Content Area Reading

Literacy and Learning Across the Curriculum

EIGHTH EDITION

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We choose *friends,* not *relatives*

How blessed we are to have these special persons who are both

Fred and Pat Vacca
Tony and Chris Vacca
Tom and Patty Schmidt
Gary and Courtney Vierstra

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Preface

When we began writing *Content Area Reading* more than twenty-five years ago, we decided to set the tone of the first edition in the opening chapter by quoting a line from Simon and Garfunkel's "Kodachrome." Although we run the risk of dating ourselves, we are reminded of the provocative line because it captures the disconnect that many students have felt in their school experience, then as well as now. The opening lyrics to "Kodachrome" are a songwriter's personal reflection on education—nothing more, nothing less. Yet the juxtaposition of having learned "crap" in school with the inability to "think" critically represents an ongoing dilemma faced by content area teachers who are wedded to an academic discipline.

We have never met a teacher who didn't believe that the essence of artful teaching is in showing students how to think deeply and critically about the content underlying an academic discipline. Yet, when *content* is taught in a vacuum without attention to the *process* by which it is learned, students are apt to make few connections between the powerful ideas underlying an academic discipline and the prior knowledge and experience that they bring to classroom learning situations. In this book, we explore the relationships between content and process by critically examining the literacy processes and strategies that students use to think and learn with texts.

Major Themes in the Eighth Edition

Influenced by the role of language, cognition, culture, and social context in learning, our goal for this edition is to inspire teachers, whether novice or veteran, to examine what it means to connect literacy and learning in a standards-based curriculum. The eighth edition continues the ambitious exploration of *content literacy*—the ability to use reading, writing, talking, listening, and viewing processes to learn subject matter across the curriculum. The major themes underlying content literacy and learning are reflected in the organizing principles described at the beginning of every chapter:

- All teachers play a critical role in helping studens comprehend and respond to information and ideas in the text.
- Instructional assessment is a process of gathering and using multiple sources of relevant information about students for instructional purposes.

- Teachers respond to the literacy needs of struggling readers and writers by scaffolding instruction so that students become confident and competent in the use of strategies that support learning.
- Teachers respond to linguistic and cultural differences in their classrooms by scaffolding instruction in the use of vocabulary and comprehension strategies and by creating classroom environments that encourage talking and working together.
- Instructional practices involving the use of informational and literary trade books in content areas help to extend and enrich the curriculum.
- Electronic texts, like trade books, extend and enrich the curriculum.
- Bringing students and texts together involves instructional plans and activities that result in active student engagement and collaboration.
- Teaching words well means giving students multiple opportunities to develop vocabulary knowledge and to learn how words are conceptually related to one another in the texts that they study.
- Activating prior knowledge and generating interest create an instructional context in which students will approach reading with purpose and anticipation.
- Teachers guide reader–text interactions through the instructional strategies and practices that they use and the reading support that they provide.
- Writing facilitates learning by helping students to explore, clarify, and think deeply about the ideas they encounter in reading.
- Looking for and using text structure in everything they read helps students to study texts more effectively.

Underlying these themes is our belief that students learn *with* texts, not necessarily *from* texts. Learning from texts suggests that a text is a body of information to be mastered by learners rather than a tool by which they construct meaning and knowledge. Learning with a text, on the other hand, implies that students have much to contribute to their own learning as they interact with texts to make meaning and construct knowledge.

Organization of the Eighth Edition

The knowledge base related to content literacy and learning has changed dramatically in the past twenty-five years, and so has thinking about what constitutes "best practice." Nevertheless, in making decisions related to changes in this edition, we ask the same question that guided the writing of the first edition twenty-five years ago: How can teachers make content literacy a visible part of their instructional routines without sacrificing high standards for content learning?

Answers to this guiding question led us to reorganize the eighth edition into three parts: Part One: Content Literacy in a Standards-Based Curriculum, Part Two: Learners and Texts, and Part Three: Instructional Strategies and Practices.

Part One situates issues and problems related to content literacy within the context of the standards-based movement and accountability systems that are changing the face of education in today's U.S. schools. Although the pressure to ensure that students meet content standards weighs heavily on instructional decisions, a teacher can make a difference in students' literacy development and knowledge acquisition by showing them how to use literacy processes and strategies to meet high standards for learning. Ongoing, authentic assessment in the classroom—when coupled with high-stakes proficiency assessment—provides the information that teachers need to inform their day-by-day instructional decisions about content literacy and learning.

