

Flexible Grouping



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PS/Rtl Project

Ice Breaker



- Name
- How long have you been an educator?
- What do you teach?
- Answer the question on the card
- Invite your partner to answer the same question.

Norms

- Value everyone's input/expertise/strengths
- Remain Positive
- Be Learning Focused
- Use Parking Lot



The Roots of Flexible Grouping



Flexible Grouping

Purpose: To deliver instruction in a variety of ways in an effort to maximize student success.

- Teachers are discovering that utilizing flexible grouping in a variety of ways throughout the school day actually makes their job easier.



What is Flexible Grouping?

- A **temporary way** for students to collaborate in a variety of configurations depending upon activity and learning outcomes.
- In order to promote maximum learning, students need to **move frequently** among groups according to their specific needs.



What are the Benefits?



- It's a great way to meet the **academic, social and emotional** needs of each student, and it allows the teacher to zero in on any **specific needs** of one student.
- It allows students to have the opportunity to **work with, and learn from, their peers** in a way that lets them feel comfortable contributing.
- Students work in a variety of groups, learning to **work independently and cooperatively** with a variety of personalities.



Teacher- vs. Student-Led

Teacher-Led Groups		
Grouping Options	Teacher's Role	Activities
Whole Class/ Small Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Explains proceduresProvides instructional scaffoldFacilitates discussionProvides explicit instructionAffirms student diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Outlining day's agenda/scheduleGiving an overview of conceptsSharing student workPresenting strategiesDeveloping background knowledge
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Guides individual developmentEncourages individual student interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Applying key concepts, strategies and skillsComposing written responsesCompleting understandingCreating own investigations
Student-Led Groups		
Grouping Options	Teacher's Role	Activities
Collaborative	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Describes students' rolesDescribes students' interpersonal skillsEncourages student interactionMonitors group effectivenessGuides understandingAffirms student diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Organizing collaborative projectCollaborating on projectsSharing group projectsDiscussing students' evaluation of group's successApplying key strategies and conceptsDiscussing different perspectives
Performance-Based	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identifies students' needsProvides instructional scaffoldProvides explicit instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Organizing short-term groupsIntroducing new conceptsTeaching specific concepts, strategies and skills
Dyad (Pairs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identifies students' interests or needsModels instructional strategiesGuides understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assisting partnersTutoring peersResponding to peer writingCollaborating

Let's Take A Moment...

- Review the information on the handout
- What is one important take-away?
- Turn to your neighbor and share your information
- Share out



Teacher-Led Groups



- Whole-Class Instruction
- Small-Group Instruction
- Students Working Alone in Teacher-Directed Activities

Student-Led Groups

- Opportunities for divergent thinking
- Students take responsibility for their own learning
- Model "real-life" adult situations in which people collaborate to solve problems



Creating Flexible Groups

Flexible grouping requires **purposeful planning**.

- Assessment data
- Student needs and abilities

It's essential when grouping students to not place them in the same group for every activity.



The key to successful grouping is to **be flexible** so you can meet each individual's needs.

- Identify the most effective grouping design.
- Ask, “What is the best type of configuration to meet my learning outcome for this activity?”
- Differentiate engaging activities for each group.

Ensuring Successful Grouping

- It is essential that assessment is frequent, and that **students are moved into appropriate groups regularly**.
- To avoid any classroom chaos and disruptions, **effective classroom management** skills must be set into place.





Video Example



Questions to Consider

- How did Mr. Yager leverage the social nature of middle school students during group work?
- How does having a growth mindset help Mr. Yager embrace this style of student collaboration?



Ensuring Successful Grouping...

- Placing students into groups to **maximize the effectiveness of an instructional technique** can be a powerful tool for both teaching and classroom management.
- **Done without planning** and careful thought, it can also lead to **inefficient, or even destructive** use of teacher and student time.

