



SHELL
EDUCATION

Instructional Coaches & Classroom Teachers

Sharing the Road to Success



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Foreword by Ellin Oliver Keene

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Starting Down the Yellow Brick Road

Thoughts About Coaching

- Coaching is about communication.
- Coaching is about sharing visions to improve student achievement.
- Coaching is about the desire to be inspired and to be inspiring.
- Coaching is about professional growth—not performance, supervision, or evaluation.

Some Observations About Teaching and Coaching



A teacher was standing in front of his class sharing the exciting news that he had been contacted by the local TV station. The station wanted to do a story about teachers who go above and beyond their duties to make learning come alive for their students. He explained that the story would cover the field trip he had planned for the class. He began to expound on the details of their upcoming trip to the zoo. He was recounting an exhaustive list of preparations he had completed to ensure the outing was educational as well as a memorable once-in-a-lifetime event. His enthusiasm was inspired by the intense effort he had put into each and every detail. He shared with his students a schedule for the day that included an exciting tour of the zoo guided by a world-renowned expert, an opportunity to assist the zookeeper in caring for and feeding the animals, and eating lunch in the aviary. As he came to a close, he waited expectantly for a response. As the class remained silent, a voice in the back said, “Yeah, but what’s in it for us?”



Can you relate to this scenario? As teachers, we are often frustrated when students seem to miss the point and purpose of our efforts, which is to serve them in ways that are beneficial to them. However, they have to be willing learners for the actions we take to move them to a desired outcome. A willing learner has to be able to answer the compelling question, “What’s in it for

me?”

Coaches, like teachers, have similar experiences. Many teachers operate with this same query when confronted with opportunities to work with a coach. Teachers want to see the purpose and point of it all. With no time or energy to spare, they want answers to “What’s in it for me?” This is an important question to consider before any effective work with a coach can begin. By effective work we mean work that will result in profit and gain for both students and teachers.

The vignette on page 19 illustrates the hard work and effort that teachers contribute in order to make their instruction meaningful, even though it goes unrecognized by the students. This also occurs with coaches. They spend endless hours preparing, reading, researching, and practicing new ideas before entering into a coaching relationship with fellow educators. But we know that regardless of their efforts, the question “What’s in it for me?” still needs to be answered. This question is one that both teacher and coach need to consider.

Let’s begin to answer that question by relating it to a condition we all experience in our schools today—stress over testing. It seems that an enormous amount of our time with students is spent administering test after test after test. It is easy to become so involved with meeting deadlines for mandated testing and reporting that we ignore the real benefit that can be reaped from these assessments. The real and true purpose for testing is not to render judgment, but rather to seek information that will assist us in serving our students. However, the real purpose can get lost in the task if we fail to retrieve what’s in it for teachers and students.



Test Anxiety: A Coach’s Story

Allow us to share a story that one of our coaches, Mary Kelley, shared with us. Many of the schools in our district are part of a Reading First Grant. One of the grant requirements is to test children three to four times each year with DIBELS® (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) assessments to screen students for risk level and for progress-monitoring purposes. Mary was administering the Nonsense Word Fluency test to kindergartners. One little boy sat down to be tested, looking morose and sad. When Mary attempted to diffuse his anxiety, he told her he needed to share something really bad with her. She replied she would be happy to let him share anything he wanted. He leaned in close and put his hand against his face to shield his words from

going anywhere except directly into her ear. With a little lisp he reported, “Sometimes I get my *b*’s and *d*’s mixed up.” Mary smiled and giggled and shared back in a dramatic whisper, “That’s okay. Sometimes I do, too!” He looked at her with grave surprise and asked, “Is that okay?” She nodded and shared that she was still learning, too. She just needed to see what he already knew so his teacher would know what to teach him next. He smiled a grateful smile, and they began the task of testing. When he came to the word *dak*, he pronounced with great confidence, “dak!” and then quickly looked up with questioning eyes and said, or “bak?”



Isn’t the little guy in our story adorable? We bet you have no problem relating to that situation. We all agree with the importance of clearly communicating the purpose of testing to our students. We want them to believe and understand that we do not expect perfection. We only expect an honest effort that will help us determine a plan of action that will meet their specific needs.

