

Book Study Guidelines

Book studies can be powerful vehicles for professional learning in both the certificated and classified work environments. Elk Grove Unified School District encourages employees to participate in collaborative study of non-fiction books that has direct application to professional duties. The ultimate goal of the book study is to increase staff members' knowledge, in whatever professional capacity the EGUSD employee serves, to support and promote the district vision — every student, learning in every classroom, in every subject, every day.

- Selected book must be **non-fiction**.
- Book studies happen over a span **up to 8 weeks** broken into 3 to 6 meetings.
- Participants will be awarded **7.5 hours** (1/2 unit) of credit.
- Book studies consist of 6 hours meeting time and 90-minutes writing a reflection.
- Participants must complete a reflection at the end of the study for credit.
- Participants may only miss 1 meeting. (Completion of a make-up assignment will be necessary in order to receive credit.*)
- Facilitators receive an additional 2.5 hours** (a total of 10 hours of credit) for creating discussion questions, moderating, reviewing written reflections, and submitting paperwork to CPL.
- If there are more than 20 interested participants, consider offering another section and/or find an additional facilitator.

**Note: Make-up work for the one "allowed" absence consists of written responses to the discussion questions identified on the agenda for the date missed. Turn in written work along with a copy of the agenda to the facilitator.*

***Note: If there are two facilitators for the same group, each will receive 1.25 additional hours. There may be no more than two facilitators per group.*

Time Commitments:

Facilitators have choices for the configuration of their book study:

- 3 sessions for 2 hours each
- 4 sessions for 90 minutes each
- 6 sessions for 1 hour each.

Participants *and facilitators* must **attend and sign-in at all** meetings.

The written reflection is intended to be an opportunity to authentically personalize and apply learning to one's job situation. A thoughtfully written response (accounting for 1.5 hours of credit) must also be completed by each participant. The written reflection may **not** be completed during the scheduled meeting times. To receive credit, responses must:

- answer **2** of the prompts provided
- be at least 250 words per prompt
- reference something specific about the content of the book

**All work must be submitted by the due date established by the facilitator.
No partial credit will be given.**

Book Study Facilitator Responsibilities

To Obtain Approval:

- Identify a minimum of 4 possible participants (20 maximum) to take part in the book study. (If there are more than 20 interested participants, consider offering another section and/or find an additional facilitator.)
- Schedule 3-6 book study meetings, depending on the format selected. Meetings cannot be scheduled more frequently than once per week to allow time between meetings for reading. The duration of the book study cannot exceed 8 weeks total.
- Set a due date (after the last meeting but before the end of the 8 week timeline) for written reflections to be turned into the facilitator. Include this information in the “notes” area when proposing your section.
- Complete a course proposal in the PL Essentials system at least 15 working-days prior to the start date of the proposed book study. Be sure to complete all sections thoroughly and accurately so that there will be no delays in procuring approval. Please note you will be asked to attach a description of the book as well as the agenda/discussion questions for the first meeting date.
- Wait for approval from Curriculum/Professional Learning before asking participants to sign-up in PL Essentials or advertising the opportunity.

Facilitator Responsibilities:

- Develop a written reading schedule detailing how much of the book will be read and discussed by the start of each meeting date. Distribute this information prior to the first book study meeting.
- Communicate to participants the due date for written reflections to be turned into the facilitator. **Facilitators, give yourself enough time to read and review the written reflections.**
- Create an agenda for each meeting date including discussion questions/topics aligned to the reading.
- Distribute sign-in forms to participants to complete at the end of each meeting.
- Collect written reflections and review each for required areas: content, length, response to prompts, prior to submission to CPL.

- ❑ At the conclusion of the book study, after completed written reflections have been reviewed, submit reflections, sign-in sheets, and agendas to Curriculum/Professional Learning. Return all materials together at one time. **Please note, make-up assignments are due at the same time. Late writing reflections are not accepted.**

Written Reflection Guidelines

This assignment is worth 1.50 hours of the total 7.50 hours of credit for the book study. This assignment must be completed outside of the scheduled 6.00 hours of meeting time. To receive credit, responses must:

- answer **TWO (2) of the prompts** provided below,
- be at least 250 words **per prompt**,
- **reference something specific about the content** of the book, and
- include participants **first and last name** and **EIN** on written reflection.

If necessary, a participant can make up for **one** missed meeting during the book study by completing a written response to the discussion questions provided on the agenda from the missed meeting and corresponding portion of the book. This should be submitted to the facilitator along with a copy of the agenda from that meeting by the writing reflection due date established.

