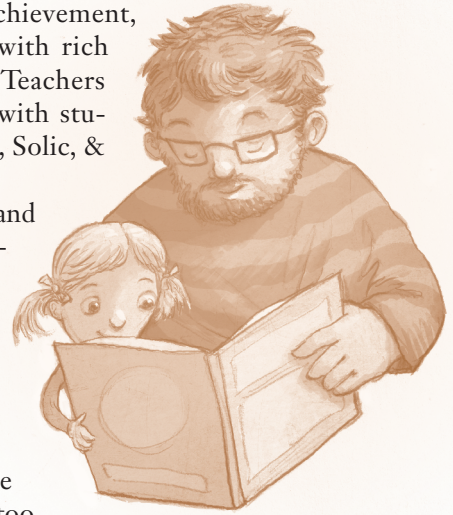


Preface

In effective elementary classrooms that produce high language arts achievement, children are highly engaged because skills and strategies are taught with rich opportunities for application to real reading and writing experiences. Teachers provide positive literacy models and scaffolded support as they work with students. They also allow students to work independently (Pressley, Gaskins, Solic, & Collins, 2006).

Such schools are not always the norm. As we work with teachers and teacher candidates in literacy, we frequently see fragmented implementation of aspects of a comprehensive literacy program, but rarely do we see all those parts put together into a meaningful whole. One teacher may closely follow a basal reading program. Another may use technology to motivate independent reading. Still others are so focused on phonics that they overlook vocabulary. And then there are teachers who are so anxious to get their students ready for the tests that they overlook the need for more authentic motivation. Some teachers say they know what they *should* be doing, but they just don't have the time to do it. They say they have too many other demands placed on them. Still others do not know how to begin organizing time and resources to present a balanced program. This discrepancy among teachers can be seen at times within the same school building. Children in a high-quality, literacy rich classroom one year can make great progress but slow their growth and lose their enthusiasm in a different classroom the following year (Jacob, Lefgren, & Sims, 2010).



Purpose

We wrote this book to give a comprehensive view of all the elements that are essential to develop effective literacy and provide the necessary **gradual release of responsibility** from teachers to students (Mooney, 1990; Mooney & Young, 2006; Pearson & Gallagher, 1983). Like the oft-repeated story of the blind man and the elephant, many literacy educators focus on the trunk, the legs, or the tail. What today's students need are more teachers who see the whole elephant—the big picture—and consistently implement what they know.

When we observe preservice teachers and their mentors, we also notice that writing is sometimes overlooked. A high number of students are not developing the competencies they need in writing (Persky, Daane, & Jin, 2003). Most teachers are concerned about reading success, as they should be, but some do not see writing as an important component in literacy growth. In this text, reading and writing are both treated in each chapter, rather than as separate chapters. We hope that you will see interconnections between the two and teach both reading and writing in your literacy curriculum. Ideally, writing leads to reading, and reading leads to writing. In fact, on close examination writing *is* reading, because authors are composing meaning; and reading *is* writing, because readers are also composing meaning. Competent readers and writers usually engage in these meaning-making processes interactively (Fitzgerald & Shanahan, 2000).

Using This Book

This book is organized into three main parts: Part I, Foundations of Literacy; Part II, Components of Literacy; and Part III, Literacy Assessment and Instruction. The ordering of the parts will help you understand *why* and *who* you are teaching, then *what* you are teaching, and finally *how* you are teaching. In Part II, Components of Literacy, we present the five essential elements of literacy in the same order that they are outlined by the National Reading Panel (2000).

Throughout the book, you will notice connections with the **Common Core State Standards**, which have been printed on the inside covers, along with **International Reading Association Standards**. There is no question that these standards greatly influence our schools, and you need to be aware of them and feel confident using them as a guide as you meet individual needs of children. You will also find “Try This” boxes, which include activities and ideas for immediate practice and practical application of the concepts you are learning. Some “Try This” boxes encourage professional development. We have also included samples of teacher and student work.

Rather than having specific chapters on speaking and listening, language conventions, **English language learners**, struggling students, and **new literacies**, we have chosen to integrate these important issues throughout the text. Icons in the margins will help you recognize where these connections have been made:



Each chapter begins with a chapter outline followed by a personal experience. We hope these vignettes provide realistic contexts for the upcoming chapters, but most of all we hope they will give you a chance to see us as real teachers who have worked in classrooms with children. Each chapter concludes with a brief summary and a Self-Check exercise to help you remember key content.

As you progress through your career, you will move through phases of development much like children move in their literacy development. Just as you receive knowledge and mentoring and gain greater expertise, so do children in their listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Just as you learn to reflect on your practice, children also develop habits of reflection. Both you and your students are developing. That’s why we didn’t title this book *Teaching Literacy* or *Learning Literacy*, but rather we put the focus on the word *developing*.

As former elementary teachers ourselves, we realize the importance of literacy in the lives of children, and we also realize the challenges that are inherent in teaching. We are passionate about facing these challenges and have devoted our professional lives to promoting literacy and making a positive difference. Thanks for being part of our dream!

Supplements

The following supplements comprise an outstanding array of resources that facilitate learning about literacy instruction. For more information, ask your local Pearson representative. For technology support, please contact technical support directly at 1-800-677-6337 or online at 247.pearsoned.com.

Instructor's Resource Manual and Test Bank

For each chapter, the instructor's resource manual features activities and resources for instructors to use in the classroom. Answers to the Self-Check questions for each chapter from the text are also included. In addition, the Test Bank includes multiple choice, essential terms, and short answer items. Page references to the main text, suggested answers, and skill types have been added to each question to help instructors create and evaluate student tests. This supplement has been written completely by the text authors. (Available for download from the Instructor Resource Center at www.pearsonhighered.com/irc.)

Pearson MyTest

The Test Bank is available as a downloadable file and can be printed by the user through our computerized testing system, MyTest, a powerful assessment generation program that helps instructors easily create and print quizzes and exams. Questions and tests are authored online, allowing ultimate flexibility and the ability to efficiently create and print assessments anytime, anywhere! Instructors can access Pearson MyTest and their test bank files by going to www.pearsonmytest.com to log in, register, or request access. Features of Pearson MyTest include:

Premium assessment content.

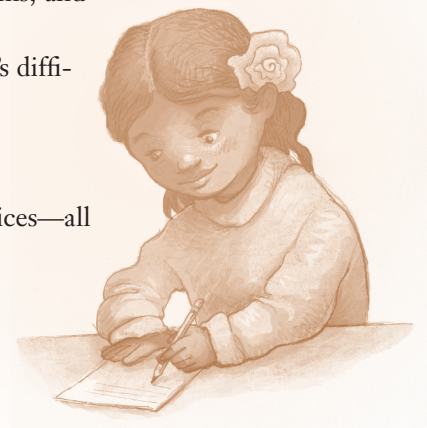
- Draw from a rich library of assessments that complement your Pearson textbook and your course's learning objectives.
- Edit questions or tests to fit your specific teaching needs.

Instructor-friendly resources.

- Easily create and store your own questions, including images, diagrams, and charts using simple drag-and-drop and Word-like controls.
- Use additional information provided by Pearson, such as the question's difficulty level or learning objective, to help you quickly build your test.

Time-saving enhancements.

- Add headers or footers and easily scramble questions and answer choices—all from one simple toolbar.
- Quickly create multiple versions of your test or answer key, and when ready, simply save to Microsoft Word or PDF format and print!
- Export your exams for import to Blackboard 6.0, CE (WebCT), or Vista (WebCT)!



PowerPoint™ Presentation

Designed for teachers using the text, the PowerPoint™ Presentation consists of a series of slides that can be shown as is or used to make handouts or overhead transparencies. The presentation highlights key concepts and major topics for each chapter. (Available for download from the Instructor Resource Center at www.pearsonhighered.com/irc.)

MyEducationLab™

Proven to **engage students**, provide **trusted content**, and **improve results**, Pearson MyLabs have helped over 8 million registered students reach true understanding in their courses. **MyEducationLab** engages students with real-life teaching situations through dynamic videos, case studies, and student artifacts. Student progress is assessed, and a personalized study plan is created based on the student's unique results. Automatic grading and reporting keeps educators informed to quickly address gaps and improve student performance. All of the activities and exercises in MyEducationLab are built around essential learning outcomes for teachers and are mapped to professional teaching standards.

In *Preparing Teachers for a Changing World*, Linda Darling-Hammond and her colleagues point out that grounding teacher education in real classrooms—among real teachers and students and among actual examples of students' and teachers' work—is an important, and perhaps even an essential, part of training teachers for the complexities of teaching in today's classrooms.

In the MyEducationLab for this course, you will find the following features and resources.

Study Plan Specific to Your Text. MyEducationLab gives students the opportunity to test themselves on key concepts and skills, track their own progress through the course, and access personalized Study Plan activities.

The customized Study Plan—with enriching activities—is generated based on the results from student pretests. Study Plans tag incorrect questions from the pretest to the appropriate textbook learning outcome, helping students focus on the topics they need help with. Personalized Study Plan activities may include eBook reading assignments and review, practice, and enrichment activities.

After students complete the enrichment activities, they take a posttest to see the concepts they've mastered or the areas where they may need extra help.

MyEducationLab then reports the Study Plan results to the instructor. Based on these reports, the instructor can adapt course material to suit the needs of individual students or the entire class.


Connection to National Standards. Now it is easier than ever to see how coursework is connected to national standards. Each topic, activity, and exercise on MyEducationLab lists intended learning outcomes connected to either the Common Core State Standards for Language Arts or the IRA Standards for Reading Professionals.

Assignments and Activities. Designed to enhance your understanding of concepts covered in class, these assignable exercises show concepts in action (through videos, cases, and/or student and teacher artifacts). They help you deepen content knowledge and synthesize and apply concepts and strategies you read about in the book. (Correct answers for these assignments are available to the instructor only.)

Building Teaching Skills and Dispositions. These unique learning units help users practice and strengthen skills that are essential to effective teaching. After presenting the steps involved in a core teaching process, you are given an opportunity to practice applying this skill through videos, student and teacher artifacts, and/or case studies of authentic classrooms. Providing multiple opportunities to practice a single teaching concept, each activity encourages a deeper understanding and application of concepts, as well as the use of critical thinking skills. After practice, students take a quiz that is reported to the instructor gradebook.

Lesson Plan Builder. The **Lesson Plan Builder** is an effective and easy-to-use tool that you can use to create, update, and share quality lesson plans. The software also makes it easy to integrate state content standards into any lesson plan.

Iris Center Resources. The IRIS Center at Vanderbilt University (iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu), funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), develops training enhancement materials for preservice and practicing teachers. The Center works with experts from across the country to create challenge-based interactive modules, case study units, and podcasts that provide research-validated information about working with students in inclusive settings. In your MyEducationLab course, we have integrated this content where appropriate.

