

Professional Development Program in Literacy

Danielle DeFarno
Adm. of Reading Programs
Spring 2008

Background

Jump Start Academy is a first year alternative high school in Central Falls, RI. Currently, there are 87 freshmen and sophomores. All students have been retained at least once, but some as many as four times. Every student was retained last year and failed at least 3 classes. Jump Start is connected with Central Falls High School and this building is a last attempt to prevent at-risk students from dropping out. The hope is that a smaller learning community will help these students succeed.

The 87 students are culturally diverse and are Caucasian, Cape Verdean and Hispanic. None are special education students. None are also ESL students, although many were at one point in their career. For most of them, the biggest challenge is attendance. Some of these students missed 70 days of school last year.

The building consists of 1 reading specialist (who teaches in the classroom) and 8 classroom teachers. There is one administrator, a behavioral specialist, two part-time psychologists and a part-time social worker. There also is a nurse, one hour a day.

Mission Statement of Central Falls High School

Central Falls High School is a standards-driven teaching and learning community that promotes literacy, effective communication, problem solving, critical thinking, civic responsibility and the skills necessary for living and working in a cultural diverse society.

Vision of a Central Falls Graduate

At the Central Falls High School, students are engaged in meaningful, rigorous and diverse learning activities designed to prepare them for future education and successful careers as scientists, artists, business people, translators/interpreters, writers, journeymen, firemen, policemen, teachers, doctors, nurses, social works, designers, technology experts, members of the armed services and many others.

In order to graduate from CFHS, each student must provide evidence that she/he has achieved and demonstrated all six of the essential learning outcomes described below.

The Central Falls High School graduate is a self-directed student, Choosing to learn from models (adults and peers), to engage others in working together, and to evaluate his/her own performance and learning.

A student demonstrates self-directed learning proficiency within and across all curriculum content areas by:

- Achieving proficiency in all content areas of the school's standards-based curriculum,
- Acquiring/applying knowledge and skills within/across all curriculum content areas,
- Analyzing/applying knowledge and skills within and across all curriculum content areas.

- Effectively utilizing resources and time, and reviewing progress towards own goals,
- Revising work according to district standards and school timelines.

The Central Falls High School graduate is a creative problem solver choosing to utilize time and resources to work cooperatively and independently towards a defined goal.

- Purposefully applying problem-solving proficiently by:
 - Compiling, interpreting, and presenting data and information,
 - Designing a product, improving a system, or planning an event

The Central Falls High School graduate is an effective communicator, choosing to clearly and confidently speak, listen and interpret ideas across content areas, to write logically, concisely and persuasively, and choosing to use technology as a means of communication.

A student demonstrates proficiency in communication by:

- Presenting ideas clearly and confidently, orally, in writing, through technology, and through artistic endeavors,
- Adjusting presentations to different context and situations,
- Choosing to communicate across different languages and cultures,
- Choosing to read, discuss and interpret a variety of written materials.

The Central Falls High School graduate will be a skillful use of technology, choosing to access on-line sources to exchange information, to analyze data using data-bases and spreadsheets, to interpret and present data effectively, and to use word-processing software.

A student demonstrates proficiency in technology by:

- Applying technology as a learning tool across all disciplines.
- Using technology tools such as video graphics, multi-media, electronic mail, and websites in own learning pursuits, at work and in community settings,
- Using technology to identify and solve problems,
- Using technology as adaptive learning devices to support one's own pursuit of learning and career explorations,
- Using the e-portfolio as a means of producing a graduation portfolio, and helping others to do so.

The Central Falls High School graduate will be a responsible member of a community, choosing to recognize individuality and respect diversity, and to meaningfully participate in school and community.

A student demonstrates responsibility by:

- Displaying a strong sense of self-discipline in academic, artistic, civic, wellness and social pursuits,
- Assuming leadership roles in school and the community,
- Understanding and accepting consequences for own behavior,

- Choosing to explore life and career options wisely,
- Engaging in community service and in the social life of the school,
- Responding appropriately to clients in internship and work settings.

