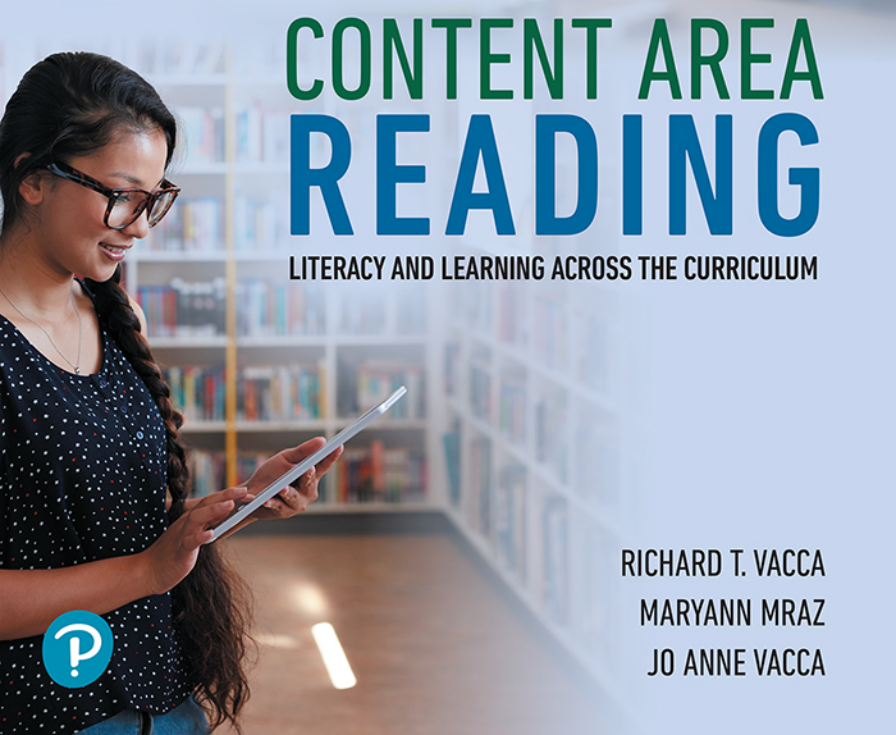


THIRTEENTH
EDITION



CONTENT AREA READING

LITERACY AND LEARNING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM



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Content Area Reading

Literacy and Learning Across
the Curriculum

Thirteenth Edition

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To teachers

You did not choose your profession to make a world of money, but instead
to make a world of difference in the lives of your students.

Thank you!

—*Rich and Jo Anne Vacca*

To my family

who departed the Old Country for Ellis Island and the hope of a new life in America:
Janko, Marko, Jela, Toma, Barbara, William, Helen, Anthon, Ursula, and Nikola.

They are remembered here with gratitude and love.

—*Maryann Mraz*

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The Vaccas live in Vero Beach, Florida, where they keep active professionally, golf, volunteer, and walk their toy poodles, Tiger, Gigi, and Joely. They especially enjoy visiting and traveling with their daughter, Courtney; son-in-law, Gary; and grandsons, Simon, Max, and Joe.

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Preface

About this Book

The 13th edition of *Content Area Reading: Literacy and Learning across the Curriculum* continues to reflect an ever-expanding knowledge base grounded in research and practice in the areas of content literacy, instructional scaffolding, differentiated instruction, student diversity, and new literacies. It continues to emphasize a contemporary, functional approach to content literacy instruction. In a functional approach, content area teachers learn how to integrate literacy-related strategies into instructional routines without sacrificing the teaching of content. Our intent is not to morph a content teacher into a reading specialist or writing instructor. Rather, our goal has always been, and shall continue to be, to improve the overall coverage of instructional strategies and practices that remain at the heart of this book.

New to This Edition

In this edition, chapter content has been rigorously updated to reflect current theory, research, and practice related to literacy and learning across the curriculum. New and updated content and features of this text include the following:

- Expanded emphasis on what it means to be literate in an age of ever-increasing **new literacies**. See Chapters 2, 9, and 10.
- New suggestions for supporting **English Learners** in comprehending content area vocabulary and texts. See Chapter 6, Box 6.1: “Evidence-Based Practices: The Intersections of Literacy and Culture”; Chapter 7, Box 7.2: “Supporting English Learners”; and in Chapter 8, Box 8.1: “Voices from the Field” on the challenges of differentiating instruction and Box 8.5: “Supporting English Learners.”
- Attention to the use of **formative assessment** to support data-based instructional decision making. See Chapter 4.
- An expanded emphasis on and new examples of **learning with multiple texts**, including both classic and contemporary adolescent literature. See Chapters 5 and 11.
- Updated **disciplinary literacy** features in many chapters to show how teachers adapt various aspects of content literacy instruction to meet the demands and peculiarities of their disciplines. See Chapter 7, Box 7.4: “Using Discipline Literacy with Project Planning in a Business Classroom,” and Chapter 9, Box 9.4: “Using Disciplinary Literacy to Explore the Real-Life Tasks of a Multimedia Story Teller.”
- Updated **Voices from the Field** features in many chapters. This feature captures the challenges that instructional team members have encountered relative

to chapter topics and the strategies used to address those challenges. See Chapters 1, 2, 3, 6, and 8. Many **instructional examples** have been replaced and updated throughout the text.

Key Content Updates by Chapter

Updates of new research and ways of thinking about literacy, learning, and instructional practice appear throughout the chapters. Updated content and features by chapter include the following:

- **Chapter 1, Literacy Matters**, is updated to reflect changes in education policy and standards. A new Voices from the Field segment presents the perspective of an instructional coach supporting content area teachers as they respond to these changes. The chapter discusses using technology integration to support collaborative learning across content areas.
- **Chapter 2, Learning with New Literacies**, reflects the prevalence of technology in schools and provides numerous new strategies and models, such as SAMR and the TPACK Framework, for integrating technology into content area classrooms. We offer suggestions for integrating social media tools in ways that increase digital citizenship and responsibility among students.
- **Chapter 3, Culturally Responsive Teaching in Diverse Classrooms**, is expanded to include a more detailed analysis of culturally relevant pedagogy and teaching for cultural understanding. We have included new strategies for supporting culturally and linguistically diverse students and have added a new Voices from the Field segment on using technology to support literacy development.
- **Chapter 4, Assessing Students and Texts**, discusses emergent content standards and their impact on assessment and data-driven instruction. The chapter is enhanced with new strategies for information assessment, a discussion of a formative assessment teaching cycle, and a framework for integrating data collection and instructional decision making.
- **Chapter 5, Planning Instruction for Content Literacy**, contains updated information on incorporating academic vocabulary in lesson planning and offers numerous updating strategy applications, including those for collaborative interactions and group investigations.
- **Chapter 6, Activating Prior Knowledge and Interest**, contains a new Evidence-Based Practices box on “The Intersections of Literacy and Culture” as well as a new Voices from the Field segment from the perspective of a first-year teacher who applies multimedia methods to activate students’ prior knowledge and interest.

