



Step 2: Plan

Part D: Written Narrative: Identifying a Problem of Practice and Strategy to Address It Template

Directions: Respond to the following prompts (up to 4 pages). Type your responses within the brackets following each prompt. Do not delete or alter the prompts.

II. Collaboratively Select a Problem of Practice Based on Student Data and Data from Your Professional Context

1. Describe how you worked collaboratively with the group to analyze student data sets on the educational focus and selected a problem of practice based on the area of educational focus that addresses how practitioners will potentially improve student learning and/or well-being by improving the current practices in your professional context.

[In alignment with our educational focus of supporting students in the acquisition of literacy skills, I facilitated a data discussion for our Community of Practice (CoP) by sharing the data from our most recent District Writing Assessment (DWA) administered in December of 2025. Using data from 9th-grade students, we discussed holistic scores and specific skill sets contributing to poor student outcomes. Nearly three-fourths (74.45%) of our 9th-grade students assessed scored below proficient on their holistic scores, and the team identified three areas of need that would have an immediate impact on the strength of their writing.

Building on our discussion of the 9th-grade writing data, I introduced the STAR Reading benchmark results by grade level from the Winter of 2025, which provided our team with valuable information about the level of academic rigor suggested for instruction. Using the Instructional Reading Level (IRL) data, we determined that our students in 9th-11th grade are processing information in written texts at a 5th-grade level. The Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) results from the Fall of 2025 corroborated the STAR reading data by showing that at least 60% of students at each grade level are performing below standard, and the 11th-grade data showed that only 22% of students met the norms.

While we can celebrate that MAP data showed a 10% growth since the 24-25 school year, there is still room for improvement. Through this collaborative discussion, our team discovered that reading comprehension was adversely affecting student learning and that, as a result, organizational skills had the greatest impact on students' performance during writing tasks. By facilitating this collaborative review of data, the CoP moved towards a shared understanding that improvements in instructional practices were needed, including scaffolding assignments, clearly identifying assessment criteria, and supporting students' understanding of content through structured discussions.]

2. Explain how you worked collaboratively with the group to review your collective data on student demographics, student learning and academic performance or well-being, and other relevant data differentiated by student groups. State the agreed-upon problem of practice and the group's rationale for selecting it. Describe the ways you facilitated the meeting to acknowledge how the problem of practice might be addressed with a change in current practices in your professional context.



[At the beginning of the school year, teachers were trained on the use of the district software ELlevation, which allows teachers to see the redesignation status of all of their students and intervention strategies tailored to each student's current fluency level. Our school has 643 English Learners, or roughly 30% of the student population, who have yet to reclassify through the English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC). To begin our data discussion, I reviewed with teachers how to access the data for their classes.

When analyzing the DWA data, it was evident that EL students were not the only ones failing to meet the standards. In fact, while only 30% of the student population was still classified as EL students, 74% of 9th-grade students were falling below the proficient level on the writing assessment. Similarly, students at all grade levels were reading at an 8th-grade level and had an average instructional reading level (IRL) of 5.5, or 5th grade in the 5th month of school.

There were some discrepancies when discussing the DWA data and STAR Reading results. One of our honors teachers did not have her students submit their DWA essays to the district software. Given that honors students traditionally perform well on writing assessments, the 74% number could be slightly lower when accounting for the missing proficient scores. Additionally, the STAR reading results only included 1100 of the 1600 9th-11th-grade students. However, the sample size was sufficient to provide a correlation between reading and writing performance and to dictate a need for intervention in writing instruction.

Through an evidence-based discussion, we arrived at the following Problem of Practice: In Grades 9-11, benchmark data indicate that students lack organization and the ability to provide evidence in longer writing assessments. Observations suggest inconsistent use of scaffolding and structured discussions during instruction. The English department will collaboratively investigate and implement strategies to reinforce classwork and improve feedback, thereby strengthening student learning.

Throughout the meeting, I facilitated the data dialogue by guiding teachers through the ELlevation website and structuring a roundtable discussion on the DWA's associated skills. Providing each member with an opportunity to share their perspective on the relevance of the skills being assessed was integral to ensuring that every member felt respected and valued. While most educators are willing to acknowledge student deficiencies, not all teachers are open about their teaching practices and prepared to make changes in their instruction. As co-facilitators, it was important that we collaboratively determined an instructional focus and invited teachers to join us in adjusting our practices to better support students.]

3. How does the identified problem of practice (a) correspond to the vision, mission, and/or goals of your professional context; (b) reflect California state standards and/or curriculum frameworks or equivalent, or other applicable standards; and (c) address existing student group performance differences or well-being?

[Our CoP determined the problem of practice to be a lack of writing organization and the inability to provide relevant evidence to support arguments in writing tasks due to inconsistent use of scaffolding and structured discussion opportunities during classroom instruction.

- (a) The Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) adopted the district priority of providing targeted literacy instruction schoolwide for the 25-26 school year. The district's graduate profile emphasizes reclassification by 5th grade, and the school's SPSA identifies literacy intervention as a priority. All departments have been required to provide evidence of the implementation of specific literacy skills, such as "summarizing" and "making a claim." As an English CoP, we sought to expand upon this initiative to identify additional gaps in instruction that can be addressed within the English department and articulated across grade levels.



