Building a Literacy Culture

Role of the Administrator

• Joshua Lawrence · January 2021
Joshua Lawrence

Career of research and practice in adolescent literacy

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Professor at the Department of Education
Disciplinary learning    Vocabulary
Reading comprehension    Critical Thinking
L1 & L2 language development

Member of the Ohio Adolescent Literacy Network

LEARN MORE    www.ohioaln.org

Co-Founder of

LEARN MORE    www.readingways.org
Administrators participating in the Ohio Literacy Academy can access relevant forums and resources on Reading Ways’ Learning Platform.

www.learning.readingways.org
Four A’s

1. What are some ideas from the presentation you Agree with?
2. What are some of the Assumptions of the presenter?
3. What do you want to Argue with?
4. What do you Aspire to?

Complete the handout “Four As”, while following the presentation. Be prepared to discuss your answer in the live conversation. The purpose of this strategy is to explore the presentation in light of one’s own values and intentions.
Literacy = Learning

Essential for our struggling students.

Essential for our top students.
OVERVIEW

Science of reading
Discussion
Multiple Texts Strategies

Necessary Conditions
Support for instructional coaching
Motivation

Expectations for implementation
Disciplinary Thinking
Academic Language
Discussion and Debate
Multiple Text Use

Ohio Adolescent Literacy Network
The Many Strands that are Woven into Skilled Reading

**LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION**
- Background Knowledge (facts, concepts, etc.)
- Vocabulary (breadth, precision, links, etc.)
- Language Structures (syntax, semantics, etc.)
- Verbal Reasoning (inference, metaphor, etc.)
- Literacy Knowledge (print concepts, genres, etc.)

**WORD RECOGNITION**
- Phonological Awareness (syllables, phonemes, etc.)
- Decoding (alphabetic principle, etc.)
- Sight Recognition (of familiar words)

SKILLED READING: Fluent execution and coordination of word recognition and text comprehension.

Ippolito Triangles
Adapted from Ippolito, Dobbs, & Charner-Laird (2019), p.16

- Literacy skill development is sequential
- Research is robust
  = Specific recommendations will work with 90 percent of students 90 percent of the time

- Literacy skill development is much less consistent
- Research is still developing
  = Specific recommendations need to be tailored to the discipline, context and content
Necessary Conditions

Expert instructional coaching.
Ongoing commitment and plan for school capacity building.

Adaptable resources and opportunities to pilot them in teams.
Clear and appropriate expectations for implementation.
Expert Instructional Coaching

The What

– The Science of Reading
– Content knowledge
– Disciplinary Literacy
– Programs
Expert Instructional Coaching

The How

• Adult Learning
• School Reform
• Professional Learning
• Facilitative Leadership
• Roles of Literacy Professionals
• Coaching Methods
Plan for Instructional Capacity Building

• Literacy Leadership Course
• Coaching implementation support
• Regional/State group (OASIS)
• Self-Assessment (CCM p. 198) – Both for coach and admin
Adaptable resources and opportunities.

- Teachers need and want explicit, concrete strategies and resources
- Some general strategies may work across content areas
- Even so, content teacher may appreciate the ability to alter and adapt to their content area
Clear and appropriate expectations for implementation.

- Literate Disciplinary Thinking
- Academic Language
- Debate and Discussion
- Multiple Text Use
COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

• Create purpose with authentic inquiry and tasks
  – Assumptions of the discipline and/or subdiscipline are made explicit
  – Connections to “thinking like” made explicit
  – Explicit reference to and discussion of the tools of a discipline

• Model literate disciplinary thinking

• Scaffold literate disciplinary thinking for students
ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

• Reference and support school-wide general academic words
• Provide explicit vocabulary instruction using adapted strategies
  – Word study with focus on morphology and polysemy
  – Connecting “signal words” to text structure and argumentation
• Use adapted sentence stems
DISCUSSION AND DEBATE

• Provide support for participation
  – Establish classroom norms that are conducive to academic discussion
  – Set up classroom in ways that allow for flexible grouping
• Monitor and support engagement
• Use talk moves (open-ended questions, wait time, extensions etc.) facilitate rich whole class discussion.
• Use discussion protocols to support varied discussion structures
MULTIPLE TEXT USE