The Central Falls High School graduate will be a supporter and/or performers of the Arts, choosing to purposefully create, perform and/or respond to music, visual arts, theater and/or dance, and to support fellow students as they engage in artistic endeavors of their choice.

A student demonstrates support and engagement in the arts by:

- Creating an original dance, improvisation, film, score, script or other work of art,
- Carrying out a live performance, an exhibit of art, or exhibiting a portfolio,
- Writing an art review, researching an art form, or describing own self-assessment.

Mission Statement of Central Falls High School Reading Program

Jump Start Academy does not currently have a reading program mission statement as it is the first year the school is in operation.

Needs Assessment Questionnaire

1. What is your current position at the high school?
 - English/Language Arts
 - ESL
 - Math
 - Science
 - Social Studies
 - Art/Music
 - Business
 - Physical Education/Health
 - Home Economics/Life Skills

2. How many years teaching experience do you have?
 - First year
 - Second Year
 - Third-Fifth Year
 - Sixth-Tenth Year
 - Tenth year or more

3. How well do you feel your education prepared you to teach reading in your first regular teaching assignment?
 - Very Adequately
 - Adequately
 - Neither adequately or inadequately
 - Inadequately
 - Very Inadequately

4. What specific areas of reading instruction would be most beneficial to you to explore in professional development?
 - Understanding the instructional needs of your students
 - Selecting appropriate materials
 - Developing comprehension skills
 - Developing vocabulary enhancing skills
 - Developing fluency skills
 - Differentiation of instruction in the classroom
 - Incorporating writing in the classroom
 - Incorporating speaking in the classroom
 - Incorporating listening in the classroom
 - Other _____

5. Which of the following methods would you prefer to be presented information?

- Professional speakers
- Classes offered for professional development
 - No college credits
 - College credit
- Conferences within the school with a reading specialist
 - One on one
 - Within department

Needs Assessment Results

What is your current position at the high school?

English/ELA/Reading	3
ESL	0
Math	2
Science	1
Social Studies	1
Art/Music	1
Business	1
Physical Education/Health	0
Home Economics/Life Skills	0
Other	0

How many years teaching experience do you have?

First year	1
Second year	5
Third to Fifth year	1
Sixth to Tenth year	1
Ten or more years	1

How well do you feel your education prepared you to teach reading in your first regular teaching assignment?

Very Adequately	0
Adequately	3
Neither Adequately nor Inadequately	5
Inadequately	1
Very Inadequately	0

What specific areas of reading instruction would be most beneficial to you to explore in professional development?

Understanding the instructional needs of your students	3
Selecting appropriate materials	3
Developing comprehension skills	9

Developing vocabulary skills	9
Developing fluency skills	1
Differentiation of instruction in the classroom	2
Incorporating writing in the classroom	2
Incorporating speaking in the classroom	1
Incorporating listening in the classroom	3
Other	

Which of the following methods would you prefer to be presented information?

Professional Speakers	2
Classes offered for professional development (non college credit)	0
Classes offered for professional development (college credit)	9
Conferences within the school with a reading specialist (one on one)	9
Conferences within the school with a reading specialist (departmental)	9
Other	

