



Step 4: Reflect

Part J: Reflective Narrative Template

Directions: Respond to the following prompts (up to 4 pages). Reflect on your learning and leadership development throughout Leadership Cycle 2. When responding to the prompts, consider your leadership capacity to facilitate collaborative professional learning and implementation of an evidence-based strategy. Type your responses within the brackets following each prompt. Do not delete or alter the prompts.

1. Cite evidence (including the agendas and minutes, group work products and initial implementation results, videos and commentary, and/or group feedback on the process) of how your actions affected members and influenced progress toward meeting the group's goals to address a problem of practice and monitor initial impact on student learning and/or well-being.

[In my role as a co-facilitator of our Community of Practice (CoP), I aimed to foster an environment where collaborative discussion was encouraged, and participants had a clear picture of both our goals and the roadmap to accomplish them. During the planning meeting, I guided the group through an analysis of student data, which eventually led to the identification of our problem of practice (Planning Meeting Minutes). There were concerns about the validity of the DWA data (Collaborative Work Products), and as a facilitator, I ensured each member felt heard by responding to their questions, while also redirecting the group to examine trends in the data rather than specific categories. Next time, I will be better prepared by specifying what the goal of the data analysis is and selecting trusted data sources. At the beginning of each meeting, I reviewed the unanimously adopted meeting norms and highlighted the agenda and discussion items (Implementation Meeting Agenda 1).

During our first implementation, members expressed interest in using Gemini AI for essay revision (Meeting Minutes 1). We reviewed bot directions from both Ms. C and Mr. M at our implementation monitoring meeting. As a facilitator, I was intentional about equitably sharing leadership and providing opportunities for other members of the group to share their expertise. Ms. C. discussed work samples and showed student interactions through a PowerPoint presentation. In Clip 2 at 3:50, Mr. M shows on his laptop how the bot responds to student work based on his guidelines. Post-meeting feedback surveys indicated that members enjoyed the opportunity to learn from one another, and they appreciated that, as a facilitator, I had allowed adequate time for the process. This openness to discussing multiple strategies and flexibility enabled us to tailor our implementation and gather valuable information about the progress of our students with disabilities. Mr. M shared that he adjusted his directions each period in response to student challenges. The results of his students' work using our collaboratively designed instructions showed rubric scores of 8-10 for students who had previously submitted incomplete assignments or failed to submit an essay.

In the initial planning meeting, I proposed a calendar of meeting and observation dates. In response to group feedback, we adjusted almost all of the dates at some point. Ms. S and Mr. G were involved in Quiz Bowl competitions, which required us to reschedule some of our lunch meetings. Other participants had previously scheduled collaboration meetings with their grade level cohorts on proposed observation dates. At the close of each meeting, we discussed each member's upcoming schedules and determined the next meeting date. The day before each meeting, I sent reminder emails to the CoP, confirming their attendance and notifying them of



the suggested agenda items. By consistently facilitating communication among CoP members, our instructional coach, and office staff, we were able to hold all collaboration meetings and organize substitute teacher coverage to conduct two rounds of lesson studies. Group members stated that they appreciated the emails and that they were well prepared for each meeting as a result of my organization and facilitation. Through the lesson studies and corresponding meetings, we observed the implementation of our revision instructional strategy and collected data on progress toward addressing the literacy-focused problem of practice.

By the final implementation meeting, each teacher had shared observations on how the instructional strategy had effectively impacted student learning. Mr. G observed that 80% of his students could identify the elements of an expository essay, which was a 50% improvement from the beginning of the year (Meeting Minutes 2), while Ms. C and Mr. M analyzed work samples to determine which skills were improving (Meeting Minutes 1 & 3). My actions in organizing and facilitating timely communication directly influenced both our progress toward our goals and the sharing of data.]

2. Cite evidence (including the agendas and minutes, group work products and initial implementation results, videos and commentary, and/or group feedback on the process) of how effectively you maintained a high standard of professionalism, integrity, and equity (e.g., respect for diverse viewpoints) as you worked with members of the community of practice.