Powerful Tool



- Maximizes the effectiveness of an instructional technique for both **teaching and classroom management**
- Done without **planning** and careful thought, can lead to inefficient, or destructive use of teacher and student time



3 Learning Group Strategies

Strategy	Problem-Solving Partnerships	Cooperative Teams	Collaborative Groups
Group Size	Two to three students per group.	Three to four students per group.	Three to six students per group.
Duration	Short (part of a class period to a few days).	Ranges from several days to several weeks.	Short (days) or longer (weeks or even months).
Task or Problem	To solve is limited in scope (a single problem or question or a limited set) and is usually a challenge or practice activity for students to apply recent learning.	Clearly defined by the teacher.	Open-ended and may cover large amounts of course content.
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple approaches to solving the problem are encouraged. There is no single "right" way to solve most problems, and all reasonable solutions or answers to the problem are honored. Individual students have an opportunity to explain and discuss their suggested solutions as well as their misconceptions. New understandings are developed by the individual, by the team, and, finally, by the whole class. Group and class discussions (and solutions) provide immediate feedback to the student. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A team plan of operation and goals is specified, and teams are highly structured. Each student has a clearly defined role in the team such as recorder, questioner, and reporter. The teacher takes time to teach each student role. Team members share leadership within the framework of specific roles. All team members must contribute or the team cannot progress. (Teams "win or lose together.") The end product represents the entire team. The team focus is on cooperation as well as on achievement of goals. Awareness of the group process is as important as completing the task. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student roles are flexible and may change throughout the project or assignment. Students observe (and help with) other students' work, and critique, evaluate, explain, and suggest ways for improvement. Open communication and multiple approaches are emphasized. All students are involved in honest discussion about ideas, procedures, experimental results, gathered information, interpretations, resource materials, and their own or other students' work. Students are constantly aware of the collaborative communication process, as well as the product or goals. They know they can change direction to meet goals.

Cooperative Learning Example

- The teacher gives the students a set of generic question stems after instruction
- Students work individually to write their own questions based on the material being covered
- Students do not have to be able to answer the questions they pose
- Grouped into learning teams, each student offers a question for discussion, using the different stems
- Sample question stems:
 - What is the main idea of...?
 - How does...affect...?
 - Explain why...?
 - How are...and...similar?
 - How would I use...to...?
 - What is the best...and why?
 - How does this relate to what I've learned before?
 - What are the strengths and weaknesses of...?
 - What is the difference between... and...?



Collaborative Groups

The essence is team spirit that **motivates** students to contribute to the learning of others on the team:

- **Share ideas** and reinterpret instructions to help each other
- **Convey the idea** that learning is valuable and fun
- **Make predictions or estimations** about a problem, share ideas, or formulate questions
- After working independently, group members might **cooperate** in composing either an oral solution or a written response
- Prove particularly effective for **open-ended** problem-solving investigations
- Come in **all sizes and configurations**, depending on the instructional goal to be achieved
 - Circle Sharing
 - Four Corners

Video Example



Questions to Consider

- How does utilizing the reciprocal teaching strategy assist students with taking ownership of their learning?





Reciprocal Teaching

SAY SOMETHING!

*Be prepared to share your thinking about the text you are reading.
When the teacher says, "Say Something," Turn and talk.*

<p><u>MAKE A PREDICTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I predict that... • I bet that... • I think that... • Since {this} happened, then I bet the next thing to happen will be... • Reading this part makes me think that {this} is about to happen. • I wonder if... 	<p><u>ASK A QUESTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why did... • What's this part about? • How is {this} like {this}? • What would happen if... • Why... • Who is... • What does {this} section mean? • Do you think that... • I don't get this part here...
<p><u>CLARIFY SOMETHING</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oh, I get it... • Now I understand... • This makes sense now... • No, I think that means... • I agree with you. This means... • At first I thought... but now I think... • This part is really saying... 	<p><u>MAKE A COMMENT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is good because... • This is hard because... • This is confusing because... • I like the part where... • I don't like this part because... • My favorite part so far is... • I think that...
<p><u>MAKE A CONNECTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This reminds me of... • This part is like... • {This} character is like {this person} because... • This is similar to... • The differences are... • I also... • I never... • This character makes me think of... • The setting reminds me of... 	<p><u>SUMMARIZE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I learned... • The setting is... • The conflict is... • Somebody, Wanted, But, So Then

Reciprocal Teaching	
Prediction	Question
Clarification	Comment
Connection	Summarization
Bringing it all together...	

