Reviewing Adolescent Literacy Reports: Components & Critical Questions

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Overview

1. Risk, Outcomes and Leveraging Change
2. Frameworks and Findings
3. Instructional Components for Improving Outcomes
4. Infrastructure Components for Improving Outcomes
5. Evidence Also Tells Us…
6. Critical Questions
7. Resources for Next Steps

Who is “at-risk”?

Students who are successful during their 9th grade year are 3.5 times more likely to graduate
- One F decreases likelihood of graduating from 83% to 60%
- 2 Fs decreases likelihood to 44%
- 3 Fs decreases likelihood to 31%

Research
Conduct school-based research on developing and evaluating evidence based practices in literacy, behavior supports, and assessment

Translating Research to Practice
Support schools, districts, and states in adopting, implementing, and sustaining evidence based practices

The Challenge for Our Nation
3 of every 10 students don’t graduate!

Source: GPE 2001, March 2002
What impacts student outcomes?

PROPORTION OF VARIANCE IN STUDENT GAIN SCORES—READING, MATH (Gr.4,8,10)—EXPLAINED BY LEVEL—PROSPECTS STUDY

CLASS
4th R
12-23%
15-27%
19% R

GAINS
20% R
15% R

WHAT AGE RANGE DEFINES AN ADOLESCENT?

• Adolescent includes students in grades four through twelve

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY “LITERACY”?

• Literacy across reports most commonly refers to reading, more specifically, as academic reading, including content area related texts (e.g., Torgesen, et al., 2007).

DEFINING KEY TERMS

Framework and Findings

A Framework Emerges

• Reading Next: A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy (2004)

• 15 key elements of effective adolescent literacy programs including
  • nine instructional improvements
    • direct explicit comprehension instruction,
    • effective instructional principles embedded in content,
    • diverse texts
  • six infrastructure improvements
    • extended time for literacy,
    • professional development,
    • ongoing summative assessment of students and programs

Procedures for Review

• Journal of Literacy Research

• Proliferation of Reports

• Common Themes

• Representative Sample of Authors & Perspectives

• Coding and Matrices for Analysis

• Responses from Field

Adol Literacy Reports in Review

• A Critical Mission: Making Adolescent Reading an Immediate Priority in SREB States (2009)

• Academic Literacy Instruction for Adolescents: A Guidance Document from the Center on Instruction (2007)

• Assessments to Guide Adolescent Literacy Instruction (2009)

• Double the Work: Challenges and Solutions to Acquiring Language and Academic Literacy for Adolescent English Language Learners: A Report to Carnegie Corporation of New York (2007)


• Interventions for Adolescent Struggling Readers: A Meta-analysis with Implications for Practice (2007)

• Literacy Instruction in the Content Areas: Getting to the Core of Middle and High School Improvement (2007)


• Reading to Achieve: A Governor’s Guide to Adolescent Literacy (2007)

• The Next Chapter: A School Board Guide to Improving Adolescent Literacy (2006)
Big Ideas: I

I. Instructional Components
   - Common Threads Related to All Students
     - What Teachers Teach All Students
     - How Teachers Teach All Students
     - Assessing Instruction for All Students
   - Unique Threads for Specific Populations of Struggling Readers
     - What Teachers Teach Struggling Readers
     - How Teachers Teach Struggling Readers
     - Assessing Instruction for Struggling Readers

Big Ideas: II

II. Infrastructure Components
   - Developing a Comprehensive and Coordinated State Literacy Plan
   - Set Appropriate Standards for Adolescent Reading Achievement
   - Summative Assessment of Students and Programs
   - Improve Teacher Preparation, Professional Development, and Ongoing Support

What Teachers Teach All Students

Instructional Components for Improving Adolescent Literacy

Common Threads Related to All Students

How Teachers Teach All Students

- No single recommended pedagogy for content area classes
- However...

How: Emerging Elements

- Backward planning based on standards allows teachers to select critical content and plan for instructional enhancement
  - graphic organizers,
  - instructional routines,
  - preteaching of concepts).
- Instruction is intentional, drawing student attention to critical information and connections.
- Teachers use modeling to demonstrate potentially covert ways of thinking about content or use of strategies when learning
**How: Emerging Elements**

- Use regular evaluation to inform student progress and feedback.
- Provide student choice and opportunities for social interaction (i.e., discussions)
  - grounded in content area texts,
  - connecting text content to students’ lives
- Embed literacy instruction in content-area instruction, a shared responsibility among secondary educators.

**Assessing Instruction for All Students**

- Accurate assessments for learning, or formative assessments,
- Collect data that are
  - usable for determining the extent of core instructional program success,
  - drive instructional adjustments and
  - differentiate according to individual student needs.
- School-wide comprehensive assessment plan

**Instructional Components for Improving Adolescent Literacy**

Unique Threads for Specific Populations of Struggling Readers

**What Teachers Teach Struggling Readers**

- Continue reinforcing previous core literacy practices in content area courses.
- Provide multiple-tiers of increasingly intense instruction.
- Cue students to activate prior knowledge and skills.
- Teach content-based language and literacy.