- **Chapter 7, Guided Reading Comprehension**, offers new suggestions for supporting English Learners and a new Disciplinary Literacy Box that applies disciplinary literacy principles to project planning in a business class. New, updated examples are offered for the QAR strategy.
- **Chapter 8, Developing Vocabulary and Concepts**, includes new content for supporting English Learners, a New Voices from the Field segment from the perspective of a high school English teacher working to meet the diverse vocabulary needs of her students, and new strategy application examples.
- **Chapter 9, Writing Across the Curriculum**, includes new information on applying disciplinary literacy principles to real-life tasks through multimedia story telling. Updated strategy examples are offered throughout the chapter.
- **Chapter 10, Studying Text**, contains many new examples of literacy applications across content areas. It includes a discussion of electronic text structure as it relates to studying text.
- **Chapter 11, Learning with Multiple Texts**, incorporates updated, research-based strategies for teaching with contemporary literature that addresses complex topics. The chapter broadens its emphasis to include multiple texts, graphic nonfiction, e-books, and databases. It includes expanded suggestions for strategy applications, especially with new technologies.

MyLab Education

One of the most visible changes, and one of the most significant in the 13th edition, is the expansion of the digital learning and assessment resources embedded in the e-text and the inclusion of MyLab Education in the text. MyLab Education is an online homework, tutorial, and assessment program designed to engage learners and improve learning. Within its structured environment, learners see key concepts demonstrated through real classroom video footage, practice what they learn, test their understanding, and receive feedback to guide their learning and to ensure their mastery of key learning outcomes. Designed to bring learners more directly into the world of content area classrooms and to help them see the real and powerful impact of ideas covered in this book, the online resources in MyLab Education with the Enhanced eText include:

- **Video Examples.** Three or four times per chapter, an embedded video provides an illustration of important

ideas in action. These video examples illustrate students and teachers working in classrooms and also describe how students and their teachers wrestle with challenges and dilemmas they encounter in classrooms.

- **Self-Checks.** In each chapter, self-check quizzes help assess how well learners have mastered the content. The self-checks are made up of self-grading, multiple-choice items that not only provide feedback on whether questions are answered correctly or incorrectly but also provide rationales for both correct and incorrect answers.
- **Application Exercises.** These exercises give learners opportunities to practice applying the content from the chapters. The questions in these exercises are usually constructed responses. Once learners provide their own answers to the questions, they receive feedback in the form of model answers written by experts.

Organization and Features of This Edition

As part of the revision process for this edition, we decided to keep the same structure as the previous edition by organizing chapters into two main parts. Part I, “Learners, Literacies, and Texts,” places the focus on the cultural, linguistic, and academic diversity of today’s learners, their personal and academic literacies, and the kinds of texts that are integral to their lives in and out of school. Part II, “Instructional Practices and Strategies,” contains a multitude of evidence-based instructional strategies waiting to be adapted to meet the conceptual demands inherent in disciplinary learning.

Changes are interwoven throughout the e-text and the traditional print edition in the form of new disciplinary literacy boxes, new Voices from the Field segments, updated content in many of the chapters, updated references, and new examples of instructional strategies. This edition is enhanced by new online resources in the MyLab Education in the Enhanced E-text, including video examples, self-check assessments, and application exercises. These activities and strategies are powerful tools for supporting students as they think and learn with text.


This edition of *Content Area Reading* retains many of the features of the previous edition while improving its overall coverage of content literacy topics. In every chapter, special pedagogical features are provided to aid in this effort.

Features at the beginning of each chapter include the following:

Part I Learners, Literacies, and Texts

Chapter 1
Literacy Matters

Written in collaboration with Melissa Sykes



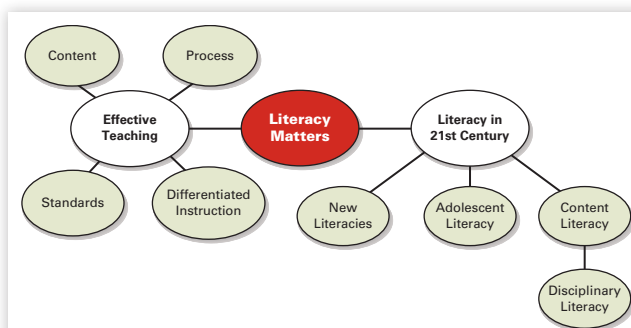
Chapter Overview and Learning Outcomes

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

- 1.1 Explain the characteristics of effective teachers and effective teaching, the difference between the two, and their impact on students and learning.
- 1.2 Explain how literacy has evolved and the classroom implications of 21st-century literacy.
- 1.3 Describe the factors influencing reading to learn in a discipline.

◀ **Learning Outcomes** reflect the major objectives of the chapter under study.

▼ **Graphic organizer** depicts the relationships among ideas presented in the chapter.



The **Organizing Principle** provides readers with a “heads-up” by introducing the rationale for the chapter and highlighting its underlying theme.

Organizing Principle

New literacies have transformed the way we read, write, think, communicate, and make meaning.

In many ways, the universe serves as a metaphor for the human mind. It is never ending, ever expanding, and unfathomable. So is the human mind. Literacy has a powerful impact on the

Frame of Mind questions get readers thinking about chapter topics.

Frame of Mind

1. What is the difference between content and process knowledge?
2. What are the characteristics of effective teaching?
3. How do content standards and content-driven planning and instruction affect literacy and learning in content areas?
4. Why is differentiated instruction an important aspect of content literacy and learning?
5. What are new literacies, and how are they changing the way we think about learning and literacy in the 21st century?
6. In what ways can technology aid instruction and support student literacy and learning?
7. What is adolescent literacy, and why is it important to 21st-century society?
8. How are content literacy and disciplinary literacy alike? How are they different?
9. What comprehension strategies are critical to reading? What role does prior knowledge play in comprehension?
10. What literacy strategies specifically target the challenges struggling and English Learners (ELs) readers face?

Teaching is an exercise in observation and response; there are no definitive formulas for teachers who want students to develop core concepts and good habits of thinking within a discipline. Nor are there magic potions in the form of instructional strategies that will make a difference with all students, all the time. Teaching is a problem-solving activity: There's just you; the academic texts and instructional strategies that you use; and the students whose lives you briefly and, hopefully, positively impact. Teaching is a daunting but immensely rewarding enterprise for those who are up to the challenge.

Effective Teaching In Content Areas

- 1.1 Explain the characteristics of effective teachers and effective teaching, the difference between the two, and their impact on students and learning.

Highly effective content area teachers plan lessons that are engaging and purposeful. These teachers recognize that “engaging the disengaged” is an essential, but difficult, task. Yet continually striving to make learning intellectually challenging and relevant for students makes teaching more effective and learning more stimulating. A top instructional priority, therefore, is to involve students actively in learning the important ideas and concepts of the *content* they are studying. But the effective teacher also knows that an intellectually challenging instructional environment engages students not only in the acquisition of content but also in the *thinking processes* by which they learn that content.

Chapter 1 Literacy Matters 3

MyLab Education Response Journal 1.1
Write a “five-minute essay” in your response journal on your initial reaction to standards-based planning, instruction, and learning.

erse of our minds. Through literacy, link more deeply about images and to learning in content areas, literacy opportunity to make a difference in explore what that role requires for eff- of doing so, we clarify several core *ther effectiveness, standards-based escent literacy, content/disciplinary needs learners.* may question the need for a course teachers have an important role to d strategies regardless of discipline ting the core ideas and concepts of ages with society over time. Content ic comprehension! Perhaps it's best t we use to make and communicate nts' literacies by helping them make ts—both print and digital—they use

reading and writing to learn in mid- arners struggle with academic texts. task of supporting students' under- linking and learning. Many students circumvent literacy tasks altogether; g with the expectation that teachers and class discussion. When students rce of information, they are rarely in a

In-text features include the following:

Videos in each chapter help readers approach the text in a critical frame of mind as they analyze and interpret the information presented.

