



Adolescent Literacy Resources

An Annotated Bibliography



Second Edition 2009



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Introduction

This annotated bibliography is intended as a resource for technical assistance providers as they work with states on adolescent literacy. Updated from an earlier edition published in 2007, this revision includes important research and documents of practical use in guiding improvements in grades 4–12 reading instruction in the content areas and in interventions for struggling readers. The entries comprise books, articles, and reports considered by Center on Instruction staff to represent current research conclusions about adolescent literacy.

This bibliography is organized into four categories: Policy and Leadership, Assessment for Instruction, Academic Literacy in the Content Areas, and Interventions for Struggling Readers. These categories align with the information provided in adolescent literacy guidance documents previously developed by the Center on Instruction.

The  symbol identifies references that are available in the Reading section of the Center on Instruction web site. The  symbol identifies references that are available in the English Language Learners section of the site.

Reference Selection

A comprehensive search of the literature was conducted in a multi-step process. First, a computer search of ERIC and PsychINFO located resources published between 1988 and 2008. Descriptors were used in various combinations to capture the greatest possible number of resources. They included adolescent literacy, evidence-based reading strategies, reading instruction, older students, learning disabilities, high-school students, reading intervention, secondary education, academic achievement, reading education, and content-area reading.

Next, abstracts were reviewed to determine if the resources were relevant to adolescent literacy. In addition to the computer search, a hand search of major journals published between 2000 and 2008 was conducted to identify recent studies in academic literacy. Journals examined in this hand search represented research on secondary students (e.g., *American Educational Research Journal*, *Harvard Educational Review*, *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *Journal of Literacy Research*, *Journal of Special Education*, *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice*, *Reading Research Quarterly*, and *Scientific Studies of Reading*). Recent reports, guides, and policy documents from a variety of sources (e.g., Alliance for Excellent Education, National Governor's Association, National Association of State Boards of Education, and Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development) were also collected. Finally, nominations were solicited from researchers in the area of adolescent literacy. Of thirty-three requests, fifteen respondents provided a variety of recommendations.

Each reference was reviewed by two researchers who considered four criteria. References were included if they earned good to excellent ratings in each of these areas:

Content Quality

- The research utilized well-accepted literature, standards, research, or theory.
- The design was based on rigorous scientific methods.
- The information and/or data presented were accurate and free of bias.
- The content, conclusions, and recommendations were supported by a preponderance of evidence and/or other research.

Communications Quality

- The information was well organized, free of jargon, concise, and provided appropriate visual support.

Utility

- Participating students were those in grades 4–12.
- The resource could be used in a timely manner.
- The expected improvement from use of the resource merited the investment.

Evidence of Effectiveness

- Current research showed that the reference has had or was likely to have a positive effect on learning and would be effective in many settings.

Policy and Leadership

This section includes resources that address policy considerations and critical leadership characteristics. These resources also describe activities necessary to support and sustain academic literacy initiatives for struggling and grade-level readers within a state or school district.

August, D., & Shanahan, T. (2006). *Developing literacy in second-language learners: Report of the National Literacy Panel on language-minority children and youth. Executive Summary*. Mahway, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

This executive summary provides a thorough overview of the major findings analyzed in the report by the National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth. The panel of major scholars in second language learning and literacy analyzed existing evidence on teaching reading and writing to language minority students and identified gaps in this area of research. Administrators and educators can use the findings described in this summary to support research-based initiatives and instruction for language-minority students. The executive summary is available for downloading at the Center for Applied Linguistics website at http://www.cal.org/projects/archive/nlpreports/Executive_Summary.pdf

Biancarosa, G., & Snow, C. (2006). *Reading next: A vision for action and research in middle and high school literacy. A report to Carnegie Corporation of New York* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education. Retrieved April 28, 2008 from <http://www.all4ed.org/files/ReadingNext.pdf>

Reading Next captures the thinking of some of the nation's leaders in adolescent literacy. They call for action to meet the needs of struggling adolescent readers and writers. Acknowledging that there is no single solution, the authors propose 15 "key elements" consisting of instructional and infrastructural improvements that research suggests should be included in an effective literacy program. They conclude by urging all stakeholders to embrace literacy reform, choosing programs with key elements and using common evaluation guidelines to enhance learning for all.

Deshler, D. D., & Hock, M. F. (2007). *Adolescent literacy: Where we are, where we need to go*. In M. Pressley, A. K. Billman, K. H. Perry, K. E. Reffitt, and J. M. Reynolds (Eds.), *Shaping literacy achievement: Research we have, research we need* (pp. 98–128). New York: The Guilford Press.

After summarizing existing research on struggling adolescent readers, the authors assert that instruction in both decoding and comprehension is necessary in order to improve reading performance. They further support this conclusion in a report of a large descriptive study that shows how highly proficient adolescent readers acquire both word-level and comprehension skills. Their report includes examples of how schools have accomplished change to improve reading outcomes, including committed leadership, utilization of individual and organizational capacities, and stakeholder involvement. The chapter ends by proposing a research agenda to address major gaps in the knowledge base to improve practice in the classroom.

Fielding, L., Kerr, N., Rosier, P. (2007). *Annual growth for all students, catch-up growth for those who are behind*. Kennewick, WA: The New Foundation Press, Inc.

This reader-friendly volume presents a clear picture of a powerful district-wide initiative that led to dramatic improvement in student reading outcomes in the Kennewick School District in the state of Washington. Specific examples and data provide illustrations of actions and steps made at all levels of the initiative. Perspectives and qualitative data from teachers, school and district administrators, school board members, union representatives, and community liaisons clearly delineate the role each group played in the initiative's success. Reflection questions and principal points challenge readers to develop insights into creating sustainable efforts to improve student learning.