Performance-Based Groups

Similar needs benefit from additional support in the completion of a task. **Unlike traditional ability groups**, they form:

- For a short time and respond to the dynamic nature of learning
- For a particular need rather than in response to predetermined performance levels

Provide a means for **increasing students' access** to a particular concept or skill. Strategies include introducing language, using concrete models, playing a concept game for skill practice, or practicing strategies.

- Group Study
- Interview for Options

Student Dyads, or Pairs

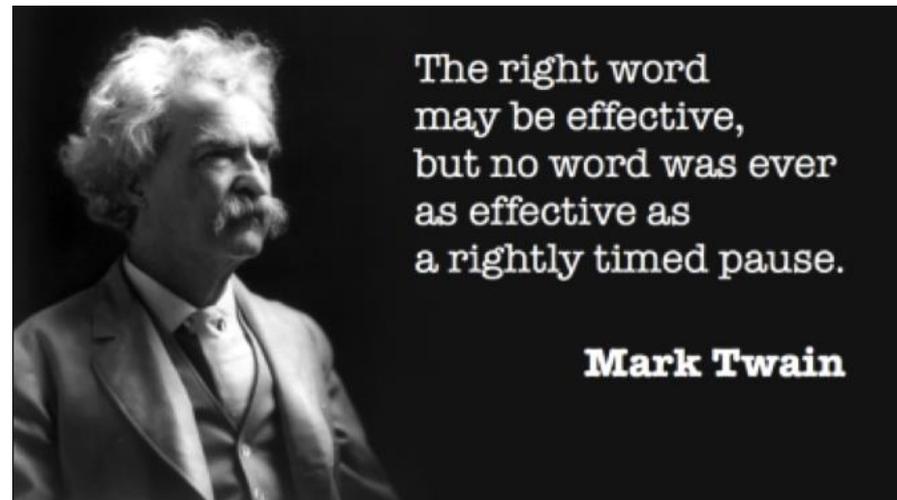
Grouping students in pairs often forms the basis for peer and cross-age programs. Various strategies for use with student pairs.

- Partner Turns
- Think, Pair, Share



2 – Minute Pause

- Take a moment to reflect on the concepts and ideas discussed so far
- Make connections to prior experiences to flexible grouping utilizing one of the following sentence stems:
 - I changed my attitude about...
 - I became more aware of...
 - I was surprised about...
 - I felt...
 - I relate to...
 - I know...
- Report Out



Managing Flexible Groups

- Create a color-coded system or chart
- Give specific instructions
- Post written instructions and expectations
- Model and practice routines and procedures for getting into and out of groups
- Set a specific time limit for completion
 - Alarm or timer
- Implement a student learning log for each group they are working in

Common Characteristics of All Types of Effective Learning Groups

- Work is **challenging and meaningful**
- Teacher is **actively involved** in the students' learning process, serving as a resource, questioner, guide, evaluator, and coach
- **Learning goals and timelines** are clearly understood by the students and monitored by the teacher
- Heterogeneous groups, and all students are **actively involved**
- **Cooperation** is valued over competition
- Have a sense of being able to **accomplish more** learning together than they can alone

Common Characteristics of All Types of Effective Learning Groups

continued

- Group process provides a **comfort level** for discussion and airing questions
- Student **interaction** and social skills are required
- Group time is **not** "free time" for student (or teacher).
- **Multiple means of assessment** are possible (rubrics, portfolios, quizzes, interviews, presentations, etc.)
- **Evaluation** can be of the individual student, of the group, or a combination



