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Full Day Teacher's Revision Workshop

**Title:** Nonfiction Revision for Every Educator—Strategies and Exercises for Helping Students of Any Subject Succeed

**Synopsis:** This full-day professional development workshop will provide teachers with a deeper understanding of the goals of revision and offer a practical and effective toolbox to help them teach revision skills to their students.

**Audience:** Primarily grades 3 through high school, but almost every educator will benefit from this workshop. Writing and reading teachers, of course, will learn new revision strategies to pursue their goals, but the workshop also aims to help any other educator whose students must write in class. One of the underlying assumptions of the workshop is to share knowledge, concepts, and lessons with educators who may not be writers themselves. In this way, teachers of history, political science, art, and other disciplines will all learn skills to help their students succeed in their writing.

**More Detailed Description:** This workshop is planned for approximately six hours with a one-hour break for lunch and shorter breaks as needed. About one-third of the time will be spent on presenting key revision concepts, but an emphasis will be placed on hands-on practice. This practice will consist of an entertaining mix of revision exercises that will tap into essential elements of the revision process. Exercises will focus primarily on revising the paragraph, the foundation for all great writing—and, as it happens, the most effective unit to focus on in teaching students. Participants will write their own paragraphs during the workshop, but will also be encouraged to bring one or two writing examples from their own students. We will revise these as a group using a document projector, giving invaluable practice in working with a variety of revision challenges.

**Outline:**

Hour 1

\* Quick word revision exercise—strengthening verbs

\* Introduction to Revision

1. What is revision

2. Why it’s important

3. Why it’s so challenging to teach

\* How real writers revise

BREAK

Hour 2

\* Quick sentence revision exercise—varying sentence lengths

\* Preparing for revision

1. Creating an environment that supports revision

2. Helping students create a vision for their work (choosing and narrowing down a topic; picking a thesis statement)

3. The many rewards of research

\* Exercise: using research on golden toads to pick a topic and a thesis statement

Hour 3

\* Exercise: Researching the Galapagos (with PowerPoint adventure)

1. Taking research notes during our adventure

2. Narrowing down a topic

3. Writing a paragraph, leading to our afternoon focus on paragraph revision

BREAK FOR LUNCH

Hour 4

\* Introduction to focusing on paragraph revision

1. What a paragraph is

2. Why it is the most efficient thing to work on with students

3. Why paragraph revision is so important

a. everything essential happens in a paragraph

b. if students can learn to create a good paragraph, they can write just about anything

\* **A three-step approach to revising paragraphs**

Step 1: Figure out what a paragraph is about. What is its point or purpose? Where is the thesis sentence?

Step 2: Make a paragraph make sense: the Number 1 goal of any nonfiction paragraph!

Step 3: Make a paragraph more fun.

\* Exercise: applying the three steps to “Joe Paragraph”

BREAK

Hours 5 & 6

\* Exercises: applying the three steps to multiple real student paragraph examples

\* Begin using the three steps on the teachers’ paragraphs and the paragraphs they brought with them.

\* Closing thoughts

**Equipment and Materials to be Provided by Host:**

\* 10-15 page handout packets (to be copied by the host)

\* Paper and pens/pencils for every participant

\* Computer and projection system set up for PowerPoint presentations

\* A document projector

\* Big white boards (if available, but can use document projector if necessary)

\* Optional: copies of Sneed’s book, *Teaching Nonfiction Revision*,for every participant.