List of Potential Sessions

This is a working copy of potential sessions that could take place during the Institute. The full agenda is still in progress, and these sessions are still subject to change. A specific schedule of sessions for each Institute is coming soon.

A Deeper Dive: Reading and Using Reports to Support Every Student

There are many useful Fast ForWord reports that are available only when going to second and third levels. This session will explore and explain the utility of this important student data.

Building Discourse in a K-5 Classroom

Classroom discourse is the ocean on which all else floats. The ability to think, articulate and discuss ideas is critical to school and career success. Experience and discover practical strategies for helping students develop the academic language and discourse required to make connections, develop opinions, and build shared understanding of ideas that can be transferred to all areas of learning. The ability to think, articulate and discuss these ideas and disciplinary content are critical to students' success.

Building Strong Relationships to Augment Learning in Virtual and Face-to-Face Classrooms

Research shows that students who have strong relationships with their teachers or their classmates learn more and are more successful in school. How do we, as teachers, create a climate in our classrooms that nurtures these connections? Join us to learn procedures and strategies to scaffold meaningful relationships in both virtual and face-to-face classrooms.

Connection Before Intervention - Students Really Will Listen

Students will be more responsive to your instruction/intervention/motivation if you have first made a personal connection with the student before jumping headfirst into the subject matter. This principle applies to 1:1 interactions but is also relevant for groups.

Deconstruct Culturally Responsive Instruction through Text Sets and Strategies

Culturally responsive instruction is a necessary practice that is now a part of many teacher standards nationwide. This workshop is designed to help teachers think critically about what it is, how it helps to shape greater experiences for their students, and ways to cultivate a more culturally responsive environment through lesson planning and delivery. Working collaboratively with other educators, participants will walk away with a toolkit of ideas and strategies to bring culturally relevant and responsive practices into their classrooms/instruction as well as ideas for text sets to add to their classroom experience.

Deepening Learning Through Discourse in the 6-12 ELA Classroom

It's no secret that discourse is key to developing the interpretive and argumentative skills at the heart of a secondary literacy classroom. But moving the chairs into a circle isn't enough to set students up for meaningful discussions of complex texts and topics. In this session, participants will experience and explore practical strategies you can use to get students talking, keep the conversation on track, and help students deepen their learning through discourse.

Developing Teacher Leaders

Participants will explore research around adult learning and John Medina's Brain Rules, define job-embedded support and what that currently looks like in your school or district, and reflect on his or her own job-embedded experiences and practices and whether that was a positive or negative experience. Lastly, participants will create next steps for job-embedded learning activities in their school/district.

Ensuring Quality and Consistency in Literacy for your School or District

Systemic descriptions of quality vary across schools and districts. There are tools and protocols that can help clarify language and expectations around Literacy. The implementation of these protocols guarantees a collaborative conversation between instructional leaders, coaches, and teachers, while ensuring quality instruction is evidenced in every classroom. Explore two quick protocols to take and enact that will shed light on literacy practice in a school or district and promote deeper conversations about literacy for all involved.

Experience a Blended Learning Lesson with M&W

Learning is not the product of technology, rather the activity of the learners. Is it a challenge to find engaging digital activities for your students? Do you or many of your students still prefer using print? Remote learning has forced many of us to consider how to successfully transition back into the classroom after being exclusively digital. We are now left searching for the best way to blend digital with print. Discuss ways to incorporate technology and print into your classroom and experience a blended learning lesson using Mirrors & Windows print and digital activities.

I am a Writer!: Shining a Light on the Early Writing Process

Everyone has something to say and therefore everyone has something to write - even a 5 year old. Examine the benefits of a laser-like focus on writing for students in the early years of school that taps into their intrinsic motivation to write and develops their ability to express themselves. Reflect on responsive learning and teaching that helps us connect with and engage our students. Participants will explore how to develop the authorial and secretarial skills required to become a proficient writer by leveraging students' natural need to communicate.

Let the Drama Begin: Using Acting Techniques to Engage Students in Studying Drama

High school students and teachers alike often groan at the thought of delving into drama. Participants will experience the techniques and strategies well-known actors use to unpack a scene and get into character. By implementing these strategies in the classroom, teachers will be able to help students understand the world and themselves in a fun and engaging way.

Make Learning Purposeful

"Why do we have to do this? When will I ever use this in real life?" Does this sound familiar? Learn ways to get students actively engaged by providing more authentic learning experiences and opportunities for student choice in your ELAR classroom. Hear from students to find out why instruction feels more meaningful through inquiry-based projects, real-life learning opportunities, student-driven activities, and other aspects of Project Based Learning. Discuss ways to change current lessons to make learning more purposeful.

Making Sense of the Messiness: Formative Assessment with Complex Texts and Tasks

Student thinking around complex texts and tasks is beautifully messy, revealing a range of interpretations, misunderstandings, partially formed ideas, emerging skills, and unique perspectives. When we make that thinking visible through formative assessment, how do we make sense of the messiness? In this session, we'll demonstrate and practice a three-step planning routine that will empower you to analyze student work in real time--during instruction rather than after the fact--and modify instruction in the moment.

