Content Area Reading
Literacy and Learning Across the Curriculum

EIGHTH EDITION

Richard T. Vacca
Kent State University, emeritus

Jo Anne L. Vacca
Kent State University, emeritus

PEARSON

Boston • New York • San Francisco
Mexico City • Montreal • Toronto • London • Madrid • Munich • Paris
Hong Kong • Singapore • Tokyo • Cape Town • Sydney
We choose *friends*, not *relatives*

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

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

Detailed Contents vii
Preface xvii

PART one: Content Literacy in a Standards-Based Curriculum 1
Chapter 1 Reading Matters 1
Chapter 2 Assessing Students and Texts 30

PART two: Learners and Texts 68
Chapter 3 Struggling Readers and Writers 68
Chapter 4 Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners 104
Chapter 5 Learning with Trade Books 154
Chapter 6 Learning with Electronic Texts 196

PART three: Instructional Practices and Strategies 226
Chapter 7 Bringing Students and Texts Together 226
Chapter 8 Developing Vocabulary Knowledge and Concepts 264
Chapter 9 Activating Prior Knowledge and Interest 294
Chapter 10 Guiding Reader–Text Interactions 318
Chapter 11 Writing to Learn 352
Chapter 12 Studying Texts 390

Appendix A Affixes with Invariant Meanings 430
Appendix B Commonly Used Prefixes with Varying Meanings 434
Appendix C Graphic Organizers with Text Frames 436

Bibliography 439
Name Index 456
Subject Index 461
PART one: Content Literacy in a Standards-Based Curriculum

chapter 1 Reading Matters

Organizing Principle
Chapter Overview
Frame of Mind
Being an Artful Teacher
No Child Left Behind Act
Learning with Texts
Beyond Assigning and Telling
Understanding Literacy
Literacy Is Situational
Influences on Content Literacy
Incorporating Content Standards into Literacy-Based Instruction
Text Comprehension in Content Areas
Developing Research-Based Comprehension Strategies
Prior Knowledge and Comprehension
Reader Response
Levels of Comprehension
Questioning
Scaffolding Instruction
Looking Back, Looking Forward
Minds On
Hands On
eResources

chapter 2 Assessing Students and Texts

Organizing Principle
Chapter Overview
Frame of Mind
High-Stakes Testing and Authentic Approaches to Assessment
High-Stakes Testing: Some Issues and Concerns
Standardized Testing: What Teachers Need to Know
Authentic Assessment: The Teacher’s Role
PART two: Learners and Texts 68

chapter 3 Struggling Readers and Writers 68

Organizing Principle 68
Chapter Overview 69
Frame of Mind 70
The Consequences of Struggling with Text 71
BOX 3.1 / WHAT ABOUT English Language Learners? 73
Low Achievement 74
Learned Helplessness 75
Explicit Instruction in the Use of Strategies 76
Metacognition and Learning 76
Strategy Instruction 78
BOX 3.2 / WHAT ABOUT Content Standards and Assessment? 80
Strategic Reading 83
Using Think-Alouds to Model Comprehension Strategies 83
Using Reciprocal Teaching to Model Comprehension Strategies 86
Using Question–Answer Relationships (QARs) to Model Comprehension Strategies 86
BOX 3.3 / Research-Based Best Practices 89
Strategic Writing 90
The Discovery Stage: Generating Ideas, Planning, and Organizing 92
BOX 3.4 / Research-Based Best Practices 94
Drafting 96
Revising 97
Looking Back, Looking Forward 101
Minds On 102
Hands On 102
eResources 103
chapter 4  Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners  104

- Organizing Principle  104
- Chapter Overview  105
- Frame of Mind  106
  - Cultural Differences in Today’s Schools  107
    BOX 4.1 / WHAT ABOUT Content Standards and Assessment?  108
  - From Monocultural to Multicultural Classrooms  109
  - Ways of Knowing  112
  - Students’ Funds of Knowledge  113
  - Linguistic Differences in Today’s Schools  114
    - Dialect Use in the Classroom  114
    - English Language Learners  116
  - Vocabulary Strategies  119
    - Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy  121
    - Concept of Definition Word Maps  121
    - Vocabulary-Building Strategies  124
  - Comprehension Strategies  133
    - Questioning the Author (QtA)  134
    BOX 4.2 / Research-Based Best Practices  135
    - Directed Reading–Thinking Activity (DR–TA)  136
    BOX 4.3 / Research-Based Best Practices  138
  - Talking and Working Together  142
    - Scaffolding Student Talk  142
    - Purposes and Types of Discussions  147
    - Creating an Environment for Discussion  148
  - Looking Back, Looking Forward  151
- Minds On  152
- Hands On  152
- eResources  153