Student anxiety over test performance is a direct parallel to the anxiety most teachers experience about coaching. You may at times feel just like the boy in the story we shared. You may be thinking that you must be perfect before sharing your teaching skills with a coworker. This is a huge misconception. Coaching is *not* about performance. It is instead about professional study and growth. The purpose of coaching is exactly the same purpose we have for serving our children. In coached lessons, the goal is for honest reflection that will help determine the next steps in our growth and development as teachers.

Think of coaching as your own private access to action research—research you get to design, implement, and use as you see fit to achieve what you desire for your classroom. We will address this and other prevalent misconceptions about coaching in [Chapter Three](#). Feel free to skip to that chapter now if you must—if not, let’s embark on a journey of discovering why coaching is exactly what you have been seeking your entire teaching career. Let’s begin by sharing a bit of fun.



A friend of mine had just described his vacation experiences.

“It sounds as if you had a great time in Texas,” I observed. “But didn’t you tell me you were planning to visit Colorado?”

“Well, we changed our plans because, uh...”

His wife cut in, “Oh tell the truth, Fred!” He fell silent and she continued, “You know, it’s just ridiculous. Fred simply will not ask for directions!” (Morgan 1981, 54)



Sound silly? Of course it does. But may we be reminded of how easy it is to recognize the folly of others while our own folly remains hidden from our conscious view. As educators, we also lose our way. Our illustration serves an important purpose. We all agree that we have a definite place where we want to arrive with our students. Though there may be more than one way to travel, we must be careful that we stay on a course that will in fact lead us to our desired destination. We need a map, yes, but we also need outside help to read our map and apply it to our navigational skills (teaching). We need help to ensure that we are traveling the *best* route possible to our destination. This book is designed to help you find the support you need in order to arrive at your desired destination feeling *fully* alive, healthy, and satisfied!

“Teaching is too tough to go it alone,” writes Regie Routman (2000, xlii). Anyone out there agree that teaching is tough? It *is* tough and seems to get tougher each year.

Teachers and Lawyers: Cheryl’s Story

I recently met a friend of my husband who was formerly a teacher. He returned to law school and now works for a prestigious law firm. This firm is known for riding its attorneys for every minute of life it can get from them. When he found out I was a teacher, he literally bowed to me. He turned to his colleague and said, “You know, as hard as we work, I have never worked harder than when I was a teacher!”

We *do* work hard! How many times have you felt bewildered, overwhelmed, and alone in your efforts to surmount the endless tasks of teaching? You work tirelessly and yet often feel you fail miserably in meeting the needs of your students. Do you ever feel scared—like you’re the only one who doesn’t know how to do this all perfectly? Do you ever wonder what is wrong with you as you watch colleagues arrive and leave on time while your day stretches hours beyond what you are paid to work?

This is what this book is all about—recognizing what we *all* feel, fear, and often try to hide inside. This job—this calling, this profession—is bigger than we ever dreamed it would be. It is in fact bigger than all of us. We need the

help and companionship of others to navigate the increasingly complex profession called teaching. “We read so we know we are not alone,” wrote a student of C.S. Lewis in the movie *Shadowlands* (1993). Many of us do feel alone in our fears and frustrations. Might we be so bold as to suggest that a direct benefit of coaching is to know you are *not* alone? Isn’t it a comfort to know there is someone willing to walk with us, learn with us, struggle with us, and celebrate with us? We can learn much—if we are open to it—from the wisdom of others. We can come to learn in new ways and strengthen and revitalize our teaching (Routman 1996). If you ever find the going too tough to go it alone, then this book is for you.

Okay—so maybe we have your attention. You agree, but so what? How can a book change anything? You are so right! A book, a program, a mandate might pose reasons or requirements for doing certain things, but that is not what drives us to embrace the need for growth and change. We may go through the motions of changing practice, but if we see no real purpose for our students or ourselves, it will be just that—meaningless motions.



This story comes to us through oral tradition. Imagine the following scene:

A mother is in the kitchen preparing the traditional ham dinner for a family gathering. Her young daughter is looking on as she works. The mother carefully slices off one end of the ham. The daughter asks, “Mommy, why do you have to cut the end of the ham like that?” The mother replies, “I learned how to cook a ham from your aunt, and that is the way she always did it.”

“Oh, I see,” says the daughter.

The next day at the family gathering, the daughter saw her aunt and asked, “Auntie, why do you have to cut the end of the ham off before you cook it?”

