coach referred to the data from the observation and asked questions to elicit a conversation with the teacher. Together, the teacher and the coach analyzed the data and looked for opportunities to refine the instruction. Through the conversation with the coach, the teacher demonstrated her understanding of how the changes she had made to her instruction had affected the students' responses and increased their ability to learn. Also, since she had implemented practices that engaged her students more fully, the teacher felt that she was matching her instruction to the needs of the students.

Coach: You are using a lot of modeling to support your students.

Teacher: Before the professional development in Reading First, I had never done think-alouds. Now I see how students respond to the modeling that happens in think alouds. I see that my students are able to use the strategies that I have modeled.

Coach: Your data shows a lot of coaching, modeling, listening, and giving feedback in your student-supported stance of teaching. Are your students engaged in active as opposed to passive responding?

Teacher: This is an active group of students. I try to keep them actively involved by doing more reading and writing. The students are successful and making gains because these ideas are helping students.

Coach: Did you clearly state the purpose?

Teacher: With everything I've learned in Reading First, stating the purpose is so important to student learning. I am remembering to state the purpose in my lessons and it is helpful to the students.

As the coach guided the teacher through an analysis of the observation, the teacher identified the elements of her instruction that caused the students to be actively engaged. Thus, the teacher recognized the components of effective instruction that she would incorporate into future lessons. The coach did not tell the teacher what to do. She used the data to guide the teacher toward her own evaluation of the lesson.

## Building Connections Between Professional Development and Instruction

A third-grade teacher from School A taught a lesson to the whole group, and her focus was on stating the purpose of the lesson as a part of explicit, cognitively engaging instruction. The conversation caused the teacher to reflect on how she was using what she had learned in study groups in her daily instruction.

Coach: Looking at my notes, I noticed how explicit you were in restating the purpose...[cites specific examples]. I also noticed that you had the students actively responding by orally sharing responses in pairs. Which part of this lesson do you think went well?

Teacher: This group needs to be actively engaged. Since this was an introductory lesson to build on the rest of the week, my goal was getting them to think about the text.

Coach: What will you do tomorrow with this group?

Teacher: I plan to have them write about the story. Also, since my students have such differing abilities, I want to remember to differentiate how I work with students who need more help.

Coach: Now that you have been in study groups and have had reflective conversations with your colleagues, do you feel that you are making changes in not only what you teach, but how you teach?

Teacher: Yes. We have really focused on being explicit in our teaching. That has made a big difference in my teaching.

In this conversation, there was evidence that the teacher's instructional practices were being impacted by reflection. The coach prompted the teacher to consider if there was a connection between the reflections in study group conversations with colleagues and the changes in her teaching. The teacher noted how the professional conversations with her colleagues in the study group setting had caused them to include more explicit instruction into their reading lessons.

Findings across several years have shown that teachers in the Minnesota Reading First Project changed their teaching practices in the directions suggested by research (Taylor & Peterson, 2007; 2008). Similar findings were reported in earlier studies as well (Taylor et al., 2005; 2007). For example, when looking at all grade 2 and grade 3 classroom teachers and specialists (e.g., Title 1, special education and ELL teachers) from years 2005–2008, we found that the mean percent of higher order talk and writing about text went from 17% to 21% of the time observed (as measured by percent of five-minute segments in which a practice was observed) in grade 2, and 22% to 26% of the time observed in grade 3. The mean percent of time for comprehension strategy instruction went from 4% to 16% in grade 2, and 11% to 18% in grade 3 (Taylor & Peterson, 2008).

Throughout the coaching conversations, concrete data served as a critical tool for guiding the questioning that led to self-reflective thinking and modification of future instructional practices. Each example demonstrated the importance of teachers having conversations about their practice with a coach who served as a facilitator and a peer.

## Reflection for Coaches

As a part of the professional development for coaches, one literacy coach would watch another coach



have a conversation with a teacher. The purpose of this observation of coaching was to provide feedback to the coach. Together, the coaches would reflect on what had been effective in the coaching conversation and how the coach could improve his or her questions to guide the teacher to deeper reflection in the future. The last example shows how the coaches from School A reflected on their effectiveness as coaches.

Coach 1: You had thoughts about the conversation you wanted to have with the teacher. Did you feel like you were able to accomplish those goals with this teacher?

Coach 2: The teacher is interested in learning to use new approaches in her teaching. I will need to continue to encourage her to use real-life connections in her teaching to better the students' understanding.

Coach 1: What do you think was most effective in your coaching conversation?

Coach 2: I see how you need to keep asking good questions to keep the teacher thinking about her instruction. The questions made the teacher think about the lesson and the importance of asking questions that make her students think about higher level responses.

Coach 1: Was there anything in this lesson that you learned from the teacher that you would share with other teachers?

Coach 2: Yes. I need to remember the importance of effective transitioning from small-group to whole-group instruction. I was reminded of the power of active engagement for student learning and staying on task in the whole-group time.

Coach 1: I see these conversations with your peers as a time for you to be learning along with your peer. These conversations engage us in a process that makes us think about what we did and whether or not to do it differently.

The opportunity for a coach to reflect with another coach on what was effective was an important part of the professional development for coaches. This helped them to have more robust conversa-

tions with teachers leading them to deeper reflection about instruction.

## Implications for Coaches

One of the key elements of the Minnesota Reading First Professional Development Program was the intentional way teachers reflected on their own instruction. While we cannot say that the coaching conversations caused the growth in students' reading scores, we can state that teachers made changes to their instruction as demonstrated through the teacher observation data, and students made accelerated progress in reading as seen in their comprehension scores. These reflections were stimulated through collaborative conversations with colleagues. Collaborative reflection occurred when teachers shared videos of their own instruction with their peers in study groups, when they examined student assessment scores with their grade-level teams, and when they talked with their literacy coach about their instruction following an observation. Through coaching conversations, teachers focused on the elements of effective instruction and set goals for themselves for the next week's lessons. Data on their own instructional practices were critical to this process.

A third-grade teacher at School D stated,

These coaching conversations have given me more background in teaching. This is a whole new world for me. I always want to improve on and do what is best for kids. This has helped me to work with my struggling readers and get them to be more independent.

A second-grade teacher at School C said,

Every reform that has come along has told us what to do. This reform is different. We learned what was effective, but we had to work together to implement it into our teaching. We have learned about our teaching and learned about each other. We have learned how to work together to make everyone more effective. This is different than anything we have ever done. It is the best work I have done in my teaching.

These testimonials suggest that in addition to reading research and increasing their knowledge of scientifically based reading practices, or systematically analyzing the assessment data from their students, teachers can benefit from concrete data on their own instruction as they reflect and change their practice. This is a critical component to incorporate into ongoing professional development and reading

reform efforts and is often the missing piece. Schools that have implemented reading reform that does not foster teacher reflection are encouraged to consider the importance of this element. Literacy coaches can help to provide these data for teachers and assist them in reflection through coaching conversations.

Schools that do not have literacy coaches can encourage teacher reflection by implementing peer observations or video sharing within teacher-led professional learning communities or grade-level teams. Following the peer observation or the video sharing, teachers can conduct coaching conversations with each other in pairs or as small groups. Simple protocols based on research, like the ones described here, can help to facilitate data collection and discussion among teacher colleagues. Reflection, collaboration, and conversations focused on instruction can empower us all to be even more effective in teaching our students to read.

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