|  |
| --- |
|  |
| Bellwood-Antis School District Literacy Update |
|  |

From the Sidelines: Literacy Matters!



# Upcoming Events

## September 4

Myers study groups during lunch from 11:00 – 1:30 in Room 105

## September 11

Middle/high school after-school study group in the high school library from 3:00 – 3:45 p.m.

## If attending, please RSVP by the day before the designated study group day so that I have plenty of refreshments!

|  |
| --- |
|  |
| Teacher Submissions Welcome! Since many of you utilize great strategies to create an environment conducive to learning, why not share your suggestions?  Email suggestions to [dih@blwd.k12.pa.us](mailto:dih@blwd.k12.pa.us) |

Diane Hubona, K-12 Literacy Instructional Coach

[www.thefacultyroom.wikispaces.com](http://www.thefacultyroom.wikispaces.com)

August Issue

|  |
| --- |
|  |
| Welcome Back Everyone!  I will be sending out a district-wide monthly newsletter with a focus on the topic for the voluntary monthly study groups offered in each building. Each newsletter will also highlight a literacy-based strategy in case you cannot join us in person. I hope you plan to join us! Act 48 hours will be earned for participation. |
|  |

Establishing a Culture for Learning!

1. **Community Build All Year Long.** Routinely include strategies and activities in your lessons such as *Save the Last Word for Me (1)* that allow students to express their thoughts and ideas, build relationships, and practice collaboration. This will help grow and maintain a feeling of emotional safety in your classroom.
2. **2. Post Student Work.** When displays of essays, poems, or projects dominate the walls, there is student ownership of the room. When they look around and see their own writing and thinking, they certainly experience a higher level of comfort than if they see store-bought posters. That said, if informational posters are needed, ask your students to create them.
3. **Read with Your Students.** The message this sends: *I like to read. I don't just tell you this and grade you on how much you read, I read side by side with you. You see my facial expressions as I struggle to understand something difficult and you see when I feel emotion at a sad or funny part. I am a reader, too.*
4. **Write with Your Students.** The message this sends: *I like to write. I don't just tell you this and grade you on your writing, I write side by side with you. You see me struggle as I am drafting a poem or letter, and you see me contemplate new words, cross-out old ones and take chances as I revise. I am a writer, too.*
5. **Offer Options.** If we start an assignment with, "You will have three choices," students may even get excited and are often much more willing than when we say, "The assignment is...." By giving students choices, we send a message that we respect their decisions.
6. **Give Students a Chance to Problem Solve on Their Own.** It's so much better when ideas and solutions come from the student. This is a chance for us to ask rather than tell: "What might be some things you can start doing so you complete your homework on time? How about I write them down as you tell them to me?"

# Instructional Strategy to Promote a Culture for Learning



|  |
| --- |
|  |
| **pp[Teacher cartoon](http://pinterest.com/pin/532058143447167929/)** |

“Save the Last Word for Me” is a discussion strategy that requires all students to participate as active speakers and listeners. The clearly defined structure helps shy students share their ideas and ensures that frequent speakers practice being quiet. It is often used as a way to help students debrief a reading or film.

Procedure:

**Step one: Preparation**

Identify a reading or video excerpt that will serve as the catalyst for this activity.

**Step two: Students read and respond to text**

Have students read or view the selected text. Ask students to highlight three sentences that particularly stood out for them and write each sentence on the front of an index card. On the back they should write a few sentences explaining why they chose that quote - what it meant to them, reminded them of, etc. They may have connected it to something that happened to them in their own lives, to a film or book they saw or read, or to something that happened in history or is happening in current events.   
  
**Step three:** **Sharing in small groups**

Divide the students into groups of three, labeling one student A, one B, and the other C. Invite “A”s to read one of their chosen quotations. Then students B and C discuss the quotation. What do they think it means? Why do they think these words might be important? To whom? After several minutes, ask the A students to read the back of their cards (or to explain why they picked the quotation), thus having “the last word.” This process continues with the B student sharing and then student C. This is actually an acceptable use of triads, since only two are discussing or sharing at a time.

Variations:

* **Using images:** This same process can be used with images instead of quotations. You could give students a collection of posters, paintings and photographs from the time period you are studying and then ask students to select three images that stand out to them. On the back of an index card, students explain why they selected this image and what they think it represents or why it is important. **For the younger students, this could also be done orally if you wish.**
* **Using questions:** Ask students to think about three “probing” questions the text raises for them. (A “probing” question is interpretive and evaluative. It can be discussed and has no clearly defined “right” answer, as opposed to clarifying questions which are typically factual in nature.) Students answer the question on the back of their card. In small groups, students select one of their questions for the other two students to discuss.