**How Teachers Teach Struggling Readers**

- A significant difference between struggling readers and their typically achieving peers is not what they are taught about literacy, but how they are taught

**How: No News Here**

- Greater instructional intensity via:
  - modeling,
  - ability- and grade-level guided practice,
  - timely and specific corrective feedback, and
  - independent practice.
- Individualized interventions based on individual assessment data.
Assessing Instruction for Struggling Readers

- Formative assessment
- Initial screening and diagnostic measures
- Assessment tends to be more frequent and individualized

Table 2

Recommendations for Teaching at-Risk Students and Specific Populations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Improving Adolescent Literacy</th>
<th>Improving Adult Literacy</th>
<th>Building Literacy with Students in Transitions</th>
<th>Comprehensive &amp; Coordinated State Literacy Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Buzz Break

Discuss the following comment with someone sitting near you:

- “The shift towards emphasizing teacher effectiveness is, if anything, a shift in the definition of teachers’ jobs away from covering content to ensuring that students learn it.” – Sara Mead

Sara Mead is a senior associate with Bellwether Education Partners who writes about education policy: http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/sarameads_policy_notebook/

Infrastructure Components for Improving Adolescent Literacy

- Establish a state office or panel to oversee and advise adolescent literacy policy and lead a statewide literacy campaign.
Set Appropriate Standards for Adol Reading Achievement

- States must make literacy expectations explicit across grade levels and content areas.
- Academic standards must reflect students’ readiness for the next level of education.
- Standards should be aligned with NAEP proficiency criteria.

Summative Assessment of Students & Programs

- Develop a more comprehensive statewide assessment framework.
- Improve the focus and timeliness of literacy performance data.
- Develop reading assessments aligned with standards and academic subjects.
- Ensure that districts have access to screening assessments.
- Collect and publish adolescent literacy data.

Improve Teacher Preparation, PD, & Ongoing Support

- Revise certification and licensure requirements.
- Provide professional development and ongoing support.
- Provide a network of literacy coaches.

“The quality of an education cannot exceed the quality of its teachers”  
(McKinsey, p. 16).

Multiple Tiers

Tier 1: Comprehensive & Coordinated Instruction for All Students

Tier 2: Supplemental Instruction for Students at Some Risk

Tier 3: Specialized, Individualized Intervention for Students at High Risk

80% of Students

15%

5%

Multi-Tiered System

- Increasingly intense across three tiers
- A unified service delivery system
- Instruction is differentiated and based on student need
- Uses research-based instruction & intervention
- Flexible grouping for student movement based on data

RtI: Critical Components

1. Multi-Tiered Service Delivery System
2. Universal Screening
3. Research-Based Classroom Instruction & Intervention
4. Data-based Decision Making
5. Fidelity of Implementation
6. School/District-wide Systems Problem Solving
**Emerging Framework**

- Discipline Specific Literacy
- Intermediate Literacy
- Basic Literacy

**Buzz Break**

Discuss one of the questions below with someone sitting near you:
- Which of the infrastructure recommendations does your school already have in place?
- Which of the infrastructure recommendations are not currently in place?
- If you had to prioritize these recommendations, which ones do you think would be the most important? Why?

**Evidence base?**

- Each of the common threads identified here were included across multiple documents.
- However, they do not provide equally robust results if implemented, nor do they share the same quantity of evidence.
  - IES document/WWC: Strong, Moderate, Low
  - Ex. Strong
    - Direct/explicit vocab and compreh instruction
    - Intensive and individualized interventions
  - Ex. Moderate
    - Extended discussions or increasing student motivation and engagement

**Continuum of Explicit Instruction**

**Level 1**
- CUE
- DO
- REVIEW

**Level 2**
- "I do it!" (Learn by watching)
- "We do it!" (Learn by sharing)
- "Y'all do it!" (Learn together)
- "You do it!" (Learn by practicing)

**Level 3**
- PROTEST
- DESCRIBE
  - Commitment (student & teacher)
  - Goals
  - High expectations
  - Model
- PRACTICE and QUALITY FEEDBACK
  - Controlled and advanced
  - Posttest & reflect
- GENERALIZE, TRANSFER, APPLY

**5 Big Ideas in RC Instruction**

1. Background knowledge
2. Knowledge of text/discourse structures
3. Cognitive Strategies
4. Increase motivation/engagement
5. Word Study

*e.g., Gersten et al., 2001; Biancarosa & Snow, 2000; Ehren, 2005; Torgeson et al., 2007; Faggella-Luby & Deshler, 2000; McCabe, 2008*
Implementing Systemic Interventions: How might this impact real schools?

Buzz Break

Discuss one of the questions below with someone sitting near you:

1. What is a realistic literacy achievement goal for your school or class?
2. How would you measure progress toward meeting this achievement goal?

Critical Questions as We Move Forward

- How do divergent definitions of adolescent literacy alter the goals of instruction?
- How can practitioners translate recommendations into practice in an attempt to enhance content instruction?
- How will ongoing research strengthen the emerging field of adolescent literacy?
Critical Questions II

- How can schools develop a comprehensive and coordinated assessment system?
- How will RtI and multiple tiers of instruction be operationalized in secondary settings?
- What is the role of the federal government in reading achievement and should state standards and high stakes assessments be aligned with the NAEP?

Critical Questions III

- What lessons can we draw from early literacy research to forward the field of adolescent literacy? What pitfalls might we avoid?
- How does a school system operationalize the recommendations offered in these policy documents?
- Who will ensure that all teachers are well prepared to deliver provide high quality literacy instruction?

Buzz Break

Discuss one of the questions presented from the article with someone sitting near you:

Topics Include:
- Diverse definition of adolescent literacy
- Translation of recommendations
- Areas needed for research
- Assessment System Development
- Operationalizing RtI or Recommendations
- Role of Federal Government
- Lessons Learned
- Teacher Preparation Impact

Resources for next steps

Web Resources

- www.ku-crl.org
- www.cber.org
- www.fcrr.org
- www.centeroninstruction.org
- www.instructionalcoach.org
- www.carnegie.org
  – Time-to-Act
- www.all4ed.org
- www.carnegie.org
- www.rand.org
- www.ncte.org
- www.nifl.org
- www.learningpt.org
- www.corestandards.org
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Closing
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