The aunt responded, “I learned to cook from your grandmother and that’s the way she always did it.”

Can you guess what happens next? You got it. The girl’s grandmother arrives, so she implores in the same manner, “Grandma, why do you have to cut the end of the ham off before you cook it?” Looking puzzled, the grandmother looks around the room at her daughters and granddaughter. The aunt speaks up and says, “You know, Mom...how you taught me to always cut off the end of the ham when you were cooking a big ham for our family gatherings.” The grandmother smiled sheepishly and said, “Well I don’t know why you do it, but I always had to do it because my pan was too short!”



We laugh at this mindless mimicry, but don't we all fall prey to similar behaviors? In the day-to-day pressures, we often find ourselves going through similar motions of empty practice. We want to help you move beyond mindless motions to purposeful practice, help you embrace what you do each day with a true commitment of mind, heart, and soul, and help you find your way to a practice of teaching that will rekindle your passion for what you do. Isn't it time to recapture the vision you held when you first made the sacred commitment to enter the classroom? Let's start the journey to that very destination now.

Mapping Our Way to Coaching

The first step we must take in order to operate at the mind, heart, and soul level of teaching is to have confidence that what we are doing will in fact create the desired positive change in our students. It is the teaching with purpose that will make the difference. Without a clear purpose, you have no foundation on which to base your decisions, allocate your time, and use your resources. You will tend to make choices based on circumstances, pressures, and your mood at that moment. People who don't know their purpose try to do too much, and that causes stress, fatigue, and conflict (Warren 2002).

Does any of this have a familiar ring? It's not that teachers aren't willing to work hard. It's not that teachers aren't willing to do enough. We believe teachers *are* willing to change their practices when they can see that it benefits their students. We believe it is every teacher's desire to see each day as a day of reckoning where we reconcile our actions with the desired end results. It is our ability to maintain *this* vision for success that will move us to refine and revise practice appropriately. However, desire is not enough—we must transform the desire into action. Are you with us so far?



Reflection

Take a moment to jot down some notes in a journal about what you may be thinking and feeling so far. You can use these thoughts to guide you later.

Okay, so we may have the desire to change, and we realize we need to take action. This, folks, is where the proverbial rubber hits the road. Schmoker observes, "The problem is not that we do not know enough—it is that we do

not *do what we already know*. We do not act on or refine or apply those principles and practices that *virtually every teacher already knows*" (2005, 148). So why don't we *do what we know*? Because it simply isn't that easy—that's why!

Has this ever happened to you? You go to a workshop and the trainers provide some terrific new ways of teaching that excite you. They cite the research that supports their training and you heartily agree. You agree because you see the evidence of that research in your students every day! You get all fired up and determine you will turn a new leaf—add a new dimension to your teaching. Your enthusiasm grows as your thoughts, beliefs, and feelings converge together in agreement with what is presented. You leave the workshop full of inspiration and conviction for what you will do differently with your students. Then something happens on your way back to the classroom that causes you to forget your new convictions and passion. Or, you actually make it back to your classroom with these passionate convictions and plans intact, but something happens as you try to put those plans into action. You believe it *could* make a difference, but now you don't know how in the world to begin. How do you change your classroom instruction and routines to support what you want to do? How can you possibly add one more thing to an already overstuffed day? What will you remove? How will you get this to actually work with the diverse and challenging group of kids sitting before you? You may find yourself giving up before you even get started. Or, you may take that courageous leap but somehow what you imagined would happen with your kids is not at all what plays out in your first attempts. You give up, thinking that either you are not capable, your students are not capable, or perhaps both. Discouraging, isn't it? After a few experiences like this, you may give up completely. In fact, you just might become so jaded that you can no longer embrace new ideas even at the knowledge or thought level.

You are not alone in this dilemma of heart, mind, and spirit. We can agree with research and have a burning desire to change, but the knowing and agreeing (though necessary) are not sufficient to make the intended change. It is the "how to do it" that trips us up, frustrates us, and, more often than not, chases us back to our old and familiar ways.