PROMPTS:

1. What was the central idea or premise of the book, and how did it change, challenge, or validate your thinking?
2. Does the author offer solutions to the problems or issues raised in the book? How probable is success, and what data/evidence informs your estimation of success?
3. How does the information gained from reading and participating in the book study connect to district, site, or department priorities (e.g., high-quality first-time instruction, social-emotional learning, equity, Outward Mindset, customer service)?
4. What were the biggest take-aways from the book, and what are your specific ideas for implementing in the classroom or your work environment?
5. Does the author—or can you—draw implications for the future? Are there long- or short-term consequences to the problems or issues raised in the book?

NOTE: Two different types of exemplars for completing ONE of the TWO REQUIRED PROMPTS can be found below.

EXEMPLAR #1 - Paragraph format addressing all parts of a given prompt (273 words)	Commentary for Meeting Written Reflection Criteria
<p>Submitted by JoAnne Teacher EIN <u>456789</u></p> <p>Name of the Book: <u>Bringing Words to Life: Robust Vocabulary Instruction</u> by Isabel Beck, Margaret McKeown, & Linda Kucan</p> <p>1. What was the central idea or premise of the book? What impact has it had on you as a professional?</p> <p>The central premise of this book is that if teachers want students to be able to use the vocabulary we teach them, we must fundamentally change the way we introduce, review, develop and practice vocabulary words.</p> <p>Most classroom vocabulary instruction includes introducing words using dictionary or glossary definitions and helping students to memorize the definitions. Memorizing the definition of a word, says Beck, is very different than knowing how to use the word in a sentence. Beck advocates for the use of student-friendly definitions which do more to explain the word to students than both glossaries and dictionaries do. In addition, she recommends ways to help students use the word in meaningful ways, so that the leap from vocabulary instruction to using vocabulary in real life and academic situations is not so great.</p> <p>As a professional, this makes great sense to me. For years, I have had students who aced vocabulary tests but who seldom incorporated new vocabulary words into their school work. Often, when I asked students to use vocabulary words in sentences, the sentences were grammatically awkward or the word meanings were stretched. Now I have alternative ways to teach and practice vocabulary so that my students are more successful actually using vocabulary words. I began creating “student-friendly” definitions so that my students don’t have to figure out what the dictionary definition means. I also have learned how to scaffold lessons in which I ask students to use a word in a sentence. Most students can’t use a brand-new word without many examples and a sentence frame. My students have been much more successful since I began using Beck’s instructional practices.</p>	<p>Includes first/last name & EIN</p> <p>Meets minimum words per prompt of 250+</p> <p>Identifies central premise</p> <p>Paraphrases author</p> <p>Provides specific references to the content of the book</p> <p>Makes connection to personal experiences/practices that are changed</p> <p>Provides authentic reflection as well as identify impact on student achievement</p>

EXEMPLAR #2 - Bulleted format addressing all parts of a given prompt (326 words)	Commentary for Meeting Written Reflection Criteria
<p>Submitted by JoAnne Teacher EIN <u>456789</u></p> <p>Name of the Book: <u>Bringing Words to Life: Robust Vocabulary Instruction</u> by Isabel Beck, Margaret McKeown, & Linda Kucan</p> <p>1. What was the central idea or premise of the book? What impact has it had on you as a professional?</p> <p>The central premise of this book is that if teachers want students to be able to use the vocabulary we teach them, we must fundamentally change the way we introduce, review, develop and practice vocabulary words. Below are some key concepts for how to effectively teach vocabulary, according to Beck:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use student-friendly explanations rather than dictionary definitions; the latter tend to be more technical and lack accessibility to students ● When possible include pictorial representation or ways for students to create visual schema. While the teacher can create a representative picture, it’s often best if students create their own pictures and provide oral or written explanations for their pictures. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This helps students interact with a word in meaningful ways. ○ This approach also provides students opportunities to orally rehearse the word to commit to long-term memory. ● Provide a context for when the word is used. Students do not understand all the nuances of an unfamiliar word. I have seen this often when my students have looked up a synonym and chosen one that doesn’t actually fit the situation they are trying to use it in. ● Depending on the word, identifying antonyms and synonyms are helpful for anchoring the new word to existing schema. <p>I admit to having students memorize definitions without putting in the classroom processes to “own” the word. Since vocabulary is so critical to student reading comprehension, my practices will include the bulleted items above as well as strategically planning repeated opportunities for students to use language frames both orally and in writing that incorporate the target vocabulary. The book validated some of what I knew such as the pictorial representation, but it has compelled me to be all in with the other instructional moves of identifying context, use of antonyms/synonyms, and provide multiple opportunities for in-class practice. In fact, I’ve already seen increased student retention of vocabulary but also students orally using the words more frequently since I began using Beck’s instructional practices.</p>	<p>Includes first/last name & EIN</p> <p>Meets minimum words per prompt of 250+</p> <p>Identifies central premise</p> <p>Paraphrases author</p> <p>Provides specific references to the content of the book</p> <p>Makes connection to personal experiences</p> <p>Provides authentic reflection of what practices have changed and which were validated as well as identify impact on student achievement</p>