Goals and Objectives

- To investigate strategies for improving reading comprehension throughout the content areas;
 - Teachers will be exposed to a wide variety of comprehension areas that the students struggle with, such as finding the main idea and story elements.
 - Teachers will be exposed to how to better incorporate the teaching of vocabulary in a content area classroom
- To understand the importance of quality teaching in reading across the content areas;
 - Teachers will be shown how the teaching of reading is the responsibility of all educators, not just the Reading Specialist or English teachers.
- To explore strategies for teaching comprehension by practice in the current teaching placement;
 - Teachers will be able to effectively teach and model the following strategies, as determined by classroom observation:
 - Finding the main idea
 - Cause and Effect
 - Story Elements
 - Comparing and contrasting
 - Summarizing
 - Sequence of Events
- To understand that reading strategies sometimes need to be taught explicitly to our students;
 - Teachers will understand that beginning readers need to see these strategies through active engagement and immersion.
- To identify quality, level-appropriate literature that can be used to support the teaching of comprehension strategies;
 - Teachers will gain knowledge of what texts are appropriate for the students of Jump Start Academy, which are mostly lower ability readers.
 - To identifying quality, level-appropriate literature that can be used to support the teaching of comprehension strategies;
 - Teachers will use the results of the GRADE and SRI testing in order to determine the next steps in working with their students.
 - To identifying quality, level-appropriate literature that can be used to support the teaching of comprehension strategies;
 - Through modeling both with their peers and students, teachers will gain a better understanding of the process of acquiring vocabulary.

- To reflect upon their current teaching practice and make adjustments accordingly
 - Teachers will reflect both orally and in writing their experiences using the material obtained in the professional development sessions.
 - Teachers will use the PAR model in order to improve their classroom teaching.

Resources

- \$2000 for students books for the library
- \$10000 for professional development
 - IRA memberships for all faculty
 - \$36 per teacher
 - \$324 for building
 - Rhode Island State Council of the IRA – Spring Conference
 - \$100 per faculty member (7 CEU's)
 - \$900 for building
 - Enrollment in Rhode Island College: Reading in the Content Areas
 - \$732 per teacher (3 credit hours)
 - \$6588 for entire faculty
 - Refreshments
 - Coffee/Breakfast Foods \$40 a session
 - \$400 for entire year
 - Remainder to be spent on professional books for faculty reference and for the Rhode Island College graduate class
 - \$88 per graduate book
 - Vacca, R. T. and Vacca, J. L. (2004). Content area reading: Literacy and learning across the curriculum (8th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
 - \$792 for graduate textbooks for entire faculty
 - \$996 for various textbooks that are applicable to teaching reading for professional library in school
 - To be decided by the faculty and reading specialist
 - Suggestions
 - Forsten, C., Grant, J., and Hollas, B. (2003). Differentiating Textbooks. Boston, Stenhouse.
 - A textbook that shows how to motivate struggling readers and to improve student comprehension.
 - Tompkins, Gail. (2003). 50 Literacy Strategies: Step by Step. Boston, Prentice Hall.
 - A textbook that uses research based, classroom tested literacy strategies—encompassing reading, writing, listening, speaking, and visualizing— to help content teachers work best with their students.

Responsibilities

- **Reading Specialist (Cheryl Aucoin, Alicia Migliore, Danielle DeFarno)**
 - Serves as a teacher for students in the first three stanines based on the SRI and GRADE testing for one class period a day (90 minutes)
 - Provides teachers support needed to implement instructional programs and practices
 - Serves as a resource to all the teachers and professionals at Jump Start Academy and/or Central Falls High School
 - Conducts SRI assessments on all students for placement in English/Reading classes
 - Conducts some GRADE assessments, as well as all-makeups
 - Writes Personal Literacy Plans for all students that require them

- **Classroom Teachers**
 - Helps develop high school students' reading and language arts, may be through subject matter learning

- **Administrator**
 - Supports the reading specialist and classroom teachers as they plan, implement and evaluate their classroom practice

Format

- This professional development will take place during the 7:35-8:30 time period on Wednesday mornings. This time is built into this year's current schedule in order to provide professional development for the faculty. It will be meeting every other week in order for participants to try the methods in their own classrooms and discuss their results with the faculty.
- The professional development will focus on comprehension and vocabulary teaching. This is based on the strong need in these areas, as shown in the results of the needs assessment. It will be taught through collaborative groups, peer teaching, student teaching, lecture, hands-on activities as well as in-class modeling or observation.
- The professional development will be in-school as well as through college course work. The course work will be for college credit at Rhode Island College. Reading in the Content Areas was selected due to the concerns of the teachers integrating the teaching of reading into the content areas.
- It is important to note that many of the students at Jump Start Academy are lower ability readers. This is due to their sporadic attendance and constant moving from country to country, district to district. Comprehension, especially the areas being examined in the professional development, and vocabulary are the biggest issues for them. These areas were not only selected by the teachers but shown by the recent assessments throughout the state and district.