[Throughout the collaborative cycle, our CoP was committed to maintaining high standards of professionalism, integrity, and equity. The foundation of our positive group dynamic was the adoption of our meeting norms, outlined in our Implementation Agenda. In addition to establishing a positive, inclusive culture for our CoP, the norms guided our focus towards achieving the goals of improving student literacy (Meeting Agenda & Minutes).

Our first norm, “be hard on the problem and gentle with each other,” set a standard of professionalism and integrity, where participants functioned as members of a team unified by a desire to solve the problem of practice. In Clip 3 at 1:30, where there were differing opinions on the use of scaffolds, members respectfully shared their thoughts, and, with my clarification and probing questions, “Are scaffolds appropriate for all students?”, we reached a consensus on the appropriate level of scaffolding students should receive. The mutual respect and professionalism outlined in the first norm allowed members of the community to “share views willingly,” as outlined in our second norm. Learning is enhanced when the assumption is that every person has something to contribute to the learning community (Duncan & Barber-Freeman, 2008). During my facilitation of our first implementation meeting, I intentionally paused our discussion and did a wraparound so each person could contribute equitably. When asked whether he had anything to add or any reflections on his students’ initial levels, Mr. M2 declined. While every member was welcome and encouraged to speak at each meeting to promote the equitable exchange of ideas, it was not required. An area for future growth is to provide work samples in advance so participants can be prepared for our discussions.

A culture of professionalism, integrity, and equity is evident in the interactions of the community of practice and in the meeting minutes and video clips. The end of Video Clip 3 at 4:45 intentionally includes a lighthearted moment in which members of the community of practice respond to Ms. S’s statement comparing writing to giving birth. I then refocus the group on the data discussion at hand. Learning is an intimate social interaction, and the social aspect of learning and self-construction is a critical issue in adult learning (Budrich, 2011). Throughout the implementation cycle, group members contributed meaningfully to discussions and expanded on one another’s ideas with their unique expertise and skills, all while pursuing improved student outcomes. I believe that my approach as a facilitator fostered a positive environment and set realistic expectations for the members to follow.]



3. What aspects of school culture and context influenced the facilitation of a community of practice in your professional context, and what actions did you take to respond to these contextually based challenges or supports?

[Because greater gains are possible when community members share a vision and common goals (Mullen & Huttinger, 2008), we intentionally reviewed the district and school priorities at the beginning of each meeting. Aspects of school culture and context that influenced the co-facilitation of a community of practice included the district graduate profile and updated focus on literacy instruction, and alignment with our school SPSA and WASC Goals. Our district priority is to have all students reading by third grade and reclassified by 5th grade. Because the shift in focus is new, more than 60% of the students at our high school are reading below grade level, according to Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Assessment Data. To address this challenge, the school's Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) has identified literacy as a point of emphasis for the past three years, and targeted literacy intervention has been listed as a school goal in our last two WASC Cycles, aiming to reduce the number of students failing English.

When considering the district graduate profile alongside our school literacy scores and English pass rates, it became evident that our community of practice needed to address gaps in school reading and writing scores as part of our area of educational focus. With a student population that is almost 99% Hispanic or Latino, our English Learner enrollment is 38% according to the California School Dashboard, and 85% of the student population is socioeconomically disadvantaged (California Department of Education, 2024). While, as a school, we were able to reclassify over 130 students last year through the English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC) and Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), our Community of Practice believed that additional intervention was necessary to support the remaining students identified for intervention.

Expanding the focus on improving literacy instruction, we used benchmark data from STAR and the District Writing Assessment (DWA) to establish a baseline for our students and identify specific skills that needed development. It was my facilitation of our conversations about the data and the identified subgroups of ELLs and students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) that led us to discuss the need for scaffolding and guided discussion during writing assignments. Due to our high ELL population and site emphasis, the School Site Council (SSC) has allocated Title 1 funds for professional development and collaboration related to literacy and numeracy. As a result, I co-facilitated collaboration meetings, working with our instructional coach to arrange substitute coverage for teachers in our community of practice to participate in lesson studies centered around essay review and revision. This year, our district has been offering training on using AI to improve instruction. Our instructional coach, Ms. C, had participated in one of the trainings prior to the formation of our community of practice. Her training on using AI to facilitate student revision and create scaffolding for individual students became a major focus for our team.