Not all Literacy Tasks are Created Equal

We know that the quality of an assignment predicts the quality of a student's work. But what makes a quality assignment? How can we ensure that every student is given the opportunity to do the complex thinking work of our literacy standards? This session will establish a rationale for using the standards as the starting point for creating tasks that intentionally support students in building the enduring and authentic literacy skills of the disciplines. Educators and school leaders will learn how a purposeful task directly determines student outcomes and will leave with a simple process for determining the quality and rigor of assignments in their schools and classrooms.

Pedagogy Through Play: Bringing Joy Into the Classroom

As we guide students through COVID-impacted school experiences, we know that focusing on content learning isn't enough to help kids critically think through problems and apply new knowledge beyond the classroom. In this session, we will learn how the science of learning shows that students learn best through the principles of guided play: active and engaged learning that is meaningful, socially interactive, iterative, and joyful. Educators and school leaders will discover the key characteristics and target skills of playful learning and will leave with practical checklists and models to implement playful learning in their contexts.

Plagiarism or Remix: Designing Assignments that Promote Originality and Attribution

Ask your students why they need to cite their sources and, chances are, their first response will be "so I don't get accused of plagiarism." While accurate, this response overshadows the real reasons we cite. With some help from Taylor Swift and Plato, this session will take you on a research journey that transforms citation from a source of frustration for students into an opportunity to be original and enact change.

Proven practices for dynamic results in Fast ForWord and Reading Assistant Plus

Leading with 16 years of experience in Fast ForWord and Reading Assistant Plus, this session will uncover best practices to ensure student motivation, engagement and successful mastery of content. We will learn how to effectively analyze data to drive instruction resulting in a reduction of interventions. Finally, we will discover how to close the learning gap in a shorter amount of time while creating lasting buy-in from students, teachers, and administrators. Learn how these proven practices can accelerate learning and efficiency in the classroom.

Supporting Emerging Bilingual Students in the Elementary Literacy Classroom

Linguistic diversity should be highlighted and praised in classrooms. Explore how to use an asset-based approach to plan instruction that supports all students, particularly emergent bilingual students. Discover the value of honoring and leveraging students' unique linguistic and cultural experiences throughout literacy in a K-5 classroom in order to empower the next generation of literacy learners.

Talk it Out: Tackling Challenging Topics through Literature in the Middle School Classroom

Adolescents are facing more challenges than ever. Experience and discover how to use middle school literature to open discussions for students about tough topics in a way that is sensitive, empathetic, and respectful to all. Participants will explore text titles and topics that promote deeper conversation about tough topics like mental health, cultural identities, homelessness and grief, to help promote social-emotional growth in the classroom.

Teaching Toward Equity

Are you concerned about students who are slipping through the cracks in the system? Would you like to be a more reflective practitioner? We know that our current educational system is not designed to provide equitable learning environments for students of color, students with disabilities, and low socio-economic students, but what can a teacher do to make a difference for their students? This session will provide you with tools to be a reflective and equitable practitioner and with strategies to make your classroom an equitable learning environment for all of your students.

"That's the English Teacher's Job": Promoting Writing and Reading Instruction Outside the ELA Classroom

Do you ever feel like everyone is looking at you to fix the literacy problems in your building? Join this support group--we mean session--to explore strategies for promoting literacy instruction within the other content areas by the other content area instructors. Return to your school with the materials you need to onboard students, teachers, and administrators in ensuring literacy for all, taught by all.

The Science of Reading: How Teachers Change Brains Through Literacy Instruction

This session will review new scientific research on cognitive, language and learning capacities required for reading and how teachers build these capacities in the brain. The session will begin with a discussion of how reading capacities develop in the brain by linking visual and language capacities. This will be followed by a review of cognitive and SEL skills that are built through different curriculum strategies. Finally, the talk will review the multiple factors that can lead to reading problems and best practices for supplementary instruction with struggling readers.

"The world's been waiting for your genius a long time.": Elevating Suppressed Voices through Novel Studies

Novel studies are great places to start when planning to meet your state standards, but how do you make sure the novel study is producing the thinking, reading, and writing skills you want students to practice? In this session, explore a novel study alongside a template that is replicable for use in your classroom. Discuss best practices related to novel studies in middle and high school classrooms that are sure to honor all students in your literacy classroom by experiencing a novel study of The Poet X.

What Leaders Need to Know About Brain Development and Literacy

This session will introduce new scientific research on cognitive, language, and learning capacities required for reading and how schools ensure the building of these capacities in the brain. This session will explore all that leaders need to know and plan for to best support striving readers in their buildings.

You're a Poet, You Just Didn't Know It!: Exploring Contributions of the Harlem Renaissance to Plan Your Next Poetry Slam

The Harlem Renaissance was a time of cultural explosion where creativity and intellect turned words of justice into rhythms of jazz and blues. The artists and writers during this time period had a real sense that what they were doing was unique, valuable, and full of fascination. Let's use the genius of these artists and writers to guide students into tapping into their human experience to write a poem for your next Poetry Slam.