 **Activities.** A+RISE activities provide practice in targeting instruction. A+RISE®, developed by three-time Teacher of the Year and administrator Evelyn Arroyo, provides quick, research-based strategies that get to the “how” of targeting instruction and making content accessible for all students, including English language learners.

A+RISE® Standards2Strategy™ is an innovative and interactive online resource that offers new teachers in grades K–12 just-in-time, research-based instructional strategies that:

- Meet the linguistic needs of ELLs as they learn content
- Differentiate instruction for all grades and abilities
- Offer reading and writing techniques, cooperative learning, use of linguistic and nonlinguistic representations, scaffolding, teacher modeling, higher order thinking, and alternative classroom ELL assessment
- Provide support to help teachers be effective through the integration of listening, speaking, reading, and writing along with the content curriculum
- Improve student achievement
- Are aligned to Common Core Elementary Language Arts standards (for the literacy strategies) and to English language proficiency standards in WIDA, Texas, California, and Florida.

Course Resources. The Course Resources section of MyEducationLab is designed to help you put together an effective lesson plan, prepare for and begin your career, navigate your first year of teaching, and understand key educational standards, policies, and laws.

It includes the following:

The **Grammar Tutorial** provides content extracted in part from *The Praxis Series™ Online Tutorial for the Pre-Professional Skills Test: Writing*. Online quizzes built around specific elements of grammar help users strengthen their understanding and proper usage of the English language in writing. Definitions and examples of grammatical concepts are followed by practice exercises to provide the background information and usage examples needed to refresh understandings of grammar and then apply that knowledge to make it more permanent.

Children's and Young Adult Literature Database offers information on thousands of quality literature titles, helping students choose appropriate literature and integrate the best titles into language arts instruction.

The **Preparing a Portfolio** module provides guidelines for creating a high-quality teaching portfolio.

Beginning Your Career offers tips, advice, and other valuable information on:

- **Resume Writing and Interviewing:** Includes expert advice on how to write impressive resumes and prepare for job interviews.
- **Your First Year of Teaching:** Provides practical tips to set up a first classroom, manage student behavior, and more easily organize for instruction and assessment.
- **Law and Public Policies:** Details specific directives and requirements you need to understand under the No Child Left Behind Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004.

The **Certification and Licensure** section is designed to help you pass your licensure exam by giving you access to state test requirements, overviews of what tests cover, and sample test items. The Certification and Licensure section includes the following:

- **State Certification Test Requirements:** Here you can click on a state name link to see a list of state certification tests.
- You can click on the **Licensure Exams** you need to take to find:
 - Basic information about each test
 - Descriptions of what is covered on each test
 - Sample test questions with explanations of correct answers.
- **National Evaluation Series™** by Pearson: Here, students can see the tests in the NES, learn what is covered on each exam, and access sample test items with descriptions and rationales of correct answers. You can also purchase interactive online tutorials developed by Pearson Evaluation Systems and the Pearson Teacher Education and Development group.
- **ETS Online Praxis Tutorials:** Here you can purchase interactive online tutorials developed by ETS and by the Pearson Teacher Education and Development group. Tutorials are available for the Praxis I exams and for select Praxis II exams.

Visit www.myeducationlab.com for a demonstration of this exciting new online teaching resource.

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Understanding Literacy Contexts

Chapter Outline

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Colonial Period
 Early American History
 Early 1900s
 Late 1900s
 2000s

LITERACY THEORIES

Bottom-Up
 Top-Down
 Interactive

SUMMARY



When I was in graduate school, I came across several books that expanded my thinking about teaching, learning, language, and literacy. One of these books, first published in 1908, was *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*, by Edmund Burke Huey. In the book Huey wrote of the wonder of the written word. Consider how just because something is written, people give it more credibility. Huey challenged us to learn about processes that take place in our minds so we can better understand the act of reading: “And so to completely analyze what we do when we read would almost be the

acme of a psychologist’s achievements, for it would be to describe very many of the most intricate workings of the human mind and to unravel the tangled story of the most remarkable specific performance that civilization has learned in all its history” (p. 38). Even though that book had been written years ago, I realized its contents were still relevant to me. I determined to strive harder to understand how the human mind works, how language works, and how children learn so I could make more informed choices as a teacher.

—Tim



An enslaved man on a Southern plantation was required to work from sunrise to sunset six days a week. However, the plantation owner offered to pay him a few coins for working on his one day off. The enslaved man eagerly accepted this opportunity, for he had secret plans to save those coins and buy his freedom. He had heard of a free man who would forge release papers for a price. When he had finally saved enough, he bought his ticket for freedom and escaped. When the inevitable happened and someone asked to see his papers, he did not panic. He confidently presented his forged papers and was confused when he was promptly arrested and returned to the plantation. Because he could not read, he had no idea that he had paid a forger who could not write. His hard-earned coins had bought him nothing but a page of scribbles. His hopes were dashed. His open window was closed forever.

Throughout history, reading and writing have always opened windows for those who possessed these life-changing skills. Literacy has always meant the difference between bondage and freedom in one form or another.

It is no different today. Reading and writing are processes that are almost indispensable in our society. In order to be successful in school, at work, or even in many leisure activities, one must be able to read and write. Your career as a teacher of literacy will permit you to open windows of opportunity for your students. You will give them a ticket to freedom that will be real and will last forever.

To become successful as a teacher of literacy, you should familiarize yourself with literacy contexts that will anchor your teaching. Durkin (2004) repeatedly said, “The most important question teachers can ask themselves is ‘*Why* am I doing what I’m doing?’” (p. 31; emphasis in original). To answer that question, you need to know something about the history of literacy instruction and the application of learning theories. Instead of being a teacher who is satisfied with teaching a lesson because it is the next one in the book or because you have found a cute new activity to try, you will teach with purpose behind your instruction.

Historical Overview

Understanding what has happened in the past helps you understand the present and prepare for the future. Most instructional approaches, materials, and trends you see in education have been used before. This brief history of American reading and writing instruction provides an important overview of the significant events, individuals, and publications that have shaped instruction during the colonial period, early American history, the early 1900s, the late 1900s, and the period from 2000 to the present.

Colonial Period

Parents provided much of the reading and writing instruction for children living in the American colonies. Many of the first colonists came from England, so the instructional materials and texts they used had been published there. The most common teaching tool for reading was the **hornbook**, a small paddle with a sheet of paper placed beneath a thin piece of clear horn from an animal (see Figure 1.1). Hornbooks were used for children’s reading instruction from the mid-1400s to the early 1700s.

Hornbooks were most commonly made of wood, but were also shaped from pewter, ivory, silver, and even gingerbread (Smith, 2002). Each small piece of paper contained similar elements, as well as different lessons. The

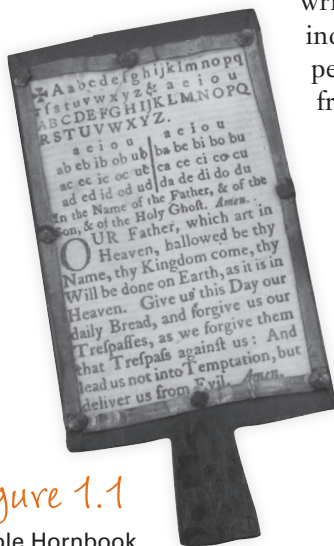


Figure 1.1
Sample Hornbook

alphabet was written at the top of the page, usually in both upper- and lowercase manuscript letters. Next came a series of common vowel-consonant combinations (such as *ab*, *et*, and *in*) and a verse from the Bible. Children named the letters of the alphabet, read the short letter combinations, then read the scripture orally, as a parent or older sibling listened and made corrections.

The first American-produced reading book, *The New England Primer*, was published in 1683 (Heartman, 1727; see Figure 1.2). A **primer** is an instructional tool for teaching reading to emerging and beginning readers. This small bound book emphasized initial learning of the alphabet and included short reading texts as well. Reflecting the culture of the people at that time, the content of the reading selections was religious.

One of the major reasons people learned to read during this period was to nourish themselves spiritually. Each lesson in *The New England Primer* ended with a type of catechism, which was a question-and-answer section reviewing the major content of the lesson. Although some public schools had been established by the late seventeenth century, most education occurred at home, especially for girls. *The New England Primer* sold over six million copies in 22 editions. Many families and schools in early America used this book to teach children to read.

In the colonial period, writing was not emphasized for females and was only taught to males who were planning to enter an occupation that specifically required writing. For most boys, to be able to write their names was considered sufficient. Little attention was paid to composing original prose, but neat penmanship was emphasized. Young boys worked on slates with chalk since paper and ink were expensive. Young women often stitched the alphabet and scripture verses on samplers. However, their skills with a needle were emphasized over their writing abilities.

Early American History

Noah Webster's *American Spelling Book* (1798), also called the Blue-back Speller for its distinctive color, was an American book. It unified spelling and pronunciation patterns distinctive to the new country. For example, the traditional British spelling of the word *colour* was changed to the American form *color*. In addition to emphasizing the alphabet, this book included exercises and rules for pronunciation and enunciation, highlighting the prominence of oral reading that would be maintained for over a century. While some selections were religious, many took a patriotic stance. Following publication of Webster's book came others that focused on spelling as a means of learning to read.

When schools became graded (first grade, second grade, etc.), materials were written to accommodate groups of children. Though not the first to grade reading materials for children, McGuffey's readers, which appeared in 1836, are the best known (see Figure 1.3). They were popular through the 1800s (McGuffey, 1866). The books in McGuffey's series do not match grade levels as you now know them. The grades indicated the order in which to use the books, regardless of the age of the learner.

