



ADOLESCENT LITERACY

DEVELOPING A SHARED UNDERSTANDING

An important function of the Literacy Leadership Team (LLT) in a school is to stimulate dialogue and focus a staff's attention and energy on addressing content literacy across the school by all stakeholders. In order to address that important function, individuals on the LLT must have a shared understanding of the term "adolescent literacy" and come to consensus on the meaning behind the term. Generally, teachers from differing content areas and background bring a multitude of different ideas to the table. This sharing of ideas can begin to build the team, broaden the understanding of the term, and prepare them for addressing this important issue in their school.

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PROCEDURE

Step 1: Explain the purpose of the activity. Developing a shared understanding of the term adolescent literacy will allow them to communicate and talk with colleagues in a more confident way.

Step 2: Have each participant reflect on their understanding of the term “adolescent literacy.” Ask them to jot down in a sentence or two as they reflect, as they will be sharing it with the whole group.

Step 3: Go around the table and ask each LLT member to read their statement. Take time to clarify, comment, or ask leading questions as they share their thinking. Most likely these statements will encourage comments and dialogue from the rest of the team. Collect the statements and compile if group desires.

Step 4: As a group, the LLT should decide on a common definition so that they understand the term deeply. Through this dialogue and sharing, LLT members will begin to get a sense of the multiple perspectives of teachers. Some teachers have a very narrow definition of the term while others see literacy as something very broad. A broad definition of literacy will help team members communicate its importance across school personnel. A subgroup may wish to synthesize the information into a statement that they can return to and share with the larger faculty.

A SIMPLE PROTOCOL TO STIMULATE DIALOGUE

It is critical that a SIM

Professional

Developer or

someone very

knowledgeable about

adolescent literacy

lead this session.

This is an initial

activity that is

foundational to the

function and purpose

of the team.

Purpose of activity: To encourage initial dialogue about literacy and development of shared definition of adolescent literacy.

Time to allow for activity:
45 – 60 minutes

Materials needed: paper