Initial implementation results showed that guided checklists were effective in helping 9th and 10th-grade students identify the elements of an essay, and AI chatbots assisted our EL and students with disabilities in writing and revising based on generated feedback and scaffolding. Further development is needed to refine the AI directions to provide appropriate support, which was a challenge during implementation. The community of practice has unanimously agreed to move forward by organizing a standards-based articulation structure for teaching the skill of revision.]

4. Analyze your strengths and areas for growth in facilitating a community of practice. Reflect on initial implementation results, the group's feedback to you, and research related to equitable leadership development, adult learning, or group facilitation.



[In analyzing my co-facilitation skills within the community of practice, I have identified the following areas of strength and growth. A strength of my leadership style is my positive attitude and calm demeanor. According to Belanger (2011), the facilitator sets the initial mood or climate of the group. I am generally happy and not easily provoked or frustrated. In tense situations, I am usually able to objectively assess both sides of an argument and help find consensus without becoming emotionally invested. I demonstrated the value of this trait when, during our initial planning meeting, several members argued about the data's validity (Planning Meeting Minutes). Although some members decided not to attend further meetings, I maintained my composure and guided the group through identifying a problem of practice. A second strength of my facilitation is my attention to detail and follow-through. Throughout the cycle, I took detailed notes and documented agreements to ensure we were prepared for future meetings. I contacted members between meetings with reminders and clarifications, and I coordinated with everyone's schedules so that they could participate.

After reflecting on my experience facilitating this community of practice and reviewing my colleagues' feedback, I have realized that there are areas of my leadership and facilitation skills where I can grow. I need to improve my meeting preparation. While there was a set agenda for each meeting, it mostly covered topics and lacked adequate structure. For example, in Clip 2 at 0:30, Mr. M asks if we can move on to the next item while he prepares a demonstration of his AI bot. Caught off guard, I ask Mr. G a vague question about his observations of his students. I would have liked to have had work samples prepared to conduct an in-depth analysis of the impact of our strategy, or to have had a specific area of growth to analyze, but instead, we relied on anecdotal observations. Secondly, I need to grow in my comfort level with delegating tasks to other members of the CoP. The meetings would have run more smoothly if I had asked members to choose a role within our team, such as timekeeper, recorder, or monitor, to share leadership responsibility and promote equity within the group. As it was, I resorted to assuming all the roles while facilitating the conversation. This was not an efficient or accurate way of running the meetings and did not effectively utilize the professional abilities of all members.]

5. Based on the analysis of your experiences in Cycle 2, identify specific professional learning goals and describe your next steps for growth.

[Based on the analysis of my experiences in cycle 2, I have identified the following specific professional learning goals: In addition to continuing to facilitate the current CoP, I would like to seek out more leadership roles on other PLCs that I participate in. Currently, I am a member of our ILT and SSC, but I have never volunteered or facilitated meetings. With my Principal's support, expanding my leadership opportunities will allow me to strengthen my identified growth area of preparing for meetings and leading professional discourse. I also plan to read Simon Sinek's book, *Leaders Eat Last*. Effective leaders and facilitators need to be others-focused (Belanger, 2008). I would like to develop my ability to identify the needs, strengths, and contributions of the people on my teams so I can address my second area of improvement, the difficulty I have with delegation and trust. Lastly, I will be participating in professional development focused on working with students who have accommodations and participating in IEPs, as well as pedagogical content-focused PDs. To strengthen my academic discourse and confidence when discussing teaching strategies and data, I need to deepen my knowledge and expertise in these areas. Cycle 2 has confirmed and revealed aspects of my leadership ability that I look forward to addressing as I become a more professional, ethical, and equitable leader.]