Haynes, M. (2007). *From state policy to classroom practice: Improving literacy instruction for all students*. Alexandria, VA: National Association of State Boards of Education.



By outlining eighth and twelfth-graders' reading data collected by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, this document establishes the need to implement significant change that will provide adolescents more effective literacy skills. Because transforming literacy practices in traditional secondary classrooms is the goal of reading reform, the author offers a systemic approach of research-based reforms at the state, district, school, and classroom levels. The approach incorporates five action areas that include planning, quality of teaching, use of data, instructional infrastructure, and accountability. The report emphasizes that the actions are comprehensive and labor-intensive, yet necessary to building capacity to structure and ultimately sustain changes in adolescent literacy outcomes.

Heller, R., & Greenleaf, C. (2007). *Literacy instruction in the content areas*. Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education.



This document addresses policymakers at the local, state, and federal levels regarding literacy instruction in the content areas. The authors assert that middle and high school students must achieve high-level literacy skills in order to be successful in college, the workforce, or even as productive members of society. The authors suggest that it is imperative for middle and high school teachers to incorporate literacy instruction into their subject areas. They provide a background for the urgent need for teaching literacy skills in conjunction with content-area material. They then present four components that are crucial parts of effectively integrating literacy instruction into the curriculum.

Irvin, J. L., Meltzer, J., Dukes, M. (2007). *Taking action on adolescent literacy. An implementation guide for school leaders*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

The authors offer a model for developing an adolescent literacy action initiative. Their model delineates actions to meet literacy goals that focus on student motivation, engagement, and achievement. The authors also stress the need for integrating literacy across different content areas and interventions for struggling readers to sustain literacy development. The actions include implementing the literacy plan, assisting teachers as they incorporate instructional change, building leadership capacity, and allocating resources. General guidance, key point summaries, and practical illustrations are offered for each action. The book is not a step-by-

step guide, but it provides a framework for considering important components of a school literacy initiative.

McCardle, P., Chhabra, V., & Kapinus, B. (2008). *Reading research in action: A teacher's guide for student success*. Paul H. Brookes, Publishing Co., Baltimore, MD.

Reading Research in Action provides readers with a practical guide to scientifically based reading research, explaining in user-friendly language what rigorous research is and synthesizing the results of several influential research documents published within the past decade, including *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*, the *Report of the National Reading Panel*, the RAND Reading Study Group report—*Reading for Understanding*, and an Australian report—*The National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy*. In addition the authors cite a wide array of other rigorous studies that use a variety of research designs and methodologies. Research support is presented for the four well-known components of reading – alphabets (phonemic awareness and phonics), vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension – as well as the additional components of spelling and writing. Chapters include bulleted highlights for each reading component of what is known from research and what needs to be answered from additional research, as well as descriptive vignettes of what effective instruction might look like in the classroom. This book could provide support for states and districts as they work to build the bridge from research-based practices to classroom reading instruction.

McPeak, L., & Trygg, L. (2007). *The secondary literacy and intervention guide: Helping high school districts transform into systems that produce life-changing results for all children*. The Stupski Foundation.

This guide describes the Content Literacy Continuum (CLC) developed through research conducted at the University of Kansas. CLC is a replicable model of instruction that can address the differentiated needs of both struggling adolescent readers and all grade-level readers. It provides enhanced content instruction and explicit instruction in skills and learning strategies that support all readers. The authors present critical questions and considerations for each implementation phase along with a suggested three-year implementation map for executing the model.



National Association of Secondary School Principals. (2005). *Creating a culture of literacy: A guide for middle and high school principals*. Reston, VA: Author.

This guide, written by a former principal, provides tools for secondary school leaders interested in creating a school-wide literacy plan to address the needs of students reading below basic achievement levels. Based on key components that appear to influence student success, the proposed reform includes: highly visible instructional leadership; literacy team decisions driven by balanced formal and informal assessments; ongoing, job-embedded, research-based professional development; highly effective teachers who collaboratively reflect; and strategic accelerated interventions. The action-oriented recommendations, which include a program for intensive reading intervention, are detailed. Five school profiles provide rich examples of authentic intervention practices and the appendices include useful templates. A cautionary note is offered regarding the time set aside in the school day for reading a book of choice independently and silently. The evidence is strong that proficient



readers spend more time reading, but it is not clear whether a few minutes a day for sustained silent reading is an effective substitute for high quality instruction, especially when the goal is increased literacy levels for struggling readers.

National Association of State Boards of Education. (2005). *Reading at risk: How states can respond to the crisis in adolescent literacy*. Alexandria, VA: Author.



Because national data demonstrate significant deficits in reading performance by adolescents in the United States, this report suggests that states need to adopt a strategic approach to adolescent literacy. The approach should reinforce six areas: goals and standards, teacher preparation and professional development, data-driven policies and evaluation, the use of research-based literacy strategies in the content areas, state funding support, and state guidance and oversight to ensure the quality of implementation. The final section includes a self-assessment checklist for policymakers developing statewide adolescent literacy plans. Appendices contain two state literacy plans and an annotated bibliography of resources.

National Governors Association. (2005). *Reading to achieve: A governor's guide to adolescent literacy*. Washington, DC: National Governors Association, Center for Best Practices.



The authors assert that illiteracy is a pressing economic crisis and argue that increasing literacy helps develop economically and socially stable adults who contribute to, rather than drain, state resources. In their discussion of the challenges of adolescent literacy and struggling readers, the authors support five research-based strategies that governors could follow to systematically improve adolescent literacy achievement in their states. Examples of how these strategies have been implemented in other states are included in addition to resources for developing an adolescent literacy initiative, examples of promising state and district adolescent literacy programs with contacts for further information, and potential federal funding sources available to states for adolescent literacy initiatives.