Guiding Questions While Planning

- Is this the only way to organize students for this learning?
Do I always teach this way, and if so, why?
- Where in the lesson could I create opportunities for students to work in small groups?
- Would this part of the lesson be more effective as an independent or small-group activity?
- Why do I have the whole class involved in the same activity at this point in the lesson?
- Will I be able to meet the needs of all students with this grouping?
- I've been using a lot of *[insert type of grouping here— whole class, small group, or independent work]* lately. Which type of grouping should I add to the mix?

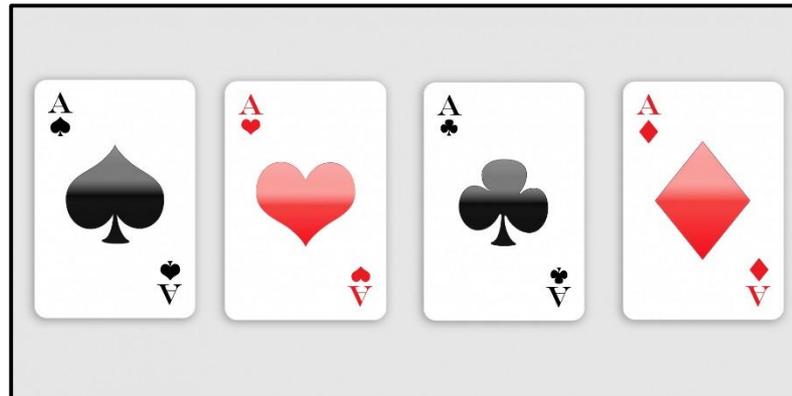
Ways to Group Students Quickly and Effectively

- Interest survey
- Setup an area for groups in your classroom
- Number Pops
- Synonyms
- Group of the Day
- Color Pencils
- Birthday Buddies or season
- Burger Buddies or beverage, type of food
- Genre Groups- books, movies, music, or subjects



Ways to Group Students Quickly and Effectively continued

- Partners- two or three for study groups, or paired reading
- Teams- three or four for hands-on activity to be completed
- Panels- five or six for discussion of written works, hot topics, "what if" scenarios, cause and effect, and problem solving with participation sheet for documentation their feelings, ideas, solutions, etc. for accountability
- Playing cards



Collaborative Structures to Encourage Student Engagement

- Turn and Talk
- Think Pair Share
- Think Write Pair Share
- Write Around
- Write and Show
- Response cards
- Share and add
- Question Cubes
- Question Matrix



10 Principles for Structuring Groups

1. Flow matters for high engagement
2. **Conversation is key** with tasks that require interaction to lead to richer collaboration
3. **Set a clear but open-ended goal** that allow for creativity. If we put students into groups to produce a predetermined outcome, we prevent creative thinking from finding an entry point.
4. Try not announcing time limits it may impede flow and produce lower quality results
5. Do not appoint a group leader they tend to subvert flow unless they participate as an equal, listening and allowing the group's thoughts and decisions to guide the interaction
6. Keep it small

10 Principles for Structuring Groups continued

7. **weave together individual and group work** individual thinking precedes the pooling of ideas in a group setting/ alternating between individual and group work helps keep the work focused
8. **Divide and conquer ≠ collaboration** undermines the thinking that collaboration produces (One individual's thought may inspire another group member's insight, which in turn sparks new concepts for another.)
9. **Think threefold.** Group tasks that produce the best results often have three defining characteristics:
 - Novel
 - Visual component, represented in nonverbal forms
 - Relational, require the combining ideas or components to be accomplished
10. Be complementary of one another

Video Example



Questions to Consider

- Why does Ms. Warburton feel students should work on their own before?



Grouping





**BUILDING CAPACITY
RTI**

Press here to begin presentation.