McGuffey's readers sold more than 120 million copies, making them the most influential set of reading books in their era. These readers were referred to as **eclectic**, reflecting emphasis on both alphabetic and whole word instructional methods. The religious and moralistic content echoed the sentiments of

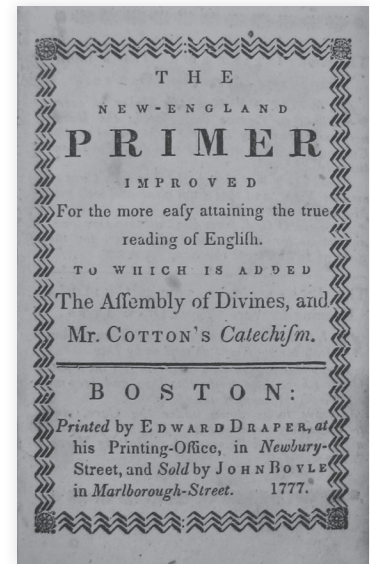


Figure 1.2
New England Primer

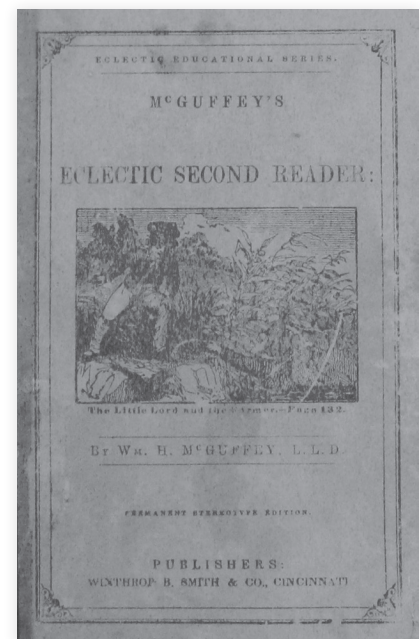


Figure 1.3
McGuffey's Reader

the country. As was the case with all materials published to this time, the readers contained limited direction for teachers. The books emphasized oral reading performance and memorization, with much less attention given to issues of reading comprehension. What little instruction was offered to teachers centered mostly on how to help children with **elocution**, speaking clearly with a conventional accent.

Early in American history, writing did not receive much more attention than it had in the colonial period. Handwriting was stressed, with great value placed on beautiful penmanship. However, in 1873 Harvard added a composition class as an entry requirement. This spurred more focus on the content of student writing, not just on transcription (North, 1987). Personal journals and correspondence provided meaningful contexts in which most people learned to write and continued to improve their writing, although writing for these purposes was not usually stressed in schools. Spelling bees were common because of the influence of the many spelling books published during this period, but spellings of words varied widely from book to book. Punctuation was not a major focus for teachers or authors; rather it was considered the job of typesetters who prepared manuscripts for publication.

Early 1900s

Major shifts in reading education occurred in the early 1900s for a variety of reasons. Changes in educational philosophy exemplified by Dewey (1916) and Skinner (1954), along with the emergence of scientific approaches to reading (Huey, 1908), led to changes in the ways reading was taught. Some began to emphasize the individual in the development of reading ability, but the **behaviorist movement**, which stressed the study of observed human behaviors, quickly became the guiding philosophy of thought and practice in education. Emphasis shifted from oral to silent reading. Researchers considered such issues as when reading instruction should begin and how vocabulary should be controlled in reading materials. Development of reading tests, teachers' manuals, and reading clinics characterized this period. Gray (1927) emphasized the whole word approach to beginning reading instruction, which led to the creation of the Dick and Jane series. These books were used for decades to teach young students how to read (see Figure 1.4). Instead of explicitly teaching phonics generalizations, Gray used words that were familiar to young readers and repeated them (“look, look” and “run, run, run”), so they could be recognized by sight.

This whole word approach was used from the 1930s through the 1950s in the United States. Then a significant event in history brought that era in reading instruction to an abrupt halt—on October 4, 1957, the launching of the Russian satellite *Sputnik* captured the attention of the world. Because Americans had not been first in the “space race,” people called for changes in American schools. Blue-ribbon panels were formed to investigate how to improve the education system.

This led to a number of changes in the 1950s and 1960s in the way reading was taught. It was a period of experimentation, during which some researchers encouraged more emphasis on phonics instruction (Flesch, 1955), while others suggested various other alternatives (Bloomfield, 1942; Fries, 1963). The minimal pairs contrast

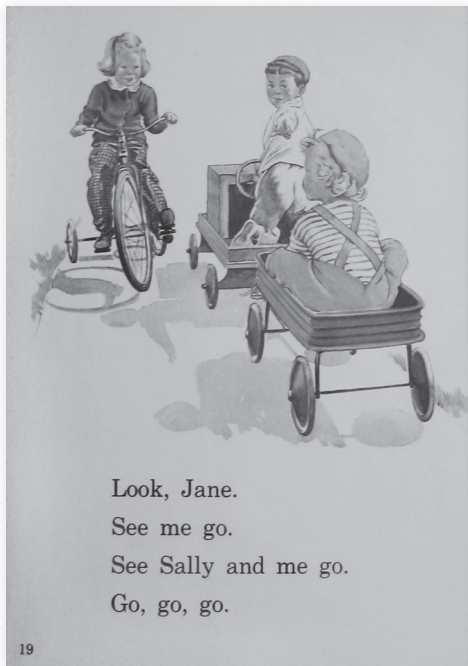


Figure 1.4

Page from the Dick and Jane Reader, *Happy Days with Our Friends*

(Source: Montgomery, Bauer, & Gray, 1948, p. 19; reprinted by permission of Pearson Education, Inc.)

approach allowed for decoding words without isolating individual speech sounds. For example, instead of teaching children to read the word *cat* by segmenting and then blending three distinct sounds, linguists suggested helping them to recognize the word family *-at* and then adding the initial /k/. This approach had been used earlier and is still used today.

Another experimental method introduced during this period was individualized reading instruction. Programmed reading (Buchanan, 1966) was one popular method that focused on phonics instruction and moved students through graded materials at their own pace rather than as a class. Students took placement tests that allowed them to begin the program at different places based on their scores. The booklets provided a way for students to check themselves. After completing several pages, students took a test to see how well they had mastered the material and then either proceeded on or practiced the material more before retaking the test.

One program developed during this time was designed to help children deal with complexities of the English spelling system. Since the English language does not have a match between speech sounds and written symbols, the **initial teaching alphabet**, better known as ITA (Mazurkiewicz & Tanyzer, 1966), was developed with 44 symbols that exactly matched the 44 sounds used in English pronunciation—no exceptions. Figure 1.5 shows uppercase above lowercase ITA symbols. Students knew that the same symbol represented the same sound each time. For example, when students saw the symbol *i*, they knew that the short sound was being represented, as in the word *insect*. But when they saw the symbol *ie*, they knew that the long sound was being used, as in *ice*.

The DISTAR program (Direct Instruction System for Teaching Arithmetic and Reading), now called reading mastery, has been used widely since its introduction in the 1960s by Engelmann and Bruner (1988). The developers of this program believed that phonics should be taught using a **synthetic approach**: Each sound in a word should be isolated and then blended to identify the word. For example, if a child saw the word *cat*, she should say the three sounds /k/, /a/, and /t/ individually and then blend them together to decode the entire word. Children were placed in small groups and taught phonics principles with one hundred percent mastery expected for each lesson. The group did not go on until all students had mastered the material in one lesson. Though they moved slowly, students came away understanding letter-sound relationships. However, the program was criticized for focusing too strongly on only one aspect of reading—phonics—and minimizing other essential elements such as vocabulary and comprehension.

Writing instruction was emphasized about the same time as Joseph Dixon, an American entrepreneur, developed an inexpensive way to produce pencils (Petroski, 1990). More attention was placed on composition than in the past, but students were still expected to complete an error-free final draft in one sitting, with little expectation of revision. The prevailing approach to writing instruction was to give students a topic and allow limited time to write to that prompt. The compositions were then read, corrected, and graded by the teachers. The grade often reflected students' spelling and handwriting proficiency more than the content. However, Dewey (1916) and Piaget (1926) provided theoretical underpinnings that helped people begin to view writing differently.



Figure 1.5
Initial Teaching
Alphabet

Late 1900s

In 1967 Jeanne Chall published her book *Learning to Read: The Great Debate*, in which she reviewed a number of studies about early reading instruction. She found that children who were initially taught some form of phonics performed better than peers who were not. Since many educators had become dissatisfied with whole word methods, her book was widely accepted. Also at this time, the federally funded First Grade Studies (Bond & Dykstra, 1967) were completed. Some 20 different researchers conducted independent studies at various locations around the United States to identify which of the many experimental instructional approaches for reading were most effective. The results led to many suggestions for change and improvement, but one major finding showed that approaches that focused on phonics were superior to those that did not. Armed with this information, most publishers included phonics instruction in all materials provided to teachers. Also at this time, programs were developed that were targeted to meet the needs of children of color and of poverty, as well as children with learning disabilities.

Individualized instruction and mastery learning were popular in the 1970s. Some districts used open school models in which a small number of teachers oversaw large numbers of students. For example, four teachers would work with the same 120 students from several grade levels, grouping them for instruction based on the students' abilities rather than their ages. Many times this open model also meant open space, where teachers worked with students in large, nontraditional classrooms with spaces partitioned for small groups.

During the 1970s and 1980s, constructivist thought gained prominence over behaviorist beliefs. Instead of focusing solely on observed behavior, the **constructivist movement** began to examine how the human mind works. Constructivism is a theory of knowledge that humans create understanding and meaning based on their experiences and ideas. Many researchers began to acknowledge that when children were reading, they were creating meaning and not just repeating what they had heard or decoding what they had seen. Chomsky (1965) postulated that children are born with the ability to create language in their minds—that they work out patterns of oral language and generalize them to other forms. They say words and phrases that they have never heard before because they are trying out their understanding of how language works. Chomsky's work revolutionized thinking in linguistics and influenced thinking in related fields like literacy. Work in psychology and linguistics led to new fields of study like cognitive science, artificial intelligence, psycholinguistics, and sociolinguistics. Educators began to see connections between oral language and learning to read and write. They also acknowledged that students used language for social purposes, such as discussing a book they were reading or sharing their writing with others. Researchers at the federally funded Center for the Study of Reading, housed at the University of Illinois, studied how these ideas related to vocabulary and comprehension in reading instruction. Their work led to the development of instructional methods that went beyond decoding.

One movement that was heavily influenced by constructivist thought was whole language. Following the example of educators in Australia and New Zealand particularly, U.S. teachers began a grassroots effort to align reading instruction with five principles closely related to Cambourne's (1988) conditions of learning. First, instead of dividing language into separate subjects like reading, writing, spelling, and handwriting, Cambourne said that all of the language arts should be taught simultaneously and throughout the school day in all of the subject areas. A second principle was that texts and tasks in literacy learning should be authentic. Instead of using basal reading passages that had been written for instructional purposes, teachers began to use literature that had been written for children. Third, the role of students as passive learners who soaked in what their teachers gave them changed

dramatically; Cambourne saw students as active learners who created understanding and composed their own writing. Fourth, the view of the teacher's role began to shift from the "sage on the stage" to the "guide on the side." Teachers became facilitators of learning, coaches who supported their students in their own learning. Last, student-centered assessment emerged. Instead of relying on large-scale standardized tests, teachers began to use measures that showed how individual students had changed over a brief instructional period.