- (b) The CCSS for ELA builds on itself as students progress, and it was our intention to design practices that could also build from the freshman year through graduation. While the DWA assessment categories were a point of contention during our meeting, they directly correlate with the standards for high school students. Creating common rubrics that assess students' mastery of organizing ideas, providing quotations, using transitions, and providing a conclusion will ensure students meet the standards. (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.2)
- (c) Given that 30% of our students are ELLs and the fact that even our redesignated students are not achieving passing scores on benchmark reading and writing assessments, all of our students will benefit from differentiated literacy instruction and interventions. The Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) strategies of scaffolding and active engagement should be present in every classroom as part of our school's BIG 5 instructional practices. Creating common practices for implementing these strategies in the classroom will provide a level playing field for our ELL students, while also supporting the growth of our general education students.]

III. Identify a Strategy to Address the Problem of Practice

1. Explain the collaborative process used during the planning meeting in selecting the one relevant evidence-based strategy that addresses the problem of practice, potentially leading to improved student learning and/or well-being across student groups. Be sure to include how you facilitated the group to help make their selection.

[Teachers were reluctant to introduce a new strategy into their teaching practices because they had already created routines with their students and were all covering slightly different information. Adult learning theory emphasizes that adults learn best when collaboration is purposeful and relevant (Knowles et al., 2015). At this point in the school year, most teachers have already covered foundational skills, and each grade level is at a different point in its curriculum. I first asked the group members to share what they were currently teaching. While 10th grade is giving a summative writing assessment, 9th grade is only beginning their next unit.

In our collaborative discussion, it became evident that any strategy would need to add value to the current instruction and seamlessly integrate into the teacher's current content. We were determined to implement something specific to writing but broad enough to apply to both shorter and longer writing assignments. Focusing on a guided self-review and peer-review process ultimately addressed all our needs by aligning with the CCSS standards, our DWA rubric, and our schoolwide focus on improving literacy.

Throughout the meeting, I facilitated the collaborative process by providing teachers with the CCSS standards and DWA grading categories and guiding the data analysis. With Ms. C's assistance, we established a schedule for our classroom observations. Mr. M and Mr. G also agreed to model the structured peer review process. The strategy will consist of the following elements: First, review the rubric criteria and categories. Second, identify the elements of the rubric in a high-scoring writing sample. Third, have students look for the same elements in their own papers. Last, have students revise their own writing to include or expand on the elements in their original submission.]

2. Describe the group's rationale for selecting this evidence-based strategy. How will the group learn this strategy and how to implement it? What challenges do you anticipate the group might encounter and how could they be addressed?



[The group's rationale for selecting the evidence-based strategy is that research shows peer feedback results in more meaning-based revisions and successful outcomes than teacher feedback due to peer interaction (Guo et al., 2025). Giving students the tools to engage in meaningful dialogue with their peers about their revision ideas reinforces the content and fosters a positive connection to the learning experience, which encourages retention. This strategy directly supports the 75% of 9th graders who are struggling with organization and evidence citation in formal writing, while also strengthening these skills in students from higher grade levels.

To learn the strategy, the group intends to participate in a series of classroom observations. Each teacher will model how they teach writing review and revision in their class, and the group will meet to discuss which practices work best and any possible adjustments to the lessons. At the end of the lesson study/learning walk process, the team hopes to have developed a best practice to share with the rest of the English department.

Two challenges will be supporting students whose original work is insufficient to participate in a meaningful review (students who did not turn in the assignment or need robust scaffolding) and encouraging engagement and interaction during the lesson. The team intends to address these instructional challenges by making sample essays available to students who did not complete their work and by providing sentence frames for discussion and writing content. Calling on non-volunteers during direct instruction will also cause more students to participate and provide an informal assessment of students' understanding.]

3. What improvements for student learning and/or well-being related to the problem of practice do the group expect the selected evidence-based strategy will yield?

[Successful implementation of the learning strategy will be evidenced by student' revisions to their writing assignments based on the provided rubrics and scaffolds. During the peer-review process, students will be able to identify the correct elements of the writing product, and during the self-review process, students will be able to determine if the same elements are present in their own work and make revisions to include them. The long-term implications of the strategy will be that students receive higher summative assessment scores with fewer necessary revisions. Ultimately, their growth would be reflected in the Fall 2026 DWA scores. The CoP has a goal that when assessed next year, each grade level would see at least a 10% increase in the number of students meeting the standard on the DWA.]

4. How will you facilitate the group in determining a monitoring process to understand the impact of the evidence-based strategy? Describe how you and the group plan to monitor and analyze initial implementation.

[To monitor the short-term effectiveness of peer-review and self-review on improving student outcomes in writing assignments, I will facilitate a collaborative process for determining consistent collection and evaluation of student work products through the use of shared grade-level rubrics. In addition, the team will create a common practice for documenting observations of student engagement and perceptions of the peer-review process. It will be important to analyze how the peer review process affects current student work and how it contributes to sustained student growth as the concepts are applied to future writing tasks. During our CoP meetings, teachers will bring selected work samples that represent student growth and reflect additional gaps in understanding, so the team can collaboratively make adjustments to the protocol. We will be sure to include sample work from our designated ELD and IEP students, and we will work with the case carriers and support teachers to consider how the process can be differentiated to support all learners.]