

# Guide to Better *Book Studies*



GETTING  
*Started*  
AND LEARNING  
TOGETHER

# BOOK STUDY

## Basics

### QUESTION: WHAT IS A BOOK STUDY?

**Answer:** Book studies are opportunities for educators to explore a professional book with peers, discuss and reflect on key takeaways, and apply that learning to their professional practice.

### QUESTION: WHAT IS THE BEST FORMAT FOR BOOK STUDIES?

**Answer:** Many groups prefer to meet face-to-face, but it's important to consider all participants' availability and accessibility. Book studies can be equally successful online via video conference, in an online forum, or on platforms such as Zoom or Google Hangouts, or on social media.

### QUESTION: HOW LONG SHOULD A BOOK STUDY BE?

**Answer:** This depends on the length of the book, how in-depth you want to go into each topic, and the availability of your participants. You may choose to cover the entire book at once or split it up into chapters for deeper learning. Discuss this with your participants and come up with a schedule that everyone can agree to.

### QUESTION: DO BOOK STUDIES WORK?

**Answer:** Any book study can be successful as long as you and your other participants set out clear goals and success criteria, and as long as all participants are dedicated to achieving those goals.

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Q & A



## TOP TIPS FOR

# Leaders

Effective leadership for a book study is critical. Here are our top tips to help you organize and lead your book study to new heights.

### INTENT

Determining the purpose of your book study is critical, as is a unified vision. When you've established a clear set of goals that everyone can buy into, you'll find that participants are more likely to be engaged and feel committed.

### STRUCTURE

Establish a time and place to meet at regular intervals. Will you meet every other week? In person? Online? How many chapters will you cover during every meeting? Be sure to include your participants in these decisions to be considerate and ensure everyone has the time to participate.

### TEXT

What book should you study? Consider your participants, their goals, their schedules, and the priorities outlined by your school or district. We recommend making a short list of books based on your participant input and then comparing them, based on a list of criteria, taking into consideration whether the book has any immediate applications, whether it's based on research or peer-reviewed, and whether the book was recommended. Flip to the [\*Picking the Perfect Book\* chart](#) for a helpful guiding visual.

### FACILITATION

Some participants will, share their thoughts and opinions, readily, and easily suggest ways to apply their learning to the classroom, while others may feel more hesitant and let their more outgoing colleagues guide the discussion. It's important to engage your quieter participants—without putting them on the spot—and keep the conversation moving smoothly without letting any one person dominate the discussion. Try allowing your participants to discuss with a partner or small group or let everyone have a moment to share.

### SUPPORT

Lack of support—or even the *appearance* of it—can quickly derail any forward progress. Make it clear from the start that your participants will be supported by their administration as they try out their new learning in the classroom. Plus, make a point to follow up regularly to see how they've applied their learning and share what teachers are doing successfully to encourage the group.



## TOP TIPS FOR *Participants*



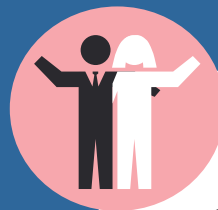
### **PACE YOURSELF**

You're busy, and reading a book isn't always your highest priority. Try dividing your reading into manageable chunks and tackling smaller sections at a time. If you find that you still don't have the time, don't be afraid to discuss this with your book study leader. Together, you can determine if there should be more time between meetings or slightly less reading assigned per meeting, in order to make sure you can still participate.



### **SPEAK UP**

Be open about your reading experience. What resonated with you? What are you thinking of applying to your classroom? This also gives your fellow participants a chance to hear your thoughts and ideas and contribute to them.



### **BE SUPPORTIVE**

It's important to support each other. Offer constructive feedback without being negative or critical, in order to ensure that everyone feels safe to share their ideas and apply their learning.



### **APPLY IT**

As you read and discuss, take note of what you can do to apply your new learning to your professional practice—and then do it! Try out new strategies and tools right away. Then, share your experience with your book study group at your next meeting to encourage others.

## PICKING THE

# Perfect Book



**TOPICS:** What topics are your participants interested in?



**PRIORITIES:** What are your school or district priorities?



**LENGTH:** How much time can your group reasonably commit to reading?



**APPLICATION:** Does this book have immediate applications?



**RELEVANCY:** How old is the book?



**QUALITY:** Is this book peer-reviewed or based on research?



# BOOK STUDY

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# Notes

Book Title & Author	
Participant Name	
Date	

Favorite Quote	
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Things to Try	
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Notes	
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# Application

Book Title & Author	
Participant Name	
Date	

What I Tried	
How I Did It	
How It Went	
What Can I Do Differently?	

# Discussion Guide

Book Title & Author	<b>Rebound</b> by Fisher, Frey, Smith, & Hattie
Participant Name	
Date	

Identify actions you're considering based on your learning of each module

<b>Introduction</b>	
Module 1: <b>Rebound</b>	
Module 2: <b>Rebuilding Educator Agency</b>	
Module 3: <b>Rebuilding Student Agency</b>	
Module 4: <b>Recovering Learning through Curriculum</b>	



# Discussion Guide (Cont.)

Identify actions you're considering based on your learning of each module

<p>Module 5: <b>Recovering Learning through Instruction</b></p>	
<p>Module 6: <b>Recovering Learning through Assessment</b></p>	
<p>Module 7: <b>Recovering Learning through Supportive School-wide Systems</b></p>	
<p>Module 8: <b>Learning Leaps that Mobilize Intervention Efforts</b></p>	
<p><b>A Call to Action</b></p>	

# Discussion Guide

Book Title & Author	<b>Leading the Rebound</b> by Fisher, Frey, Smith, & Hattie
Participant Name	
Date	

Identify actions you're considering based on your learning of each module

<b>Introduction</b>	
<b>1 Take Care of Yourself</b>	
<b>2 Take Stock and Find the Path</b>	
<b>3 Rebuild Teacher Agency</b>	
<b>4 Rebuild Collective Teacher Efficacy</b>	
<b>5 Foreground Social and Emotional Learning</b>	

# Discussion Guide (Cont.)

Identify actions you're considering based on your learning of each module

<b>6 Change the Learning Loss Narrative</b>	
<b>7 Guide Teacher Clarity</b>	
<b>8 Ensure Instructional Excellence</b>	
<b>9 Use Assessments for a Range of Purposes</b>	
<b>10 Design and Implement Interventions</b>	

# Discussion Guide (Cont.)

Identify actions you're considering based on your learning of each module

<b>11 Win Back Parent-Teacher Relationships</b>	
<b>12 Establish Restorative Practices</b>	
<b>13 Avoid Stealing the Conflict</b>	
<b>14 Enhance Teacher-Student and Student-Student Interactions</b>	
<b>15 Develop Early Warning Systems for Attendance, Behavior, &amp; Course Completion</b>	
<b>16 Confront Cognitive Challenges to Learning</b>	

# Discussion Guide (Cont.)

Identify actions you're considering based on your learning of each module

<b>17 Ensure Equitable and Restorative Grading</b>	
<b>18 Enhance Professional Learning Communities</b>	
<b>19 Provide Empathetic Feedback</b>	
<b>20 Host Honest Performance Conversations</b>	
<b>21 Maintain Your Social Presence</b>	
<b>22 Future-Proof Teachers and Students</b>	