Successful Literacy Learning for English Learners in the Era of Common Core

Professional Development and Classroom Practices

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www.wested.org/readingapprenticeship
Road Map for Today

The Strategic Literacy at WestEd
  • Who we are, what we do, where we do it
The Challenge of High Level Literacy for All
  • What it is
  • What it will take
Reading Apprenticeship in Action
  • Active reading and reasoning with complex texts in chemistry, ELA, and history classes
The Reading Apprenticeship Framework
  • How Reading Apprenticeship addresses the challenge
  • How Reading Apprenticeship serves ELs
Impact
  • Teacher capacity
  • Student engagement and achievement
Strategic Literacy Initiative at WestEd

A program of research and development focusing on improving academic literacy across subject areas

Mission: To work with communities of educators to support the development of high level academic literacy skills among diverse populations of students, especially academically underperforming youth.
Strategic Literacy Initiative Program of Research and Development

How can we provide diverse students with the means to participate successfully in the complex literacy practices they encounter in school and beyond?
Strategic Literacy Initiative Program of Research and Development

Reading Apprenticeship Instructional Framework
Inquiry-based designs for teacher professional development
Ongoing R&D in discipline-specific literacy instruction
Ongoing studies to refine and improve program impact for teachers and students

• Investing in Innovation (RAISE, iRAISE)
• Reading for Understanding (READI)
Reading Apprenticeship Improving Secondary Education (RAISE i3 Grant)

Five states – CA, IN, MI, PA, UT
  • Incl. Granite, Logan, Ogden

Three subject areas
  • ELA, History, Science

High needs students, ELs

240 Teacher Leaders
2800 Teachers
600,000 Students
Reading Apprenticeship Site-Based Professional Development

Certified Reading Apprenticeship facilitators
All subject areas
National and International scope
Arizona

» Previous IES-Funded Study
» Lichtfield (increasing EL population)
» Osborn School District #8 (increased ranking from D to B)
High Level Literacy for All
A New Focus for the Nation

• Language and literacy demands of 21st century competencies for deeper learning
• College and career readiness skills
• Critical literacy
• Next Generation Science Standards
• Common Core State Standards
The nation must reach for high level literacy skills (Heller & Greenleaf, 2007).

Gaps between student groups at the below basic level of performance have narrowed over time while gaps at the advanced level have widened (Education Trust, 2013).
Common Core Literacy Standards

Students who are college and career ready
- demonstrate independence
- build strong content knowledge
- value, cite, and use evidence
  - know different disciplines call for different types of evidence
- comprehend as well as critique
  - work diligently to understand precisely what an author or speaker is saying
  - question an author’s assumptions and premises
  - assess the veracity of claims and the soundness of reasoning
Common Core Literacy Standards

Through wide and deep reading ... of steadily increasing sophistication, students gain

• an appreciation of the norms and conventions of the discipline, e.g., the kinds of evidence used
• an understanding of domain-specific words and phrases
• an attention to precise details
• the capacity to evaluate intricate arguments, synthesize complex information, and follow detailed descriptions of events and concepts
Next Generation Science Standards

Practice 1. Asking questions and defining problems

Students at any grade level should be able to ask questions of each other about the texts they read, the features of the phenomena they observe, and the conclusions they draw from their models or scientific investigations.
Literacy as Social Practice

Literacy is a social, cultural, and cognitive activity shaped by situation and context of use (e.g. Scribner & Cole, 1983, Street, 1995).
Mapping a Course Toward High Level Academic Literacy for All

• Need to gain reading, writing, and discussion practices that support participation and learning in disciplines (Lee & Spratley, 2010)

• Move beyond generalist literacy learning to teach high level literacies in the disciplines (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008)

• Build instructional capacity to develop linguistic resources, literacy proficiencies, and content knowledge & skills simultaneously
Academic Disciplines Participate in Distinct Literacy “Practices”

Specialized ways of reading, writing, speaking and reasoning that are specific to an intellectual discipline

- Particular reasons to read and write
- Conventional forms of text & means of representation