Voices from the Field include interviews with teachers, administrators, and curriculum specialists related to instructional practices and policies.

Box 6.3 Voices from the Field

Drew, Mathematics Coach

Challenge

During a unit on area and perimeter, a fifth-grade classroom teacher, Mrs. Little, posed a real-world mathematical task to students to allow them to explore these concepts more deeply. Here is the task they were given:

You have 12 yards of fencing to build a rectangular cage for your rabbit. Which dimensions give you the most space inside the cage?

Students often struggle with solving these types of mathematical tasks for a couple reasons: They struggle to read and make sense of the mathematical situation, and, sometimes, they don't know where to begin. In this case, students struggled to distinguish between the concepts of perimeter (the amount of fencing) and area (the space inside).

Strategy

To support the students, Mrs. Little and I spent time at the beginning of the lesson activating their prior knowledge by asking them about real-life examples of area and perimeter. We posed questions such as:

- If we needed to build a fence, how would we determine how much fencing we would need?
- Can you think of other examples where we would need to figure out the distance around something?
- If we needed to put carpet down on the floor of a house, how would we determine how much carpet we would need?
- Can you think of other examples where we would need to figure out how much material we will need to cover a flat surface?

We posed the task to students and provided them with plastic square tiles to begin exploring the task. Initially, students connected the number 12 in the task with the need to grab 12 square tiles. Nearly every student did this and immediately made rectangles. Some students made a rectangle that was 6 tiles wide and 2 tiles tall, while others made one that was 4 tiles wide and 3 tiles tall. While both used 12 tiles, neither rectangle had a perimeter of 12.

Seeing this misconception, Mrs. Little and I revisited students' understanding of perimeter by asking them a few questions:

Mrs. Little: Do we know the amount of fencing that we have or the space that we have inside of our pen?

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- Present findings of research in a variety of products and formats, including charts, graphs, and visual or performing arts.
- Discuss possible sources for information presented in the class or for answering questions posed by the teacher or students (e.g., personal interviews, diaries, experiments).

The teacher must carefully plan inquiry-centered projects, giving just the right amount of direction to allow students to explore and discover ideas on their own. The research process isn't a do-your-own-thing proposition; building research need structure. The trick is to strike a balance between teacher guidance and student self-reliance. A research project must have just enough structure to give students (1) a problem focus, (2) physical and intellectual freedom, (3) an environment in which they can obtain data, and (4) feedback situations in which to report the results of their research.

Box 5.2 Evidence-Based Best Practices

Procedures for Guiding Inquiry/Research Projects

1. Raise questions, identify interests, organize information.
 - A. Discuss interest areas related to the unit of study.
 - B. Engage in goal setting.
 1. Articulate curiosities.
 2. Create awareness of present levels of knowledge.
 - C. Pose questions relating to each area and/or subarea.
 1. "What do you want to find out?"
 2. "What do you want to know about?"
 3. Record the questions or topics.
 4. "What do you already know about?"
 - D. Organize information; have students make predictions about likely answers to gaps in knowledge.
 1. Accept all predictions as possible answers.
 2. Encourage thoughtful speculations in a nonthreatening way.
2. Select materials.
 - A. Use visual materials.
 1. Trade books
 2. Magazines, catalogs, directories
 3. Newspapers and comics
 4. Indexes, atlases, almanacs, dictionaries, readers' guides, computer catalogs
 5. Films, slides
 6. Online videos, television programs
 7. Digital texts: CD-ROMs, website documents, online articles and databases, webinars, virtual field trips
 - B. Use nonvisual materials.
 1. Audio files
 2. Recorded music or talk
 3. Radio programs or webcasts
 4. Field trips
 - C. Use human resources.
 1. Interviews
 2. Letters
 3. On-site visits
 4. Discussion groups
 5. E-mail
 6. Listservs
3. Encourage self-selection of materials.
 1. "What can I understand?"
 2. "What gives me the best answers?"
4. Guide the information search.
 - A. Encourage active research.
 1. Reading
 2. Listening
 3. Classifying
 4. Talking
 5. Writing
 - B. Facilitate with questions.
 1. "How are you doing?"
 2. "Can I help you?"
 3. "Do you have all the materials you need?"
 4. "Can I help you with ideas you don't understand?"
 - C. Have students keep records.
 1. Learning log that includes plans, procedures, notes, and rough drafts
 2. Book record cards
 3. Record of conferencing with the teacher
5. Consider different forms of writing.
 - A. Initiate a discussion of sharing techniques.
 1. Essay or paper
 2. Lecture to a specific audience
 3. Case study
 4. Story, adventure, science fiction, another genre
 5. Dialogue, conversation, interview
 6. Dramatization through scripts
 7. Commentary or editorial
 8. Thematic sketch
 - B. Encourage a variety of writing forms.
 1. Essay or paper
 2. Lecture to a specific audience
 3. Case study
 4. Story, adventure, science fiction, another genre
 5. Dialogue, conversation, interview
 6. Dramatization through scripts
 7. Commentary or editorial
 8. Thematic sketch
6. Guide the writing process.
 - A. Help students organize information.
 - B. Guide first-draft writing.
 - C. Encourage responding, revising, and rewriting.
 - D. "Publish" finished products.
 1. Individual presentations
 2. Classroom arrangement
 3. Class interaction

MyLab Education Self-Check 3.2

MyLab Education Application Exercise 3.2: Valuing Students' Funds of Knowledge in a Content Area Classroom

Linguistic Differences in Today's Schools

3.3 Explain the impact of linguistic diversity on content area instruction.

Linguistic differences among today's student population are strikingly evident in many school districts throughout the United States. From the East Coast to the West Coast and from the Gulf to the northern Great Lakes, the increasingly large number of immigrants from non-European nations is influencing how content area teachers approach instruction. It is no exaggeration to suggest that in some large urban school districts, more than 175 different languages are spoken (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, 2014).

When immigrant students maintain a strong identification with their culture and native language, they are more likely to succeed academically, and they have more positive self-concepts about their ability to learn (Banks, 2001; Diaz, 2001; Garcia, 2002). Schools, however, tend to view linguistically diverse students whose first language is one other than English from a deficit model, not a difference model. For these English Learners, instructional practices currently are compensatory in nature: "That is, they are premised on the assumption that language diversity is an illness that needs to be cured" (Diaz, 2001, p. 159).

In addition, regional variations in language usage, commonly known as dialects, are a complicated issue for teachers. In truth, as explained in Box 3.3, all English language users speak a dialect of English, which is rooted in such factors as age, gender, socioeconomic status, and the region of the country where one was born and grew up. Even presidents of the United States speak dialects! The difficulty with dialect differences in the classroom is the value assigned to dialects—the perceived goodness or badness of one language variation over another. Linguists explain that language variations are neither good nor bad and that such judgments are often about the people who make them rather than about clarity or precision (Ahearn, 2012). Gee (2012) argues quite convincingly that teachers need to respect and recognize the strengths of diverse learners who use dialects in the classroom.



MyLab Education Video Example 3.2: How Can Educators Help Students to Learn English? Watch this video to hear one educator's advice on helping students learn English.