Sessions

Presenters: Cheryl Aucoin, Alicia Miglore and Danielle DeFarno

➤ September

- **What is reading?**
 - Teachers will discuss how reading is essential to their content areas and how it is used in their classroom.
 - Teachers will discuss their concerns with teaching reading.
 - Teachers will also discuss how to select books that support the needs of our students
 - Selection of books that benefit the current population of students (in conjunction with the reading specialist)
 - High interest, lower readability for some selections
 - \$2000 budget for school library
- **What is IRA?**
 - The reading specialist will discuss the IRA and it can help educators in their teaching of reading.
 - All 9 teachers will be presented with a year long membership. (Cost \$36 per teacher or \$324 for building)
- **Needs Assessment**
 - The needs assessment will be examined and the various areas of interest will be discussed. The first area that professional development will concentrate on is comprehension.
- **Comprehension/Vocabulary Overview**
 - The teachers will work collaboratively and make a semantic map of comprehension that can be referred to as the session progress. It will also serve as a reference of how much is learned at the last session in this area.
 - Discussion of why comprehension and vocabulary strategies need to be explicitly taught in the classroom

➤ October

- **Comprehension**
 - Semantic map will be reviewed
 - Overview of various areas that are most concerning to JSA students in comprehension (as shown in NECAP assessments, GRADE assessments and classroom observations)
 - Cause and Effect
 - Finding the Main Idea
 - Sequence of Events
 - Story Elements
 - Summarizing
 - Comparing and Contrasting

➤ November

- **Finding the Main Idea**

- Ask teachers to bring an article/passage they use in their classes that students struggle with
- Distribution of various graphic organizers that teachers can use to supplement their teaching of this area
- Modeling
 - Provide teachers with a generic article
 - Demonstrate the steps of Finding the Main Idea
 - Step 1: Identify the topic
 - Use think alouds to show what the article is mostly about
 - Step 2: Find the main idea that relates to this topic
 - Think aloud: "The main idea tells the most important idea about the topic. It's often stated at the beginning of a text or section".
 - Reread the first paragraph aloud and point out the topic sentence. Then show how the students underline it and record it on their graphic organizer.
 - Step 3: Reread the rest of the article, modeling how to find details that support the main idea
 - Model how to find supporting details
 - Have students enter additional details on the graphic organizer
- Have teachers practice teach this method with the article they brought in small groups
- Teachers will then model this strategy in their classroom and be observed by the reading specialist doing so
- Closure
 - Discussion of what was learned about teaching students about finding the main idea
 - Discussion of classroom experiences with this method
 - Discussion
 - How has this helped you in your teaching of reading comprehension?
 - What other questions do you have?
 - Evaluation survey (attached)

➤ December

- Sequence of Events
 - Ask teachers to bring in an article that is applicable to demonstrating a sequence of events
 - Distribution of various graphic organizers that are applicable to teaching the sequence of events in a story
 - Modeling with generic article
 - Step 1: Think about the order in which events take place

- Think aloud: "Sequence is the order in which things happen. When you think about events, it's important to identify the sequence so you can clearly understand what happened".
- Step 2: Look for times, dates, and signal words that tell what happened first.
 - Reread the paragraphs in the article.
 - Guide students to enter the first event in the graphic organizer.
- Step 3: Look for signal words and phrases that tell the next event.
 - Teach examples of signal words such as first, then, next and finally.
 - Guide students to use signal words and dates to complete the graphic organizer, showing the sequence of events.
- Make sure the sequence makes sense.
 - Think aloud: When I read my sequence, do I understand what happened?
 - Students complete their organizer to be sure they make sense.
- Teachers demonstrate what they have learned using the articles they have brought in small groups
- Teachers will then model this strategy in their classroom and be observed by the reading specialist doing so
- Closure
 - Discussion of what was learned about teaching students the sequence of events
 - Discussion of classroom experiences with this method
 - Discussion
 - How has this helped you in your teaching of reading comprehension?
 - What other questions do you have?
 - Evaluation survey

