

COABE 2009, Louisville, KY : Sessions Attended

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Preconference

“Current Trends & Issues in Professional Development” (AALPD)

A.M. Roundtables:

- **Powerful & Effective Presentations** – Avoid Death by Power Point
 - The presenter IS the presentation, so don't want the PP slides to distract from speaker
 - Less is more. The human brain can only retain 3-4 chunks from a presentation – focus on those!
 - Slideshows should be for images, not text (at least, keep text minimal). Powerful images result in an emotional “hook” which will make audience interested in what presenter has to say.
 - Worst is to read the text on the slide – our brains can't listen and read simultaneously.
- **Kentucky ABLE's Professional Development Model**
 - The Collaborative Center for Literacy Development (CCLD) provides research-based, in-depth, professional development activities to improve the instructional practices of preschool-12 teachers of literacy. Finances were allocated to CCLD to address the instructional needs of adult educators by offering the Kentucky Adult Educators Literacy Institute (KAELI). KAELI will provide intensive instruction in adult reading; participants may earn three hours of graduate credit after completion of project requirements. Includes four days of intensive instruction with follow-up activities twice a year at the three state universities sponsoring KAELI, and two coaching visits during the year from the KAELI professor.

Breakout Sessions

What is Math? How Instructor Beliefs Shape Student Learning, Jeanne Kantner, Kishwaukee College

- Provided math attitude inventories (for students and teachers)
- Takes many tools to solve a GED math problem – can't just pick the “screwdriver” and expect to solve – need many tools.
- Main points: instruction should encourage collaboration and engagement with problem-solving; connect problem to real world and other disciplines [deeper thinking]; value multiple approaches – there's more than one way to solve a problem; encourage more oral and written (narrative) responses.

Assessing Learner Progress (SABES – Carey Reid – research based on Wiggins & McTigue)

- STRONG classroom learning objectives drive assessment – and learning activities (“backward design” – this way, what you're measuring is what you have taught !

- DEPTH & COMPLEXITY OF LEARNING drive assessment.
- Student involvement in assessment – design rubrics with students
- How to develop criteria for **constructed** (v. multiple choice, T-F, etc) response: e.g., rubrics.
- Value of reflection – KWL, Learning Logs, etc.
- GREAT PRESENTER (knowledgeable, funny, to the point)

Are We Making a Difference? Minnesota PD System (evaluation)

- 9 PD regions and a state specialist; each region has stipend-paid PD coordinator (a program person).
- They looked at Guskey’s levels of engagement. Realized they were at Level 1 (initial satisfaction with PD experience); wanted to get to level 4 / 5 (5 almost impossible to evaluate – learner impact).

Lessons Learned from Current Research in Reading Judith Alamprese, Abt Associates, Inc.

- Conducted a study of adult decoding at low intermediate level, using a program called “Making Sense of Decoding and Spelling Curriculum” developed by the study staff. It is one component of reading program that includes fluency, vocabulary and comprehension instruction. Emphasizes metalinguistic knowledge of English and emphasizes spelling as well as decoding. Findings: gains in word attack, word identification, vocabulary. Hope to release the curriculum by Fall 2009.

“Read Right” Rapid & Permanent Gains in Reading – (vendor).

- Brain creates “anticipatory set” to comprehend (anticipating author’s message). Read Right changes neural pathways, over time. Student reads with tutor; student realizes when “not getting it” – tutor is trained to recognize that moment and be ready to respond with scaffold – the intervention will address the brain wiring.

NRS Effect on PD: A Small Research Project (Christine Smith, U Mass, Amherst)

- Negative: greater focus on teaching to the test; less focus on student goals – more focus on meeting state goals.
- Positive: meeting state goals made teachers more focused on showing gains (a different take on the “negative”); use of data as source for solving issues, problems; stronger focus on PD that is on target with program goals.
- Conclusions: Accountability helps focus PD on curricular needs of students, but there is little evidence to support the claim that such systems positively impact PD. Tendency to narrow PD to test prep that is disconnected from curricular needs.

****Pete’s Power Points: good resource! Pppst.com**

**** cliffsnotes.com** has good essay info