Short, D. J., & Fitzsimmons, S. (2007). *Double the work: Challenges and solutions to acquiring the language and academic literacy for adolescent English language learners: A report to the Carnegie Corporation of New York*. Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education. Retrieved March 5, 2008 from <http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource/2479>

Written for the Center for Applied Linguistics, this report examines the major issues facing adolescents who are English language learners. A panel reviewed the literature on ELL literacy and identified six major challenges to improvement. This paper addresses each challenge individually and provides recommendations for solutions. It also examines three promising programs and makes six suggestions policymakers should consider when developing ELL literacy programs. The report also includes the results of a Migration Policy Institute study that identifies demographic trends and academic achievement of ELLs.

Snow, C. E., Martin, T., & Berman, I. (2008). State literacy plans: Incorporating adolescent literacy. *Harvard Educational Review*, 78(1), 211-230.

This article describes the function of professional development institutes designed to familiarize state policymakers with research on adolescent literacy and support development of state literacy plans. It includes a review of the literacy plans from four states. It also discusses how these states incorporated the content of the literacy institutes into their plans.

Torgesen, J., Houston, D., & Rissman, L. (2007). *Improving literacy instruction in middle and high schools: A guide for principals*. Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation, Center on Instruction.



Written as a “quick start” guide for a school-level reading initiative, the information in this document is based on scientific research on reading and reading instruction and on studies of successful middle and high schools. Interviews with successful middle and high school principals are also included. The recommendations for literacy improvement are guided by three goals: improving overall levels of reading proficiency, ensuring that all students make at least expected yearly growth in reading ability each school year, and accelerating struggling readers’ development. Included are the critical actions required to meet these goals in content-area classes and in classes for students reading below grade level.

Assessment for Instruction

Entries in this section focus on assessments that can be used to guide instruction in academic literacy for both grade-level and struggling readers. Categories of assessments addressed include:

- classroom-based formative assessments,
- benchmark, or interim, assessments,
- curriculum-based measurement, and
- screening/diagnostic assessment.

Ainsworth, L., & Viegut, D. (2006). *Common formative assessments: How to connect standards-based instruction and assessment*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

This book describes a comprehensive instruction and assessment model for a school or district. It also provides a guide for utilization of common formative assessments in instruction and other assessment practices. The text describes actions to facilitate improved instruction and student learning by aligning standards and assessment practices that focus on effective use of formative assessment data.

Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (1998). *Assessment and classroom learning*. *Assessment in Education*, 5(1), 7-74.

A review of the literature on classroom formative assessment, this resource addresses the strong interaction between formative assessment linked to learning activities and improved student achievement. The findings in the research review present significant evidence that assessment activities that are (a) designed to provide students quality feedback and (b) guide instruction yield substantial learning gains.

Chappuis, S., Stiggins, R., Arter, J., & Chappius, J. (2005). *Assessment FOR learning: An action guide for school leaders* (2nd Ed.). Portland, OR: Assessment Training Institute.

Designed as a guide to help educators develop an action plan using assessments to improve student learning, this book also provides easy-to-digest information and examples to build knowledge about classroom formative assessment. It describes the essential conditions for classroom assessment to be meaningfully infused into school or district practices. The book details how a strong assessment foundation can support improved initiatives, and it describes what is necessary for school leaders and teachers to optimize assessment data to inform classroom practice.

Francis, D. J., Rivera, M., Lesaux, N., Kieffer, M., & Rivera, H. (2006). *Practical guidelines for the education of English language learners: Research-based recommendations for the use of accommodations in large-scale assessments*. Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation, Center on Instruction. Retrieved March 5, 2008 from <http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/ELL3-Assessments.pdf>



This book is the third in a series of three *Practical Guidelines for the Education of English Language Learners*. The No Child Left Behind Act has increased awareness of the academic needs and achievement of ELLs as schools, districts, and states are held accountable for teaching English and content knowledge to these students. ELLs present a unique set of challenges to educators because of the central role played by academic language proficiency in the acquisition and assessment of content-area knowledge. This document focuses particularly on research-based recommendations on the use of accommodations to increase the valid participation of ELLs in large-scale assessments. Also, a professional development PowerPoint overview is available to download at www.centeroninstruction.org.

McMillan J. H. (Ed.). (2007). *Formative classroom assessment: Theory into practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.

This book provides a concise description of the theory, research, and current literature about formative assessment and its relationship to instruction and student learning. Chapters discuss how effective formative assessment can be utilized in the context of current accountability systems. Direct examples of classroom applications are provided.

Perie, M., Marion, S., & Gong, B. (2007). *A framework for considering interim assessments*. Dover, NH: National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment.

This report presents a framework for evaluating and examining interim assessments. It focuses on determining how the assessments are used and how they fit into a comprehensive assessment system that includes summative, interim, and formative assessments. The purpose of the report is to provide advice about evaluating the suitability of interim assessment products that are to be incorporated into the comprehensive assessment system. The report provides detailed information to assist with analyzing needs of students and purposes of the assessments, including criteria to guide administrative considerations. It also provides hypothetical case studies to illustrate the use of the framework. Implementation issues from both the state and district perspectives are discussed.

Perie, M., Marion, S., Gong, B., & Wurtzel, J. (2007). *The role of interim assessments in a comprehensive assessment system: A policy brief*. Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute.

This policy brief, based on a report developed by the first three authors for the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, provides an overview of how formative and interim assessment fit into a broad approach to assessment. It provides information about differentiating among types of assessments and their purposes. Questions guide decision makers in clarifying the purpose of an assessment and recognizing characteristics of effective assessments for instructional purposes. In addition the authors

provide key points for district and state decision makers to consider in selecting assessments to support student learning.

Torgesen, J. K., & Miller, D. H. (2009) *Assessment to improve instruction in academic literacy for adolescents*. Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation, Center on Instruction.



