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Study groups can be a “new model of professional development that improves on the old in-service presentation model” (*Teacher Study Groups: Building Community through Dialogue and Reflection*).

Mentors and coaches work together to plan in-services using the presentation model. However, just as we should be differentiating instruction in the classroom, we should also be differentiating professional development. This differentiation can be done by forming study groups.

Mentors can have discussions with their coaches about the initiatives in which the school is involved. These initiatives can become the topics for study groups. As coaches reflect on school initiatives, mentors can help by keeping the conversation focused. Coaches can then offer study groups to teachers for their professional growth around a topic of interest and need.

In the PIIC model, as coaches reflect with their teachers about classroom practices, so, too, do coaches reflect with their mentors. A journal gives teachers, coaches, and mentors a place to reflect about discussions, readings, and classroom visits. This journal can be used to create a BDA Cycle of Consultation with the study group. Ebony M. Roberts suggests that group members might write in their journals before they meet, and again after the meeting to “reflect on changes in their ideas prompted by the discussion. Regular writing encourages participants to be reflective practitioners.”

This journal can be hard copy or electronic, and can be private or shared. The use of online tools like blogs, wikis, Wallwisher (<http://wallwisher.com/>), and Stixy (www.stixy.com) help build ‘collective wisdom’ and build a more common vision of the topic being discussed. Mentors working with technology coaches can help create appropriate questions and prompts.

Study groups initially facilitated by coaches can be a valuable professional development vehicle to move classroom practices toward more student engagement.