

Literary Learning

The Newsletter for Vermont's English Language Arts Educators and Supporters

Spring 2024

Adolescent Literacy
Intervention
Workshop

The Importance (and
Benefits!) of Writing
Across the
Curriculum

Guest Author:
Transform Your
Classroom: Harness
the Power of Literacy
Instruction in an
Asynchronous
Summer Course

Proficiency Scales for
High School ELA

Professional Offerings

How to Access this
Newsletter:

- ✓ [Subscribe to our listserv](#)
- ✓ Request subscription by emailing [Emily Leute](#) (your name will be added to a Listserv)
- ✓ The [AOE Weekly Field Memo](#)
- ✓ The AOE Website: [English Language Arts and Literacy Content Page](#)



Adolescent Literacy Intervention Workshop

On March 18-19, 2024, five Vermont educators traveled to Massachusetts to participate in the Region 1 Comprehensive Center's 2024 Adolescent Literacy Intervention Regional Workshop. They were joined by other expert panelists from across New England with the goal of reviewing adolescent literacy interventions for inclusion in the [Adolescent Literacy Intervention Selection Tool \(A-LIST\)](#). The A-LIST is designed to provide educators with information about literacy intervention programs currently on the market so that they can make informed decisions.

The review process involved training on the use of two rubrics: one that evaluates a program's alignment to recommendations from the [IES Practice Guide Providing Reading Interventions for Students in Grades 4–9](#) and one that evaluates a program's support of culturally and linguistically sustaining practices (CLSP). In addition to preparing the panelists to review the interventions for the A-LIST, the training also provided educators with a deeper understanding of how to use each rubric. Both rubrics can be found on the [A-LIST website](#), along with more information about the process and an application to be considered for future scoring panels.

One panelist says this about their experience:

Region 1's Comprehensive Center Network offered a beneficial professional development opportunity focusing on reading interventions for students in grades 4-9. The hands-on experience of analyzing rubrics and evaluating literacy programs directly was powerful. Collaborating in state teams led to meaningful discussions on criteria, evidence, and scoring, enriching our learning and enhancing our instructional practices. While there isn't a "perfect" program, the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) in partnership with American Instructional Research (AIR) and CCNetwork Region 1 are dedicated to helping educators make well-informed decisions. I am excited for teachers to access the A-LIST!

The A-LIST has yet to be updated with the results of the most recent panel convening (which included Vermont educators), but those updates will be posted soon, so stay tuned!

The Importance (and Benefits!) of Writing Across the Curriculum

Educators from Vermont Career Technical Education (CTE) Centers gathered on March 25, 2024, to learn how to incorporate writing into their curricula. As a former ELA teacher, I have attended so-called “writing across the curriculum” trainings during which presenters received pushback from content area teachers who felt it was not their place to teach or assess writing for a variety of reasons (e.g., they don’t have time to teach writing because they have to teach their content, it’s not their job to teach writing, they don’t know how to assess writing, etc.). The problem with previous initiatives designed to include more reading and writing across the curriculum is that, intentionally or otherwise, they left secondary educators feeling like they had to assign lengthy essays that they would then have to assess for content, structure, and conventions. This is simply not the case.

What was different about this training, however, was that it focused on simple, accessible ways that content area teachers (in this case, CTE educators) could incorporate short bursts of writing into their classes with minimal effort and maximum payoff. The presenter truly impressed upon the participants that writing could help their students learn their content, communicate what they have learned, and feel successful while doing it, all within a few short minutes a day. Students are more likely to feel like writers when they have the option to write about something they have a passion for, such as the focus of their CTE program, as opposed to just English language arts.

The training was based on the [Collins Writing Program](#), which categorizes writing into five types: Type 1 (Capture Ideas); Type 2 (Respond Correctly); Type 3 (Edit for Focus Correction Areas); Type 4 (Peer Edit for FCAs); and Type 5 (Polish). This presentation was focused on Types 1 and 2, suggesting that many CTE teachers would find themselves using these types of writing the most often as they provide a low-lift way to integrate writing into their programs.

The handout [Great Type Ones to Start the Year](#) (which is available on the Collins Writing Program website) explains the benefits of this type of prompt as well as provides some samples. “These prompts require no prior knowledge, have no right or wrong answer, and will build opportunities for you to get to know your students while fostering a culture of writing in your classroom.” [Type Twos to Promote Comprehension](#) provides sample prompts and explains that “Type Two Writing is perfect for eliciting quick responses before, during, and after reading and for encouraging students to summarize, make connections, interpret, and analyze text in a low-risk environment.” These prompts are a great way to help students make sense of what they have read and to feel like successful writers while doing so. Finally, [Six Characteristics of a Great Prompt](#) provides more information about how to construct a writing prompt that will be efficient and effective in any content area classroom.

Please share this information with content area teachers in your buildings and reach out if you would like additional guidance on how to include more reading and writing across content areas or support in doing so.