This document provides guidance on assessment for the improvement of instruction in adolescent literacy for literacy specialists. It includes two major parts: information about key elements of a comprehensive assessment plan to improve literacy instruction for adolescents, and examples of the wide variety of assessments and assessment system approaches available for grades 4-12 as a means to address some of the challenges in meeting adolescent literacy assessment needs. The document discusses the various purposes of assessment and the major types of assessments that can be used to meet each purpose, with a focus on formative assessments used to guide instruction.

Wayman, M. M., Wallace, T., Wiley, H. I., Ticha, R., & Espin, C. A. (2007). Literature synthesis on curriculum-based measurement in reading. *The Journal of Special Education, 41*(2), 85-120.

The authors review the extensive research base on curriculum-based measurement (CBM) in reading from 1989 to the present and provide summaries of findings for the technical adequacy of CBM measures, CBM materials, and student growth as measured by CBM. The authors examine the adequacy of three commonly used CBM reading measures (reading aloud, maze selection, and word identification) and their use with various student populations and purposes. They investigate findings related to the difficulty and source of material used for CBM probes. Finally, the writers analyze research results for growth represented on CBM measures and differences in growth by age, group, or performance level.

Academic Literacy in the Content Areas

This section addresses the improvement of academic literacy for all students, including students reading below grade-level. The resources address instructional strategies that can be implemented by content-area teachers to improve overall levels of literacy in late elementary, middle, and high school. These include:

- effective instruction in comprehension strategies,
- deep, sustained classroom discussion of reading content,
- students' motivation and engagement in reading,
- high standards for level of text, conversation, questions, and vocabulary reflected in discussions and in reading assignments, and
- instructional routines that ensure that all students, even those who struggle with text, gain essential content.

These resources are divided into four sub-categories: content area, comprehension, vocabulary/word study, and motivation and engagement. Although some overlap occurs between each division, in general the sub-category represents the main focus of each individual reference. References in the content area sub-category address both specific content-area instruction and more than one sub-category.

CONTENT AREA

Bulgren, J. A., & Schumaker, J. B. (2006). Teaching practices that optimize curriculum access. In D. D. Deshler & J. B. Schumaker (Eds.), *Teaching adolescents with disabilities. Accessing the general education curriculum* (pp. 79-120). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

The authors present the results of a systematic research review that details positive interventions for secondary school students struggling to learn subject-area content. They group the interventions as either text-based or multiple-source based, further classifying them into three categories: organizing information, understanding information, and recalling information. For each category, the authors describe Content Enhancement Routines for content areas to illustrate their use in instruction.

Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and Public Consulting Group's Center for Research Management. (2007). Adolescent literacy toolkit. *Content area literacy guide*. Retrieved on August 15, 2008 http://www.ccsso.org/projects/secondary_school_redesign/Adolescent_Literacy_Toolkit/

This resource assists high school teachers in helping students master core content. It includes a framework for effective lesson planning and a planning template that includes before-, during-, and after-reading lessons. The guide provides a collection of two dozen strategies

that support students' understanding of content in science, social studies, mathematics, and English language arts. Each strategy offers a description, its purpose, step-by-step directions for use, and suggestions for differentiated applications.

Jacobs, V. A. (2008). Adolescent literacy: Putting the crisis in context. *Harvard Educational Review, 78*(1), 7-39.

In this overview of historical and present concerns about adolescent literacy, the author provides an opportunity to reflect on past lessons learned and how they can be applied to current literacy initiatives. Starting with a synopsis of the stages of reading development and their implications for adolescent literacy, she follows with a brief examination of historical trends in reading instruction for older readers, including the role of content-area reading. She contends that higher level reading demands actually begin earlier than adolescence. She also notes that we can build on knowledge obtained from programs for struggling readers, including how to support these readers in content-area reading, and that clarification of the changing roles of educators in the area of reading instruction is necessary to apply the "wisdom of the past to our future efforts."

Jetton, T. J., & Dole, J. A. (Eds.). (2004). *Adolescent literacy research and practice*. New York: The Guilford Press.

This volume compiles writings from researchers to report what is known about adolescent readers and literacy instruction, the nature of the support for current knowledge and what remains to be investigated to inform research of and practice in teaching adolescent literacy learners. Topics include literacy instruction in content areas, literacy research, interventions for struggling adolescent readers, motivation, cultural influence, and assessment.

Langer, J. A. (2001). Beating the odds: Teaching middle and high school students to read and write well. *American Educational Research Journal, 38*, 837-880.

The goal of this research was to study schools and teachers that were more and less successful in helping students meet high literacy goals. The authors conducted a study across 25 schools, 88 classrooms, and 44 English teachers using qualitative and correlational methods. They identified six dimensions of classroom instruction that differentiated high-performing schools from average schools, two of which apply to improving support for reading achievement: using state literacy standards within the curriculum and instruction and setting higher standards for deep understanding and generative knowledge and skills.

National Institute for Literacy, National Institute for Child Health and Human Development, and United States Department of Education. (2006). *What content-area teachers should know about adolescent literacy*. Washington DC: Author.

This is a two-section report emphasizing research-based instructional practices for improving adolescent literacy skills. The first section describes the National Reading Panel's five critical components in the development of adolescent reading proficiency. An explanation of how good readers approach each of the five components of decoding/phonemic awareness and phonics, morphology, vocabulary, fluency, and text comprehension is followed by a discussion of challenges faced by adolescents in learning the associated skills. In addition, the report recommends instructional techniques for addressing literacy in content-area classrooms and

offers examples of research areas that need additional exploration. The second section discusses the role of assessments in writing instruction and in developing student motivation to improve learning. The authors give evidence suggesting that motivated readers and writers share self-determination, self-regulation, and engagement attributes. Content teachers will learn from this text how to support adolescent reading through systematic, explicit, and direct instruction. Further suggestions are also given for content teachers to influence student motivation. The report can be downloaded at:
http://www.nifl.gov/nifl/publications/adolescent_literacy07.pdf

Nokes, J. D., Doles, J. A., & Hacker, D. J. (2007). Teaching high school students to use heuristics while reading historical texts. *Journal of Educational Psychology, (99)*3, 492–504.