In Parts Two and Three of this edition, we build an instructional framework for content literacy and learning across the curriculum. In Part Two, Learners and Texts, our emphasis is on the exploration and clarification of issues related to struggling readers and writers, culturally and linguistically diverse learners, and the use of trade books and electronic texts to extend and enrich the curriculum. Students who continually struggle with text in reading and writing situations need to build strategic knowledge, skills, and insights related to literacy and learning. Moreover, culturally and linguistically diverse students present a unique challenge to content area teachers, especially in light of the influx of immigrant students in today's classrooms. We also examine the limitations of textbooks and explain how to use trade books and information and communication technologies such as the Internet to extend and enrich a standards-based curriculum.

In Part Three, Instructional Strategies and Practices, we flesh out the instructional framework by explaining how to create active learning environments in which all students—alone and in collaboration with one another—know how to use content literacy strategies to learn with texts. To this end, Part Three offers a multitude of instructional strategies and practices that allow teachers to scaffold instruction in ways that support the following:

- development of vocabulary knowledge and concepts;
- activation of prior knowledge before, during, and after reading;
- comprehension and critical analysis of text through reader–text interactions;
- use of various writing activities to facilitate learning; and
- development of study strategies based on a search for text structure in everything that students read.

These instructional strategies and practices are designed to engage students in their strategic interactions with text and other learners. Rather than left to "sink or swim" with a text assignment, students will be more likely to know how to search for meaning in everything they talk about, listen to, and read, view, and write.

Features in the Eighth Edition

The eighth edition retains all of the features of the previous edition, while improving its overall coverage of content literacy topics and instructional strategies and practices.

New and Expanded Chapters

The text 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. As a result, we expanded our discussions of topics in the previous edition by creating separate, new chapters for the following:

- Chapter 1: Reading Matters (with an emphasis on the impact of teaching to content standards);
- Chapter 3: Struggling Readers and Writers (with a renewed emphasis on writing strategies for students who struggle with the writing process);
- Chapter 4: Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners (with emphasis on students whose first language is other than English);
- Chapter 5: Learning with Trade Books (written by Professor Barbara Moss from San Diego State University, a leading expert in the field of informational literature for children and adolescents); and
- Chapter 6: Learning with Electronic Texts (with emphasis on learning with the Internet).

Aids to Understanding

A new design makes the text visually appealing and easy to use. Through this new, attractive design, the main features are easily identified, making the text user-friendly.

Each chapter opens with a quotation to help readers reflect on the underlying theme of each chapter. The **Organizing Principle** gives readers a "heads-up" by introducing the rationale for each chapter and highlighting its underlying theme. A **Chapter Overview** depicts the relationships that exist

among the important ideas presented in each chapter. A set of questions at the start of the chapter helps readers approach the text in a critical **Frame of Mind** as they analyze and interpret information presented in each chapter.

End-of-chapter features include **Minds On** and **Hands On** activities. Minds On activities engage students individually and collaboratively in thinking more deeply about some of the important ideas that they have studied. Hands On activities engage students individually and collaboratively in applying some of the important ideas that they have studied.

Frame of Mind

1. Why are today's classrooms more diverse than they were several decades ago?
2. What are some of the cultural and linguistic differences that students from various racial and ethnic backgrounds bring to classroom learning situations?
3. Why do English language learners struggle with content literacy tasks, and how does sheltered instruction make content more accessible to them while providing additional language support?
4. How can teachers scaffold instruction to develop vocabulary-building strategies for diverse learners?
5. How are the questioning the author (QtA) strategy and the directed reading–thinking activity (DR-TA) similar? How are they different?
6. Why is classroom talk especially important to English language learners, and how can teachers create an environment for discussion in their classrooms?