Using Data to Differentiate Intervention Instruction

A Middle School Example

Click on the left corner of the scroll bar below to stop, start, forward or rewind the presentation at any time.

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Video Example



Questions to Consider

- How were groups determined?
- How were levels of support determined?

The image shows a presentation slide with a dark teal header and footer. The header contains the logo 'BUILDING CAPACITY RTI' on the left and a grey button with the text 'Press here to begin presentation.' on the right. The main content area is white and features the title 'Using Data to Differentiate Intervention Instruction' in orange, followed by the subtitle 'A Middle School Example' in orange. The footer is dark teal and contains two light blue callout boxes: one on the left with instructions for navigation (stop, start, forward, rewind) and one on the right with instructions for closed captioning and audio. A copyright notice '© 2013 University of Texas System/Texas Education Agency' is centered at the bottom of the footer.

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Using Data to Differentiate Intervention Instruction

A Middle School Example

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Instructional Grouping Example

	Decoding	Fluency	Vocabulary and Comprehension
Burton, Sarah			✓
Chang, Eunhae			✓
Figliozi, Peter		✓	✓
Frey, Elizabeth		✓	✓
García, Ricardo	✓	✓	✓
Grice, Patricia		✓	✓
Huy, Ley	✓	✓	✓
Lyman, Scott			✓
Ramsey, Megan		✓	✓
Spielman, Robert			✓
Straubman, Min	✓	✓	✓
Walker, Lillian		✓	✓
Wallace, Amanda			✓

Meeting the Challenges



Group 1: Largest Gaps
Decoding Low
Comprehension Low



Group 2: Moderate Gaps
Decoding Adequate
Vocabulary, Fluency and Comprehension Low



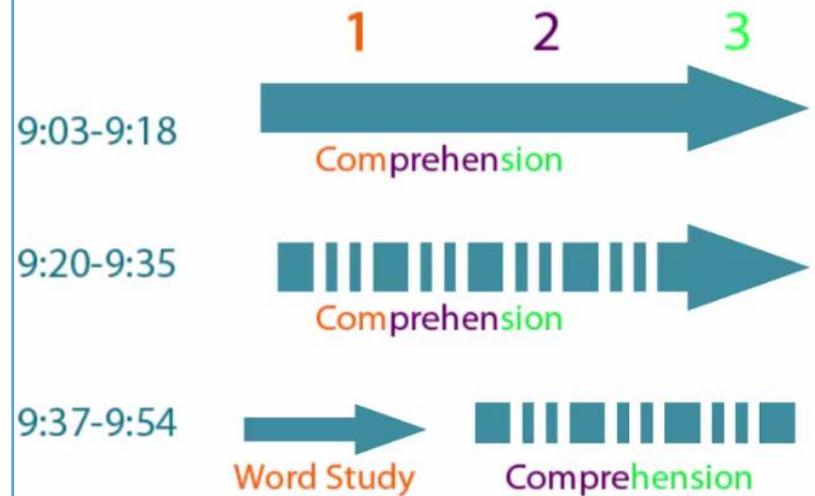
Group 3: Smallest Gaps
Decoding and Fluency Adequate
Vocabulary and Comprehension Low