Investigating the effectiveness of content-focused versus heuristic-focused instruction and the use of traditional textbooks and multiple texts, this quasi-experimental study measured the impact of the intervention on high school student learning of history content and the use of heuristics similar to those used by historians to think about texts. After the three-week intervention, students who read multiple texts scored higher on history content and use of two components of the heuristic than students in the group who read traditional textbooks.

Shanahan, T., & Shanahan, C. (2008). Teaching disciplinary literacy to adolescents: Rethinking content-area literacy. *Harvard Educational Review, 78*(1), 40–59.

This article describes the authors' exploratory study investigating high school content literacy skills and reading strategies for incorporation into teacher preparation programs. Teams were formed for chemistry, mathematics, and history and the content demands of each discipline explored. Each team consisted of two university researchers, two teacher educators, two disciplinary content high school teachers, and the two authors as literacy experts. The teams identified discipline-specific reading strategies and piloted those strategies in several high school classrooms. The preliminary results indicate the need to "rethink" the needs of basic content-area literacy for high school students and in teacher preparation programs.

Snow, C. E., Porche, M. V., Tabors, P. O., & Harris, S. R. (2007). *Is literacy enough? Pathways to academic success for adolescents*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

Results from this Home-School Study of Language and Literacy Development compellingly argue for continued literacy development beyond beginning reading. This longitudinal study of literacy skill development from preschool through high school for a cadre of students in Boston collected quantitative data for language and literacy skills coupled with qualitative data from self-reports and interviews with students, teachers, and parents. The empirical data provide a picture of the literacy growth patterns while case studies provide descriptions of the literacy development path for representative students. Taken together, the data provide insight into the factors that create risk and influence student success in school.

Torgesen, J. K., Houston, D. D., Rissman, L. M., Decker, S. M., Roberts, G., Vaughn, S., Wexler, J., Francis, D. J., Rivera, M. O., & Lesaux, N. (2007). *Academic literacy instruction for adolescents: A guidance document from the Center on Instruction*. Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation, Center on Instruction.



Written to assist literacy specialists, this document includes three parts which address improving literacy instruction for adolescents: (1) recommendations for improving literacy in the content areas, with English language learners and struggling readers; (2) experts' advice on methods for improving adolescent literacy from the perspective of school- and state-level policy recommendations; and (3) examples of state activities that support improved adolescent literacy instruction. The recommendations for literacy improvement are guided by three goals: improving overall levels of reading proficiency, ensuring that all students make at least expected yearly growth in reading ability, and accelerating struggling readers' development. The document defines six essential areas of growth in knowledge, reading, and thinking skills for grades 4 to 12: reading fluency, vocabulary knowledge, content knowledge, higher-level reasoning and thinking skills, cognitive strategies specific to reading comprehension, and motivation and engagement.

COMPREHENSION

Beck, I. L., & McKeown, M. G. (2006). *Improving comprehension with Questioning the Author: A fresh and expanded view of a powerful approach*. New York: Scholastic.

Beck and McKeown explain the rationale for and describe the optimal implementation of "Questioning the Author," an instructional process designed to support students in gaining meaning from text. Explicit examples and 25 classroom cases offer realistic illustrations of the process and can inform the use of this strategy to guide students' reading comprehension.

Block, C., Parris, S., Reed, K., Whitely, C., & Cleveland, M. (in press). *Instructional approaches that significantly increase reading comprehension*. *Journal of Educational Psychology*.

Using a quantified experimental versus controlled group comparison, this research study examined the effects of adding 20 minutes of the most widely-used literacy instructional approaches on the reading comprehension of grade 2–6 students. Results suggest that the three most successful approaches were similar in that they (a) allowed students to choose from an assortment of books to read in guided independent reading practice, (b) engaged students to read more than seven pages of continuous text from fiction and nonfiction classroom books, and (c) included 15–20 minutes of silent reading which included specific teacher actions. Specific teacher actions were defined as (a) the implementation of teacher-monitored silent-reading periods with personalized scaffolds to assist students to overcome comprehension challenges when they presented themselves in individual texts; (b) requiring (and making available) two expository books on the same topic that students chose to read; and (c) providing books from which students chose that related to one aspect of a global class theme, and (d) spending five minutes of the 20-minute silent reading period in an open-ended discussion about insights that students gleaned from the reading of their selected books. The study suggests that the specific actions that teachers take to support students during silent

reading periods produce significant growth in students' comprehension. An additional finding suggests that treatments producing significantly more achievement for less able readers worked equally well for more able readers. The study also noted that two instructional practices, workbook practice and the addition of 20 minutes of traditional instruction did not produce significant improvement in students' reading comprehension.

Pressley, M. (2000). What should comprehension instruction be the instruction of? In M. L. Kamil, P. B. Mosenthal, P. D. Pearson, & R. Barr (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research* (Vol. 3, pp. 545–451). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Pressley summarizes the research on comprehension development, including word-level skills, background knowledge, and comprehension strategies. He uses this foundation to describe evidence-based instruction that can promote comprehension as students move from word-level to higher-order skills.

Pressley, M., & Hilden, K. (2004). Toward more ambitious comprehension instruction. In E. R. Silliman & L. C. Wilkinson (Eds.), *Language and literacy learning in schools* (pp. 151-174). New York: The Guilford Press.

Pressley and Hilden set the stage for thinking about more powerful comprehension instruction by discussing sources of support for improving instruction within and outside the school. They review the history of research on comprehension strategy instruction and how the knowledge base has evolved, and they conclude by discussing the relationship between comprehension and other elements of reading instruction that can strengthen students' reading comprehension.