• Use a variety of texts and other resources to provide multiple entry point for student learning
• Design opportunities for student to consider information, perspectives, and arguments across sources
• Discuss disciplinary criteria used to evaluate source quality
Ohio Adolescent Literacy Leadership Network

Members of an OASIS regional network meet regularly for support and to exchange experiences.
Thanks

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Learning Platform ReadingWays
www.learning.readingways.org
Access code: Ohio21LA

Next presentations
• Cross-content principles and disciplinary literacy
• Interventions
Building a Literacy Culture

Cross-Content Principles and Disciplinary Literacy

Joshua Lawrence · March 2021
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- Content-specific literacy for skillful learning

LEARN MORE @Josh_F_Lawrence
LEARN MORE www.ohioaln.org
LEARN MORE www.readingways.org
Where did you hear about us?: Ohio21LA

What best describes your professional role?:
- Instructional Leader
- Administrator
- Teacher
- Consultant
- Researcher
- Other
Because, But, So

SENTENCE STEM:
Reading is hard for middle and high school students
OVERVIEW

Cross-content principles

Academic Vocabulary
Discussion
Multiple Texts
Strategies

Disciplinary Literacy
The Many Strands that are Woven into Skilled Reading

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Fluent execution and coordination of word recognition and text comprehension.

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

General Academic Words
- structure, function, analyze

Discipline-Specific Academic Words
- cytoplasm, rhombus, abolition, iambic pentameter

Connectives
- therefore, in addition, however

Features of Academic Words
- Abstract and/or Technical
- Morphologically Complex
- Polysemous

Researcher in Focus:
Dianna Townsend, University of Nevada, Reno

Webinar Available:
Ohio Adolescent Literacy Network

Core Academic Language Skills (CALS)

Research suggests that CALS (in English and Spanish) as captured by assessment predicts 4-8th graders reading comprehension outcomes and informational writing proficiency (n=11,500).
ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

Skills

Examples

‘Look fors’

CALS Text Analysis Routines
(The Questions we Pose to Students)

CALS Domain

- Unpacking complex words
- Unpacking complex sentences
- Connecting ideas logically
- Tracking participants and themes
- Organizing analytic texts
- Understanding metalinguistic vocabulary
- Interpreting writers’ viewpoints

Researcher in Focus:
Emily Phillips Galloway, Vanderbilt University

Webinar Available:
Ohio Adolescent Literacy Network
Understanding metalinguistic vocabulary
- Skill in understanding words that refer to thinking and reasoning
- Hypothesis, inference, precise words that refer to reasoning steps or qualities
- What does this word mean in this context?

Interpreting writers’ viewpoints
- Skill in interpreting words that signal a writer’s attitude or level of certainty about a claim
- Impossible, presumably, conclusively, words that signal how an author feels about a claim or how certain he/she is about the claim
- How does the author feel about x? how do you know? How sure is the author about this? How do we know?

Connecting ideas logically
- Skill in understanding words that connect ideas in text
- Consequently, nevertheless, in conclusion
- Connecting words
- What does this word tell us about how the ideas are related? Do you know another word that means the same thing?

Organizing analytic texts
- Skill in organizing argumentative texts
- Some think... Others think... The first reason... The second reason...
- Non-narrative text structures
- Ask students if they can anticipate what might follow in a paragraph/ sentence

Tracking participants and themes
- Skill in tracking referents through a text
- Water evaporates at 100 degrees Celsius. This process...
- Pronouns
- Who or what is the author referring to here? How do you know?

Unpacking complex sentences
- Skill in understanding complex sentences
- Expanded noun phrases: The adorable puppy, always eager to play, followed me everywhere.
- Center-embedded clauses: The decrepit car, in which my parents drive me to school, stopped suddenly.
- Commas, semicolons, dashes
- Why is the information contained between the commas important? What is the author telling us more about?

Unpacking complex words
- Skill in understanding complex words
- Nominalizations: invasion, durability, contribution
- Words ending in -ion, -ility, -tion, -ty
- What does this word mean? Do you know other words with the same beginning?
DISCUSSION AND DEBATE

Enabling Conditions

• Are students actually speaking?
• Can students hear each other?
• Do students listen actively to each other?
• Do students respond to each other’s ideas?
• Do students deepen their own and their peers’ reasoning?