Grouping Example

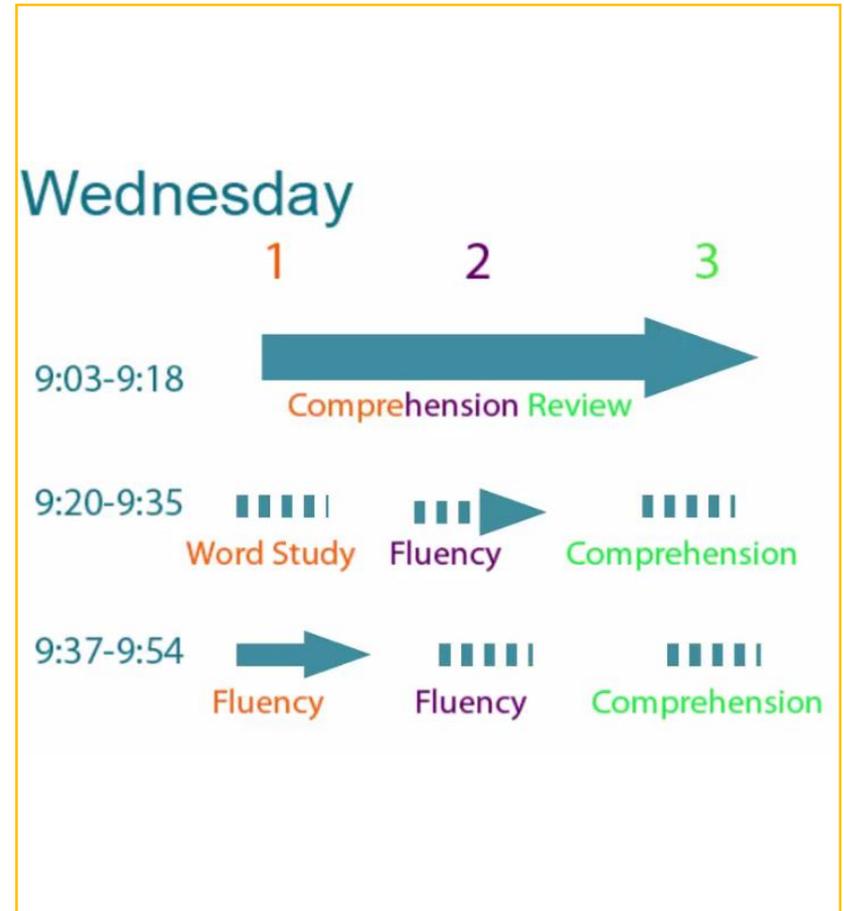
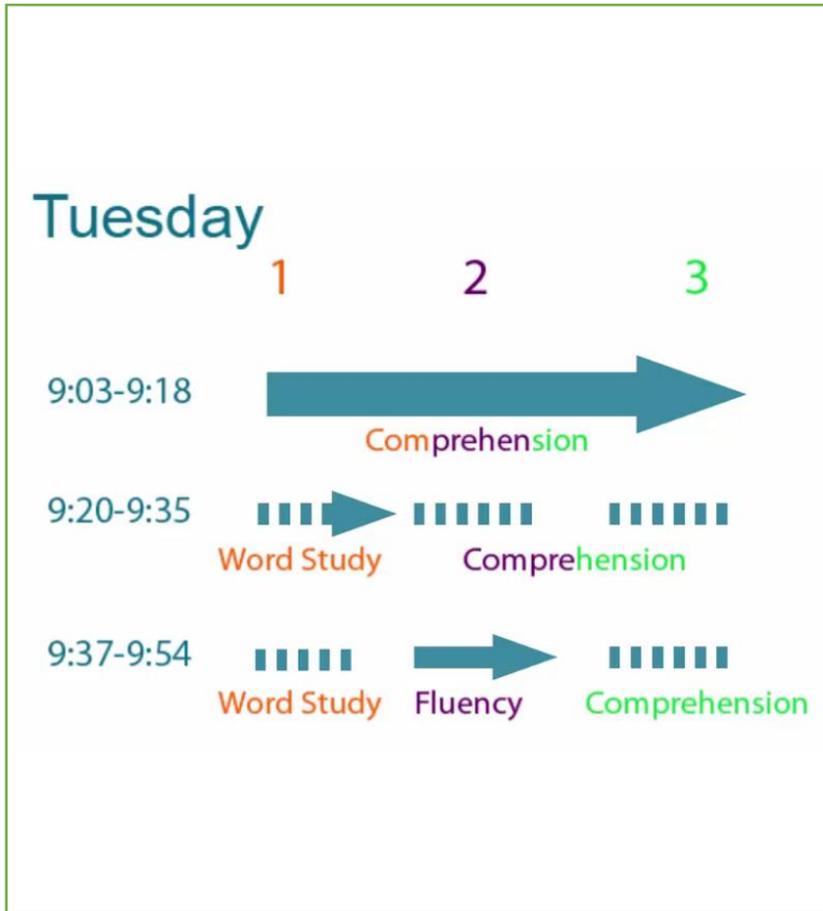
The Different Levels of Support