Box 3.3 Evidence-Based Practices

Standard English Is Not the Only English

Scholars have long disagreed on the actual number of dialects in the United States, but one point they agree on is that everyone speaks a dialect of English. In the companion website for PBS's series "Do You Speak American?" Fought (2005) writes: "Do you think because I'm a professor, I don't speak a dialect? I do. I speak Valley Girl. My native dialect is 'Valley Girl' English,

changes. The people who live in an area as well as those who enter an area influence dialect. African American Vernacular English (AAVE), Ebonics, or Black English Vernacular, as it is also known, may have evolved as a fusion of West African languages and English. What is most interesting about AAVE is that while other dialects are typically defined by the regions

Box 7.4 Disciplinary Literacy

Using Disciplinary Literacy With Project Planning in a Business Classroom

As we learned in Chapter 1, disciplinary literacy is becoming increasingly important in content classrooms due to the textual demands associated with discipline-specific content. As a reminder, each discipline requires students to read, write, think, and speak in order to acquire knowledge in the discipline itself (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). Thus, when students have opportunities to engage in specific discipline practices, they can begin to see themselves as engineers, mathematicians, scientists, poets and authors, and future entrepreneurs (Buehl, 2009). Put another way, teachers become the facilitators and scaffold learning so their students "develop the capacity to read disciplinary specific texts through an insider perspective" (Buehl, 2011, p. 10).

High school business classes provide an ideal setting for the application of disciplinary literacy. After all, the primary purpose of these classes should be to allow students to dip their toes into business practices to get a feel for their personal fit. Unfortunately, the purpose often gets lost in prolonged projects, outdated software applications, and job descriptions that no longer apply to real positions. The question then becomes: What

guidelines should content area classroom teachers consider when implementing disciplinary literacy practices and still teaching the content curriculum?

To assist classroom teachers, the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) provides recommendations or "insights" to consider when planning to initiate disciplinary literacy practices into their content areas (Thawin & Theodore, 2015, p. 1):

1. Provide an approach to content instruction that cultivates the skills for 21st-century literacy: critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity;
2. Take charge of designing authentic, real-world experiences and assessments;
3. Commit to a conceptual framework of learning by doing;
4. Provide opportunities for students to use inquiry, key habits of practice, and academic language; and
5. Implement ongoing, job-embedded professional development and collaboration by discipline with teachers as designers and facilitators.

3) to develop the academic language critical to the role of a project manager. The ultimate goal was to engage his students in one facet of a real-world business practice.

To begin, he chose the career path of the project manager. Not only does this job exist in almost every industry, but it also encompasses the basic skills necessary to be successful in the management of a business. He planned a 6-week project to be accomplished in three parts. For Part One, the students would conduct in-depth research on the knowledge, skills, and education required to be a project manager. During Part Two, the students would engage in actual project planning; and for Part Three, the students would prepare a presentation for an employer.

On day one, he had his business students scour the Internet for project management job descriptions because he wanted his students to formulate an understanding of the words **project** and **project management**. It was essential that his students understand that every project is engineered by goal-minded individuals who are trained in leadership and management practices. Additionally, the students looked up college programs to identify the course of study associated with the training and development of a project manager. Over the course of 2 weeks, the students chose when they would ideally like to work and which salary was most appealing. Under the guidance of the teacher, they made their lists of required knowledge, skills, and education needed for project management that matched the job descriptions geographically and their preferences by salary for prospective employment.

To initiate Part Two, the teacher rolled out the sample project plan – the next great snaker. To set the course for the project, he showed a power point on project management to highlight the essential project management techniques, the organizational, assessment, and software tools, and the project management process in order for his students to achieve the next great snaker. In order for his students to fully understand the job of project management, he knew this could best be achieved if he created planning teams. He believed the jigsaw strategy (discussed in Chapter 5) would provide each member of the planning team the opportunity to become an expert. As a result, he divided his class into five teams, consisting of five members to a team, and each member of a team was assigned a critical element of the five stages of project management:

▲ **Disciplinary Literacy** features show how teachers in a particular discipline adapt various aspects of content literacy instruction to meet the demands and peculiarities of their disciplines.

◀ **Evidence-Based Best Practices** highlight the steps and procedures involved in using high-visibility strategies that are supported by theoretically sound rationales and/or evidence-based, scientific research.

Special marginal notations and callouts provide opportunities to enhance the basic instruction within the chapters:

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learning tasks and activities for students to complete using Internet resources. WebQuests are typically organized around several components: introduction, task, process, resources, learning advice, and conclusion.

The introduction to a WebQuest provides an overview of the learning opportunity available to the students. Often the introduction places the learner(s) in a hypothetical situation somewhat similar to RAFT writing activities (see Chapter 9). As a result, students are assigned a role and a purpose for engaging in the learning activity. The task component of the WebQuest describes the task(s) students will complete and lists the questions that guide the information search. The process component outlines the steps and procedures students will follow to complete the learning task. The resources component of a WebQuest provides links to information resources on the Internet that students will need to access to complete the learning task. The “learning advice” component provides directions to students on how to organize information, whether in outlines, time lines, graphic organizers (see Chapter 10), notebook entries such as the double-entry journal format (see Chapter 5), or I-charts. And, finally, the conclusion to the WebQuest brings closure to the activity and summarizes what students should have learned from participation in the WebQuest.

Adapting Learning Strategies with Technology

Computers and digital technologies are both a “facilitator of knowledge and medium for literacy” (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004). Technology allows teachers to plan higher levels of differentiation and to meet the academic needs of a greater number of students during instruction. Electronic databases, such as EBSCO and ProQuest, provide middle and high school students a wealth of information at various degrees of reading difficulty, allowing teachers to find multiple texts related to course content.

For example, ProQuest has created the ProQuest Central and STEM Database and EBSCO has Explora, search engines designed for middle and high school students. Explora and ProQuest Central provide adolescent learners with appropriate research tools for easily obtaining the information that they seek from these databases, including electronic magazines, newspapers, biographies, and videos. Students can also search databases by topic and limit their searches according to appropriate *Lexile reading levels* (see Chapter 4 for a discussion of Lexile reading levels and other tools for determining the readability or difficulty level of texts).

Using electronic texts, content area teachers can create flexible groups within their classes that allow all students access to text appropriate to their needs and relevant to course objectives. In addition, interactive computer programs, such as Newsela and CommonLit, offer a range of textual material adapted to students’ reading levels, while ReadWorks provides a range of nonfiction material for teachers to use with K-12 students. Many of these texts and websites adapt to a student’s reading performance by providing text passages that are written at a level consistent with the student’s needs. Doing so increases the comprehensibility of the text for the student. Additionally, such programs provide students with immediate feedback on assignments and allow teachers to track student progress toward goals outlined in intervention plans. Some programs that include voice recognition software allow students to record themselves while reading so that miscues can be tracked and appropriate feedback provided. These resources can be useful for providing students with multiple interactions with texts and for offering independent practice (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004).

Many learning strategies such as KWL and RAFT can be adapted using Web 2.0 technologies. For example, comprehension strategies such as KWL and 3-2-1 can be created in shared document sites like Google Drive. Teachers can post research and writing tools, such as I-charts and RAFT, to a Dropbox folder or their class wiki. Twitter can be used in place of question cards to generate questions for a class discussion.

Here is a chart with digital adaptations of some of the strategies presented in this book.

MyLab Education

Response Journal 2.2

Consider how technology has evolved throughout your educational experience as a student and, perhaps, as a teacher. How has technology impacted your experiences in classrooms and schools and changed learning for you?

◀ **Response Journal** marginal icons signal readers to use a “response journal” while reading to make personal and professional connections as they react to ideas presented in each chapter.