The whole language movement in the United States has been considered among the most influential educational movements in the twentieth century (De Carlo, 1995), but its impact was confined mostly to a span of about 10 years, from the late 1980s to the late 1990s. Its demise was caused by a variety of factors related to the temper of the times. Because it was largely a grassroots effort, there was little central control over the movement. This led to a variety of definitions of whole language. Some educators defined the term as a personal guiding philosophy of education and others considered it as a set of guidelines. For example, some felt that the use of phonics instruction was not consistent with principles of whole language, whereas others believed that phonics was one of many appropriate means of language instruction in whole language classrooms. The whole language label was no longer used, but the principles associated with the movement continued to influence education. By the late 1990s, policy decisions and in some cases state legislation mandated more focus on word identification and explicit instruction (Allington, 2002a).

Writing instruction also changed dramatically during this period. The English translation of Vygotsky's *Thought and Language* (1962) confirmed many of Piaget's theories and had an impact on both reading and writing. Unlike Piaget, Vygotsky believed that cognitive growth was the product of language use and that students use language to organize their thinking as well as express it. Rogers (1969) wrote *Freedom to Learn*, in which he claimed that teachers should teach children how to learn rather than just what to learn. He tied self-expression to self-discovery. In a more practical vein, Murray (1968), Emig (1971), and Elbow (1973) provided an insider's view of the process authors use as they write. Graves (1983), Calkins (1986), and Atwell (1987) guided teachers to teach writing in a **workshop format**, during which students learned writing skills, engaged in authentic writing activities, and shared their writing with others.

Beliefs about writing included the idea that writers need regular periods of time to explore their own topics and purposes and subsequently to seek response to their writing. They need to learn mechanics in context, see adults who write, read widely on their own, and feel safe to take a risk. Qualities of effective writing were defined by Diederich (1974) and expanded by educators in Oregon and Montana. These definitions became known as the "six traits" and were used as a widespread method of first assessing and later teaching writing (Education Northwest, 2011).

Although typewriters were used in the early 1900s, keyboarding was a skill mastered by only a few. During the late 1900s, keyboarding became essential with the emergence of personal computers and word-processing programs that shortened the time necessary to complete the writing process. Revision could be done with cutting and pasting, and spelling and grammar checking programs made editing easier. Penmanship, a long-standing hallmark of writing instruction, was no longer stressed as it had been in the past.

2000s

The whole language movement was followed quickly by greater federal involvement in education generally and in literacy instruction specifically. The Report of the National Reading Panel (2000) focused heavily on empirical research in education for children with disabilities. The term "scientifically based reading research" was used repeatedly



New Literacies



Common Core
State Standards



English Language
Learners



Struggling Learners/
RtI

in calls for “gold standard research” that would be experimental or quasi-experimental. Other methodologies were discounted. This reliance on evidence-based instruction was apparent in the No Child Left Behind and Reading First federal legislation in the early 2000s, and was pervasive in the field of literacy education through the late 2000s and into the 2010s. The Common Core State Standards led to rigorous literacy instruction nationally. The state of literacy instruction in the 2000s can be characterized with the words *assessment*, *accountability*, and *evidence-based instruction*.

Significant demographic changes in the United States have led to increased focus on teaching English language learners (ELLs). Teachers have learned ways to accommodate and accelerate the learning of these students. Similarly, accommodations and scaffolding of instruction for students with learning disabilities have become more widespread in regular education classrooms through response to intervention (RtI). Although some teachers had been accommodating for individual needs and differentiating instruction for years, increased emphasis on teaching ELLs and helping struggling students has led to increased efforts by many teachers.

New technologies challenged the ideas of what reading is, what writing is, and what text is (Coiro, Knobel, Lankshear, & Leu, 2008). When a computer novice who is trying

to install software reads the technical words in an instruction manual over the telephone to a computer support person who interprets the wording, who is really reading? If a teacher writes the words that a child dictates, who is really writing? Must a text always come in the form of a book with pages or lines on a screen? What about a painting, a ballet, a mathematical equation, or a musical score—are they also texts? What does it mean to create or to read such texts? Although foundational skills such as understanding letter-sound relationships, grammar, and conventions of written language are essential in reading and writing words in nearly any context, many differences exist in the reading demands of various types of text. For example, reading on the Internet involves the use of strategies that require readers to select sites to read, to choose what portions of a site to read, and to determine what parts of a site to dismiss.

During the 2000s, instruction in and opportunities

for student writing decreased (Applebee & Langer, 2006). The National Commission on Writing in America’s Schools and Colleges (2003) called writing “the neglected ‘R’” (p. 9). In a national survey, fourth through sixth grade teachers reported that they taught writing for only 15 minutes a day (Gilbert & Graham, 2010), and most of their writing activities did not include expectations for students to revise or edit their work. This decline may have been due in part to the focus on reading instruction and assessment of reading skills and the pressure for school performance on standardized tests (Brandt, 2001). Writing was not part of the national testing movement.

The writing process that had influenced the field for decades began to be affected because of the focus of the Common Core State Standards on three genres of writing—narrative, informational, and argumentative. Some educators are beginning to experiment with new approaches to writing instruction to help children succeed with these genres.

Outside of school, the availability of technology, including the Internet, allowed students to engage in reading and writing for their own purposes. Educators who initially



A student and teacher working at a computer.



New Literacies



Common Core
State Standards

Try This for Professional Development

- Create a timeline that highlights significant events in the history of literacy instruction in the United States.
- Establish the total time span you want to cover.
- Determine the style of your desired timeline (horizontal or vertical timeline).
- Enter the most significant dates sequentially on the timeline and then provide facts and information

History of Literacy Timeline

concerning people or events that occurred on the specified date.

- Be sure texts are clear and concise.

Variations

- Include on the timeline events in history unrelated to literacy to provide context.
- Add graphics as a visual component.



viewed technologies such as emailing, texting, blogging, and social networking skeptically soon accepted these technologies and sought ways to utilize them as motivating contexts for increased literacy learning (Richardson, 2010).

**New Literacies****Literacy Theories**

Along with understanding historical contexts, it is important to see how reading and writing have been viewed through a theoretical lens. Many theorists have attempted to describe the reading process in order to better understand the complex exertions of the mind (Huey, 1908) in order to increase understanding and to improve instruction. Three major literacy theories have resulted from these efforts—bottom-up, top-down, and interactive. The following explanations are brief and simple; they are presented as an overview.

Bottom-Up

The **bottom-up theory** outlines a linear process that proceeds from perceiving letters to understanding sentences. Gough (1972) wrote about what he thought would transpire during one second of elapsed time of reading. In this model Gough explained that the eye views the page of text and sends information to the brain for letter-by-letter processing. The mind ties this visual information to the speech sounds associated with the letters. A mental lexicon then determines which letter/sound combinations go together and identifies the word. The words are finally combined in sequence, and semantic and syntactic rules are applied to them so that sentences can be understood.

This approach to explaining the reading process is called bottom-up because the factors that are lowest on the scale of making meaning (letters, sounds, and individual words) build sequentially to comprehension. Some refer to this theory as an outside-in model; that is, information that is outside the mind is used first before sense can be made inside the head. In their model LaBerge and Samuels (1974) emphasized the importance of developing automatic word identification as a means of combining subskills to reach comprehension.

In writing, bottom-up models maintain that when children begin to write, they must first learn how to form the letters, then learn how to spell words, and finally learn how to

create sentences and paragraphs. Knowledge of grammar would also precede meaningful composition.

In bottom-up theory the parts add up to the whole. This theory is evidenced in phonics-first programs, reading readiness materials, and letter-of-the-week instructional approaches. Practically, the theory could be described as memorizing notes before playing music, mastering strokes before swimming, and proving proficiency at dribbling in preparation for a basketball game.

Top-Down

At about the time Gough was promoting the bottom-up model of reading, others (Goodman, 1967; Smith, 1971) were exploring a theory influenced by Chomsky's (1965) ideas in linguistics that individuals acquire oral language ability as they try to make meaning by inferring rules of language. The **top-down theory** of reading begins with powerful meaning-making processes such as using semantic and syntactic information, and only later in the process employs visual information like association of letters and sounds. In fact, Goodman (1967) suggested that syntactic and semantic information can be used to make accurate predictions or guesses in identifying individual words, and that the letters are used only to confirm those predictions. For example, when reading the sentence "I saw a cow at the farm," the reader would not need to process all of the letters in the word *farm*. If all of the preceding words had been identified, noting only the initial letter *f* would be necessary for the reader to predict *farm* to be the word. Because higher-level information sources are used first, this linear process theory is commonly referred to as top-down. Others refer to it as an inside-out model.

In writing, top-down theories argue that children begin to write by first focusing on meaning, then organizing their thoughts, then recording their ideas as best they can, and finally attending to conventions of print so their ideas can be accessible to others.

In this theory the whole motivates the natural learning of parts. This theory is evidenced in writing to read programs, emergent literacy practices, and holistic literature-based approaches. In practice, the theory could be described as learning notes in the context of music, developing strokes in the swimming pool, and improving dribbling while playing basketball.

Interactive

The third literacy theory is usually called **interactive**. Although many educators see this as simply a combination of bottom-up and top-down theories, or a meeting in the middle of two extremes, the relationship is not that simple. This theory proposes the notion of parallel processing. Rumelhart (1976) argued that cognitive processing is not linear in either a bottom-up or a top-down direction. Rather, he explained that multiple information sources interact simultaneously on the visual information that the eye sends to the brain. When perceptual processes forward the letters to the mind, syntactic, semantic, orthographic, and lexical information sources work simultaneously to identify the meaning of the symbols. The fast rate of reading indicates that multiple information sources are working together to create meaning.

Stanovich (1984) described an interactive model of reading that included the idea of **compensation**; that is, when one of the information sources is weaker, the strengths of the others can compensate. For example, if a child is weak in using letter/sound knowledge or if the text presents words that are difficult to immediately identify, the syntactic and semantic sources can provide more information to identify the words.

Try This for Professional Development

- List the key features, unique contributions, and limitations of the theories described.
- Identify classroom applications associated with each theory (e.g., methods, materials, and teacher roles).
- Think of something you have learned in a bottom-up, top-down, or an interactive way (e.g., piano lessons, baseball practice, computers, speaking a foreign language, and cooking). Analyze the process

Exploring Literacy Theories

you went through and how that process has affected your motivation to continue learning in this area.



Variations

Explore broader learning theories, such as behaviorism (Skinner, 1974), constructivism (Piaget, 1969; Smith, 1971), and sociolinguistics (Vygotsky, 1978). List the key features, unique contributions, and limitations for each.

Another interactive model of reading, proposed by Rosenblatt (2004), is referred to as a transaction between readers and authors, who create meaning together. She explained that meaning does not lie in the text or even in the author's intent. It is created when the reader and the writer work together as readers bring themselves to the writer's words. This theory also acknowledges the stances that readers can take as they read text: aesthetic and efferent. An **aesthetic stance** means the reader is paying attention to feelings, images, and emotions that are evoked by the text. Reading aesthetically allows readers to get lost in a story and care about characters. An **efferent stance** refers to taking meaning from the text. Efferent reading focuses on learning information. It is reading to remember and to be able to use facts and insights to enrich understanding. Students can also take a **critical stance** by evaluating authors' words and analyzing the support given for their positions. Reading critically raises questions about whose voices are represented and whose are missing in the text. It examines the text from multiple perspectives and helps readers avoid being manipulated (McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2004).