We believe that working with a coach is an obvious solution to this dilemma. This concept of coaching seems to be reaching mass proportions today. We have worked with our coaching project since 1999. We continue to reflect and ponder how we can make our project truly serve the intended end users—teachers. As we have wrestled with this issue, we have read books and articles and read even *more* books and articles. We have come to a startling

realization along the way. All the books we find are written to the audience of coaches or those who would administrate a coaching initiative. We think the most important audience has been left out of the loop—the teachers! In discussing the idea of writing a book, we agreed on one condition—that it would be written for teachers. We are part of a growing chorus of writers who recognize the critical role for teachers in professional learning activities (Darling-Hammond 1997; DuFour 2005; Little 1990, 2007; Lortie 1975; Schmoker 2005). For example, Schmoker notes, “Teachers do not learn best from outside experts or by attending conferences or implementing ‘programs’ installed by outsiders. Teachers learn best from other teachers, in settings where they literally teach each other the art of teaching” (2005, 141).

Although we believe coaching is a viable vehicle, we also realize it is still an oft-misunderstood and mistrusted concept. We find it interesting that in the sports and entertainment fields, it is accepted practice to hire the best coach money can buy in order to take individuals to the maximum level of performance. Athletes and performers *expect* coaching to be part of a successful career path. Isn’t it about time that teachers expect this and even demand this for themselves as well? Isn’t it ridiculous to think that this critical support would only be made available to those who are charged with entertaining us, while ignoring the needs of those in charge of our very future? We hope our time together in this book will help move teachers from fearing what coaching might do *to* them to discovering the possibilities and power coaching offers *for* them. We hope to leave you wondering how anyone could think it possible to ever be without a coach!

“One of the beauties of teaching is that there is no limit to one’s growth as a teacher, just as there is no knowing beforehand how much your students can learn.”

—Herbert Kohl

What Coaching Can Do for You

Let’s start our work together by helping you answer the important question of “What’s in it for me?” Since we know the dangers of relying on mere opinion, let’s start with some research that will hopefully begin to build your level of confidence in this thing called coaching. Our coaching project began as a response to a requirement to increase districtwide efforts to meet the

needs of struggling readers in K–2 classrooms. Many options and plan designs were considered, but the research of Joyce and Showers prompted our district to move in a new direction (1988; 2002). Their research indicated that coached support was necessary to ensure that teachers implemented new curriculum and teaching models into general practice and thereby influenced students’ learning environments (Joyce and Showers 1988). Sound familiar? This research focused on the experience we just discussed about the difficulties of taking new information from training into the classroom where it can actually work to positively impact student achievement.

The research of Joyce and Showers reveals that it takes greater support than the traditional “sit and get” workshop to implement changes. Some of these findings are summarized in [Table 1.1](#). Let’s take a look at what this research reveals.

Table 1.1 Teacher Effectiveness Steps

Training Steps	Knowledge Mastery (%)	Skill Acquisition (%)	On-the-Job Application (%)
Theory	Middle to High 85	Low 15	Very low 5–10
Theory and Demonstration	High 85	Low to Middle 18	Very Low 5–10
Theory, Demonstration, and Practice/Feedback	High 85	High 85	Very Low 10–15
Theory, Demonstration, Practice/Feedback, and Coaching	High 90	High 90	High 80–90

Based on Joyce, B., and B. Showers. 2002. *Student achievement through staff development*. 3rd ed. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.

[Table 1.1](#) clearly illustrates that when teachers attend a presentation that only delivers theory, their knowledge may grow, but the new knowledge does not increase their skills and has minimal application in the classroom. When staff developers add demonstration or modeling during the training session, teachers are able to implement new knowledge and skill at the workshop, but very seldom transfer the new knowledge and skill to their classroom practice. When teachers are allowed time to actually practice and receive immediate feedback from trainers and peers during the training session, the skill level of the teacher grows dramatically. However, the skill level still does not transfer

to any significant degree in their classroom. The researchers found that the key to realizing successful use of new knowledge and skills in the classroom is the support of a colleague (a coach) in the classroom setting. By working with a coach when implementing new practices, the teacher has the opportunity to see it modeled in their particular classroom with all the realities and challenges that face them each day. It is at this point that attending training actually makes a difference for the students.



Reflection

Take a few minutes to think about issues you have faced when trying to implement new skills, strategies, and methods you acquired in a workshop training model. How does your experience compare to the aspects of effectiveness shown in [Table 1.1](#)?



Coaching Results in One School District

The School District of Hillsborough County, where we have both worked as teachers and coaches, instituted a program of onsite staff development in 64 elementary schools and two early-childhood centers. The program was in place throughout 2000–2001 and continues today. Thirty-two K–2 reading coaches served these schools, as well as two other reading coaches who worked in an additional four schools for part of the year. Each reading coach was typically assigned to two elementary schools geographically close to one another; the two principals collaborated in selecting the reading coach.

