

Teacher Focus Group Guide

Hello, I am _____ and this is _____. We are researchers from NORC at the [University of Chicago/TIES] and we are conducting an evaluation of Minnesota Reading Corps (MRC) for the Corporation for National and Community Service. As part of this evaluation, we are conducting focus groups with Pre-K and K-3 teachers who participate in the MRC program at [name of site/school] in order to find out more about your role in the MRC, how it is implemented at this [site/school], and your satisfaction with the program. The information we will gather in this session will help the Corporation strengthen the MRC program.

The information we gather is strictly confidential; you will not be identified by name in any reports. Participation is voluntary. You are not required to participate and you do not need to answer any question that you are not comfortable with. The focus group will last about 45 minutes. If you have questions about the study after this interview, please contact the Project Director, Carrie Markovitz, at 301-634-9388. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this research project, please call the NORC Institutional Review Board Administrator at 866-309-0542.

OK. We are now ready to start. We would like for everyone to participate in the discussion, but you don't have to talk in any particular order.

First of all, please introduce yourselves. Let's go around the roomThank you.

I'd like to start by asking you some questions about how long have you been a teacher at [site name/school name], when you begin participating in the MRC program, and how many AmeriCorps Members are providing literacy interventions [PreK]/serving as literacy tutors [K-3] with your students.

1. Did you assist in the selection of tutor(s) to serve in your classroom? Please describe your input into the selection process.

2. Did you have any concerns about adhering to the MRC model as a condition for:
 - a. PreK implementing the program in your classroom?
 - b. K-3 students in your classroom to receive supplemental literacy support?"

3. Were any school policies and procedures changed to support program implementation?
YES NO
 - a. [IF YES] Please describe.

4. We have some questions that we would like you to consider about the AmeriCorps Members serving as a literacy tutor *in your classroom* [PreK]/*for students in your class* [K-3].
 - a. Is the AmeriCorps Member sufficiently trained to serve as a literacy tutor? Are there any areas where the training of AmeriCorps Member(s) could be improved?

 - b. Are there any particular characteristics of the AmeriCorps Member that enhances or hinders their ability to work with children?

 - c. Does the AmeriCorps Member receive adequate supervision from the Minnesota Reading Corps program? From the Internal Coach?

 - d. Are you satisfied with the effectiveness of *literacy interventions* [PreK]/*tutoring services* [K-3] provided by the AmeriCorps Member(s)? **YES NO**

[IF YES] What specifically?

[IF NO] What needs to be improved?

5. What types of supports do school staff provide the AmeriCorps Member(s)?
[PROBE: Advice, sharing professional development materials, etc.]

6. How well do you think the MRC program has been implemented at this site /school? Please explain.

7. We would like to ask you about any challenges experienced in implementing the MRC model.
 - a. Have you experienced any challenges implementing *literacy interventions in your classroom* [PreK]/*tutoring sessions with your students* [K-3]? If so, what are they? How were they resolved?

 - b. Have you experienced any challenges in working with the AmeriCorps Member *in your classroom* [PreK]/*in your school* [K-3]? Please explain. How were they resolved?

8. Is there sufficient organizational support for implementing the program? *[PROBE: Minnesota Reading Corps? Region or school district? Site/school? Other?]*

9. In your opinion, has MRC helped students better meet their reading proficiency targets? Why or why not?

10. What lessons have been learned about implementing the program at [name of site/school] that might be helpful to other sites/schools?

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this focus group. You have given us a lot of good information about your experiences that, I am sure, will help strengthen the MRC program. Are there any questions before we end?