In writing, interactive theories would argue that children combine the use of skills and expression of thoughts to create meaningful text. Meaning can be created during the act of writing. If writers feel inadequate in spelling, their strengths in creative ideas can make up for this weakness; they may even invent new words for people or places. Writers consciously decide their own purposes for writing and deliberately take stances to help a reader enjoy a story, to convey information, or to persuade others.

In this theory the whole becomes greater than the sum of its parts. This theory is evidenced in balanced literacy programs, process writing practices, and integrated literacy approaches. In broad practical terms, the theory could be described as notes so related with music, strokes so connected to swimming, and dribbling so intertwined with other moves in basketball that the parts cannot be separated from the whole.

Summary

To assist in the development of children's literacy, you should know about the history of reading and writing instruction in the United States. This context will help you understand the progress educators have made

and the way certain activities and processes have come into use today. As you become familiar with the many ways to consider what counts as text and what reading and writing really are, you can assist young people to

deal with the variety of literacy demands in our current society.

As you become familiar with the context provided by theories of language processing, you will be able to evaluate instructional programs and materials. You will want to be sure that the ways you teach reading and writing are consistent and align with your beliefs and philosophy of language instruction.

Within these literacy contexts, you will discover the foundations required to better understand the needs of all students and help them develop as learners and reach their potential as human beings. Young children have dreams and desires. Literacy opens the windows that allow them to pursue those dreams and desires. You can help children develop into learners and lovers of literacy throughout their lives.

Self-Check

1. Describe the major areas of focus in early American reading and writing instruction.
2. Explain what process dominated reading instruction during the early to mid 1900s.
3. Indicate some of the innovations in reading instruction that were used in the early 1960s.
4. Explain how new literacies can influence the language learning of children.
5. Why is it important to understand history?
6. Explain the bottom-up and top-down theories of reading.
7. Explain how bottom-up and top-down theories of reading are different from interactive theory.
8. Compare aesthetic, efferent, and critical stances in reading and writing.

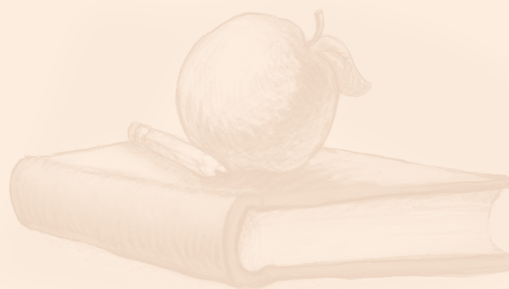
MyEducationLab™

Go to the Topic, Media/Digital Literacy, in the **MyEducation Lab** (www.myeducationlab.com) for your course, where you can:

- Find learning outcomes for Media/Digital Literacy along with the national standards that connect to these outcomes.
- Complete Assignments and Activities that can help you more deeply understand the chapter content.
- Apply and practice your understanding of the core teaching skills identified in the chapter with the Building Teaching Skills and Dispositions learning units.
- Examine challenging situations and cases presented in the IRIS Center Resources.
- Check your comprehension on the content covered in the chapter by going to the Study Plan in the Book

Resources for your text. Here you will be able to take a chapter quiz, receive feedback on your answers, and then access Review, Practice, and Enrichment activities to enhance your understanding of chapter content (optional).

- Visit **A+RISE** Standards2Strategy™, an innovative and interactive online resource that offers new teachers in grades K–12 just-in-time, research-based instructional strategies that meet the linguistic needs of ELLs as they learn content, differentiate instruction for all grades and abilities, and are aligned to Common Core Elementary Language Arts Standards (for the literacy strategies) and to English language proficiency standards in WIDA, Texas, California, and Florida.



Understanding the Needs of All Learners

Chapter Outline

CULTURE

LANGUAGE MINORITIES

- Second Language Acquisition
- School Assistance

POVERTY

URBAN AND RURAL EDUCATION

- Urban
- Rural

LEARNING DISABILITIES

SUMMARY



About three weeks after school had started, a new student was assigned to my third-grade class. Sisimone was a nine-year-old boy who had just arrived in the United States from Laos because his father was preparing to attend the local university. Sisimone had been well educated in Laos as a young boy, but he had not learned the English language there. Despite his limited ability with English, Sisimone was anxious to get to know his new classmates and was eager to learn. He loved to

play soccer during recess, and he even learned how to play American football and kickball. I had never before had a student who was so new to the language, so I was at a loss as to what to do. After talking to other teachers, I decided to seat Sisimone close to the front of the classroom next to Carl, with whom Sisimone liked to play. I encouraged Carl to try to help him as best he could. My wife and I created word cards that we placed throughout the classroom to label various objects, like the wall clock, the door, desks,

chairs, and so on. I also met regularly with Sisimone to teach him about letters and sounds and words. During whole class instruction, I would stop periodically to simplify things for Sisimone. He loved to come to the front of the class and show us how to spell words in his language. “Sisimone already knows one language, and he is learning a new one,” I explained to the other students. Sisimone made quick progress in learning how to communicate on the playground and in the classroom. In a few short months he was able to

carry on short conversations and ask questions during lessons. However, I noticed that he had much more difficulty when dealing with the increased demands of content area subjects. Unfortunately for us, Sismone’s time in our class came to an end in March when his family found a different apartment and moved away. We had a going-away party and were sad to see him leave. We had all learned as much by having Sisimone in our class as he had learned from us.

—Tim

Most teachers enter the profession because they love children. Working with children can be exhilarating, but it can also be frustrating. One first-year teacher complained to his wife, “I feel like every day is a roller coaster ride with so many highs and lows. I wish things would just even out.” His wife, a nurse, replied, “When they hook you up to a heart monitor, you don’t want a straight line. That’s the bad news. The up and down lines are what let you know you’re alive.” Truly, working with children takes you to extremes, but that is what lets you know that you are participating, not just observing; living, not just existing.

Children often bring a fresh perspective that is delightful. One sixth-grader came to school late one day—about four hours late. His teacher asked, “Where have you been?” He replied, “I’m sorry, but this morning I got this thing stuck in my nose and I couldn’t get it out. My mom had to take me to the emergency room, and they finally got it. But they didn’t know if they got everything, so they took an x-ray of my head, but there was nothing there!”

A student teacher met with her university supervisor for a debriefing session after she had taught a lesson. A kindergartner interrupted them and declared, “I can’t find my coat!” The student teacher replied, “It’s right there on the hook.” The child responded, “That’s not mine.” The adults immediately joined the child in searching the classroom and playground for the lost coat. Finally the student teacher asked, “Are you sure that’s not your coat on the hook?” The child emphatically responded, “No! Mine had snow on it.”

Despite challenges, children’s fresh perspectives bring joy to teaching. As a teacher, you will have students in your classes who come from various backgrounds. Some will be from wealthy families; others will come from homes of poverty. Some will be very proficient in English; others will come from homes where other languages or variant dialects of English are spoken. There will also be physical, ethnic, cultural, and cognitive differences. A brief review of cultural issues, language minority matters, poverty concerns, urban and rural education themes, and learning disabilities will help you understand variations. This knowledge will give you a strong foundation from which you can respond to student needs appropriately and effectively.

Try This for Professional Development**Respond to a Teacher**

Teaching isn't always easy. Consider this letter written by a first-grade teacher during the first month of school:

My Dear Friends,

Oh my, teaching first grade is crazy. The first week of school I spent most of my time thinking there was no way I was going to make it through the week, let alone a year. It took me days to finally answer my phone, I was afraid I would cry if I talked to any of my friends.

I miss going to the bathroom. I have found everything I hoped I would—my students think I am the prettiest, smartest teacher in the world. I get hugs and one student tells me I look like a princess. However, I get asked 20 times a day when it is time to go home, I have a few students who spend most of their day rolling around on the floor, tapping their pencils, and making odd/irritating noises with various body parts. I literally peel one crying child off of her mother every morning and secretly hope one boy will go on a very long vacation. I say "shhhh" 500 times a day even though I know it is totally ineffective and inappropriate.

However, the children are so wonderful. They make me laugh and I am amazed at the growth I have seen in just 2 weeks. Yesterday all of the boys decided they could read Magic Treehouse books and wanted to take one home. I had one of the boys read to me today—of course he could only read a few words. I think that is pretty good for a 6 year old. It's so great to have a child ask you if it would be ok if he read a book. Almost all of the children are reading and returning the books I send home with them each day.

If I had to make a decision tonight—it would be easier to work at the gas station on the corner next year, where I could drink Dr. Pepper, eat candy corn, and go to the bathroom whenever I want. But I know things will get easier and that what I'm doing matters.

- In what ways do you relate to this teacher?
- Tell how you would respond to this teacher.
- Reflect on your personal choice to become a teacher.

Culture

Culture consists of “the vast structure of behaviors, ideas, attitudes, values, habits, beliefs, customs, language, rituals, ceremonies, and practices peculiar to a particular group of people” (Nobles, 1990, p. 5). This definition of culture can apply to large groups of people as well as to smaller groups. Sometimes people even refer to individual families as cultural groups.

Cultures vary significantly. In one culture being quiet and reserved may be valued, whereas being louder and more aggressive may be viewed positively in another



Children from multiple ethnicities and cultures at school.



Struggling Learners/
RtI



English Language
Learners

One of the first steps you can take is to recognize the cultural capital, or funds of knowledge, children bring with them to school (Gonzales, Moll, & Amanti, 2005; Sullivan, 2001). **Cultural capital** refers to the knowledge, accomplishments, and qualifications that an individual has within a given social circle. You might hear some people make disparaging remarks about children and refer to their cultures as deficient or deviant. On the other extreme, you might hear people say, “I don’t see color, I just see children.” Both responses are inappropriate. You need to view culture as a significant element of education. Use the cultural capital that students possess to improve learning in your classroom. One resource to find out more about cultures around the world is a compilation of brief articles called CultureGrams, available online (online.culturegrams.com/kids/index.php/). Each is concise, accurate, and often more up to date than print sources. There is also a kids’ edition of CultureGrams designed for elementary school children. Although this site is for subscribers, the free demonstration

culture. One culture may highlight competition; another may place value on cooperation and group efforts. Being aware of cultural differences of students in your class enables you to help your students feel more comfortable and better able to learn (Au, 2000).