By Cathy O’Connor, Boston University

https://inquiryproject.terc.edu/shared/pd/TalkScience_Primer.pdf
Characteristics of Text Sets

• Centers on a **single topic** (i.e., insects, desert animals, entrepreneurship) and contains a **variety of texts** (i.e., books, articles, videos, websites, infographics)

• Purposely **sequences** texts to support students in building vocabulary and knowledge
Disciplinary Literacy Instructional Focus across the Grades

Adapted from Ippolito, Dobbs, & Channer-Laird (2019), p.16

Basic Literacy

Intermediate Literacy

Disciplinary Literacy

Kindergarten 6th Grade 12th Grade
The Many Strands that are Woven into Skilled Reading of History

LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION
- Background Knowledge (facts, concepts, etc.)
- Vocabulary (historical and technical term)
- Language Structures (historical syntax, nominalizations)
- Verbal Reasoning (avoiding presentism, contextualization)
- Literacy Knowledge (genre knowledge, multiple texts, primary and secondary sources, timelines, maps)

WORD RECOGNITION
- Phonological Awareness (syllables, phonemes, etc.)
- Decoding (alphabetic principle, etc.)
- Sight Recognition (of familiar words)

SKILLED READING: Fluent execution and coordination of word recognition and text comprehension.
The Many Strands that are Woven into Skilled Reading of Science

**LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION**
- Background Knowledge (facts, concepts, etc.)
- Vocabulary (technical terms)
- Language Structures (succinct and precise)
- Verbal Reasoning (informed skepticism, integrating results and data)
- Literacy Knowledge (tables, graphs, figures, comparing findings, specialized genre)

**WORD RECOGNITION**
- Phonological Awareness (syllables, phonemes, etc.)
- Decoding (alphabetic principle, etc.)
- Sight Recognition (of familiar words)

SKILLED READING: Fluent execution and coordination of word recognition and text comprehension.
The Many Strands that are Woven into Skilled Reading about Literature

LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION
Background Knowledge
(the cannon, the genre, the author)
Vocabulary
(historical and technical term)
Language Structures
(playful, personal, may invite ambiguity)
Verbal Reasoning
(varied interpretations accepted, less detached)
Literacy Knowledge
(intertextuality, genre knowledge)

WORD RECOGNITION
Phonological Awareness
(syllables, phonemes, etc.)
Decoding
(alphabetic principle, etc.)
Sight Recognition
(of familiar words)

SKILLED READING: Fluent execution and coordination of word recognition and text comprehension.
The Many Strands that are Woven into Skilled Reading about Math

**LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION**
- Background Knowledge
  (mathematical concepts and skills)
- Vocabulary
  (words with technical and non tech meanings, symbols)
- Language Structures
  (extreme precision, unique formulations “let x be ...”)
- (Verbal) Reasoning
  (integrating verbal and mathematical thinking)
- Literacy Knowledge
  (multiple representations of the same concepts in equations, graphs, figures, and narrative)

**WORD RECOGNITION**
- Phonological Awareness
  (syllables, phonemes, etc.)
- Decoding
  (alphabetic principle, etc.)
- Sight Recognition
  (of familiar words)

**SKILLED READING:**
Fluent execution and coordination of word recognition and text comprehension.
Example of adaption

What does 'POVERTY' mean to you?

Before

The international poverty line

After

Human Development Index (HDI)

Definition
Facts
Examples
Non-examples

POVERTY

Gini coefficient

Happiness index
Necessary Conditions

Leadership and a culture of literacy
- Strong rationale for this work
- Clear expectations but also acknowledgement of differences

Job-embedded coaching
- Extremely challenging
- Strong support for capacity building

Instructional Supports
- Adaptable
Thanks

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- Cross-content principles and disciplinary literacy
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Sources


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READINGWAYS

Content-specific literacy for skillful learning

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• What excites you about interventions?
• What do you find worrisome about these or other interventions or what is a potential downside?
• What additional information is needed to make a proposition and would help in evaluating?
• What is your current stance and how may you move forward in the evaluation of these or other interventions?
Overview

Intervention Researcher and Practice

Programs and practice selection

Challenges for literacy interventions in secondary

Review of effective literacy interventions
How does IES evaluate an intervention?
How does IES evaluate an intervention?