During 2000–2001, the district conducted an evaluation of the impact of the coaching project on student reading achievement. After one year of implementing the K–2 Reading Coach Project in schools with highest need, we were able to obtain evidence that the support of a coach had a positive effect on student achievement (Albritton 2001). The evaluation used two complementary achievement tests: the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), a criterion-referenced test, and the Stanford Achievement Test, 9th Edition (Stanford-9), which is the district’s norm-referenced achievement test. Existing test data primarily required for evaluation of the Title VI Class Size Reduction (CSR) program were also used. It is noteworthy that considerable overlap exists between CSR sites and schools served by the K–2 reading coaches.

At the first-grade level, students typically performed at kindergarten or early preprimer instructional reading levels on the pre-test DRA in the fall of 2000. By spring 2001, the scores were distributed so as to resemble a normal curve ranging from zero to 44 (fifth-grade level) with the most frequent score at level 18 (early second grade). The same pattern of low levels of achievement on the DRA pretest and widely distributed levels of achievement on the post-test held up for all ethnic groups, for boys and girls, and for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students. Similarly, a wide range of achievement on the post-test was evident at all sites where the DRA was administered.

Similar findings were evident in the results from the Stanford-9 administered in the first and second grades. At the first-grade level, 5,651 students in 61 schools with K–2 reading coaches and a free/reduced-price lunch eligibility rate of 69.7 percent attained scores comparable to average students in the nation. Similar results were found with students in the second grade.

Based on this evidence, the district recommended continuing the K–2 Reading Coaches Initiative and, when possible, expanding the number of schools assigned a reading coach. Additional recommendations related to continued administration of the DRA and the Stanford-9 as part of the evaluation of the Reading Coaches Initiative. There was also consideration of how to use the DRA more widely throughout the district by determining what other personnel could be trained to use the assessment in schools where no reading coach was assigned.



Moving Ahead on the Yellow Brick Road

Still not convinced you should work with a coach? Maybe we can help you think differently by using an analogy most people can easily relate to. Many of you either have experienced or will come to a time in your life when you will be responsible for teaching a teenager to drive.

Teaching My Daughter to Drive: Cheryl's Story

When my daughter, Emily, was ready to drive, much had been learned from the experience of teaching my two sons, Kyle and Curt. I decided we would really do it right this time. The teacher/coach in me would not allow me to repeat my past failed attempts with my older children. After much reflection, I decided to

follow the model for teaching I used in my classroom. The model of I do/We do/You do became a focus for how we would approach the fearsome task before us. The first thing I did differently was to have Emily start watching me as I drove. The radio was silenced and she had to endure lengthy and detailed explanations of my ongoing thinking process when driving. (As you can imagine, she just loved this!) Once satisfied that she understood the thinking process, my husband, Doug, took her to the parking lot of her high school for her first experience behind the wheel. We wanted her to get comfortable with the car and how it functions without any distractions. Once she knew how to stop, start, and turn in isolation from other factors, we began to let her practice on roads. These first trials of driving occurred in our neighborhood. She eventually became very efficient and confident in this protected and mild setting. Now, wouldn't you think we were insane if we withdrew our support at this point? Think how dangerous it would have been for her (and all of you out on the road as well) if we had said, "Emily, you are doing a great job in the parking lot and an adequate job in the neighborhood. We know you will someday want to go other places, and there are highways, freeways, and interstates that will take you anywhere you want to go. So good luck, sweetie!" How silly it would be to withdraw our support at the point when it was needed most.

Think of learning new strategies and techniques for teaching in the same manner as Emily learning to drive a car. The workshop setting is your parking lot and neighborhood driving experience. It is devoid of the realities of teaching. When you attempt to implement the new practice in your classroom, you have now entered the highway. Though your destination may not have changed, you are now traveling on unfamiliar roads and learning to use a new vehicle to get there. The turn signals are not where you are used to finding them, and the traffic is horrendous (or it is moving so fast that you can barely keep up!). You need a navigator at first to help you arrive with all passengers alive. It does indeed feel like survival the first few times out. It all feels awkward and new. You feel lucky to have arrived alive!