You should expect to have students from a variety of cultures in your classroom. In the United States, many teachers are culturally different from their students. At times this mismatch can cause fear and insecurity that can affect performance (Jackson, 2001). Perhaps you have heard of an **achievement gap** in the United States. This refers to disparity in scores on achievement tests among groups of students from different cultures, races/ethnicities, and income levels. Those students who are not in the mainstream culture generally score lower on large-scale tests. Although many factors contributing to these differences are outside your control, there are some things you can do to close or at least reduce that gap for your students (Levine, 2000).

Try This for Teaching

Create Your Own Culture Grams



- Discuss what children already know about a country of interest (e.g., food, holidays, dress).
- Following a pattern such as those found at online.culturegrams.com/kids/index.php/ or in encyclopedias or other resources, assign children to create their own brief report about that country.
- Students can provide facts, a map, and a flag and then choose several categories (e.g., history, greeting, customs, education, and climate) to expand on.
- Students can explore the sample pages (e.g., hear the name of the country pronounced or the

national anthem, a timeline history, and see photos of favorite foods and sports) and create something similar for their country.

- Have students compare and contrast multiple countries.

Variations for ELLs

- Invite a guest who is from or has visited another country to share the culture of that country with the class.
- Compare the United States with a foreign country.

and sample pages found under New Reports can provide a pattern to follow as students create their own culture grams for peers or for younger students.

When you have children from minority cultures in your class, it may not be wise to place them in a fishbowl by asking them to explain their differences. They may be trying desperately to fit in. Instead, allow all students to study various cultures in school and share what they learn with the rest of the class. One effective way to do this is through books. Figure 2.1 lists some favorite multicultural books for children. Be sure to seek out books that portray the cultures of children in your class so you can add to this list. Be careful that racial or cultural stereotypes are not portrayed in the literature. Cultural details need to be accurately presented. Not only will children gravitate to those books that tie to their culture but they can be encouraged to discuss the meaning of the books and expand their vocabularies by reading and talking about them. For example, children could study the Harlem Renaissance, a cultural movement in the early 1900s in New York City. Using the book *Harlem Stomp! A Cultural History of the Harlem Renaissance* (Hill, 2009), individuals or small groups of students could study and report on various aspects of the movement, including art, poetry, literature, music, people, and places.



New Literacies



English Language Learners

Figure 2.1 Favorite Multicultural Books

Author	Title	Culture/Country
Aardema, Verna	<i>Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain</i>	Kenya
Alexander, Lloyd	<i>The Fortune-Tellers</i>	Cameroon
Ancona, George	<i>Pablo Remembers: The Fiesta of the Day of the Dead</i>	Latino
Andrews-Goebel, Nancy	<i>The Pot That Juan Built</i>	Latino
Bunting, Eve	<i>Smoky Night</i>	Urban U.S.
Cofer, Judith Ortiz	<i>An Island Like You: Stories of the Barrio</i>	Latino
Demi	<i>The Empty Pot</i>	China
de Paola, Tomie	<i>Legend of the Bluebonnet</i>	Native American
Donaldson, Julia	<i>The Magic Paintbrush</i>	China
Dorros, Arthur	<i>Abuela</i>	Latino
Farmer, Nancy	<i>A Girl Named Disaster</i>	Mozambique
Feelings, Muriel	<i>Moja Means One: Swahili Counting Book</i>	Kenya
Filipovic, Zlata	<i>Zlata’s Diary: A Child’s Life in Sarajevo</i>	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Fletcher, Susan	<i>Shadow Spinner</i>	Middle East
Fox, Mem	<i>Possum Magic</i>	Australia
Friedman, Ina R.	<i>How My Parents Learned to Eat</i>	Asian-American
Fritz, Jean	<i>The Double Life of Pocahontas</i>	Native American/England
Goble, Paul	<i>The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses</i>	Native American

(continued)

Figure 2.1 (Continued)

Author	Title	Culture/Country
Grifalconi, Ann	<i>Osa's Pride</i>	Africa
Hamilton, Virginia	<i>Her Stories: African American Folktales, Fairy Tales and True Tales</i>	African-American
Heide, Florence Parry	<i>The Day of Ahmed's Secret</i>	Middle East
Hill, Laban Carrick	<i>Harlem Stomp! A Cultural History of the Harlem Renaissance</i>	Urban U.S.
Ho, Mingfong	<i>Hush! A Thai Lullaby</i>	Thailand
Kimmel, Eric A.	<i>The Greatest of All: A Japanese Folktale</i>	Japan
Kimmel, Eric A.	<i>The Three Princes</i>	Middle East
King, Martin Luther, Jr.	<i>I Have a Dream</i>	African-American
Martin, Rafe	<i>The Rough-Face Girl</i>	Native American
McDermott, Gerald	<i>Raven: A Trickster Tale from the Pacific Northwest</i>	Native American
McKissack, Patricia C. and Frederick L.	<i>Christmas in the Big House, Christmas in the Quarters</i>	African-American
Miles, Miska	<i>Annie and the Old One</i>	Native American
Munsch, Robert	<i>A Promise Is a Promise</i>	Native American
Myers, Walter Dean	<i>Slam</i>	Urban U.S.
Nelson, Kadir	<i>He's Got the Whole World in His Hands</i>	African-American
Oppenheim, Shulamith Levey	<i>The Hundreth Name</i>	Middle East
Polacco, Patricia	<i>The Keeping Quilt</i>	Russia
Polacco, Patricia	<i>Pink and Say</i>	African-American
Ringgold, Faith	<i>Tar Beach</i>	Urban U.S.
Salisbury, Graham	<i>Under the Blood-Red Sun</i>	Asian-American
San Souci, Robert D.	<i>A Weave of Words</i>	Armenia
Say, Allen	<i>El Chino</i>	Asian-American
Say, Allen	<i>Grandfather's Journey</i>	Asian-American
Snyder, Diane	<i>The Boy of the Three-Year Nap</i>	Asian-American
Soto, Gary	<i>Snapshots from the Wedding</i>	Latino
Soto, Gary	<i>Too Many Tamales</i>	Latino
Step toe, John	<i>Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters</i>	Zimbabwe
Taylor, Mildred	<i>Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry</i>	African-American
Tunnell, Mike and George Chilcoat	<i>The Children of Topaz</i>	Asian-American

Author	Title	Culture/Country
Uchida, Yoshiko	<i>The Bracelet</i>	Asian-American
Volavkova, Hana	<i>I Never Saw Another Butterfly</i>	Czechoslovakia
Wisniewski, David	<i>Golem</i>	Czechoslovakia
Wyndham, Robert	<i>Chinese Mother Goose Rhymes</i>	China
Yashima, Taro	<i>Crow Boy</i>	Japan
Young, Ed	<i>Lon Po Po</i>	China

You should make yourself aware of reading materials and authors that your students will identify with. For example, one author who is very appealing to many African-American young people is Walter Dean Myers, an African American who frequently sets his stories in inner cities and uses black characters to direct the action. Allen Say is a Japanese-American author and illustrator who often depicts events in the lives of Japanese-American characters.

In addition to using multicultural websites and books, you can make learning relevant to your students by investigating what is motivating and engaging to them. For example, when working with African-American students, you may recognize that rhythm, repetition, and recitation are recurring learning patterns for many (Mann, 2001). These principles can influence your teaching across the school day. For example, you can use songs and chants to teach about speech sounds. A repetitive piece with physical movements can help students learn states and their capitals. Help children learn meanings of words by feeling the rhythm and repetitive pattern of definitions you write together. Recite them with your students with animated emphasis: “*Ancestral* means pertaining to our ancestors, those in our families from whom we are descended” and “To *admonish* means to mildly caution someone and give . . . advice” (Mann, 2001, p. 25). Example sentences that you create can often reinforce the meanings of the words: “Last summer we traveled back home to our *ancestral* country” and “He *admonished* me for driving too fast” (Mann, 2001, p. 25).



Try This for Professional Development

- Visit a location in your community that is considered to be mainstream or most typical.
- Also visit a place in your community that could be described as an immigrant community.
- In both locations, gather evidence of literacy practices and materials as well as literacy opportunities and access.
- Compare and contrast the two areas, detailing similarities and differences between them in terms of literacy.

Transnational and Community Exploration

Variations

- Reach out to a class in another area and compare your two communities.
- Be sensitive to how different cultures are depicted in movies, books, and TV programs.



L language Minorities

Language differences of students in schools often accompany cultural differences. The number of students in U.S. schools who come from minority language backgrounds has increased, exceeding 11 million in grades K through 12 in 2011 (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2011a). Because of this growth, your class will probably include students who are not proficient in English. In order to assist them, you need to know how second language is acquired and what school assistance is available.



English Language
Learners

Second Language Acquisition

Acquiring a second language (L2) is similar to developing a first or primary language (L1) (Haynes & Zacarian, 2010). As with first language acquisition, development of another language takes time, up to about 10 years. In general, English learners (ELLs) progress through five stages of language development: pre-production, early production, speech emergence, intermediate fluency, and advanced fluency (Krashen & Terrell, 1983).

Pre-Production. As children acquire English as a second language, many may experience a period when they simply do not speak much, commonly referred to as the **silent period**. Although children may not produce much oral language at this time, they are still acquiring language. They may have an L2 listening/speaking vocabulary of up to 500 words and may feel comfortable repeating words and sentences they hear. Take time to explain words and concepts to them so their receptive vocabularies can grow. They could benefit from having a friend or a buddy assigned to them who may or may not speak their L1 (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2008).

Early Production. During this stage, which can last for about six months, students will be able to speak in one- or two-word phrases. They are still acquiring new words and may have developed a listening/speaking vocabulary of over 1,000 words. They can use language to serve different purposes, like asking and answering questions and taking turns in conversations. Many students at this stage will benefit from your use of objects and illustrations. Listening activities and small group work are particularly helpful for them. You should use graphic organizers and charts to help them learn content (Grabe, 2009). Ask other students to support and encourage these L2 learners. Remind them that when they were learning language as little children, they made lots of mistakes as they progressed.

Speech Emergence. At this stage, L2 students can speak in short sentences. Although they may be able to communicate in brief conversations, grammatical miscues are often evident. Many teachers have found that rather than correcting a mistake in grammar, they can simply repeat the sentence using conventional form. For example, when a child said, “I runned real fast,” one teacher said, “I’m so happy that you ran fast.” When a child said, “Me and Jose went to a movie,” the teacher responded, “My husband and I like to go to movies too.” In this way students heard a correct model without constantly feeling corrected.

During speech emergence, students’ oral language vocabulary may have grown to about 3,000 words, and they also may be able to write many of them. Choral reading and journals are especially helpful. Many students will remain at the speech emergence phase one year or more before they progress further (Haynes & Zacarian, 2010).

