Disciplinary Literacy: Close Reading of Complex Texts
Skills & Strategies to Address Secondary Common Core State Standards

Marty Hougwen & Nancy Corbett
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Objectives:

• Describe disciplinary literacy (DL): What it is and why it is important for teachers

• Identify unique literacy skills for:
  – History
  – Mathematics
  – Science & Technical Subjects
  – Literary Genres
Objectives continued

• Understand the emphasis the CCSS place on DL and close reading

• Explain how DL strategies support students with reading difficulties
Teachers Expected to Know

CAEP

1.1 Teacher candidates and completers know subject matter (including pedagogical content knowledge) and pedagogy

CEC

3.1 Beginning special education professionals understand the central concepts, structures of the discipline, and tools of inquiry of the content areas they teach, and can organize this knowledge, integrate cross-disciplinary skills, and develop meaningful learning progressions for individuals with exceptionalities

CCSS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.6 Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts
CCSS Instructional Shifts

Increased emphasis on:

1. Informational text
2. Complex text
3. Text-based evidence
4. Academic vocabulary
5. Analytical writing
6. Disciplinary knowledge

Source: Adapted from www.engageNY.org, Instructional Shifts for the Common Core
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.6 Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.7 Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.
Science & Technical Subjects

• **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.9-10.4**
  Determine the **meaning of symbols, key terms, and other domain-specific words and phrases** as they are used in a specific scientific or technical context relevant to **grades 9–10 texts and topics**.
CCSS & Students with Disabilities

“The Standards allow for the widest possible range of students to participate fully from the outset and with appropriate accommodations to ensure maximum participation of students with special education needs.”

Source: Common Core State Standards, pg. 9.
Rationale for DL

• Advanced literacy across content areas is the best available predictor of students’ ability to succeed in introductory college courses.

• High school students’ ability to read complex texts is strongly predictive of their performance in college math and science courses.

Alliance for Excellent Education, 2011
College Ready?

Nearly 40% of all entering students take at least one remedial course.

Only 30% of entering freshmen graduate within 8 years.

1 in 4 ready for college

Find facts specific to your state at:
http://www.all4ed.org/about_the_crisis/schools/map

Alliance for Excellent Education, 2011
Stagnant 2013 SAT Results

• 57% of SAT takers are unprepared for rigorous college work.

• Scores unchanged during the last five years.

• More underrepresented minority students need access to rigorous course work.

Why Are Disciplinary Texts Difficult for Students?

Students may lack:

1. **Experience** reading lengthy expository writing
2. Content-specific **vocabulary**
3. **Decoding** skills
4. **Comprehension** strategies
5. **Background knowledge** and interest in the content
Reflections of a Researcher

Let’s listen to Dr. Timothy Shanahan, from the University of Illinois at Chicago, define disciplinary literacy.

Listen to Dr. Shanahan's comments
Disciplinary Literacy

• Refers to specialized ways of knowing and communicating in different disciplines to make meaning

• Recognizes that each discipline possesses its own language

• Encompasses the idea that students need to be taught specialized routines

Jetton & Shanahan, 2012
Disciplinary Literacy is NOT:

- Another term for *content area reading*
- A method to work with poor readers
- A generalized approach to literacy across disciplines
- Limited to study skills
The Increasing Specialization of Literacy Development

Adapted from Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008
## Reading in the Disciplines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Language Arts</th>
<th>Social Studies</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Mathematics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elements of a story: who, what, when, where</td>
<td>Author’s perspective; sourcing</td>
<td>Factual reading</td>
<td>Search for the “truth”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literal vs. implied meaning</td>
<td>Time period &amp; historical context; contextualization</td>
<td>Graphs, charts, formulas</td>
<td>Search for errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genres</td>
<td>Corroboration of multiple perspectives</td>
<td>Corroboration &amp; transformation</td>
<td>Interpretation of information presented in unusual ways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of themes</td>
<td>Bias</td>
<td>Scientific signs &amp; symbols</td>
<td>Mathematical signs &amp; symbols</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Close Reading**
Scaffolding Struggling Students

Don Deshler, Ph.D.
The University of Kansas
Center for Research on Learning

Listen to Dr. Deshler on supporting struggling students
Teachers should…

• Carefully select content

• Teach essential vocabulary

• Model strategies
Who teaches the students?