"The disposition for teaching is two percent inborn and ninety-eight percent reinvented every day of one's career."

—Susan Ohanian

This, our friends, is the point where the juncture for success or abandonment of changed practice will occur. It feels terrible to do things less than perfectly. That is why most people turn back from promising practice. It feels too much like failure, and we succumb to fear. Steve Barkley (2005), executive vicepresident of Performance Learning Systems, describes this as an event that should be expected and is a natural part of changing and improving practice. When working with our principals and coaches in our district, he suggested that principals should look for one important piece of evidence to ensure that the coach was being accessed and used by teachers. The sure sign of evidence he shared is that the instructional delivery will look worse before it gets better. He reminded us that without an awkward period of adjustment, no real stretch occurs and there is no need to work with a coach. The easy change is done naturally by teachers and can be accomplished in solo fashion. It is the hard work of meaningful change to purposeful practice that can only be accomplished in the company of a trusted colleague—a coach.

Let's continue using the analogy of the student driver to get you thinking about coaching as a vehicle to assist you in reaching your desired destination. There is one tremendous understanding that needs to occur in order to move forward in your thinking and your practice of working in a coaching situation. You must understand that both the coach and the teacher are simultaneous learners and experts. You, the teacher, are in control of the learning experience. You get to decide when it is more helpful to be in the driver's seat and when you will receive greater benefit from the coach taking the wheel as you sit in the role of observer.

We will discuss the different models for working with a coach in a later chapter. For now, we hope you see that working with a coach is not about outside evaluation, but rather a thoughtful, reflective process that works from within. This process will guide you in pinpointing what is working well, and it will help you identify places in which you wish to see greater benefit for your students and yourself. We want you to embrace the real and true purpose of coaching, which is *not* to render judgment, but rather to seek information that will help you realize your vision and goals for your students. With this understanding established, we strongly believe coaching will be the vehicle employed by teachers who want to capitalize on the opportunity to make a difference for children. It is sacred ground we traverse. We invite you to use the questions at the end of the chapter as a guide for personal reflection or with trusted colleagues you have invited to travel with you as you begin your journey.



Communication and sharing lead to positive coaching experiences.

Let the research affirm you as a teacher. Let the message about the need for coaching revitalize your self-confidence as a teacher. You can now release all failed attempts and recognize there was nothing wrong with your students or your abilities. You were just missing an important and necessary element for making desired change happen—a coach.

Teachers Talk About Coaching Experiences

Read the following testimonials from teachers to learn more about their coaching experiences.

“Working with my coach really frustrated me at times. She kept wanting to explore what could be done with a few students in my classroom that I felt were beyond my ability to help. She was insistent. Though I walked away from her a few times feeling really frustrated, I am glad she persisted. We kept trying one thing after another and I finally did see improvement. Our screening and progress monitoring began to prove these children could make progress. I was finally convinced.” (Amanda Madunic, First-Grade Teacher, West Tampa Elementary)

“Being new to the district, I was unfamiliar with the instructional models. I grabbed my coach and said, “You have got to help me.” She helped me dig myself out when I got stuck. Making me talk it out helped me think it out. She helped by not giving me the answers but getting me to think it out. We ended up being great friends over time. It was the best situation I’ve been in during my teaching career—having that open relationship.” (Emily Joseph, ESE

Teacher)

“I had to have someone start with me at ‘square one.’ If I had not had my coach, I would have had no idea where to begin.” (Sam Williams, Alternatively Certified Kindergarten Teacher)

“I had three coaches over time. At first I was afraid. Once I understood the purpose, I relaxed. The jitters left over time. With more contact, a relationship began to build through our conversations. We eventually became friends.” (Cathy Tirpak, Third-Grade Teacher)

“The real difference was that my coaches didn’t try to solve my problems but helped reveal the answers within me. Sometimes the lessons that failed were the ones we learned the most from together.” (Jennifer McCrystal, Former Third-Grade Teacher Who Became a Reading Coach)



Reflection

Take a moment to respond to the testimonials of teachers who felt more than a bit skittish at the outset but who have moved to trust coaching and now embrace the work with their coaches as a necessary dimension of teaching.

Then, using thoughts you captured along the way, reflect on what has been shared about the purpose of coaching to complete the statement below:

I can grow and improve my instructional practice best in the company of others—especially a coach. The first step I will take is...

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