Intermediate Fluency. Some students require three years or more to achieve intermediate levels of language proficiency. Students at this phase have added more words to their listening, speaking, reading, and writing vocabularies. They are also using more complex language structures in their speech and writing. Many are more successful in school subjects like mathematics and science that are less dependent on language proficiency than other subjects. They are feeling more confident, and they may be willing to ask more questions for help. This stage may last for months and even years.

You can help children continue their progress by making sure that some of their reading materials are at appropriate levels. You can also offer plenty of opportunities for speaking and listening, such as sharing about books they have read or stories they have written. Children benefit greatly by having a safe place to practice before presenting in front of peers. In writing, emphasize the drafting step of the writing process (Herrell & Jordan, 2011). In reading, offer children time to rehearse a text before being expected to read aloud.

Advanced Fluency. At the beginning of this final stage, students are able to converse fluently in most informal settings. At the end of this phase, students have reached near native language ability. The duration of this stage is usually about four to nine or more years (Haynes & Zacarian, 2010). Throughout this stage students will need ongoing support from you and from classmates, especially in content areas that require advanced language proficiency.

Cummins (2008) explained two terms to describe the language development of L2 learners. When individuals who are acquiring English develop the ability to converse in casual conversation and can carry out many functions of everyday life using simple oral language, we say that they have developed **basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS)**. BICS capabilities are generally acquired in students' first three years after arrival in the United States. However, it takes much longer to develop **cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP)**. CALP abilities are those required to succeed in the demands of academic learning in schools. In these settings the vocabulary load and language complexity require much more advanced language proficiency than BICS demands. As with L1 acquisition, the rate at which students progress to BICS and on to CALP will vary, and individual differences are expected. You cannot assume that because children can carry on a conversation with you that they have the language capacity to succeed in all the reading and writing tasks required for success in your classroom. These students benefit from being involved in group work before they must produce independently.

School Assistance

Facing a classroom of students who speak many different primary languages can seem overwhelming; however, you are not without support. Many schools and districts provide special services including pull-out ESL, newcomer, and bilingual immersion programs (Duff, 2005). Programs and resources are also available to teach you strategies that make a difference for L2 students in your own classroom (Herrell & Jordan, 2011; Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2008). You have the responsibility to refer language minority students for special services and to provide instructional support in your classroom.

Special Services. Identify students who may qualify for English language services by closely observing children whose first language is not English. Your conversations and observations will help you determine what general level of English proficiency they have.



English Language
Learners



English Language
Learners

If you find children who are unable to communicate well or who are in a silent period of their second language (L2) development for too long, communicate with an ELL specialist in your school or district who can help you match the needs of your student with the services available.

There are several commonly used tests to determine students' levels of English language proficiency. The LAS Links (ctb.com/ctb.com/control/ctbProductViewAction?p=products&productId=800) assesses listening, speaking, reading, and writing in a 30-minute session. The Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey (www.riverpub.com/products/WMLS-R-NU-IIP/) is similar but does not measure speaking, and it takes about one hour to administer. The Bateria III Woodcock-Muñoz (www.riversidepublishing.com/products/bateriaIII/details.html) is the Spanish-language version of the Woodcock-Johnson test that assesses multiple aspects of language, mathematics, and general intellectual ability. To test vocabulary and conceptual understanding, try the Spanish-language version of the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) called the TVIP (Test de Vocabulario en Imagenes Peabody; www.pearsonassessments.com/HAIWEB/Cultures/en-us/Productdetail.htm?Pid=PAa2600&Mode=summary).

Based on results of such tests, students may be placed for part of each day in a class designed for ELLs and taught by those who have specific education and experience in this area. Instruction in that setting is designed to help the student master concepts as well as skills in English to help him or her become more successful in your regular classroom.



English Language
Learners



Speaking/Listening

Instructional Support. The most successful teachers of English do not always focus on teaching English—they teach students science, mathematics, reading, and writing. They view English as a means to those ends. Some teachers say, “Good teaching for ELLs is good teaching for all children.” Although this is true, you will find you must vary the amount and intensity of certain aspects of good instruction to make a difference with ELLs. **Sheltered instruction** involves adjusting how much you are teaching vocabulary, connecting content to students' prior knowledge, and using visuals and real objects to help students learn the content of the curriculum as they acquire English.

One version of sheltered instruction is the sheltered instruction observation protocol (SIOP®), a framework for creating lessons to assist ELLs. Among the activities suggested are language experience, cooperative learning, and text structure instruction. Total Physical Response (TPR) is a related approach to L2 acquisition in which a teacher shows objects related to the lesson, demonstrates actions, and asks students to respond to commands using physical movement.

You can help L2 students acquire English more effectively by focusing on authentic language interactions with them more than attending to specific features of language like phonics, spelling, and punctuation. Use whole texts—stories, books, songs, poems, and articles—rather than isolated words and sentences. Speak clearly and stress key content words. Use fewer idioms and avoid slang and figurative language. Make judicious use of gestures and facial expressions. Take advantage of appropriate pictures, objects, videos, and hands-on activities (Herrell & Jordan, 2011).



Teacher using a prop during instruction.

*Try This for Teaching***Modeled Talk**

- Along with verbal directions, provide students with additional support.
- Offer assistance through written directions that you track as you read them to students. Visuals that support the writing make the directions even more clear. For example, if the written direction tells students to cut two circles out of a piece of paper, add a drawing of two circles.
- Props can support both verbal and written directions. For example, cut two circles from a piece of paper as you speak about doing so.

- Gestures that you make as you speak can also be helpful. For example, pantomime cutting a circle out of a piece of paper as you talk about it.

(Herrell & Jordan, 2011)

Variation for ELLs

- Help other students learn the importance of physical demonstrations by setting aside a half hour during which all students can communicate only through gestures, facial expressions, pointing, and pantomiming. Discuss their experiences.

**P**overty

Poverty in U.S. schools has always been an issue, but its influences on achievement for children have only been studied in recent decades (Korbin, 1992; Kozol, 2006). Inequalities in public education across the country as well as within individual school districts are being documented and addressed. Some schools in a given district are newer, better maintained, and equipped with the latest books and supplies, but other schools are rundown, with broken equipment and shabby surroundings. Beyond the physical differences, teacher morale is often worse in the lower income areas. Many teachers want to transfer to more affluent schools; thus newer and more inexperienced teachers are left working in schools in the lower income areas.

Poverty is not a simple concept. It involves more than the amount of money a family earns. Opportunity and access to benefits like hospital care, public utilities, libraries, and safety also define poverty (Connell, 1994). Poverty is often related to other issues that affect learning, including high transience, malnutrition, violence, and nontraditional families. To address problems of poverty and inequality, compensatory programs like the War on Poverty initiatives of the 1960s were created. **Title I** is part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act first passed in 1965 and reauthorized consistently since. This federal program provides financial assistance to school districts with a high percentage of students from low-income families, providing funds for initiatives and resources to help at-risk children succeed at school. More recently the No Child Left Behind (2001) legislation also has attempted to address some of these challenges. Unfortunately, children of poverty still struggle and are still falling behind (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2005). The overall achievement gap between children of wealth and poverty remains high (Alexander, Entwisle, & Olson, 2011).

Poverty affects children's literacy development (Snow, Barnes, Chandler, Goodman, & Hemphill, 1991). The reading achievement of students at all income levels improves



Poverty setting.

during the school year, but reading skills diminish over the long summer break more for children of poverty than for their wealthier peers.

The enormity of the problem can seem daunting to you as a teacher, and large-scale solutions go far beyond your sphere. But within your classroom and school, you can take action to help all children learn to read and write. Mraz and Rasinski (2007) remind us to not underestimate the importance of reading aloud to our children, encouraging them to write notes to others, asking them questions about what they are reading, and modeling for them various strategies for decoding unfamiliar words. Additionally, be aware of children in your class who come from difficult life situations and make adjustments for them. For example, you may not want to require students to complete homework that requires a computer and printer. Also, do not assume that all of your students have access to a public library.



Struggling Learners/
RtI

Urban and Rural Education

Issues of culture, language, and poverty are applicable in both urban and rural schools. Students from both areas perform equivalently on standardized achievement tests (USDA Economic Research Service, 2011). However, teachers in these settings face different challenges and opportunities.

Urban

An **urban** setting is one with a population of over 250,000 (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2011b). Many urban students face funding inequality, high teacher and student mobility, and limited access to literacy resources in their communities (Cooper, 2004; Teale & Gambrell, 2007). Urban schools generally have larger enrollments than schools in other areas. Urban teachers frequently have fewer resources available to them, and they exert less control over the curriculum that they are required to teach. Urban teachers are more likely to serve low-income students, who are more likely to be exposed to safety and health risks and less likely to have access to regular medical care. Teacher absenteeism, a possible indicator of low morale, is more prevalent in urban schools than in suburban or rural schools (Lippman, Burns, & McArthur, 1996).

Much has been done to help children who live in urban areas through teacher professional development efforts (Au, 2006; Au, Hirata, & Raphael, 2005; Taylor, Pearson, Clark, & Walpole, 2000; Taylor, Pearson, Peterson, & Rodriguez, 2003, 2005). Individual classroom teachers who act as professionals by seeing needs and meeting them make a greater difference than those who implement a program with absolute fidelity (Teale & Gambrell, 2007). When teachers implement high-quality

literacy instruction and are involved in ongoing professional development, children's scores on large-scale assessments increase, even for students who live in highly impacted areas.

Many urban students are street smart and will be able to apply relevant schemata to the topics they are reading and writing about. However, many of them have not



Urban setting.

traveled a great deal outside their city or neighborhood, so their acquaintance with other parts of the United States and different regions of the world may be limited. You may find yourself in the position of needing to build background knowledge for these students to help them better understand what they read. A related challenge may be to interest them in reading passages that stretch them beyond their experiences (Flood & Anders, 2005).

Urban students need to be able to write on topics that interest them, and they need to write to authentic audiences so that their voices can be validated. *The Freedom Writers Diary* (The Freedom Writers, 1999) recounts the experience of Erin Gruwell, a first-year high school teacher in southern California who was trying to reach urban students. Having no success in interesting them in books and skills that she was supposed to cover, she invited them to start keeping their own diaries. The students came alive as they documented the violence, homelessness, racism, illness, and abuse that surrounded them. Learning became personal as it was driven by a need to express as well as to receive.

Rural

A **rural** community is at least five miles from an urbanized center (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2011b); however, some are much farther. Some people love the peace and tranquility of rural settings; others feel out of touch.

A basic principle of education in the United States is that equal educational opportunity should be provided for all children. Although schools are a critical part of any rural community, providing some kinds of educational opportunities can be particularly challenging in rural areas due to isolation, limited resources, and school and class size (Schafft & Jackson, 2010). Students who live in rural areas may be challenged in their access to literacy opportunities. Some may live great distances from a public library and may depend on a bookmobile or online sources to obtain access to reading materials. In some remote areas Internet, telephone, and TV services are limited. People may have to travel great distances to shop for supplies and to obtain medical services. Despite such drawbacks, many rural schools have the advantage of closer ties among teachers, parents, and students that can lead to a supportive learning environment.

