

What is a Book Study Group?

Book Study Groups are formed to open up opportunities for books to be read and discussed by teachers with Writing Project Teacher Consultants as leaders. The purpose is to bring people together to collaborate using the latest research as a springboard for teachers to benefit and improve the teaching of writing. Book study groups promote conversations among teachers and school staff that will lead to the application of new ideas in classrooms and improvement of existing skills. Teachers in book study groups offered by the Great Valley Writing Project can earn credit for attendance and participation.

A typical book study group meets for five, three-hour sessions – usually one a week, but could meet for ten, hour-and-a-half meetings depending on the groups needs. These sessions can be easily tailored to the needs of the group. Each session consists of:

- Welcome, sign-in
- Time to reflect and write about the book and discussions
- Assigned reading for the next meeting
- Discussion of the reading assignments - whole group, small group, and partner
- Time to meet with grade level to discuss and plan how to use the concepts presented in the book the group is reading. This is an important part of the book study – allowing teachers time to figure out how this will work in their own rooms.

How do you choose a book?

Teacher Consultants should have a clear objective for reading a particular book. For example, a group of teachers interested in grammar may suggest books related to that topic, and then decide which book(s) to read.

How do you start a Book Study Group?

If you are having a site level book study to start, seek members from grade-level team members, subject-area groups, and departments. Participation should always be voluntary and membership inclusive. It is also a good idea to seek out the support of your principal, who may be able to help your group with determining a time and location and or support for refreshments or book purchases.

Study groups may be opened to an entire district by grade levels or interest.

Decide a meeting schedule, meeting place, the length of the book to read, and what will happen after the book is read. (Will the group disband after the book is read, continue to meet to discuss applications, or read other books?)

Sample Agenda

Time	Activity	Person(s) Responsible
4:00-4:10	Sign-in, Welcome, Administrative Duties	Facilitator(s)
4:10 -4:30	Writing Time – Reflective from Reading, Word of Day	All Participants
4:30-4:40	Sharing of Writing – Pair/Share, Whole Group	All Participants
4:40-5:00	Discussion of Assigned Reading (Quaker Reading)	All Participants
5:00-5:30	Small Group Activities – Grade Level, Interest from Reading	All Participants
5:30-5:40	BREAK	All Participants
5:40-6:00	Readings of Articles that support the book – English Journal, Voices in the Middle, etc.	Facilitator(s) All Participants
6:00-6:10	Whole Group Discussion	All Participants
6:10-6:50	Group Time to Discuss Classroom uses and implementation for the ideas in the book and readings	All Participants
6:50-7:00	Closure Activity – Exit Slip – “What will you do in your class this next week?” Reminder of Assigned Reading for the next meeting	Facilitator(s) All Participants

The job of the facilitator(s) is to promote teacher collaboration, remind group members of meetings, keep the group on task, take care of record keeping, and help run meetings.

GVWP provides support through flyers, enrolling participants online, sign-in sheets, unit forms, and purchasing the books for the group.