➤ **January**

- Story Elements
 - Ask teachers to bring in an article that demonstrates story elements
- Modeling
 - Distribute various graphic organizers that can be used in the classroom
 - Step 1: Analyze the setting of the story
 - What assumptions can we make about the setting of the story?

- Guide students to circle details that relate to the setting
- Step 2: Identify the characters
 - Explain that in most stories, a character faces a problem. Readers should pay attention to how the character tries to solve the problem, and how he or she changes.
 - Guiding questions: Who is the main character in the story? What do we know about him/her? We'll examine more details about the characters as we read on.
- Step 3: Discuss the plot
 - Explain that most story plots tell how the main character solves a problem. The plot action rises as the character gets closer and closer to finding a solution. At the highest point, or climax, the character begins to solve the problem. After that, the plot action falls as the story comes to an end.
 - Guiding questions: How does this story begin? What problems do the characters/narrator face?
- Step 4: Discuss the theme
 - The theme is the message the author wants readers to get from a story.
 - Guiding questions: What does the author want us to think of the story?
- Teachers demonstrate what they have learned using the articles they have brought in small groups
- Teachers will then model this strategy in their classroom and be observed by the reading specialist doing so
- Closure
 - Discussion of what was learned about teaching students the elements of a story
 - Discussion of classroom experiences with this method
 - Written and oral reflection
 - Evaluation
 - How has this helped you in your teaching of reading comprehension?
 - What other questions do you have?
 - Evaluation survey

➤ February

○ Summarizing

- Ask teachers to bring in something they use in the classroom that students have to summarize
- Distribute various graphic organizers teachers can use in their classroom
- Modeling with generic article
 - Step 1: Model how to find the topic
 - Step 2: Model how to look for important details

- Step 3: Model how to restate the topic and details in a short summary statement.
 - Think aloud: To summarize the article, I can briefly restate the topic and important details in my own words. Here's how I'd begin my summary...
 - Have students follow your model and orally summarize the article in pairs.
- Have teachers practice teach this method with the article they brought in small groups
- Teachers will then model this strategy in their classroom and be observed by the reading specialist doing so
- Closure
 - Discussion of what was learned about teaching students how to summarize a story
 - Discussion of classroom experiences with this method
 - Discussion
 - How has this helped you in your teaching of reading comprehension?
 - What other questions do you have?
- Evaluation survey

➤ March

- Cause and Effect
 - Ask teachers to bring in an article that is applicable to teaching cause and effect
 - Distribution of graphic organizers that can be used to teach cause and effect
 - Step 1: Find a cause
 - Step 2: Find effects
 - Have teachers practice teach this method with the article they brought in small groups
 - Teachers will then model this strategy in their classroom and be observed by the reading specialist doing so
 - Closure
 - Discussion of what was learned about teaching students about cause and effect
 - Discussion of classroom experiences with this method
 - Discussion
 - How has this helped you in your teaching of reading comprehension?
 - What other questions do you have?
 - Evaluation survey

➤ April

- Compare and Contrast

- Ask teachers to bring in an article that is applicable to teaching comparing and contrasting
- Distribute graphic organizers that can be used in the classroom
- Modeling with generic article
 - Step 1: Model how to look for things that are alike
 - Think aloud: To compare _____ and _____, I'll look for ways they are alike.
 - Guide students to identify the similarities.
 - Step 2: Model how to look for things that are different
 - Think aloud: To show _____ and _____ are different, I'll look for things that are not the same between them.
 - Guide student to identify the differences.
- Have teachers practice teach this method with the article they brought in small groups
- Teachers will then model this strategy in their classroom and be observed by the reading specialist doing so
- Closure
 - Discussion of what was learned about teaching students how to compare and contrast information in a story
 - Discussion of classroom experiences with this method
 - Discussion
 - How has this helped you in your teaching of reading comprehension?
 - What other questions do you have?
 - Evaluation survey