Raphael, T. E., & Au, K. H. (2005). QAR: Enhancing comprehension and test taking across grades and content areas. *The Reading Teacher*, 59(3), 206-221.

The authors describe the need for instruction in reading comprehension, especially those strategies that require students to answer and generate challenging questions. They provide explicit information for incorporating Question Answer Relationships (QAR) in schools and classrooms to (1) address the lack of shared language among teachers and students for improving questioning practices, (2) bring coherence to literacy instruction within and across grade levels, (3) provide a focal point for whole-school reform of literacy learning and teaching, and (4) provide a means to prepare students for high-stakes tests at different grade levels and in a variety of subject areas.

Raphael, T. E., Highfield, K., & Au, K. (2006). *Improving QAR now: A powerful and practical framework that develops comprehension and higher-level thinking in all students*. New York: Scholastic.

This book gives teachers and teacher groups a framework to plan questioning activities and organize instruction in comprehension strategies across subject areas. Written in a teacher-friendly format with many real-time classroom examples, the book also provides a thorough analysis of QAR (Question Answer Relationships), a six-step model of how to teach QAR lessons, explicit examples of QAR instruction across grades and content areas, and a teacher study group guide.

Sweet, A. P., & Snow C. E. (Eds.). (2003). *Rethinking reading comprehension*. New York: The Guilford Press.

In an effort to inform effective teaching, the authors build on the reading comprehension research agenda developed by the RAND Reading Study Group, translating current knowledge into reliable information for practitioners. Chapters by leading reading researchers address key reading comprehension issues and research findings for beginning readers and adolescent readers and describe instructional strategies to address specific student needs and characteristics.

Trabasso, T., & Bouchard, E. (2002). Teaching readers how to comprehend text strategically. In C. Block and M. Pressley (Eds.), *Comprehension instruction: Research-based best practices* (pp. 176-200). New York: The Guilford Press.

This book chapter provides a summary of 12 categories of text comprehension strategy instruction based on the authors' literature review of 205 experimental investigations relevant to the instruction of reading comprehension. Also included are reviews of studies on teacher preparation for text comprehension instruction and cooperative learning by peers.

VOCABULARY/WORD STUDY

Baumann, J. F., Edwards, E. C., Font, G., Tereshinski, C. A., Kame'enui, E. J. & Olejnik, S. (2008). *Teaching morphemic and contextual analysis to fifth-grade students. Reading Research Quarterly, 37*(2), 150–176.

The authors describe a study conducted to determine if strategy instruction in morphemic and contextual analysis promotes vocabulary learning and comprehension. This study included 88 fifth-grade students from heterogeneous classrooms divided into one of four groups: morphemic analysis instruction only, contextual analysis instruction only, combined instruction in morphemic and contextual analysis, and a control group. Although the results are inconclusive, this study extends and supports the limited research available in this area.

Bear, D., Invernizzi, M., Templeton, S., & Johnston, F. (2007). *Words their way: Word study for phonics, vocabulary, and spelling instruction*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Merrill/Prentice Hall.

This fourth edition is a comprehensive sourcebook that presents theory and assessment tools, along with word-study instruction for six stages of literacy development. It explicitly shows teachers how to incorporate word study into classroom instruction at every level of development. Included are explicit examples, figures, graphic organizers, lists, and pictures suitable for reproduction and use in the classroom.

Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G., & Kucan, L. (2002). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction*. New York: The Guilford Press.

This book begins with a rationale for why direct vocabulary instruction is important and how to determine which words, or kinds of words, are important to teach. It includes detailed and specific vocabulary activities for all grade levels. The authors propose that vocabulary

instruction which inspires a lifelong fascination with words must be robust, vigorous, strong, and powerful.

Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G., Kucan, & L. (2008). *Creating robust vocabulary: Frequently asked questions and extended examples*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Written as a response to interactions generated by the publication of *Bringing Words to Life*, this book answers questions about vocabulary issues and provides extended examples for vocabulary instruction. The book begins with a summary of the importance of vocabulary and its relationship to comprehension. Other chapters focus on which words to teach, when and how to teach these words, and how to design effective vocabulary experiences for ELLs. Full sets of activities for vocabulary instruction for students in grades K-12 follow, along with the authors' rationale for developing them. Appendices detail instructional activities and book and story lists.

Graves, M. (2006). *The vocabulary book: Learning & instruction*. New York: Teachers College Press.

This book offers a background of theory, research, and best practice related to vocabulary instruction over the past 30 years and presents a comprehensive plan for vocabulary instruction for children in grades K-12, including English Language Learners and struggling readers. Graves outlines and presents a four-part vocabulary program of study that aims to provide rich and varied language experiences, teach individual words and word-learning strategies, and foster word consciousness. The book includes many explicit classroom examples of effective vocabulary instruction and useful graphic organizers.

Hiebert, E., & Kamil, M. (Eds.). (2005). *Teaching and learning vocabulary: Bringing research to practice*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

This collection of chapters written by leading researchers covers three ideas in learning and teaching vocabulary: (1) how words are learned and taught as a function of word features, content areas, and developmental levels, (2) how vocabulary interventions differ for different age groups and content areas, and (3) what words should be emphasized in instruction.

MOTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Guthrie, J. T., (Ed.). (2008). *Engaging adolescents in reading*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

This text utilizes the best research currently available to address the question "Why are so many students disengaged from school reading?" The text describes and outlines ways to increase student motivation and engagement in reading. Specifically, it emphasizes six motivations for student reading and corresponding instructional practices. This practical resource provides many examples by teachers who have successfully applied the recommended practices. Professional development is not specifically addressed; however, a chapter is devoted to ideas and suggestions for a general implementation plan. Tools and resources are also provided in the appendices to assist teachers.