We began our teaching careers in the 1960s in a suburban high school just outside of Albany, New York, during the height of the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War. The times were tumultuous in the wake of great social change. Practically every facet of American society was open to critical examination, if not reform, including the nation's schools. The landmark 1954 U.S. Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* ruled that "separate but equal" schools were unconstitutional and laid the groundwork for educational reform in the 1960s. The civil rights movement fueled the legislative agenda of President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited discrimination in public institutions on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin. Also in 1964, the Economic Opportunity Act resulted in educational programs, such as Head Start and Upward Bound, that are still in existence today. In 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) established compensatory educational programs (Title 1) to provide educational opportunities for low-income students from minority backgrounds. In addition, the Bilingual Education Act of 1967 made it possible for schools to receive federal funding for minority groups who were non-English speaking.

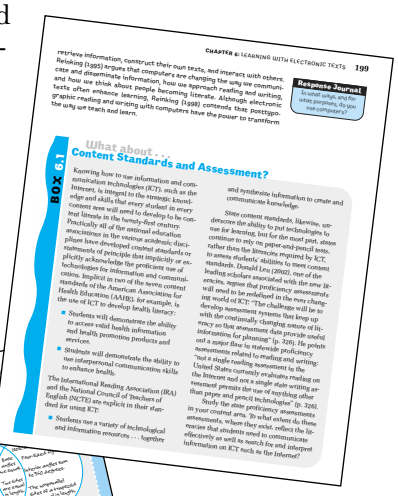
Despite the social and educational reforms taking place in the 1960s, it was business as usual at the high school where we taught. The school seemed impervious to change. In a student body of more than 1,000 students, no more than 1 or 2 percent of the students were people of color or immigrants whose first language was one other than English. One of our students during our first year of teaching, Johnny, was the oldest son of Hungarian immigrants. He worked after school at his uncle's garage where he pumped gas and did minor repairs on cars. He used to work on our beat-up, old Chevy Impala whenever it broke down and needed repair. Anyone who took the time to get to know him could tell that Johnny was a bright young man, but in school he was mostly a quiet

Response Journal
If you currently are teaching, how would you describe the cultural and linguistic differences of your students? If you are studying to be a teacher, describe the cultural and linguistic differences that existed in your school experiences.

New Features

New features to this edition include marginal notations and "boxed" text segments that highlight issues related to content standards and assessment, procedures for research-based best practices, and connections between chapter content and diverse learners.

- **What about Content Standards and Assessment?** Boxes positioned throughout most of the chapters. These boxes are designed to emphasize relationships between chapter content and issues/implications related to academic standards and high-stakes state proficiency assessments as well as authentic assessments in the classroom.


BOX 6.1 What about Content Standards and Assessment?

- **Research-Based Best Practices.** Boxes positioned throughout most of the chapters relating to instructional strategies and practices. These boxes highlight the steps and applications involved in using high-visibility strategies that are supported by theoretically sound rationales and/or evidence-based research.

BOX 12.2 RESEARCH-BASED BEST PRACTICE

- **What About Struggling Readers and English Language Learners?** Boxes positioned occasionally in several of the chapters to augment the content presented in separate chapters on struggling readers and linguistically diverse learners.

BOX 8.3 What about ELL and Struggling Readers?

- **Response Journal.** The Response Journal marginal icon signals readers to use a journal while reading to make personal and professional connections as they react to ideas presented in each chapter.

- **eResources.** The eResources marginal icon directs readers to the Companion Website to search for Web links, Web activities, or suggested readings to engage in further learning about the topics presented in each chapter. There are also additional eResources at the end of each chapter directing students to the Companion Website for more activities and suggested readings, as well as articles from the *New York Times.*

Supplements for Instructors and Students

Allyn and Bacon is committed to preparing the best quality supplements for its textbooks, and the supplements for the eighth edition of *Content Area Reading* reflect this commitment. For more information about the instructor and student supplements that accompany and support the text, ask your local Allyn & Bacon representative, or contact the Allyn & Bacon Sales Support Department (1-800-852-8024).