Valued reasoning processes

- Traditions of argumentation: What counts as a good question, evidence, problem, or solution
Distinct Literacy Practices Support Discipline-Based Tasks

- Proof in algebra or geometry
- Document analysis in history
- Hypothesis generation and inquiry design in science
- Thematic and symbolic analysis in literature
Preparing Students for Advanced Literacies

Many of our secondary students, often especially English learners, are profoundly inexperienced and unprepared to engage in academic literacies, but most are not beginning readers.
We Can’t Get There from Here

Teaching as Telling
Teaching around the text
Doing the intellectual work for students
Lecture & PowerPoints
Explanations & interpretations
Demonstrations
Putting students in passive modes
Students receive information
Students copy, recite, remember
Assigning and hoping for the best
Attaining Advanced Literacies will Require Transforming Instruction

Supporting students’ active learning
- Grappling, inquiring, raising questions
- Making meaning
- Building knowledge
- Identifying and solving problems
- Using evidence
- Constructing and critiquing arguments
The Reading Apprenticeship Approach to Academic Literacy

Transforming Teaching for Student Independence

- Building academic dispositions
- Engaging in worthwhile literacy tasks
- Fostering intellectual engagement
- Close reading to make meaning of complex texts
- Language learning strategies
- Literacy as inquiry to build knowledge
The Reading Apprenticeship Framework

Metacognitive routines make normally invisible reasoning processes visible and available for assessment, modeling, and coaching during reading, problem solving, and inquiry activities.
Reading Apprenticeship

A partnership of expertise between teacher and students
The primary question was not what do we know, but how do we know it.

〜 Aristotle 〜
Design Principles in Professional Development

Connections to teachers’ experience, disciplinary commitments, and expertise

Practice “making thinking visible” with varied subject area texts and investigations

Collaborative, metacognitive learning experiences embedded in content that model target classroom practices

Opportunities to explore student reading and thinking in the context of content learning
Investigating Meaning with a Science Diagram

How do you read a science diagram?

What are the meaningful text signals and conventions?

Here, for example, what does an arrow mean?

How do you know?
What indicators of good instruction for English Learners would you hope to see?
Reading Apprenticeship in Action
Old Man

By Ricardo Sanchez

remembrance (smiles/hurts sweetly)
October 8, 1972

old man
with brown skin
talking of past
when being shepherd
in utah, nevada, colorado and new mexico
was life lived freely;

old man,
grandfather,
wise with time
running rivulets on face,
deep, rich furrows,
each one a legacy,
deep, rich memories
of life . . .
"you are indio,
among other things,"
he would tell me
during nights spent
so long ago
amidst familial gatherings
in albuquerque . . .

old man, loved and respected,
he would speak sometimes
of pueblos,
    san juan, santa clara,
    and even santo domingo,
and his family, he would say,
came from there:
    some of our blood was here,
    he would say,
before the coming of coronado,
other of our blood
    came with los españoles
and the mixture
was rich,
    though often painful . . .

old man,
who knew earth
    by its awesome aromas
and who felt
the heated sweetness
    of chile verde
by his supple touch,
gone into dust is your body
    with its stoic look and resolution,
but your reality, old man, lives on
in a mindsoul touched by you . . .

Old Man . . .
Metacognitive Conversation about Reading Complex Texts

What did you do to make sense of this text?
What got in the way of your reading?
What was confusing?
What problems did you solve?
How did you figure them out?
What problems, if any, remain?
Rita Jensen, English Language Development, Grades 7 & 8

- Living continuously in US
- Enrolled in English Language Development or ESL classes since school entry (Long term ELs)
- Unable to transition due to academic performance on standardized tests (reading and writing academic English)
- Resigned and self-identified as non-students
- 85% tested out of ESL after this class
Identifying Instruction that Fosters Engagement and Learning

How does the teacher support students to engage, grapple, make meaning with complex text?

What else supports linguistically diverse students in doing this work?