▶ **Classroom Artifact** figures throughout the book illustrate instructional procedures and materials developed by teachers for authentic teaching situations.

Figure 9.5 Entries from a Double-Entry Journal Assignment for *The Call of the Wild*

Classroom Artifact	
What did you learn from the demonstration?	How did the demonstration help you better understand the novel?
<p>I learned that although dogs just look big and cool they really can work. When people take the time they can teach their dog anything. Yet that saying also applies to life.</p> <p>[Alex]</p>	<p>I never realized how hard it was for Buck to pull the sled. It takes a lot of work.</p>
<p>It was excellent. I learned that the owners and the dogs were a family and extremely hard workers. I learned how hard a race could be and the risk involved. I'm glad I got to see the dogs and their personalities.</p> <p>[Marcus]</p>	<p>It proved to me how Buck needed to be treated with praise and discipline and equality. That way you get a wonderful dog and a companion for life.</p>
<p>I learned about how they trained their dogs and that they need as much or more love and attention as they do discipline.</p> <p>[Jennifer]</p>	<p>It helped me understand the book better because it showed how unique Buck is compared to the other dogs. Also what a dog sled looks like and what Buck might have looked like. It made the story come alive more.</p>

Box 9.3 Evidence-Based Practices

Authentic Writing With English Learners

Daniel (2017) reminds writing instructors that English Learners benefit from authentic writing experiences that are connected to their experiences. For example, an eighth-grade science class engaged in a unit study on the spread of disease. One of their writing assignments was to imagine that they worked for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Their task was to catalog and categorize the diseases, their symptoms, and their cures. This class included several Himong students who had limited proficiency with English. The teacher created sight word

cards and corresponding picture cards of disease symptoms. Capitalizing not only on the eighth-grade fascination with all things gruesome but also picture/word associations, the Himong students worked with their English-speaking counterparts to learn the vocabulary as they matched the sight word cards with the pictures. Next, they worked in small groups to dramatize symptoms that corresponded to a disease. The experience of playing these roles helped all students to understand the nature of the diseases they were studying. This activity supports

Chapters conclude with additional features that help readers review and practice the concepts introduced in the chapter:

Texted Reading Guides

An engaged classroom provides an opportunity to learn and practice in authentic ways. One way to do this is to encourage students to use technology that usually resides outside of the classroom, inside the classroom (Crawley, 2015). Texted reading guides are one way to allow students to use their texting skills academically. An activity that is best done in groups of two, texted reading guides can either be an e-mail exchange or, more ideally, a text exchange. The learners work together to text or e-mail each other their notes. Just like an outline, they should organize their writing so that, when read back, it can reflect the structure of the texts. This process starts with one reader texting a title and the other texting the main point. This continues until all the main points have been explored.

Here is an excerpt from an exchange about *The Outsiders*. The students were given the assignment to discuss how they felt about Ponyboy.

Student One: I like Ponyboy, but I think he is really naïve.

Student Two: Why do you think that?

Student One: I think he trusts people too much. Like when he is trusting his brothers to take care of everything. I think he looks at them like they can do no wrong. That is naïve. Don't you think.

Student Two: Yes I guess, but they are also family. Sometimes you have to believe in something, right? If you can't believe in your family, what else do you have. I don't call that naïve, I call that loyal.

Then the process begins again with a new title and new points. Not only does this assignment allow students to express their opinions and points of comprehension authentically, but also their conversation is saved digitally. They can look back at their notes to study, ask questions, and recall important points. They can read and revise it in real time, and through the revision, it becomes a living document.

MyLab Education Self-Check 10.4

MyLab Education Application Exercise 10.4:
Using Text Annotations in Content Area Classrooms

Looking Back Looking Forward

Teaching students how and why to study texts involves showing them how to become independent learners. In this chapter, we used the role that text structure plays to illustrate how you can teach students to use learner-directed strategies that involve constructing graphic organizers, writing summaries, and making and taking notes. We also emphasized the importance of connecting studying to authentic tasks and technologies.

Understanding how authors organize their ideas is a powerful factor in learning with texts. Because authors write to communicate, they organize ideas to make them accessible to readers. A well-organized text is a considerate one. The text patterns that authors use to organize their ideas revolve around description, sequence, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, and problem and solution. The more students perceive text patterns, the more likely they are to remember and interpret the ideas they encounter in reading as they connect them with their cultural backgrounds and life experiences.

Graphic organizers help students outline important information that is reflected in the text patterns that authors use to organize ideas. The construction of graphic organizers allows students to map the relationships that exist among the ideas presented in text. This strategy is a valuable tool for comprehending, retaining, and expressing information.

Students who engage in summarizing what they have read often gain greater understanding and retention of the main ideas in text. Students need to become aware of summarization rules and to receive instruction in how to use these rules to write and polish a summary.

◀ **Looking Back, Looking Forward** sections at the end of each chapter offer a summative review of the concepts introduced and a perspective on where the discussion will lead to next.

eResources

Explore topics on content area literacy presented on the Reading Rockets website. Consider how you might apply concepts presented there to enhance instruction in your discipline.

The National Reading Panel's focus on research-based strategies serves as a landmark in reading education. Review the panel's findings on text comprehension.

Use the keywords "QTA" or "questioning the author" and "KWL" or "KWL strategies" to search for these two powerful comprehension strategies. Consider how you might use these strategies in your content area. Reading Quest provides examples of how to apply strategies such as KWL and QTA in the discipline of social studies. If you teach social studies, consider how you might adapt these strategies for use in your classes.

► **eResources** signal readers to investigate online resources to enrich and extend the topics presented.

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Part I Learners, Literacies, and Texts

Chapter 1

Literacy Matters

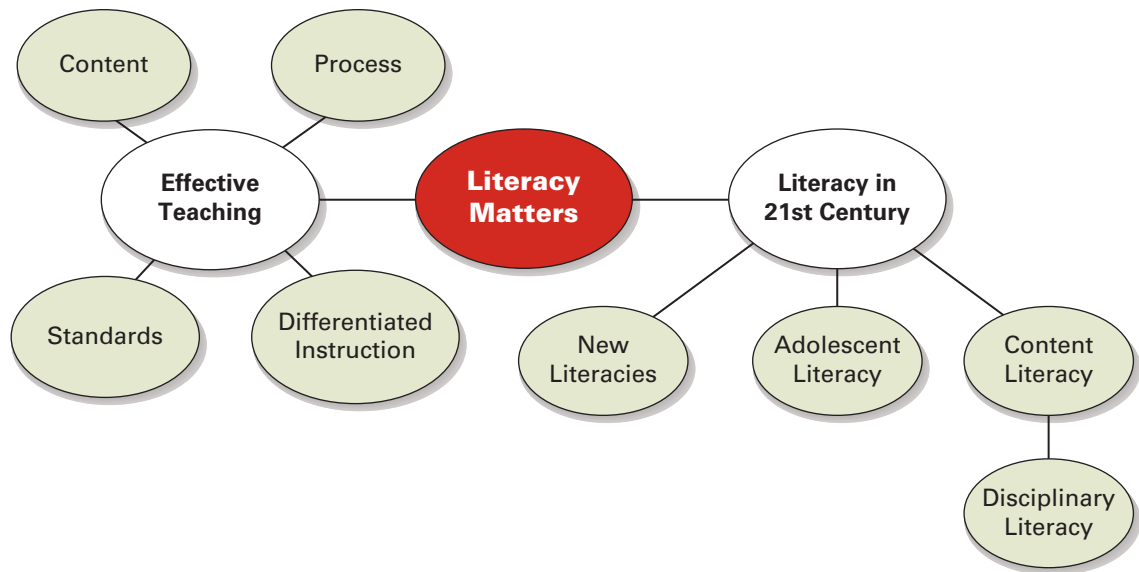
Written in collaboration with Melissa Sykes



Chapter Overview and Learning Outcomes

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

- 1.1** Explain the characteristics of effective teachers and effective teaching, the difference between the two, and their impact on students and learning.
- 1.2** Explain how *literacy* has evolved and the classroom implications of 21st-century literacy.
- 1.3** Describe the factors influencing reading to learn in a discipline.