Transform Your Classroom: Harness the Power of Literacy Instruction in an Asynchronous Summer Course

By Robert Frantum-Allen, MA, CSLT Public Consulting Group

Are you looking for an engaging and valuable way to renew your teacher certificate this summer? Consider taking our course on the science of reading! This course will equip you with evidence-based strategies for teaching reading skills to students with diverse learning needs, ensuring you stay current with the latest research and best practices in literacy instruction.

Whether you hold a Level 1 or Level 2 license, fulfilling the professional learning requirements is essential. Did you know that the Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) offers a valuable opportunity for professional development in the neuroscience of reading, completely free of charge?

With up to 45 hours of professional development available, spanning six modules, this course delves deep into the science of reading. For Secondary math, science, social studies, and specials endorsed teachers, Modules 5 and 6 are particularly relevant. These modules focus on Building Vocabulary and Increasing Reading Comprehension, vital skills for enhancing student learning across disciplines. As cited by Beck, McKeown, and Kucan in "Creating Robust Vocabulary," students benefit from learning 3000 vocabulary words annually. For K-12 Literacy Interventionists, a comprehensive understanding of the science of reading is invaluable. With insights into reading trajectories and assessment-driven interventions, educators can make a significant impact on student literacy.

Special Education Teachers, Speech Language Pathologists, and School Psychologists play a crucial role in supporting students with disabilities. Understanding the science of reading is paramount, as many disabilities are language-based and impact literacy. By staying informed about shifts in reading instruction, special education staff can better advocate for accommodations and provide effective support to students.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to deepen your understanding of the science of reading and enhance your teaching practice. Enroll in the AOE's professional development course today!

Why choose summer for an asynchronous class? Summer offers the perfect opportunity for professional development without the pressures of daily teaching responsibilities. With our asynchronous format, you can learn at your own pace, fitting coursework around your summer schedule. Plus, the relaxed summer atmosphere allows for deeper reflection and exploration of new ideas, enhancing your understanding and application of the science of reading principles.

Learn more about the professional learning series and register on the [AOE's English language arts and literacy webpage](#).

Emily Leute

English Language Arts and
Literacy Specialist
Proficiency-Based
Learning Team

Vermont Agency of Education
1 National Life Drive, Davis 5
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501

PHONE:
(802)828-6598

E-MAIL:
emily.leute@vermont.gov

Proficiency Scales for High School ELA

On January 24, 2024, educators from across the state gathered to review and provide feedback on the [AOE's model proficiency scales for high school English language arts](#). This feedback was incorporated into the most recent version of the scales. Proficiency scales for all content areas are being updated and will be available soon on the AOE's [Proficiency-Based Graduation Requirements webpage](#). In the meantime, check out the newly published [Vermont Framework for Proficiency: Resources to Support Implementation](#), which is composed of stackable documents that enable educators to access the information that is most relevant to the needs of a particular school system

Professional Offerings and Opportunities

Vermont Literacy Conference – Partnerships for Literacy and Learning is excited to announce Cris Tovani and Wiley Blevins as the 2 Keynote speakers for the 2024 Vermont Literacy Conference, July 30 - August 1, at the Stoweflake Resort and Spa in Stowe, Vermont. Cris Tovani is a veteran K–12 teacher and an education consultant for pre-service and secondary teachers, focusing on disciplinary literacy and integrating literacy strategies into lessons so students can be better readers and writers. She is the author of many books, including most recently, *Why Do I Have to Read This? Literacy Strategies to Engage Our Most Reluctant Students* (Stenhouse, 2020). Wiley Blevins is an early reading specialist who holds a M. Ed. from Harvard. He is renowned for changing the way educators think about teaching children to read, helping thousands of teachers implement effective instruction. Two recent books include: *Differentiating Phonics Instruction for Maximum Impact* and *Teaching Phonics and Word Study in the Intermediate Grades*. [Register](#) by July 29, 2024. For more information, email Mary Grace at mkgrace@pllvt.org.

Community Engagement Lab – Registration is now open for the [Project Design Lab](#) (PDL) at the University of Vermont, June 24-25, 2024. Design a creative project to improve the well-being of your classroom and school community. Learn alongside colleagues, master teaching artists and facilitators, and acclaimed Guest Artists. Rejuvenate and have fun! PDL projects use creative engagement – *making things we care about* – to improve your classroom's culture of empathy, respect and belonging, activate student creativity, and inspire deep engagement in learning. Earn three graduate credits or 40 hours of relicensing credits. Four courses to choose from for PreK-12 educators, including [Embracing AI in the Classroom](#), [Building the Classroom Community](#), and [Thriving Communities Projects](#).

Like what you just read? Want to read more? [Subscribe to our listserv](#) to receive our monthly newsletter, Literary Learning, as well as other important up-to-date information about ELA in Vermont.