➤ May

○ Vocabulary

- Ask teachers to bring in an article that they use to teach vocabulary to their students
- Modeling with generic article
 - Step 1: Pronounce the word. Ask the students to repeat it. Then give the part of speech.
 - Step 2: Explain the meaning of the word. Then restate the meaning, asking student to complete it with the new vocabulary word.
 - Step 3: Provide examples and model them to the classroom. Then ask student to generate additional examples in complete sentences.
 - Step 4: Deepen their understanding of the new word. Ask questions that relate each word to students lives. Make sure respond in complete sentences using the new word in their answer.
 - Step 5: Review the word.

- Have teachers practice teach this method with the article they brought in small groups
- Teachers will then model this strategy in their classroom and be observed by the reading specialist doing so

- Closure
 - Discussion of what was learned about teaching students vocabulary
 - Discussion of classroom experiences with this method
 - Discussion
 - How has this helped you in your teaching of reading comprehension?
 - What other questions do you have?
 - Evaluation survey

➤ **June**

- Review of comprehension strategies
 - Discussion of what has been learned
 - Discussion of new questions that have arisen
 - Experiences in the classroom
- Review of vocabulary strategy
 - Discussion of what has been learned
 - Discussion of new questions that have arisen
 - Experiences in the classroom
- Semantic Map
 - The teachers will work collaboratively and make a semantic map of comprehension that can be compared to what was known at the beginning of the professional development. It will also serve as a reference of how knowledge has been learned throughout the year.
- Needs Assessment
 - Distribution of needs assessment in order to begin planning for next school year
- Evaluation
 - Final Evaluation survey (attached)

Needs Assessment for 2007-2008

What is your current position at the high school?

English/ELA/Reading	
ESL	
Math	
Science	
Social Studies	
Art/Music	
Business	
Physical Education/Health	
Home Economics/Life Skills	
Other	

How many years teaching experience do you have?

First year	
Second year	
Third to Fifth year	
Sixth to Tenth year	
Ten or more years	

How well do you feel your professional development this year prepared you to teach reading?

Very Adequately	
Adequately	
Neither Adequately nor Inadequately	
Inadequately	
Very Inadequately	

What specific areas of reading instruction would be most beneficial to you to explore in professional development next school year?

Understanding the instructional needs of your students	
Selecting appropriate materials	
Developing comprehension skills	

Developing vocabulary skills	
Developing fluency skills	
Differentiation of instruction in the classroom	
Incorporating writing in the classroom	
Incorporating speaking in the classroom	
Incorporating listening in the classroom	
Other	

Which of the following methods would you prefer to be presented information next year?

Professional Speakers	
Classes offered for professional development (non college credit)	
Classes offered for professional development (college credit)	
Conferences within the school with a reading specialist (one on one)	
Conferences within the school with a reading specialist (departmental)	
Other	

Additional comments:

Results/Evaluations

Professional Development Evaluation Form

Name of

Activity: _____

Date: _____

Circle only one response for each question

Strongly Disagree (1)

Disagree (2)

Neutral (3)

Agree (4)

Strongly Agree (5)

- 1. The content was accurately and adequately delivered. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
- 2. The ideas and skills presented will be useful in improving student learning. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
- 3. The activity was carefully planned and the time was used effectively. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
- 4. The presenter was well-prepared and used effective presentation skills. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
- 5. Participants were actively engaged learners. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
- 6. Questions/concerns from the audience were addressed. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
- 7. The material is immediately useful for me. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
- 8. I will be able to use the content of this program as part of my professional development. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

9. What were the best aspects of this professional development session?

Explain.