Organizing Principle

New literacies have transformed the way we read, write, think, communicate, and make meaning.

In many ways, the universe serves as a metaphor for the human mind. It is never ending, ever expanding, and unfathomable. So is the human mind. Literacy has a powerful impact on the meaning-making and learning that take place in the universe of our minds. Through literacy, we begin to see, to imagine, to comprehend, and to think more deeply about images and ideas encountered in all kinds of texts. When it comes to learning in content areas, literacy matters. All teachers have a critical role and powerful opportunity to make a difference in the literate lives of their students. In this chapter, we explore what that role requires for effective teaching in the content areas. And in the process of doing so, we clarify several core concepts related to literacy, teaching, and learning: *teacher effectiveness*, *standards-based planning*, *differentiated instruction*, *new literacies*, *adolescent literacy*, *content/disciplinary literacy*, *reading to learn*, and *strategies to support high-needs learners*.

Though both preservice and content area teachers may question the need for a course that has the terms *reading* and/or *literacy* in its title, all teachers have an important role to play in showing students how to use literacy skills and strategies regardless of discipline or context. While many view their primary role as teaching the core ideas and concepts of their discipline, literacy is an evolving concept that changes with society over time. Content counts, but literacy is the foundation for content-specific comprehension! Perhaps it's best to think of literacy in terms of the *multiple literacies* that we use to make and communicate meaning. In this book, we explore how to support students' literacies by helping them make and communicate meaning with the various kinds of texts—both print and digital—they use in content areas.

Our primary emphasis throughout this book is on reading and writing to learn in middle and high school. Unfortunately, many adolescent learners struggle with academic texts. Teachers across all content areas will be faced with the task of supporting students' understanding and use of reading and writing as tools for thinking and learning. Many students either read or write on a superficial level or find ways to circumvent literacy tasks altogether; and all too often, adolescent learners give up on reading with the expectation that teachers will impart information through lecture, demonstration, and class discussion. When students become too dependent on teachers as their primary source of information, they are rarely in a position to engage in active literacy for learning.

This need not be the case. The organizing principle of this chapter underscores the dynamic relationship between literacy and learning: Effective teachers show students how to think, learn, and communicate with all kinds of texts.

Study the Chapter Overview. It's your map to the major ideas that you will encounter in the chapter. The graphic display shows the relationships that exist among the concepts you will study. Use it as an organizer. What is the chapter about? What do you know already about the content to be presented in the chapter? What do you need to learn more about? How will you implement the presented information and concepts in your own practice?

In conjunction with the Chapter Overview, take a moment or two to study the Frame of Mind questions. This feature uses key questions to help you think about the ideas that you will read about. When you finish reading, you should be able to respond fully to the Frame of Mind questions.

MyLab Education Response Journal 1.1

Write a “five-minute essay” in your response journal on your initial reaction to standards-based planning, instruction, and learning.

Frame of Mind

1. What is the difference between content and process knowledge?
2. What are the characteristics of effective teaching?
3. How do content standards and content-driven planning and instruction affect literacy and learning in content areas?
4. Why is differentiated instruction an important aspect of content literacy and learning?
5. What are new literacies, and how are they changing the way we think about learning and literacy in the 21st century?
6. In what ways can technology aid instruction and support student literacy and learning?
7. What is adolescent literacy, and why is it important to 21st-century society?
8. How are content literacy and disciplinary literacy alike? How are they different?
9. What comprehension strategies are critical to reading? What role does prior knowledge play in comprehension?
10. What literacy strategies specifically target the challenges struggling and English Learners (ELs) readers face?

Teaching is an exercise in observation and response; there are no definitive formulas for teachers who want students to develop core concepts and good habits of thinking within a discipline. Nor are there magic potions in the form of instructional strategies that will make a difference with all students, all the time. Teaching is a problem-solving activity: There's just you; the academic texts and instructional strategies that you use; and the students whose lives you briefly and, hopefully, positively impact. Teaching is a daunting but immensely rewarding enterprise for those who are up to the challenge.

Effective Teaching in Content Areas

1.1 Explain the characteristics of effective teachers and effective teaching, the difference between the two, and their impact on students and learning.

Highly effective content area teachers plan lessons that are engaging and purposeful. These teachers recognize that “engaging the disengaged” is an essential, but difficult, task. Yet continually striving to make learning intellectually challenging and relevant for students makes teaching more effective and learning more stimulating. A top instructional priority, therefore, is to involve students actively in learning the important ideas and concepts of the *content* they are studying. But the effective teacher also knows that an intellectually challenging instructional environment engages students not only in the acquisition of content but also in the *thinking processes* by which they learn that content.

No wonder the classroom is like a crucible, a place where the special mix of teacher, student, and text come together to create wonderfully complex human interactions that stir the minds of learners. Some days, of course, are better than others. The things that you thought about doing and the classroom surprises that you didn't expect fall into place. A creative energy imbues teaching and learning.

Sometimes, however, lessons limp along. Others simply bomb—so you cut them short. The four or so remaining minutes before the class ends are a kind of self-inflicted wound. Nothing is more unnerving than waiting for class to end when students don't have anything meaningful to do. During this time the silence can be deafening, and behavior management can become overwhelming.

Consider a high school science teacher's reflection on the way things went in one of her chemistry classes. "Something was missing," she explains. "The students aren't usually as quiet and passive as they were today. Excuse the pun, but the chemistry wasn't there. Maybe the text assignment was too hard. Maybe I could have done something differently. Any suggestions?"

This teacher's spirit of inquiry is admirable. She shows she knows her students and wants them to succeed; she also wants to know how to improve her teaching—how to engage students in learning the important concepts of her chemistry course and how to involve them in thinking like scientists.

Like all good teachers, the chemistry teacher in the preceding example cares about *what* she does and *how* she does it. **Content and process**, after all, are two sides of the same instructional coin. She knows a lot about the *what* of instruction—the content of chemistry—and how to teach that content in ways that develop important ideas and concepts in an intellectually challenging instructional environment. A strong attraction to academic content is one of the reasons teachers are wedded to a particular discipline. Yet it is often much more difficult to teach something than to know that something: "The teacher of the American Revolution must know both a great deal about the American Revolution and a variety of ways of communicating the essence of the American Revolution to a wide variety of students, in a pedagogically interesting way" (Shulman, 1987, p. 5). While a teacher's passion may lie with the content, the instruction of that content requires more skill and finesse.

Teaching is complicated. There are no shortcuts to effective teaching in content areas. Often, what to teach (content) and how to teach it (process) represent nagging problems for today's teachers. Despite pacing guides and standardized programs, the specific what and how of teaching is dependent on individual student needs, and quality instruction of the content is vital. On one hand, researchers have shown that subject matter mastery is essential for effective teaching (Allen, 2003; Sanders, 2004; Walsh & Snyder, 2004). Indeed, a strong connection exists between teachers' content knowledge preparation and higher student achievement.