+ The WWC standards focus on the causal validity within the study sample—that is, internal validity—rather than the extent to which the findings might be replicated in other settings—that is, external validity.
+ Random assignment is best
+ Not "contaminated" is best

Literacy Intervention Evidence Base

Find What Works based on the evidence

Filter by topic

- Literature
- Mathematics
- Science

10 Results filtered by:

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Evidence of effectiveness

Intervention

Grades examined

Compare
Literacy Intervention Evidence Base

- 231 Programs identified for literacy
- Only 28 for secondary

Numbers get very small when you filter for programs that are available to public schools, programs for general education classes etc.

NOTE: Lack of positive effects is not the same as evidence that the program does not work.
The definition of "evidence-based" is given in section 8101(21) of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA (United States Congress, 2015). The ESSA delineates "evidence-based" actions according to four categories that reflect strength of evidence:

**EVIDENCE-BASED.**
(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the term 'evidence-based', when used with respect to a State, local educational agency, or school activity, means an activity, strategy, or intervention that—
(i) demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on—
  (I) strong evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented experimental study;  
  (II) moderate evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study; or  
  (III) promising evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias; and  
(ii) demonstrates a rationale based on high-quality research findings or positive evaluation that such activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve student outcomes or other relevant outcomes; and  
(iii) includes ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such activity, strategy, or intervention.

(B) DEFINITION FOR SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES FUNDED UNDER THIS ACT.—When used with respect to interventions or improvement activities or strategies funded under section 1003, the term 'evidence-based' means a State, local educational agency, or school activity, strategy, or intervention that meets the requirements of subparagraph (A)(i) or (A)(ii).

The fourth category above, demonstrates a rationale, is supported by (a) high-quality research; or (b) a positive evaluation that the intervention is likely to improve student outcomes; or (c) other relevant outcomes that are undergoing evaluation and supported by a logic model.

• (I) demonstrates a **rationale based on high-quality research findings** or positive evaluation that such activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve student outcomes or other relevant outcomes
• (II) includes ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such activity, strategy, or intervention.
Regional Support

• The Ohio Adolescent Literacy Network has members from every region in Ohio.

• The members participate in regular meetings with nationally recognized researchers and stay current with literacy research.
Practice Guides

Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices

This guide presents strategies that classroom teachers and specialists can use to increase the reading ability of adolescent students. The recommendations aim to help students gain more from their reading tasks, improve their motivation for and engagement in the learning process, and assist struggling readers who may need intensive and individualized attention.

1. Provide explicit vocabulary instruction.
2. Provide direct and explicit comprehension strategy instruction.
3. Provide opportunities for extended discussion of text meaning and interpretation.
4. Increase student motivation and engagement in literacy learning.
5. Make available intensive and individualized interventions for struggling readers that can be provided by trained specialists.

Researcher in Focus: Dan Reynolds, John Carroll University

Webinar Available: Ohio Adolescent Literacy Network
Selection at School Level

- Time requirements
- Technology infrastructure and compatibility
- Training duration and intensity
- Capacity to support, evaluate and extend
- Competition with competing programs
- "Buy in"
- Needs Assessment

[Graph showing data on reading comprehension improvement and academic vocabulary pretest]
Selection by Grade or Team

- "Buy in"
- Needs Assessment
- Time requirements
- Curricular match
- Human capital
- Adult learning
MTSS

Tier 1
- Supports adopted by the school or team and made available to **all students** through general education

Tier 2
- These supports are generally done in small groups and include additional opportunities to practice the skills necessary for core instruction

Tier 3
- Intensive support.
- Often explicit, focused interventions that occur individually or in very small groups
Challenges in Secondary

• Scheduling
• Motivation (student and teachers)
• Content specific sequential pacing
  – Time!
  – Competing demands
• Contextual differences within and across schools
Necessary Conditions

• School leadership
  – Clear rationale
  – Data driven decision making
  – Public expectations

• Instructional Coaching
  – Collaborative
  – Job-embedded
  – Supported and sustained
Sources