Identify features of instruction that build students’
- language and content knowledge
- dispositions to grapple with complex texts
- text-based problem solving strategies
Chemical Reactivity: Acids and Bases

INTRODUCTION

Many of the substances you come into contact with every day have acidic or basic properties. Examples are the foods you eat, the beverages you drink, the cleaning products you use around the house, and so forth. One of the properties of acids is that they generally taste sour; bases usually taste bitter. Another of the properties of acids and bases is that they can cause color changes in certain dyes. These dyes are called indicators. They indicate whether a substance is an acid or a base, depending on what color change it produces in the dye.

A fundamental property of acids and bases is that an acid and a base always react to “neutralize” one another. That is, the products of the reaction do not have acidic or basic properties (or they are substantially reduced compared to the reactant acid and base). One excellent way to tell whether an acid-base reaction has occurred is to use an indicator in the reaction mixture. Look to see whether the final color of the indicator suggests that the solution has substantially reduced acidic and basic properties.

One of the products of acid-base reactions is always water, a very stable compound. Indeed, another way of looking at reactions of acids with bases is as water-forming reactions. The driving force for the reactions is the formation of water, and essentially any acid will react with any base. Thus, once you learn to recognize acids and bases, you can predict the reactions they will undergo, including the products formed. Most of the reactions you carry out every day, or in these explorations, are done in aqueous solution, so you usually can’t detect the formation of more water, because there is so much already there.
Will Brown, Introduction to Chemistry

- Underperforming high school, Title 1
- ~Half of the class scored below 10th percentile on standardized reading tests
- Only two students scored above 25th percentile
- English learners designated FEP but underperforming academically
- Introduction to Chemistry, midway through the academic year
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Gayle Cribb, Honors US History

Central Valley of California

Military and agriculture; High migrant population

Open enrollment in Honors classes

Immigrant students, new citizens

Considering the constitutionality of the US internment of Japanese in WWII
Identifying Instruction that Fosters Engagement and Learning

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What Does Instruction that Supports High Level Literacy for ELs Look Like?

- A focus on comprehension
- On-going conversation about how students are thinking when they read
- Skilled coaching and modeling of discipline-specific thinking and reading processes
- A climate of collaboration
- An emphasis on student independence
The Reading Apprenticeship Framework

Builds Skills & Knowledge
- Explicit instruction of comprehension strategies
- Reading/writing connections
- Language study
- Discipline-based literacies
- Text-based discussion

Fosters Dispositions for Academic Learning
- Stamina and persistence
- Tolerance for ambiguity
- Code breaker stance
- Collaboration
Reading Apprenticeship Supports English Learners’ Oral Language Development

- Discussion is central and routine (listening & speaking)
- Discussion is scaffolded
- Discussion is text-based (fosters use of target language and content)
- Reflection on growth as learner, thinker, reader, writer invites authentic engagement
Reading Apprenticeship Supports English Learners’ Reading Development

Extensive in-class reading opportunities
- range of text structures and language inputs linked to content
- Increased volume, time, stamina, familiarity

Instructional support
- chunking texts at instructional level
- modeling and guided practice of comprehension strategies

Collaborative problem-solving for comprehension
- making thinking visible
- social resources for learning
Reading Apprenticeship Supports English Learners’ Writing Development

- “Talking to the Text” -- time to process thinking
- Writing about the process of reading and sense making
- Writing to connect ideas across texts, experiences, and classroom conversations
- Writing summaries, explanations, descriptions, claims and evidence, arguments
- Extensive reading offers models for writing
In Reading Apprenticeship Classrooms

Students

• Engage in more reading with instructional support
• Gain insight into and take control of their own reading processes
• Practice using effective strategies for overcoming obstacles in their reading
• Develop their own motivations for reading—even of very challenging materials
Impact on Student Learning Opportunities, Identity, Engagement, and Achievement
Transforming Instruction: Randomized Controlled Trial in High School Biology

Treatment/Control Differences on Teacher Interviews

- Reading Opportunities
- Support for Student Reading Engagement
- Metacognitive Inquiry
- Reading Comprehension Routines
- Collaboration
- Inquiry