“The best direction is for ‘both sides of the house’ – both ELA and science teachers - to help students read and write better in the area of science.”

And the IHE teacher educators need to teach teachers how to help their students.

Close Reading

I. Rereading
   1. What text is about
   2. Author’s devices, evidence
   3. What does the text mean? To me? Compared to other texts? Quality?

II. Discussion of text
History/Social Studies

- **Source the Document**
  - Note the author, the author’s bias and purpose, when the text was written, and for whom
  - Determine what and when the author knew the information
  - **Contextualize the Document**
    - Consider what was going on at this time, what people believed and were thinking and doing
  - **Summarize the Document**
    - Determine who or what the text is about
    - Determine what is important about the “who” or “what”
  - **Corroborate/Cross-Check Documents**
    - Determine if selected documents agree or tell different stories
    - Determine which document is more believable and why
The Crisis No. 1 – T. Paine

“The American Crisis.
Number 1

By the Author of Common Sense.

THERE are the times that try a man’s soul: The savages war and the tyrannick pangs will, in this crisis, thrench from the majesty of his country, but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of the whole nation. Tyranny, not hell, is not safely conquer’d, yet we have this confidence with us, that the harder the struggle, the more glorified the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly. It is dearness only that gives every thing its value. Heaven knows how to fix a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed, if so celestial a virtue as FREEDOM should not be highly valued. Britain, with an army to cultivate her tyranny, has declared, that she has a right (not only to Tax, but) “to Tax and Tax, as much as she pleased, and if being sound in her own money, not be answerable, then is there not nothing a thing so filthy upon earth. Each the exposition is implanted, for its universal a power can belong only to God.

Whether the independence of the Continent was declared too soon, or delayed too long, I will not now enter into an argument; my own simple opinion is, that had it been eight months earlier, it would have been much better. We did not make a proper end of last winter, neither could we, while we were in a dependent state. However, the facts, if it were one, was all our own; we have more to blame than ourselves. But no great deal is left very all that House has been doing for this county pay in labor a range than a song, which the spirit of the Jefrey a year ago would have equally required, and which some and a little satisfaction will soon return.

I have as little occasion in me as any man living, but as

“The present winter” becoming the last, “is worn out,” as injury, if rightly employed, but if left, it remarkably, the whole,” “Continental will produce of the evil,” and there is no particular

must that issue can not desire, the he who, or what, or

where he will, that may be the mode of delivering a truth

“in precise and solid.”

Common Sense,
THESE are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman.
Metacognitive Strategies Modeled

- Recalling prior knowledge
- Noting a rhetorical device
- Visualization
- Self-questioning
- Bias of the author
- Context of the text
- Rereading
- Chunking

*NEXT assignment:* to corroborate this text with others
Science Literacy

- Latin and Greek roots, prefixes, and suffixes
- Relationships
- Functions
- Graphs, Charts, Formulas
- Corroboration
- Transformation
Mathematics Literacy

- Presentation
- Vocabulary
- Symbols
- Logic
- Forms of communication
- Mapping representation
- Textual representation

Pythagorean Theorem
Angle of elevation
Order of operations
English/LA

- Genre, author’s purpose and point of view
- Elements of narrative
- Who, what, where, when, why
- Themes
- Character development
- Literal vs. implied meaning
Differentiation of Instruction
Access

- Audio recordings of material
- Partner reads
- Modified or different text on same theme
- Assistive Technology
- Pre-teach decoding & meaning of difficult vocabulary
- Explicit modeling of expected skills
- Systematic instruction with scaffolding
Practice

- Increase opportunities to practice skills
- Smaller groups
- Less text
- More time
- Varying situations and environments
Demonstration of Knowledge

- Presentations integrating technology
- Visual arts
- Music
- Performance
- Debate
- Role play
Additional CEM Resources for Professional Development

• Slide presentation with speaker notes
• Handouts & application assignments
• Examples of differentiation of instruction for diverse student populations
• Activities & video resources for the classroom
• Sample syllabi
• References
• Resources
• Relevant Links
Thank you!

The CEEDAR Center
www.ceedar.org

Marty Hougen
mchougen@coe.ufl.edu

Nancy Corbett
ncorbett@coe.ufl.edu
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