The Educational Testing Service (ETS) study *How Teaching Matters* (Wenglinski, 2000) concluded, not surprisingly, that teachers' content knowledge is an important factor in student achievement. Content counts! Student achievement, for example, increases by 40% of a grade level in both mathematics and science when teachers have a major or minor in the subject. However, the study also concluded that content knowledge alone is not the only factor necessary to help increase student achievement. Indeed, the classroom instructional practices and strategies of teachers significantly influence student achievement. The study found that students who engage in active, hands-on learning activities and respond to higher-order thinking questions outperform their peers by more than 70% of a grade level in mathematics and 40% in science. In addition, the study showed that students whose teachers have received professional development training in working with special populations outperform their peers by more than a full grade level. The findings of the ETS study indicate that greater attention, not less, needs to be paid to improving the pedagogical knowledge of teachers and the classroom aspects of teacher effectiveness.

What Makes a Teacher Effective?

The U.S. Department of Education (2010), readily acknowledges that the “most important factor” in student success is the teacher. When students have access to effective teachers in the classroom, not only can achievement gaps narrow, but students will approach literacy and learning tasks with purpose and enthusiasm. Realistically, however, even in classrooms where teachers are practicing their craft effectively, some students will zone out from time to time or become sidetracked with other matters. Ball and Forzani (2010) put it this way in describing the difference between a tutor working one on one with a learner and a teacher working with an entire class of learners:

Not only do teachers have more learners to understand and interact with, but they also must design and manage a productive environment in which all are able to learn. One student requires a firm hand and a great deal of direction whereas another works best when left to puzzle further on his own. One student is active—tapping her pen, doodling, and rocking on her chair—even while deeply engaged whereas a second is easily distracted. (p. 42)

Yet in the presence of an effective teacher most learners will tune in to what they are studying in the classroom—and stay tuned in.

With today’s focus on educational reform, teacher effectiveness is closely tied to student achievement. An effective teacher has been defined as one whose students’ growth is equivalent to at least one grade level in an academic year (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). Linda Darling-Hammond (2006) expands the notion of teacher effectiveness beyond how well students perform on achievement measures. She suggests that it is important to keep in mind the distinction between *teacher quality* and *teaching quality*. She defines teacher quality as the traits, understandings, and characteristics an effective teacher brings to instruction, including the following:

- Strong general intelligence and verbal ability that help teachers organize and explain ideas as well as observe and think diagnostically
- Strong content knowledge
- Knowledge of how to teach others; how to use hands-on learning techniques and how to develop higher-order thinking skills
- An understanding of learners and their learning and development—including how to assess and scaffold learning, how to support students who have learning differences or difficulties, and how to support the learning of language and content for those who are not already proficient in the language of instruction
- Adaptive expertise that allows teachers to make judgments about what it is like to work in a given context in response to student needs (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 2)

Teaching quality, on the other hand, has more to do with the context of instruction. Quality teaching enables a teacher to meet the demands of a discipline and to provide “strong instruction” that allows a wide range of students to learn.

Pearson and Hoffman (2011) also discuss teaching quality and strong instruction from the perspective of what it means to be a practicing teacher. They describe practicing teachers as *thoughtful*, *effective*, *pragmatic*, and *reflective*. In the classroom, the actions of a practicing teacher are guided by ten general “principles of practice” associated with teaching quality. Effective teachers reflect and are guided by these principles in their daily work in the classroom. These principles of practice are summarized in Table 1.1.

Higher levels of student achievement, Pearson and Hoffman (2011) contend, will not result from mandated standards or high-stakes testing alone. While standards and high-stakes assessment are an integral part of today’s educational landscape, practicing teachers, who know how to balance content and process in a standards-based curriculum, are the real game changers in the education of 21st-century learners.

Table 1.1 Ten General Principles of Practice Associated With Quality Teaching

1. Principle of Praxis: Effective teachers act on the understanding that education has the power to transform the individual and society.	6. Principle of Community: Effective teachers share their classroom knowledge and experiences within and across multiple professional communities as a means of growing professionally and giving back.
2. Principle of Purpose: Effective teachers operate in the moment guided by a clear understanding of <i>why</i> they are doing <i>what</i> they are doing. There is always a purpose behind their actions in the classroom.	7. Principle of Service: Effective teachers serve the learners in their classrooms and their parents.
3. Principle of Serendipity: Although effective teachers engage in a variety of instructional practices, they “expect the unexpected” and are open to learning opportunities that may occur within the context of instruction.	8. Principle of Flexibility: Effective teachers plan instruction but are flexible in the implementation of lessons. They adapt to unanticipated events or responses in ways that make learning possible.
4. Principle of Exploration: Effective teachers are continually exploring new practices and making changes in their practices based on their exploration of instructional possibilities in the classroom.	9. Principle of Caring: Effective teachers care about the learners in their classroom, the disciplinary content that they teach, and the literacy processes they use to make a difference in the lives of students. Caring is necessary to build relationships essential to the teaching/learning transaction.
5. Principle of Reflection: Effective teachers think about the <i>what</i> , <i>how</i> , and <i>why</i> of instruction during and after each teaching activity. They engage in the process of reflection to solve instructional problems and set goals.	10. Principle of Reward: Effective teachers find satisfaction and reward in what they do for their students; they value the spontaneity of classroom life, the immediacy of the classroom, the learning they are a part of, and the autonomy of making instructional decisions.

Effective Teachers and the Standards-Driven Classroom

Literacy and learning are challenges in today’s classrooms, where the demands inherent in the teaching of content standards can easily lead to “covering” information without much attention given to *how* students with a wide range of skills and abilities acquire core concepts. Schools continue to question the curriculum choices made in their classrooms. Curriculum refers to the content taught, which resources and strategies are used, and the learning activities in which students are engaged (Dunkle, 2012). Building or employing a curriculum that balances content and process in a standards-based curriculum means at the very least:

- Knowing the standards for your content area and grade level
- Making instructional decisions based on authentic assessments throughout the school year about students’ abilities to use reading and writing to learn
- Integrating content literacy practices and strategies into instructional plans and units of study

Standards, in a nutshell, are expected academic consequences defining what students should learn and how they should learn it at designated grade levels and in content areas. Since the mid-1990s, a proliferation of state standards have provided a road map to what students *should know* and *be able to do* at each grade level and for each content area.

The underlying rationale for the creation of standards is that high learning expectations—clearly stated and specific in nature—will lead to dramatic changes in student achievement. With high learning expectations comes an accountability system based on “high-stakes” testing to determine how well students meet the standards formulated in each content area. The goal is purposeful instruction with clear data points that allow teachers to identify if students have learned what they aimed to teach and to determine what their students know. Some states tie high-stakes assessment to the threat of grade-level retention for students who perform below predetermined levels of proficiency in critical areas such as reading. We explore in more detail the nature of high-stakes assessment, and the types of authentic assessments to improve learning, in Chapter 4.

MyLab Education Response Journal 1.2

Did you have many teachers who were effective in the classroom? Why were they effective?