Guthrie, J. T., & Humenick, N. M. (2004). Motivating students to read: Evidence for classroom practices that increase reading motivation and achievement. In P. McCardle & V. Chhabra (Eds.), *The voice of evidence in reading research* (pp. 329–354). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

This book chapter provides an analysis of 22 experimental studies that include students aged 8-14, which verify causal relationships for educators interested in designing and sustaining contexts that foster external and internal reading motivation. Their analysis reveals how knowledge goals, student choices, and collaboration have a sizable impact on reading motivation and should be viewed as major constituents of any long-term instructional program.

Interventions for Struggling Readers

Interventions for accelerating reading development in older students must be responsive to a wide range of reading difficulties. The resources in this section address strategies for intervention with students who have a broad range of reading difficulties ranging from moderate problems with strategic reading and vocabulary to pervasive difficulties with fundamental reading skills including problems with word decoding and fluency. The resources discuss interventions that involve some combination of:

- systematic and explicit instruction in word analysis/decoding strategies,
- supported practice to increase fluency,
- targeted vocabulary instruction, and
- intensive instruction and support for the development of reading comprehension strategies.

These resources are divided into five subcategories: content area, comprehension, vocabulary/word study, fluency, and motivation and engagement. Although some overlap occurs between each division, in general the subcategory represents the main focus of each individual reference.

CONTENT AREA

Bailey, A. L. (2007). *The language demands of school: Putting academic English to the test*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

This book describes a line of research conducted at the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST) to investigate assessment of ELL students, including academic English language (AEL). The chapters in this revised text explore AEL use in three domains: language proficiency tests, subject area content, and instruction. The information describes initial research inquiry and issues that have emerged. It includes recommendations for further research, but does not provide conclusive recommendations for policies or instructional or assessment programs.

Deshler, D., Palincsar, A. S., Biancarosa, G., & Nair, M. (2007). *Informed choices for struggling adolescent readers: A research-based guide to instructional programs and practices*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Beginning with a succinct review of the research, this book suggests that successful adolescent literacy reform is guided by recognizing signs of readiness to adopt instructional and organizational change at the local school or district level. Examples of application within a variety of schools emphasize the similarity in the process of enacting effective change. A descriptive tool comparing 48 adolescent literacy programs provides educators with a research-supported overview of strategies that improve adolescent reading achievement.

Francis, D. J., Rivera, M., Lesaux, N., Kieffer, M., & Rivera, H. (2006). *Practical guidelines for the education of English language learners: Research-based recommendations for instruction and academic interventions*. Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation, Center on Instruction. Retrieved March 5, 2008 from <http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/ELL1-Interventions.pdf>



The first of three *Practical Guidelines for the Education of English Language Learners*, this book provides evidence-based recommendations for policymakers, administrators, and teachers in K-12 settings who seek to make informed decisions about instruction and academic interventions for ELLs. Its focus includes reading and mathematics, and the recommendations apply to both a classroom-wide instructional format and individualized, targeted interventions, depending on the population and the goals of the instruction. Also, a PowerPoint overview of the series is available at www.centeroninstruction.org.

Francis, D. J., Rivera, M., Lesaux, N., Kieffer, M., & Rivera, H. (2006). *Practical guidelines for the education of English language learners: Research-based recommendations for serving adolescent newcomers*. Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation, Center on Instruction. Retrieved March 5, 2008 from <http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/ELL2-Newcomers.pdf>



This book is the second in a series of three *Practical Guidelines for the Education of English Language Learners*. This document addresses ELLs who are adolescent newcomers to the United States and who have a short amount of time to simultaneously develop academic language skills and master grade-level content. It provides evidence-based recommendations for policymakers, administrators, and teachers in middle and high schools who seek to make informed decisions about effectively serving adolescent newcomers. Also, a PowerPoint overview is available for downloading at www.centeroninstruction.org.

Hartry, A., Fitzgerald, R., & Porter, K. (2008). *Implementing a structured reading program in an afterschool setting: Problems and potential solutions*. *Harvard Educational Review*, 78(1), 181-210.

This article describes the implementation fidelity component of a randomized controlled trial that used a commercial intervention to improve an afterschool program in one district. Data indicate that improved student outcomes depended, in part, on successful implementation of the program. Implementation fidelity was facilitated by three factors: addressing infrastructure and support needs prior to program initiation, assuring that necessary resources were available, and providing ongoing support and problem solving.

Kempe, J., Corrin, W., Nelson, E., Salinger, T., Herrmann, S., & Drummond, K. (2008). *The enhanced reading opportunities study: Early impact and implementation findings* (NCEE 2008-4015). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Science, U.S. Department of Education.

The Enhanced Reading Opportunities study was designed as a demonstration and evaluation of two supplemental literacy programs implemented with two cohorts of ninth-grade struggling readers. In addition to reporting the intervention's impact on student reading

comprehension skills, implementation and overall fidelity to the program design were also investigated. Findings from the first year indicated a statistically significant improvement in reading comprehension test scores for students in the intervention program, although the students were still reading two or more years below grade level. Because schools varied in the initiation dates and implementation of the intervention programs, the initial findings of the study are not conclusive about the effectiveness of the interventions. Subsequent reports will provide results for additional ninth grade cohorts and efforts to improve program implementation for the remaining years of the study.

Scammacca, N., Roberts, G., Vaughn, S., Edmonds, M., Wexler, J., Reutebuch, C. K., & Torgesen, J. K. (2007). *Interventions for adolescent struggling readers: A meta-analysis with implications for practice*. Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation, Center on Instruction.