chapter 5  Learning with Trade Books  154

- Organizing Principle  154
- Chapter Overview  155
- Frame of Mind  156
  BOX 5.1 / WHAT ABOUT Content Standards and Assessment?  157
  - Textbook Use in Today’s Classrooms  157
  - Reasons Teachers Use Textbooks  158
  - Problems with Using Textbooks  158
  - Rationale for Using Trade Books  161
Learning through Literature 163
Nonfiction Books 163
BOX 5.2 / Research-Based Best Practices 169
Picture Books 169
Fiction Books 171
Multicultural Books 174
BOX 5.3 / Research-Based Best Practices 175
Books for Struggling Readers 176
Using Trade Books in the Classroom 177
Creating Classroom Libraries and Text Sets 177
Student Self-Selected Reading 178
Teacher Read-Alouds 180
Literature Study in Content Areas 182
BOX 5.4 / Research-Based Best Practices 183
Promoting Response to Literature 184
Making Connections: Text-to-Self, Text-to-Text, Text-to-World 185
Process Drama as a Heuristic Response 188
Readers Theatre 190
Idea Circles 191
Looking Back, Looking Forward 193
Minds On 193
Hands On 194
eResources 195

chapter 6 Learning with Electronic Texts 196
Organizing Principle 196
Chapter Overview 197
Frame of Mind 198
BOX 6.1 / WHAT ABOUT Content Standards and Assessment? 199
Rationale for Electronic Texts 200
Interactivity 201
Communication and Information Search/Retrieval 201
Multimedia Environments 202
Socially Mediated Learning 202
Electronic Texts in the Classroom 203
Learning with Hypertext and Hypermedia 203
Learning with Software Programs 205
Learning with Electronic Books 207
Learning with Word Processors and Authoring Systems 208
Learning with the Internet 209
Strategies for Online Learning 214
Internet Workshops 214
Internet Inquiries 217
PART three: Instructional Practices and Strategies 226

chapter 7 Bringing Students and Texts Together 226

Organizing Principle 226
Chapter Overview 227
Frame of Mind 228

Sociocultural Context for Reading Comprehension 229
The Reader–Text–Activity Dynamic 229
Collaborative Interactions 231
Engaged Minds 231
Designing and Planning Text Lessons 231
B–D–A Lesson Structure 232
Some Examples of Text Lessons 236
BOX 7.1 / Research-Based Best Practices 238
BOX 7.2 / Research-Based Best Practices 240
Designing and Planning Units of Study 243
Components of a Well-Designed Unit 243
An Inquiry/Research Emphasis in Units of Study 247
BOX 7.3 / Research-Based Best Practices 248
A Multiple Text Emphasis in Units of Study 250
Designing and Planning Collaborative Interactions 252
Cooperative Learning Groups 252
Small-Group Processes Underlying Cooperative Learning 255

Looking Back, Looking Forward 260
Minds On 260
Hands On 261
eResources 263

chapter 8 Developing Vocabulary Knowledge and Concepts 264

Organizing Principle 264
Chapter Overview 265
Frame of Mind 266
Experiences, Concepts, and Words 267
What are Concepts? 267
Concept Relationships: An Example 267
BOX 8.1 / WHAT ABOUT Content Standards and Assessment? 268
Using Graphic Organizers to Make Connections among Key Concepts 271
BOX 8.2 / Research-Based Best Practices 272
A Graphic Organizer Walk-Through 272
Showing Students How to Make Their Own Connections 275
Activating What Students Know about Words 276
Word Exploration 277
Brainstorming 277
List–Group–Label 278
Semantic Word Maps 279
Word Sorts 279
Reinforcing and Extending Vocabulary Knowledge and Concepts 281
Semantic Feature Analysis (SFA) 282
Categorization Activities 283
Concept Circles 283
Context- and Definition-Related Activities 284
BOX 8.3 / WHAT ABOUT ELL and Struggling Readers? 286
Magic Squares 287
Looking Back, Looking Forward 290
Minds On 291
Hands On 291
eResources 293

chapter 9
Activating Prior Knowledge and Interest 294
Organizing Principle 294
Chapter Overview 295
Frame of Mind 296
Self-Efficacy and Motivation 297
BOX 9.1 / WHAT ABOUT Content Standards and Assessment? 298
Arousing Curiosity 300
Creating Story Impressions 300
BOX 9.2 / Research-Based Best Practices 302
Establishing Problematic Perspectives 302
Guided Imagery 306
Making Predictions 307
Anticipation Guides 307
Adapting Anticipation Guides in Content Areas 308
chapter 12 Studying Texts 390