The United States, unlike most countries, does not have a set of national education standards. Individual states have sole responsibility for determining what teachers should teach and students learn. However, to unite the nation around standards-based teaching, in 2010 the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers released the **Common Core State Standards (CCSS)** for literacy and mathematics. The Common Core State Standards Initiative (2010) defined the Common Core State Standards as a way to

provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge that our young people need for success in college and careers. With American students fully prepared for the future, our communities will be best positioned to compete successfully in the global economy. (p. 11)

Proponents of the CCSS argued that a standardized curriculum would facilitate the following:

- Increased collaboration between teachers in a subject area, a grade level, a district, and even across state lines
- Increased teacher readiness to teach content regardless of assignment
- Standardized texts and resources focused on the most relevant concepts that relate most directly to student learning
- Increased depth of instruction that explores concepts substantially rather than working to cover many disparate topics that may be inadequately developed (Dunkle, 2012)

Initially adopted by 45 of the 50 states in 2010, Common Core standards implementation has been controversial. Though the standards are the closest the United States has come as a country to adopting a national curriculum, since the initial proposal of the standards, “24 of those states have reviewed and revised their English language arts (ELA) and mathematics standards. In most states, the review process was triggered in response to mounting political opposition to the Common Core or associated testing and accountability policies” (Achieve, 2017). Despite Common Core politics and state-specific standards reforms, the push for teachers to work from the same core standards, and the possibility for broad-based sharing of what works in the classroom, has never been greater. Because the Common Core does not come with rigid guidelines concerning implementation, it provides local school flexibility to decide how best to implement the standards at various grade levels (Phillips & Wong, 2011).

In addition, state-specific revisions of Common Core standards have shifted the focus toward “the characteristics of high-quality college- and career-ready (CCR) standards” that aim to develop students “to enter and succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing courses in postsecondary institutions and to have access to careers” (Achieve, 2017). Even the Common Core standards reference and recognize that CCR anchor standards and grade-specific standards “work in tandem to define college and career readiness expectations—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity” (National Governors Association, 2018).

Several important shifts resulted from the implementation of the Common Core standards and have continued throughout states’ revisions of the core standards. In order to focus on CCR teaching that “reflect[s] the skills and knowledge students will need to succeed in college, career, and life,” most literacy standards now require the tenets of CCSS, including:

- Regular practice with complex texts and their academic language
- Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from texts, both literary and informational
- Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction (National Governors Association, 2018).

Through an increased exposure to nonfiction resources, students may build their background knowledge, or schema (to be discussed more fully later in this chapter); cultivate their cognitive learning and critical thinking skills; learn to read and write in a real-world, authentic manner; and read writing that more clearly links to the content area (Dunkle, 2012).

A greater emphasis on helping students build thinking habits rather than memorize content facts and figures is now the focus; the intention of standards-based teaching is to help students develop an inquiry mind-set that can be utilized across the curriculum. Learning the skill of perseverance, for example, would help a student stick with a difficult math problem as well as complete a difficult text. Accordingly, these mind-sets are meant not to help a student pass a test but to prepare that student to enter university or succeed in his or her chosen career.

Finally, the emphasis placed on texts and text-based answers (McLaughlin & Overturf, 2012), requires students to comprehend, evaluate, articulate, and form an argument based on evidence in the text (National Governors Association, 2018). Nonfiction, content-heavy texts are employed to help students learn how to use the text to answer questions while backing up their thoughts through understanding the author's arguments and logic. These thinking skills can then be transferred to any text the students are given, the ultimate goal being the understanding not of the text but of how to use the text as a means to answer questions.

One of the important dimensions of standards-based instruction is the emphasis on literacy in all content areas. Phillips and Wong (2011) put it this way: "Think of literacy as the spine; it holds everything together. The branches of learning connect to it, meaning that all core content teachers have a responsibility to teach literacy (pp. 40–41)." The real potential of standards-driven planning, instruction, and assessment from a literacy perspective is that it positions students to become more active in their use of literacy skills by discovering concepts and processes that lead to independent learning. To become literate in a content area, students must learn how to learn with texts. Integrating these thinking/learning processes into content instruction helps learners to better understand what they are reading about, writing about, talking about in classroom discussion, or viewing on a computer screen or video monitor. Weaving literacy into the fabric of disciplinary study does not diminish the teacher's role as a subject matter specialist. Instead, reading, writing, talking, and viewing are tools that students use to learn with texts in content areas. Who's in a better, more strategic position to show students how to learn with texts in a content area and grade level than the teacher who guides *what* students are expected to learn and *how* they are to learn it?

A social studies middle school teacher working to integrate the literacy goals in his or her practice might consider teaching content as follows:

The teacher's goal is to teach the divisive societal conflicts that led to the French Revolution.

- The teacher would first collect a variety of nonfiction, content-rich texts that would describe those conflicts. Students would have their choice of text that best fits their learning needs and reading style.
- The students would then have time to collaborate and use the key tenets of literacy to analyze and engage with the text during lessons, working both individually and collectively to connect with, explore, and reflect on the concepts presented.
- The teacher would act as facilitator, pushing students to think deeper through purposeful questioning and providing guidance through pointed student monitoring and reflective feedback.

- The students would be given a writing task, such as those described in Chapter 9. Basing their writing on the provided text, they would complete their nonfiction writing task.

The intention of this instruction would be the creation of a student-centered, independent learning environment that allows students the space to develop their own understanding of the conflicts through an in-depth understanding of the information presented in the texts. It is indeed a departure from the teacher/lecturer model or the fact-based instruction often seen in the social studies classroom.

A standards-based approach creates high expectations for students to develop their ability to use literacy and language skills to learn in content areas. One of the ultimate goals is that students will develop independent learning habits to more adequately develop a college-ready mind-set:

Students must read widely and deeply from among a broad range of high-quality, increasingly challenging literary and informational texts. Through extensive reading of stories, dramas, poems, and myths from diverse cultures and different time periods, students gain literary and cultural knowledge as well as familiarity with various text structures and elements. By reading texts in history/social studies, science, and other disciplines, students build a foundation of knowledge in these fields that will also give them the background to be better readers in all content areas. Students can only gain this foundation when the curriculum is intentionally and coherently structured to develop rich content knowledge within and across grades. Students also acquire the habits of reading independently and closely, which are essential to their future success. (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2010, p. 35)

Another major goal is that all learners will develop a strong knowledge base across the curriculum:

Students establish a base of knowledge across a wide range of subject matter by engaging with works of quality and substance. They become proficient in new areas through research and study. They read purposefully and listen attentively to gain both general knowledge and discipline-specific expertise.

They refine and share their knowledge through writing and speaking. They respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline. (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2010, p. 35)

CCSS has not progressed without its critics; even standards-based instruction (and its frequent assessments) has been challenged as limiting for certain student populations, including ESL and special needs learners. Tienken (2011), for example, fears that standardization of the curriculum may not meet the needs of a diverse population of U.S. students. Some critics argue that top-down mandates for curriculum change are often only vaguely related to day-to-day instruction. Such mandates ignore the professional expertise and thinking of teachers to determine the most effective instructional strategies and methods to teach their students (Lee, 2011). Successful implementation of standards-based instruction requires ongoing professional development to support teachers as they learn how to integrate literacy strategies into their regular instructional routines. This requires a long-term time commitment in school districts where funding for professional development may be limited.

Despite some of the criticism leveled toward CCSS and standards-based learning, many educators are hopeful that these approaches will make a difference in the content knowledge and skills that learners will develop to be successful in college or in careers. Box 1.1, *Voices from the Field*, captures an instructional coach's perspective on how standards-based instruction affects the planning process for teachers.

Given the wide range of students that teachers encounter daily, *differentiating instruction* will be one of the keys to ensuring the successful implementation of standards-based approaches to learning.