All school districts are expected to maintain necessary services regardless of location, including facilities, staff, transportation and food services. However, the cost for a small school district to provide these services is greater than for a larger district. Rural schools face many challenges in acquiring the financial and human resources necessary to offer the quality of education students need. Some rural school districts have more difficulty attracting and retaining qualified teachers and administrators. In many places it is difficult to provide after school programs because of the costs of transporting students in sparsely populated areas. Some of the challenges of education in rural areas are felt more acutely in the secondary grades (for example, there may be fewer opportunities for students to participate in team sports and advanced placement courses, and there may be less technical equipment and fewer labs available).

If you are an elementary teacher in a rural area, you have the responsibility of providing high-quality literacy experiences and opportunities for your students.



Rural setting.



New Literacies

Be prepared to create more of your own resources than your peers in larger school districts. Get to know your students so you can judge the match between text demands and their prior knowledge and experiences. Where there are mismatches, be prepared to provide information to build students' background knowledge. Also be aware of any language dialects in your region that may affect children's acquisition of letter-sound knowledge. You may need to alter your phonics instruction to prevent confusion for your students. In rural settings you will continually need to remind students of the larger world in which they live.

In the book *October Sky* (Hickam, 2000), Homer Hickam, a NASA engineer, tells of a teacher in his rural coal mining community who instilled in him a love of learning and helped him see potential he was unable to see himself. Although some resources in that rural community were limited, Homer's teacher was able to help him see that his possibilities were unlimited.

L earning Disabilities

Professionals in the field of special education are dedicated to working with children who struggle with challenges such as deafness, autism, dyslexia, and attention deficit disorder, to name a few. In your classroom, you will probably have children who have been classified as having learning disabilities. A **learning disability** is defined as an auditory, visual, neurological, or perceptual disability that interferes with a child's ability to learn. About 5 to 10 percent of children are identified as having a learning disability at some time during their school years (Hallahan & Kauffman, 2000). The most common learning disabilities affect reading and spelling, with writing and math disabilities less common.

The Learning Disabilities Association of America (2011) lists four major categories of disabilities. The first, *input*, refers to processing difficulties related to getting information into the brain. Students may struggle with auditory or visual perception or both. The second, *organization*, deals with making sense of information after it is in the brain. Some students may struggle with sequencing, and others have difficulties with abstraction. The third category, *memory*, is concerned with storing and retrieving information. Children may struggle to hold information in their short-term memory long enough to be combined with their long-term memory. The fourth category, *output*, focuses on getting information from the brain. Some students deal with a variety of language disabilities; others have motor difficulties; and some others must cope with a combination of the two.

Until recently children were identified as having a disability when discrepancies were found between their performance on measures of intelligence and their achievement scores in specific areas. This discrepancy model has been replaced with a new approach that identifies children as having a learning disability when they do not respond appropriately to effective instruction (Fletcher, Coulter, Reschly, & Vaughn, 2004). This change in the field of special education has led to the emergence of the **response to intervention** or **RtI** movement.

The essential components of RtI revolve around making decisions based on data (National Center on Response to Intervention, 2011). Teachers initially screen their students to identify needs. Then they organize their classrooms to allow for differentiated or tiered instruction. Finally, the teacher monitors progress. Following RtI guidelines, screening is done with approved tests. Effective instruction is delivered to all students in the *first tier*. While the rest of the class works independently, the teacher works with students who need additional help in small groups; this constitutes *tier two*. *Tier three* provides special education instruction for individuals who need a greater level of support. Progress of students is monitored in all three tiers, which informs teachers' next steps.



Struggling Learners/
RtI

Figure 2.2 Favorite Books Dealing with Disabilities

Author	Title
Bezzant, Pat	<i>Angie</i>
Bloor, Edward	<i>Tangerine</i>
Byars, Betsy	<i>Summer of the Swans</i>
Charlip, Remy & Miller, Mary Beth	<i>Handtalk Birthday</i>
Corcoran, Barbara	<i>A Dance to Still Music</i>
Little, Jean	<i>Listen for the Singing</i>
Maguire, Gregory	<i>Missing Sisters</i>
Martin, Ann M.	<i>A Corner of the Universe</i>
St. George, Judith	<i>Dear Dr. Bell . . . Your Friend, Helen Keller</i>
Wolff, Virginia Euwer	<i>Probably Still Nick Swansen</i>
Wright, Betty Ren	<i>The Dollhouse Murders</i>

Although RtI is firmly established throughout the United States, some researchers challenge its basic principles. There are concerns about both the task of defining and measuring what is expected of students and the validity of the assessment measures used to screen, diagnose, and monitor student achievement (Goodman, 2006). Teachers’ professional judgment and interactions with students on a daily basis should be recognized as additional sources of information about children. There is also controversy around the issue of knowing when students have responded adequately (Tierney & Thome, 2006). Additionally, some people question the viability of labeling children as learning disabled when their difficulties may be related more to the impact of factors like poverty, second language acquisition, or ineffective instruction than to innate difficulties.

Despite the controversy, you should expect to have children in your class who experience particular difficulties in learning to read and write. In working with such children you must be prepared to modify your instruction and make appropriate accommodations. Some may need extra time to complete assignments, and others may need the assistance of a buddy or a tutor. You can work with small groups or with individuals while the rest of the class is busy with other work (Ortiz, 2004). Along with modifying instruction, you can help children become familiar with books about those who have mental or physical challenges. Figure 2.2 lists a few favorite books about children with disabilities.

Struggling learners experience difficulty mastering a range of aspects of in language learning. Two in particular are phonological awareness and vocabulary development.

Many young learning disabled students have difficulty developing phonological awareness. Typical students require 5 to 12 hours of phonological awareness instruction (National Reading Panel, 2000), but some of your students will require much more. You should be prepared



Students engaged in a project.

Try This for Professional Development

- Think about your own literacy development from birth to the present.
- Get additional information from parents, siblings, grandparents, and others.
- Make a timeline of significant individuals, events, places, and so forth that contributed to your growth as a reader and writer, noting how they have influenced your view of literacy.
- Include both positive and negative examples of writing and reading (DeGroot, 2010).

Literacy Autobiography

- Write or prepare a presentation about your literacy development.

**Variations**

- Talk to a parent, grandparent, or other person not of your generation about his or her literacy development and compare that story with yours.
- Encourage your students to write their own literacy autobiographies.

with many songs, chants, and games that stress the sounds that make up words in spoken language (Yopp & Yopp, 2010).

Vocabulary development is crucial for all children, but especially for the learning disabled. Resist the urge to use traditional approaches like giving students a list of words and requiring them to find those words in the dictionary, write definitions, and compose sentences using them. Johnson and Pearson (1984) described the inadequacy of this approach. They ventured that if students looked up the meaning of the word *exasperated*, they would probably choose the shortest definition, *vexed*, and write the sentence “He was exasperated.” After the student had completed this activity, you would know that he was able to locate the word in the dictionary, find the shortest definition, and apply his knowledge of syntax to use the word correctly in a sentence. What you would not know, however, is whether the student understood the meaning of the word. Instead of using ineffective activities, focus on usable, meaningful words found in the context of wide reading. Utilize a combination of approaches to teach words and link them to a conceptual framework. Provide multiple opportunities to use new words (Marzano, 2004).



**Struggling Learners/
RtI**

Summary

Cultural diversity will almost certainly characterize your classroom. View this diversity of background as a strength, and use your children’s cultural capital to advance their learning. Become aware of the backgrounds of your students so you can understand and appreciate their cultural heritage.

Poverty is a multidimensional issue that goes beyond the amount of money available to individuals and families. As much as possible in your classroom, identify children of poverty and modify instruction and assignments to help them feel success. Awareness of individuals’ backgrounds and circumstances will give you insights into accommodations you can provide.

Children who live in urban surroundings and those from rural areas all face challenges not encountered by their peers who live in the suburbs and other more affluent areas. Many students in urban settings face challenges including financial inequality, high teacher and student mobility, and limited access to literacy resources in their communities. Students who live in rural areas also face the challenge of limited access to literacy opportunities. They may live in remote areas that have inadequate Internet, telephone, and TV service, and they may have to travel great distances to shop for supplies and to obtain medical services.

You will also work with children who have various learning disabilities. Become aware of the types of learning

disabilities represented in your class and determine what accommodations you can make in your teaching to help the children learn the content of the curriculum. Work with the specialists in your school or district to identify children with special needs who will require additional services. Organize your classroom to provide interventions that will assist struggling learners.

Although working with the diversity of students in your classroom can be challenging, the satisfaction of providing all students with excellent instruction and materials is great. Don't forget what probably attracted you to education in the first place—a love of children. Actively seek ways to understand the needs of all learners and act as an advocate for them.

Self-Check


1. What is meant by the terms *cultural capital* or *funds of knowledge*? How can you use your students' cultural capital to advantage in helping them learn and develop?
2. Outline the common steps of second language acquisition.
3. Describe differences between the acronyms *BICS* and *CALP* as they relate to second language acquisition.
4. What are some specific steps you can take to assist students who are acquiring English as a second language?
5. Describe aspects of poverty other than low income.
6. What are some specific challenges faced by teachers in urban and rural settings?
7. How are students with learning disabilities identified today? Compare that process with the traditional method of identification.
8. Explain some strategies you can try as a classroom teacher to help students with learning disabilities.

MyEducationLab™

Go to the Topic, English Language Learners, in the **My EducationLab** (www.myeducationlab.com) for your course, where you can:

- Find learning outcomes for English Language Learners along with the national standards that connect to these outcomes.
- Complete Assignments and Activities that can help you more deeply understand the chapter content.
- Apply and practice your understanding of the core teaching skills identified in the chapter with the Building Teaching Skills and Dispositions learning units.
- Examine challenging situations and cases presented in the IRIS Center Resources.
- Check your comprehension on the content covered in the chapter by going to the Study Plan in the Book

Resources for your text. Here you will be able to take a chapter quiz, receive feedback on your answers, and then access Review, Practice, and Enrichment activities to enhance your understanding of chapter content (optional).

- Visit  **A+RISE** Standards2 Strategy™, an innovative and interactive online resource that offers new teachers in grades K–12 just-in-time, research-based instructional strategies that meet the linguistic needs of ELLs as they learn content, differentiate instruction for all grades and abilities, and are aligned to Common Core Elementary Language Arts Standards (for the literacy strategies) and to English language proficiency standards in WIDA, Texas, California, and Florida.