Connecting Knowledge: Improving writing through lesson study

Information for Lead Teachers

**What does the project involve?**

The project will involve engaging teacher participants with what is known about the effective teaching of writing. These teachers will then write a personal action plan (impact frame) to focus their thinking on what it is they want to improve about learning in writing for a small number of identified pupils in their class. These two experiences will enable the teachers to come up with research questions that link their own practice to the theory from research.

Teachers will then participate in sessions led by a UCL Institute of Education Consultant with expertise in lesson study so that they understand and feel prepared to participate in lesson study in their own schools.

Back at school, teachers will work in small groups (ideally three or four) with a Lead Lesson Study Teacher from another school. They will participate in ‘cycles’ of lesson study, each cycle involving:

* Half a day to collaboratively plan a research lesson;
* Half a day to observe pupils’ responses to this research lesson (taught by one of the teachers in the group) and to discuss what they have learnt in relation to the research question.

The UCL Institute of Education Consultant will also attend some of these in-school sessions to add their expert knowledge to the discussion.

The second cycle of lesson study will be ‘open house’, meaning that teachers from other schools will be invited to attend: to watch the research lesson and to participate in the post-lesson discussion. In this way, learning about the teaching of writing will be transferred across schools. Learning will also feed into a series of four professional development sessions for all teachers in participating schools, focused on the effective teaching of writing.

Ideally, teachers will then integrate this new learning into a third cycle of lesson study, which they will manage themselves.

Teachers will complete before and after confidence surveys and a simple questionnaire about the impact of lesson study on their practice. They will also provide the project with assessment data for the small number of focus pupils identified in their impact frame (no more than six).

A final conference will present findings about the teaching of writing to all participating schools.

**Who can become a Lead Teacher?**

Lead teachers will be teachers who have already taken part in lesson study leadership projects through Connecting Knowledge and/or have already led cycles of lesson study in their own or other schools.

There are only 12 places for Lead Teachers on the project.

**What will be the role and responsibilities of the Lead Teachers?**

Lead Teachers will need to:

* Attend the two project face-to-face sessions (both full days)
* Lead at least two cycles of lesson study (ie two times two days release) in participating schools
* Communicate with their lesson study groups regularly to ensure the project remains on track
* Ensure the lesson study dates are communicated to the project manager and lesson plans sent to observers and the UCL Institute of Education Consultant in good time for the research lesson
* Communicate regularly with the project manager and the UCL Institute of Education Consultant about the progress of their lesson study group
* Participate in the end of year conference, including input into sessions
* Participate in an end of year evaluation of their role in the project

A small number of Lead Teachers will be mentored by the UCL Institute of Education consultant and supported to design professional learning sessions for schools involved in the project. These sessions will draw on learning from the lesson study groups and be closely linked to what is known about the effective teaching of writing from research. Lead Teachers will work collaboratively to lead these professional learning sessions for teachers.

**How will the Lead Teacher benefit?**

The project will give Lead Teachers a deep understanding of the skills and knowledge required to lead lesson study in their own schools. They will have access to the ongoing advice, guidance and feedback of the UCL Institute of Education Consultant.

Lead Teachers should also develop expertise in the teaching of writing. There will be opportunities for some Lead Teachers to learn about the effective design and leadership of professional learning sessions for teachers.