12. What could be done to improve this professional development session?

Explain

13. For future professional development on this topic, what further information would be most helpful in performing your job?

Professional Development Evaluation Form

B

Comprehension/Vocabulary sessions- 2007-2008

Circle only one response for each question

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neutral (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

- 1. The content was accurately and adequately delivered. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
- 2. The ideas and skills presented will be useful in improving student learning. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
- 3. The sessions were carefully planned and the time was used effectively. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
- 4. The presenter was well-prepared and used effective presentation skills. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
- 5. Participants were actively engaged learners. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
- 6. Questions/concerns from the audience were addressed. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
- 7. The material is immediately useful for me. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
- 8. I will be able to use the content of this program as part of my professional development. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

9. What were the best aspects of these professional development sessions? Explain.

12. What could be done to improve these professional development sessions? Explain

13. For future professional development on reading, what further information would be most helpful in performing your job?

14. Please add any additional comments. Feel free to use the reverse side if necessary.

Danielle DeFarno
Reader Experiences
Administration of Reading Programs
Spring 2008

When I was selecting a person to write about, I came across an interesting person by accident. Throughout the last few weeks, I have been working in an after-school program at Veterans Elementary School in Central Falls. My group consists of kindergarten and first graders, some classified as ESL or Special Education. I work in an extremely high need district with a huge migrant population. There is one girl in particular, Ashley, who has caught my attention. She is an amazing little girl who is trying to persevere despite having a learning disability. By meeting this little girl, I was introduced to her mother Maria who became the person I did my history on.

It became quite apparent through working with Ashley that she has obvious signs of dyslexia: an inability to distinguish phonemes in words, a difficulty remembering the names or sounds of letters and trouble writing letters correctly without immense concentration. After speaking with her mother, it was discovered that Ashley is indeed being evaluated for dyslexia and that Maria herself is dyslexic.

Maria was born in Guatemala. She was a mediocre student and always struggled with her schooling. Maria hated to read. She sat in the back of the room so she wouldn't have to be called on. When she did get called on, she would read the sentences incorrectly and couldn't understand why she couldn't get it. Maria believes her classmates and teacher thought she was just stupid and not good in school. When she was

15, her parents came to America for financial reasons and brought her against her will. She had no desire to come here but was given no choice.

She attended school in Central Falls and felt like no one understood her, ~~right off~~ ~~the bat~~. Maria had a hard time understanding English and often teachers would give her “baby books” and put her off in a corner by herself. She remembers just staring at the pages, having no idea what was in front of her. Finally, a teacher paid attention to the quiet girl in the back and discovered why Maria had always struggled in school. Maria was dyslexic! Soon after the diagnosis came, Maria was faced with a life changing situation. She was pregnant and was forced to drop out of school. Before she knew it, she was twenty years old with three children and no father to support them.

Who did the diagnosis?

Amazing

Maria herself is dyslexic, so she is adamant in trying to get Ashley the support she deserves. She doesn't want her daughter to go through the struggles she has had. Maria told me that it has severely impacted her life. She dropped out of high school and has had to be selective in her jobs. Maria still struggles with reading as an adult and has a hard time being organized. She also said it take her “forever” to complete her work and that her previous employers do not take her disability into account.

Maria told me that she knew early on that Ashley had similar symptoms to what she herself experienced as a child. Her speech was delayed as a child. Luckily, Ashley receives speech services as school. Ashley can write her name, but it takes a long time and she can't tell you what letters are in it. She also reverses letters often and is extremely disorganized. Ashley has a hard time following directions and completing things in a specified order.

It is truly heartbreaking when I work with Ashley at times. She is fully aware that she is not up to the level of her peers and will state "I can't read". Ashley, despite her trouble with reading, is very determined and tries extremely hard. She will often buddy read stories we have practiced in class and even has asked for assignments to work on at home. I am also truly amazed at how often she will raise her hand and ask to read out loud, even if she needs to have assistance throughout the page. Maria has noticed this as well and has hope for her daughter that she does not have for herself.