- **Instructor's Resource Manual and Test Bank** with teaching suggestions and test items for each chapter.
- **PowerPoint™ Presentation.** Ideal for lecture presentations or student handouts, the PowerPoint™ presentation created for this text provides dozens of ready-to-use graphic and text images (available for download from Supplement Central at www.suppscentral.ablongman.com).
- **Companion Website** (www.ablongman.com/vacca8e) that provides online practice tests, activities, and additional Web resources to deepen and expand understanding of the text.
- **VideoWorkshop,** a new way to bring video into your course for maximized learning! This total teaching and learning system includes quality video footage on an easy-to-use CD-ROM plus a Student Learning Guide and an Instructor's Teaching Guide. The result? A program that brings textbook concepts to life with ease and that helps your students understand, analyze, and apply the objectives of the course. VideoWorkshop is available for your students as a value-pack option with this textbook. (Special package ISBN required from your representative.) VW will eventually become part of an exciting new package online called "My Lab School" currently under construction. Watch for details.
- **My Lab School.** Discover where the classroom comes to life! From video clips of teachers and students interacting to sample lessons, portfolio templates, and standards integration, Allyn and Bacon brings your students the tools they'll need to succeed in the classroom—with content easily integrated into your existing course. Delivered within Course Compass, Allyn and Bacon's course management system, this program gives your students powerful insights into how real classrooms work and a rich array of tools that will support them on their journey from their first class to their first classroom.
- **Allyn and Bacon Digital Media Archive for Literacy.** This CD-ROM offers still images, video clips, audio clips, Web links, and assorted lecture resources that can be incorporated into multimedia presentations in the classroom.

- **Professionals in Action: Literacy Video.** This 90-minute video consists of 10- to 20-minute segments on Phonemic Awareness, Teaching Phonics, Helping Students Become Strategic Readers, Organizing for Teaching with Literature, and discussions of literacy and brain research with experts. The first four segments provide narrative along with actual classroom teaching footage. The final segments present, in a question-and-answer format, discussions by leading experts in the field of literacy.
- **Allyn and Bacon Literacy Video Library.** Featuring renowned reading scholars Richard Allington, Dorothy Strickland, and Evelyn English, this three-video library addresses core topics covered in the literacy classroom: reading strategies, developing literacy in multiple intelligences classrooms, developing phonemic awareness, and much more.

Acknowledgments

We are grateful to the many individuals who made this edition possible. First, we would like to thank several of our former doctoral students who came to the rescue of tired and beleaguered mentors by helping us to meet deadline commitments: Dr. Barbara Moss, San Diego State University, for revising Chapter 5, Learning with Trade Books; Dr. Christine McKeon, Walsh University, for serving in the role of Webmaster as she updated and redesigned the Companion Website for this edition; and Dr. Maryann Mraz, University of North Carolina, for revising and updating the Instructor's Resource Manual.

We also wish to acknowledge the thoughtful and thought-provoking professional suggestions of those who responded to questionnaires and reviewed the text for this edition: Vi Alexander, Stephen F. Austin State University; Mickey Bogart, Kansas State University; Dr. Deb Carr, King's College and Hazleton Area School District; Ann Harvey, Columbia College; Stephenie Hewett, The Citadel; Lois E. Huffman, North Carolina State University; Luther Kirk, Longwood University; and Joyce Stallworth, The University of Alabama.

This book is only as good as the editors behind it. We owe a debt of gratitude to our Acquisitions Editor, Aurora Martínez, whose graceful guidance and incisive leadership on this project made us work harder than we wanted to. And special kudos to Tom Jefferies, the finest and steadiest developmental editor with whom we have had the pleasure to work thus far.

A special thanks to students, colleagues, and teachers in schools throughout the United States and Canada, too numerous to list, who have contributed immeasurably to our growth as teachers and scholars. This book has been a marriage-of-sorts for us and it's time to celebrate our silver anniversary with this edition's time cycle! Never in our dreams did we think it possible, and we thank a Power greater than ourselves for making it a reality.

R. T. V.
J. L. V.

Content Area Reading Inventory. Term. how does hypertext differ from printed text?Â checklists, interviews, CARI (content area reading inventories) -rubrics, self assessments. Term. What do checklists, CARI's, and interviews do? ContentAreaReading(Content Area Reading: Literacy Learning Across the Curriculum)(with MyEducationLab) (10th Edition) [Hardcover](2010)byRichard T. Vacca,Jo Anne L. Vacca,Maryann E. Mraz. T. Hardcover.Â The Vacca and Vacca Content Area Reading book is the most cited text on teaching reading in the content areas. The Content Area Reading collections give teachers the resources for comprehensive literacy instruction across subjects. The collections contain both informational texts and literature about the topics to encourage learning about content through a variety of text types. By reading different text types on a variety of academic topics at a range of complexity, students are able to develop the fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary necessary to read and understand the concepts and content taught in today's classrooms.