Difference in Standard Deviation Units
Treatment/Control Differences on Teacher Surveys

- Reading Opportunity - Text
- Reading Opportunity - Structure
- Reading Opportunity - Content
- Collaboration - Modeling
- Collaboration - Student Practice
- Metacognitive Inquiry - Modeling
- Metacognitive Inquiry - Student Practice
- Comprehension Strategies - Modeling
- Comprehension Strategies - Student Practice
- Negotiating Success - Instruction
- Negotiating Success - Assessment
- Teaching Philosophy - Reading
- Teaching Philosophy - Learning
- Teaching Philosophy - Diversity

Difference in Standard Deviation Units

* p < 0.05
** p < 0.01
Figure 1
Treatment/Control Differences on History Teacher Surveys

- Reading Opportunity - Text: 0.56***
- Reading Opportunity - Structure: 0.74**
- Reading Opportunity - Content: 0.77**
- Collaboration - Modeling: 0.59**
- Collaboration - Student Practice: 0.75***
- Metacognitive Inquiry - Modeling: 0.87***
- Metacognitive Inquiry - Student Practice: 0.96***
- Comprehension Strategies - Modeling: 0.74***
- Comprehension Strategies - Student Practice: 0.61**
- Negotiating Success - Instruction: 0.46
- Negotiating Success - Assessment: 0.31*
- Teaching Philosophy - Reading: 0.51**
- Teaching Philosophy - Learning: 
- Teaching Philosophy - Diversity: 

Difference in Standard Deviation Units
Increasing Student Achievement & Engagement

Student Opportunity to Learn Surveys and Integrated Learning Assessments show significant differences in literacy engagement for intervention students, compared to controls:

- Increased reading in the subject area
- Increased integration of content and literacy
- Increased learner identity, especially for students whose home language is not English
- Increased use of problem-solving strategies that build understanding of content
- Demonstration of disciplinary thinking
Increasing Academic Confidence and Identity, Especially for ELs - Biology

Treatment/Control Differences on Student Opportunity to Learn Surveys

- Reading in Biology
- Integration of Reading & Biology
- Identifying as a Reader
- Student Identity
- Motivation in Class
- Reading Science

English vs. Non-English

Difference in Standard Deviation Units

** indicates significance at the .01 level.
Increasing Achievement in Literacy and Science Content Learning (Reading Apprenticeship/Control Differences)

California Standards Tests

- English Language Arts: 0.23
- Reading Comprehension: 0.24
- Biology: 0.28
Increasing Achievement in Literacy and History Content Learning (Reading Apprenticeship/Control Differences)
Closing Achievement Gaps

Central Valley

High Latino, Migrant population

Schoolwide Reading Apprenticeship

From Underperforming in 2000 to California Distinguished School in 2010
In my classroom, students are reading a greater amount of text and are more actively engaged with text. As a classroom teacher, I have also become more cognizant of demands different kinds of text place on our students. As a result, I am offering far more in the way of direct reading instruction and practice. Instead of simply conveying information to my students, they are constructing their own knowledge through reading, critical analysis, and writing.

They are working harder, learning more content, and developing greater literacy skills as a result. What has been fascinating to me is how many students have become more confident.
Student Voices

"When I first started this class I was scared. I have discovered that I have the courage to read stuff that I couldn't read. I'm more confident. Also I need to work on spelling."

"When I used to read and I didn't really understand it, I use to completely stop. Now when I don't understand the text, I think."

"My reader identity is getting a lot more knowledge into it and that makes me feel like I am a smart young man who can do whatever I set my mind to and whatever people say will not hurt me because I know I have the knowledge to school them."
Last Words

Whatever their background, and whatever success or struggles they have experienced so far, adolescents are capable of serious, disciplined, academic work.

To provide them with opportunities to master high-level academic content is the only real fulfillment of the promise of America’s public schools.

Heller & Greenleaf, 2007
THANK YOU

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