

# CFIP DATA ANALYSIS MEETING: ENGLISH GRADE 10

*As you read this story about a CFIP data dialogue, notice that there are really three instructional conversations based on data embedded in the CFIP protocol:*

- 1. An analysis of the results of a common performance assessment that was recently administered by team members (CFIP Steps 3-4)*
- 2. A review of the results of the re-teaching and re-assessment conducted since the last CFIP dialogue (CFIP Step 5)*
- 3. A look ahead at a future difficult topic for the students and dialogue on how it might be taught more effectively (CFIP Step 6)*

It's 10 a.m. on a cold mid-January Tuesday morning. Four of the five grade 10 English teachers have common planning time, so, one by one, Marcus, Breanna, Kami, and Roger enter the grade-level conference area.

Each week, all the grade 10 English teachers administer some type of common assessment. Sometimes, it's a district-developed writing prompt or mid-term exam. At other times, the teachers have collaborated to develop their own mini-assessment that focuses on one or two essential common core concepts and skills being taught that week.

Today, the group will be analyzing student performance on a real-world performance task that the district generated modeled after the prototype assessments on the PARCC website. Its focus is on building students' proficiency in synthesizing evidence from multiple texts and writing well-supported arguments. It's Kami's week to be the facilitator for the group, a job they rotate, so she will assume responsibility for session planning and follow-up. Team members have already scored the assessment, based on the rubrics that were provided, and they bring the data to the meeting in "talkable" form.

Participants sit around the table. After "hellos" all around and some good-natured ribbing, they settle in to their use of the Classroom-Focused Improvement Process (CFIP) data analysis protocol. Since Kami is leading the dialogue, Marcus will use his laptop to take notes on the CFIP template used throughout the school. The template was adopted by the faculty to help structure conversations and to result in data-based and actionable conclusions to implement.

As CFIP's first step, the group reviews important information about the assessment that their students just completed, such as the major concepts and skills that

were covered; any “quirks” in the assessment itself, including poorly-worded directions; and student behavior during the test administration that might have influenced their scores, like if a disruption occurred or if there was a fire drill while the test was being given. When they analyze data from the district’s information management system, they also make sure everyone understands what the numbers mean on the data-reporting forms.

Moving on to CFIP’s Step 2, the group posts the question that they want to answer from the data on a big piece of chart paper so it will remain in view. They find that this helps them to focus and keeps “birdwalks” (off-topic conversations) to a minimum. Today’s question is, “How prepared are our students for the PARCC performance assessment that they will take in two months?” Sometimes, the question is as simple as, “What do we know now, that we did not know two weeks ago, about student achievement in \_\_\_\_ (a grade 10 essential English skill or concept)?”

Data are analyzed by the team at as finely a grained level as possible. For this assessment, for example, the group will examine student performance on an essential concept that is integral to the grades 9-10 Maryland Common Core Curriculum Framework.

As they move on to CFIP’s Step 3, the team always starts with the positives. They were pleased to see that there were essential skills (including several writing conventions) in which almost all the students were proficient. They list these on the CFIP template. On the other hand, a few skills “pop out” of the data as still problematic for almost all students, and these are noted on the template as well. Not unexpectedly, these relate to students’ delving deeply into several texts to gather evidence and then using this evidence to support their claims in writing.

Beginning CFIP’s Step 4, the team reflects on why they think students were not successful on these weak skills. They hypothesize that it may be that their in-class expectations were less than those required in the “PARCC-like” assessment and that, while they have been working on “supporting claims with evidence” since the beginning of the year, it appears that the students still need additional time, more focus, and, perhaps, a greater diversity of models in order to internalize and process the new knowledge.

Team members then consider the several options that they face in response to the data. Among them are to:

- Reteach the weak skills to the entire class.

- Integrate the weak skills seamlessly into instruction in their next unit.
- Give students additional practice time -- but no additional instruction -- on the weak skills through drills and warm-up activities.
- Move on to new content, knowing that students will encounter the same skill again later this year or next.

Even though students will encounter “argumentation with evidence” many times during the remainder of the year, because the concept is so central to the Common Core framework, Bre suggests that they reinforce it again with all classes. Others agree, so the group brainstorms ideas to identify an innovative strategy, since their previous approaches have not been as successful as they had hoped. This is always the hardest part of the meeting. It may take several minutes, or even a second session, for them to come to closure, with time in between to investigate best instructional practices.

Eventually, an instructional strategy is decided upon that all team members agree to try in the next two weeks and to track the results. The four realize that this is only one of many times that they will be revisiting this topic before March, and they are going to have to be continually creative to engage the students.

Once the method and time frame have been established for the team’s response to the performance task data, the group moves on to CFIP’s Step 5, the review of the results of their re-teaching of a previous week’s essential skill (separating relevant from irrelevant details). This need evolved from their analysis of a brief writing prompt that everyone used a few weeks ago as an exit ticket.

Team members are pleased that some pupils consistently excel week after week. They discuss briefly how learning will be enriched for these students and how they will be challenged to continue performing at a high level.

On the other hand, team members are not surprised to find that there are a few students who are still not proficient in citing only relevant details, even after the re-teaching. They list these students’ names on the CFIP template and plan to take advantage of the parallel scheduling arrangement to regroup the students by skill needs on Friday.

Because teachers have the autonomy to move students from teacher to teacher for focused, skill-based instruction, there is little talk of “my” students and “your” students. The focus is on the success of all “our” students.

The team decides that Marcus will work with the students who are ready for more sophisticated text, and Bre will teach the large group that seems to just need a little more practice. Roger and Kami will provide intensive tutoring for the students who still “don’t get this ‘argument with evidence’ idea at all,” incorporating many and diverse examples, with the help of special educators, if possible.

The final CFIP step is unique in that it is forward looking and not in response to previous data. So, the team takes the few minutes left in the meeting to preview topics to be taught over the next couple of weeks and to apply their experience and previous years’ assessment results to identify a skill or concept that students always seem to find difficult. The goal is to use the most effective instructional strategy possible with the upcoming tough content so that more students will be successful through the initial teaching, thereby cutting down on the follow-up needed. Since this planning will take a while, they resolve to touch base informally a few times before the next CFIP session, as ideas occur to them.

Finally, as facilitator for the week, Kami takes a quick pulse of the team: “Do we all feel that the meeting was worthwhile?” “What could we do next time to improve the flow or effectiveness of our limited meeting time?”

The planning time is about to end, so the four teammates must rush back to their classrooms. While the team will not formally get together for another data dialogue for two weeks, there will probably be several instructionally-oriented conversations “on the fly,” as two or three teachers meet in the faculty room or while on hall duty.

Marcus will finalize notes on the CFIP template and e-mail it immediately to the team members so they can follow-up, as well as to their colleague who is not available this period to join the meeting. A copy will also go to the assistant principal, from whom they usually get positive feedback, offers of support, or specific suggestions of resources that they had not considered.