This document summarizes the results of two separate meta-analyses. The first synthesizes research on the effectiveness of reading interventions for older struggling readers. Specifically, these interventions target improving fluency and vocabulary, as well as the use of comprehension strategies. Three questions were posed: How effective are these interventions? How do these interventions impact comprehension? How do these interventions influence students with learning disabilities? The second meta-analysis addresses studies of interventions conducted within a special education context. The authors note unique challenges that arose when they attempted to conduct research in the field of special education and provide the reader with a table describing the interventions and results.

COMPREHENSION

Gajria, M., Jitendra, A., Sood, S., & Sacks, G. (2007). *Improving comprehension of expository text in students with LD: A research synthesis*. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 40(3), 210-225.

The article provides a research synthesis of intervention studies, extending the knowledge base of research-validated interventions for facilitating reading comprehension of expository text in students with LD (Learning Disabilities). Only those research studies meeting the following six criteria were included in the synthesis: inclusion of content-area intervention; intervention recipients who were school-age children or adolescents with LD; an experimental or quasi-experimental group design with a control group; inclusion of at least one measure of expository text comprehension; provision of sufficient quantitative information; and a study report published in English. Overall, this synthesis provides a rationale for states offering professional development for content-area and reading teachers and presents compelling evidence to support content enhancement and cognitive strategy instruction for students with LD and other students who struggle with expository text.

Gersten, R., Fuchs, L. S., Williams, J. P., & Baker, S. (2001). Teaching reading comprehension strategies to students with learning disabilities: A review of research. *Review of Educational Research, 71*(2), 279-320.

This systematic review of research on effective reading comprehension instruction for students with learning disabilities provides a thorough discussion of studies on comprehension instruction with both narrative and expository texts. The authors outline the evolution of research-based knowledge in comprehension instruction and summarize the cumulative knowledge gained. Descriptions of the study interventions and subsequent student performance on achievement measures enrich this discussion of conclusions from the research review.

VOCABULARY/WORD STUDY

Ebbers, S., & Denton, C. (2008). A root awakening: Vocabulary instruction for older students with reading difficulties. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 23*(2), 90–102.

This article provides an in-depth look at vocabulary instruction for struggling adolescent readers. Specific instructional approaches that have shown evidence of effectiveness are described and include: (1) delivering explicit instruction, (2) teaching students to apply cognitive and metacognitive strategies, (3) using questioning approaches to promote more active cognitive interaction with text, (4) assigning cognitively demanding tasks to collaborative groups, (5) promoting collaborative engagement in learning with opportunities for verbal interactions, and (6) providing many opportunities for practice with teacher feedback. The article describes a school-wide approach to vocabulary instruction across the content areas.

Henry, M. S. (2003). *Unlocking literacy: Effective decoding & spelling instruction*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

This practitioner's guide for general and special education teachers of students from pre-K to middle school begins with a brief history of written English and the structure of the English language. It follows with a summary of current research on the reading process, including implications for instruction for beginning and struggling readers. Specific instructional routines for teaching decoding and spelling provide a resource of activities for beginning readers and upper elementary school students. Challenging linguistic activities for competent readers are also included.

Jitendra, A. K., Edwards, L. L., Sacks, G., & Jacobson, L. A. (2004). What research says about vocabulary instruction for students with learning disabilities. *Exceptional Children, 70*(3), 299-322.

This review of published research on vocabulary instruction with learning disabled students analyzes 19 studies and suggests that direct vocabulary instruction should be emphasized for students with learning disabilities. The authors also find that since many effective, research-based vocabulary instruction methods are available, the method used by teachers should depend on instructional goals. The authors include implications and suggestions for future

research and recommendations for classroom practice in vocabulary instruction for students with learning disabilities.

Reed, D. (2008). A synthesis of morphology interventions and effects on reading outcomes for students in grades K–12. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 23*(1), 36-49.

This synthesis of morphology intervention studies of students in K-12 found strong effects for root word instruction and morphology instruction when aligned with students' reading development levels and the age of acquisition pattern for morphemic knowledge. The introduction to the research provides an inclusive summary of the components of morphology: its significance for word identification, its evidence in spelling instruction, its role in vocabulary development, and its relationship to reading comprehension. The notable limitation of this resource is the small number of qualifying studies: seven out of a possible 400. However, results suggest a clear benefit to student learning outcomes from morphology instruction, and the suggestion of integrating this instruction within reading skill and content-area lessons already in place is sensible.

FLUENCY

Hudson, R., Lane, H., & Pullen, P. (2004). Reading fluency assessment and instruction: What, why, and how? *The Reading Teacher, 58*(3), 702-714.

The authors define fluency and explain its important contribution to reading comprehension. They offer research support for the links from automaticity, reading accuracy, reading rate, and prosody to reading proficiency. Included are a summary of assessments for oral reading fluency and evidence-based instructional methods for fluency development. Tables provide reading fluency assessments, instructional resources for developing fluency, and recommended reading fluency rates.

Wexler, J., Vaughn, S., Edmonds, M., & Reutebuch, C. (2008). A synthesis of fluency interventions for secondary struggling readers. *Reading & Writing, 21*, 317-347.

The authors examine 19 research-based intervention studies that provided fluency interventions to secondary struggling readers. Findings indicated that, for secondary students, fluent reading might not be sufficient for comprehending the kinds of complex text they encounter in school. Recommendations for specific fluency intervention practices are made, though the authors caution that factors other than fluency (such as background knowledge or working memory) may play a larger role in comprehending text as students get older.

MOTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Guthrie, J. T., & Davis, M. H. (2003). Motivating struggling readers in middle school through an engagement model of classroom practice. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, 19, 59-85.

In their discussion of disengagement and low motivation in middle school readers, Guthrie and Davis describe six dimensions of change between elementary and middle school classrooms that they believe contribute to reading disengagement in middle school students. The authors suggest six classroom practices middle school teachers can use to counteract these classroom environmental changes and foster engagement and reading competence.



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