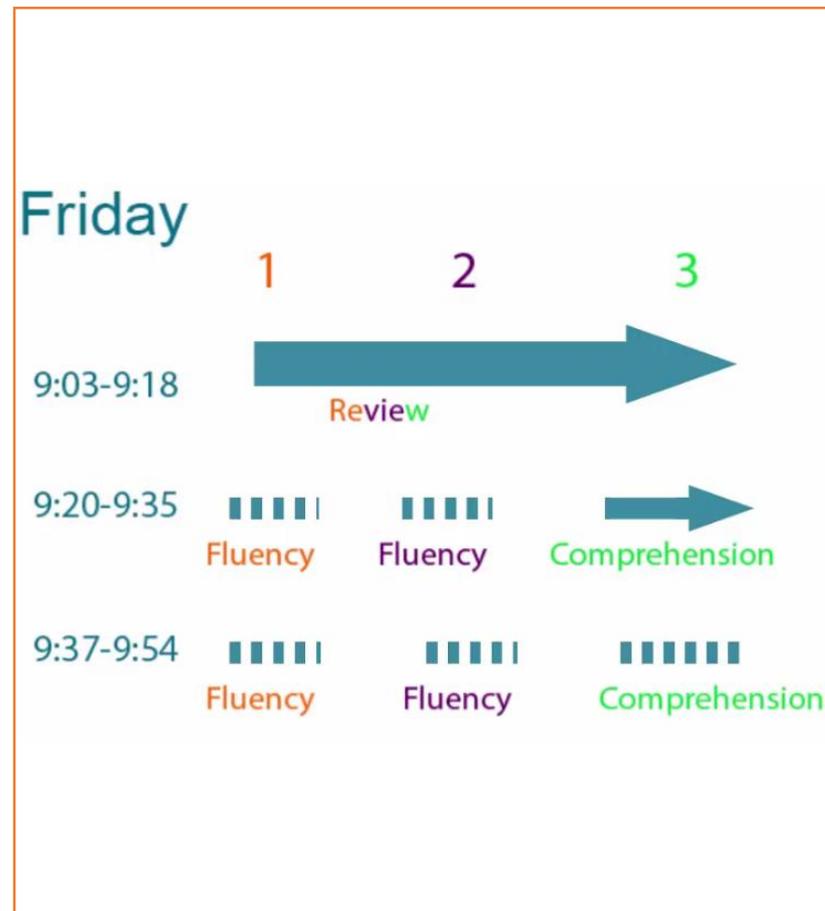
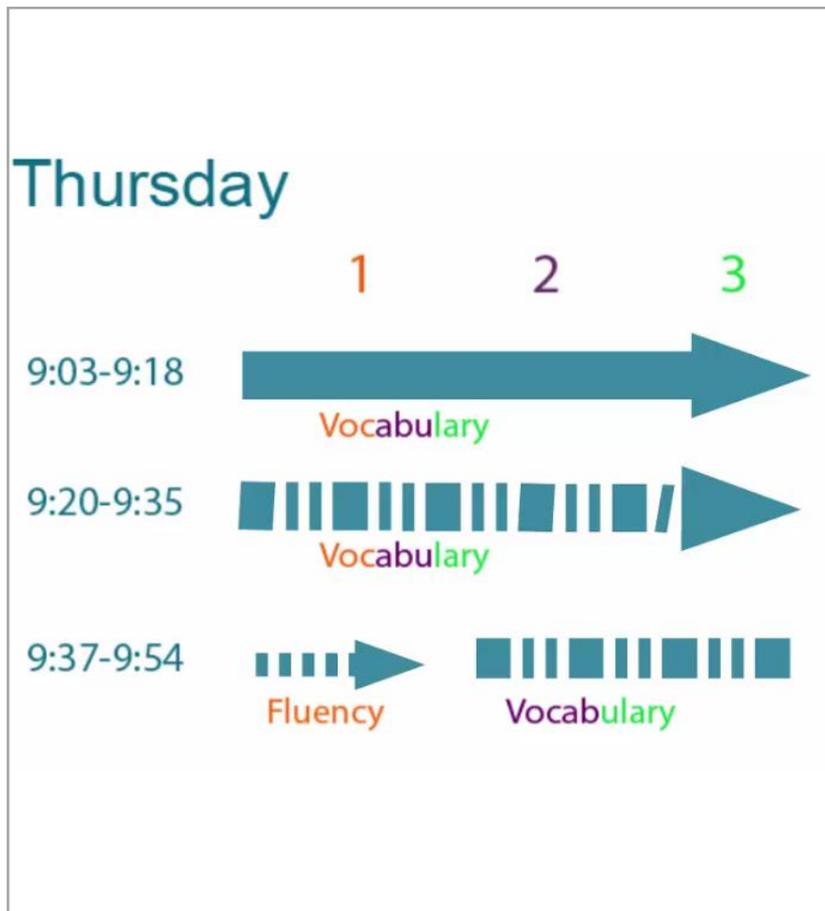
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Grouping Example Continued



