 Bright Ideas for Tackling Challenges

Culpeper, VA

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| **Challenge #1:**  Organization of the classroom materials | **Bright Ideas:**   * Post-its and tabs are our friends!! * Add a pocket folder to the front of each teacher binder to place duplicates of important pages you may want to copy or place on the document camera. * Before starting each unit, make multiple copies of all passages and comprehension quizzes. Place the passages where students can easily access them (possibly in a box with clearly labeled folders). Place copies of comprehension quizzes in a master notebook or folder that can be easily accessed and distributed by the teacher. * Teachers can break down the manual and place appropriate sections behind the corresponding daily schedules. |
| **Challenge #2:**  Student absences (especially during the Describe and Model stages) | **Bright Ideas:**   * Videotape your describe and modeling presentations and place the videos in Google classroom for viewing by students as needed. * During warm-ups, provide a quick review of the steps of the strategy, so students who were absent during the Describe Stage can hear the steps and the purpose of each step. Verbal practice can also be conducted during warm-up, independent practice. * Repeatedly embed “mini-models” during guided readings with students. * Develop an absence packet for students who are out a lot. (Review work and extra practice of strategies the student has already learned.) * Refer chronic attendance issues to support staff. |
| **Challenge #3:**  Motivating students | **Bright Ideas:**   * Incorporate tangible positive reinforcements for student achievements. (Examples of reinforcements: edibles such as Jolly Ranchers or non-edibles such as stickers or preferred activities such as sitting in the comfy reading area). * Incorporate a “mystery motivator” for the whole class when the class achieves a specified goal. * Remember the 3-to-1 ratio when providing feedback to students (3 positives for every corrective feedback). * Increase the number of positive social interactions with students. * Have students set measurable targets. * Provide choice – such as letting students choose the passage they want to work on at their assigned levels. * Refer to the motivation chart from the book, *Taking Action on Adolescent Literacy* |
| **Challenge #4:**  Off-task behaviors | **Bright Ideas:**   * Use timers for activities. (Small personal hour-glass timers for individual students and timers with a bell for whole class behaviors.) * Try ideas listed in the “motivating students” section above |
| **Challenge #5:**  Limited time to collaborate | **Bright Ideas:**   * Continue communications via Google Hangout * Extend the timeframe of monthly meeting – get permission to release from duties after school. * Plan agendas for monthly meetings. |
| **Challenge #6:**  Progress Monitoring  (Outside assessments) | **Bright Ideas:**   * Get additional help for administering assessments. * Develop a Google sheet for data collection * Develop an assessment calendar |
| **Challenge #7:**  Book Study | **Bright Ideas:**   * Offer alternative activities (book studies) – check suggestions in Xtreme Google Folder. * Reduce the number of mandatory book studies. Additional book studies could be completed for extra credit. * Do a group book study. * Explain different genres to students. * Provide reading time in class. Require students to bring book study selections to class each day. * Do a book study on a short story. Choose selections such as “The Play Book” – Kwame Alexander. Show his video. |
| **Challenge #8:**  Block Schedule | **Bright Ideas:**   * Combine 2 days of instruction during one block * Set timelines for the units. * Format for the daily schedule includes the following:   + Warm up   + Question of the Day/Would You Rather?   + Strategy Instruction (Review and practice, or verbal practice)   + Guided Reading. |