I found it interesting that research shows that there is indeed a genetic component to dyslexia but there isn't very much known about it. Some countries, including New Zealand, didn't acknowledge that dyslexia even exists until recently! These countries are now realizing that they need to identify these students as early as possible and provide them with the support they need. It is truly to Ashley's benefit to have a parent and school that is so aware and supportive of her educational needs as a student.

I think the only validation is to have an MRI brain scan.

Questions asked of Maria:

- 1) Where were you born and when did you come to the United States?
- 2) What were your early experiences in school like? Later experiences?
- 3) Did you consider yourself a good student?
- 4) How has your dyslexia affected your life?
- 5) What characteristics do you see in Ashley that you yourself have/had?

An interesting case, D.
B

**SECTION IV - Assessment #8
Rhode Island College
Staff Development Workshop
Scoring Guide**

Name Danielle Delano Date 5/11/08

Element	Unacceptable - 1	Acceptable - 2	Exemplary - 3	Score
IRA Standard 5.3	Does not adequately demonstrate the ability to actively engage in collaboration with other teachers and reading specialists to obtain advice on teaching practices and ideas. Does not adequately demonstrate ability to positively and constructively provide an evaluation of his or her own or others' teaching practices. Does not demonstrate an ability to assist classroom teachers and paraprofessionals improve their own practice	Adequately demonstrates the ability to actively engage in collaboration with other teachers and reading specialists to obtain advice on teaching practices and ideas. Adequately demonstrates an ability to positively and constructively provide an evaluation of his or her own teaching practices. Adequately demonstrates an ability to assist classroom teachers and paraprofessionals improve their practice.	Demonstrates the ability to actively engage in collaboration with other teachers and reading specialists to obtain advice on teaching practices and ideas at an advanced level and constructively provide an evaluation of their own or others' teaching practices at an advanced level. Demonstrates an ability to assist classroom teachers and paraprofessionals improve their own practices an an advanced level.	2
IRA Standard 5.4	Does not adequately demonstrate participation individually and with colleagues in professional development experiences. Does not adequately exhibit leadership skills in professional development.	Adequately demonstrates participation individually and with colleagues in professional development experiences. Adequately exhibits leadership skills in professional development.	Demonstrates participation individually and with colleagues in professional development experiences and exhibits leadership skills in professional development at an advanced level.	2

<p>Clear, concise, error-free written work</p>	<p>Unclear writing style that is disorganized and contains numerous errors or conventions</p>	<p>Clear writing style that is organized and contains a limited number of errors or conventions</p>	<p>Exemplary writing style that is organized and contains a limited number of errors or conventions</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>American Psychological Association (APA) format</p>	<p>Several errors (4 or more) in APA format</p>	<p>Few errors (1-3) in APA format</p>	<p>No errors in APA format</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Followed assignment requirements: Collaborative Work Presentation of Theory Needs Assessment Goals and Objectives Format Plan Responsibilities Resources, Budget & Schedule Evaluation Instruments</p>	<p>Assignment does not contain all requirements</p>	<p>Assignment adequately contains most requirements (no more than one minor issue)</p>	<p>Assignment carefully contains all assignment requirements</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Presentation Process</p>	<p>Does not adequately present in-service. Problems with one of more of the following: goals, audience, timing, learning needs of audience, handout, approach to adult</p>	<p>Adequately presents in-service. In terms of goals, timing, learning needs of audience, approach to adult instruction, handout, technology, poster</p>	<p>Present in-service at an advanced level. Excellent goals, timing, understanding of the learning needs of audience, handout, approach</p>	<p>2</p>

	instruction, technology, poster		to adult instruction, use of technology, development of poster content	
				Total Score

Overall Performance

Assessment:

5 ≤ 5
Unacceptable

12 6 12
Acceptable

13 - 18
Exemplary

Recommendation:

REVISION

PASS

PASS

B

Faculty member signature(s) _____

Robert J. Reed