Grouping Example Continued



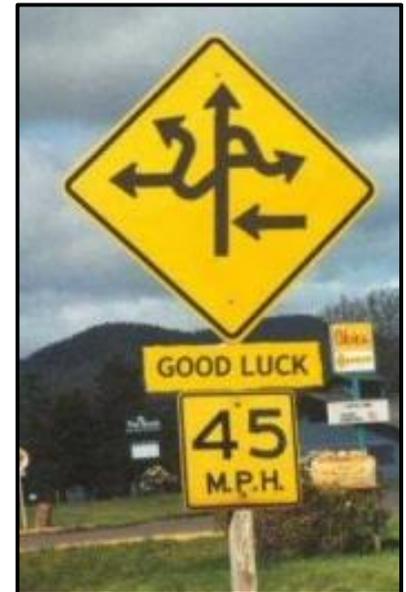
Application





Directions

- Review the handouts
 - Teacher- vs. Student-Led
 - 3 Learning Group Strategies
- Read the “Class Scenario” handout
- Complete the “Student Groups” handout





Flexible Grouping Example

STUDENT GROUPS				
How will students be grouped?				
Group A: ___ 2, 7, 8 _____				
Group B: ___ 1, 3, 4 _____				
Group C: ___ 5, 6, 9 _____				
Group D: _____				
Group E: _____				
What skills will be taught during small group instruction?				
Group A: Decoding	Group B: Syntactic, Vocabulary	Group C: Comprehension	Group D:	Group E:
What resources will be used during small group instruction?				
Group A: Word Sorts of multisyllabic words, Building word knowledge	Group B: Spelling patterns, affixes, Writing accuracy	Group C: Metacognitive strategies, High level reasoning skills, Vocabulary skills, Increase rigor required to excel and achieve grade level standards	Group D:	Group E:
Additional Information: Daily schedule consists of the teacher utilizing a gradual release of responsibility instructional model to rotate groups in order to focus on their needs. Additionally, she ensures she provides time on a daily basis for the <i>Academy of Reading</i> program.				

Reflection

- What is one idea that you could implement in your classroom tomorrow?
- What is the importance of utilizing flexible grouping?



Additional Resources

Visit the Wiki!



HOB-FlexibleGrouping.wikispaces.com

Evaluation



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be

inspired