Organizing Principle 390
Chapter Overview 391
Frame of Mind 392
Searching for and Using Text Structure 393
External Text Structure 393
BOX 12.1 / WHAT ABOUT Content Standards and Assessment? 394
Internal Text Structure 396
Signal Words in Text Structure 398
Graphic Organizers 399
BOX 12.2 / Research-Based Best Practices 401
Using Graphic Organizers to Reflect Text Patterns 402
Using Questions with Graphic Organizers 407
Semantic (Cognitive) Mapping 409
Study Guides Based on Text Patterns 411
Classroom Examples 412
Writing Summaries 414
Using GRASP to Write a Summary 416
BOX 12.3 / Research-Based Best Practices 417
Polishing a Summary 419
Making Notes, Taking Notes 420
Text Annotations 420
A Note-Taking Procedure 424
Looking Back, Looking Forward 425
Minds On 427
Hands On 428
eResources 429
Appendix A: Affixes with Invariant Meanings 430

Appendix B: Commonly Used Prefixes with Varying Meanings 434

Appendix C: Graphic Organizers with Text Frames 436

Bibliography 439
Name Index 456
Subject Index 461
When we began writing *Content Area Reading* more than twenty-five years ago, we decided to set the tone of the first edition in the opening chapter by quoting a line from Simon and Garfunkel’s “Kodachrome.” Although we run the risk of dating ourselves, we are reminded of the provocative line because it captures the disconnect that many students have felt in their school experience, then as well as now. The opening lyrics to “Kodachrome” are a songwriter’s personal reflection on education—nothing more, nothing less. Yet the juxtaposition of having learned “crap” in school with the inability to “think” critically represents an ongoing dilemma faced by content area teachers who are wedded to an academic discipline.

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

### Major Themes in the Eighth Edition

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

- All teachers play a critical role in helping students comprehend and respond to information and ideas in the text.
- Instructional assessment is a process of gathering and using multiple sources of relevant information about students for instructional purposes.
Teachers respond to the literacy needs of struggling readers and writers by scaffolding instruction so that students become confident and competent in the use of strategies that support learning.

Teachers respond to linguistic and cultural differences in their classrooms by scaffolding instruction in the use of vocabulary and comprehension strategies and by creating classroom environments that encourage talking and working together.

Instructional practices involving the use of informational and literary trade books in content areas help to extend and enrich the curriculum.

Electronic texts, like trade books, extend and enrich the curriculum.

Bringing students and texts together involves instructional plans and activities that result in active student engagement and collaboration.

Teaching words well means giving students multiple opportunities to develop vocabulary knowledge and to learn how words are conceptually related to one another in the texts that they study.

Activating prior knowledge and generating interest create an instructional context in which students will approach reading with purpose and anticipation.

Teachers guide reader–text interactions through the instructional strategies and practices that they use and the reading support that they provide.

Writing facilitates learning by helping students to explore, clarify, and think deeply about the ideas they encounter in reading.

Looking for and using text structure in everything they read helps students to study texts more effectively.

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

Organization of the Eighth Edition

The knowledge base related to content literacy and learning has changed dramatically in the past twenty-five years, and so has thinking about what constitutes “best practice.” Nevertheless, in making decisions related to changes in this edition, we ask the same question that guided the writing of the first edition twenty-five years ago: How can teachers make content literacy a visible part of their instructional routines without sacrificing high standards for content learning?
Answers to this guiding question led us to reorganize the eighth edition into three parts: Part One: Content Literacy in a Standards-Based Curriculum, Part Two: Learners and Texts, and Part Three: Instructional Strategies and Practices.

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

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

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

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

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

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

New and Expanded Chapters

The text continues to emphasize a contemporary, functional approach to content literacy instruction. In a functional approach, content area teachers learn how to integrate literacy-related strategies into instructional routines without sacrificing the teaching of content. Our intent is not to “morph” a content teacher into a reading specialist or writing instructor. As a result, we expanded our discussions of topics in the previous edition by creating separate, new chapters for the following:

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

Aids to Understanding

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

Each chapter opens with a quotation to help readers reflect on the underlying theme of each chapter. The Organizing Principle gives readers a “heads-up” by introducing the rationale for each chapter and highlighting its underlying theme. A Chapter Overview depicts the relationships that exist...
among the important ideas presented in each chapter. A set of questions at the start of the chapter helps readers approach the text in a critical Frame of Mind as they analyze and interpret information presented in each chapter.

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

New Features

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

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

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

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

- **Response Journal.** The Response Journal marginal icon signals readers to use a journal while reading to make personal and professional connections as they react to ideas presented in each chapter.
eResources. The eResources marginal icon directs readers to the Companion Website to search for Web links, Web activities, or suggested readings to engage in further learning about the topics presented in each chapter. There are also additional eResources at the end of each chapter directing students to the Companion Website for more activities and suggested readings, as well as articles from the New York Times.

Supplements for Instructors and Students

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

- **Instructor’s Resource Manual and Test Bank** with teaching suggestions and test items for each chapter.

- **PowerPoint™ Presentation.** Ideal for lecture presentations or student handouts, the PowerPoint™ presentation created for this text provides dozens of ready-to-use graphic and text images (available for download from Supplement Central at www.suppscentral.ablongman.com).

- **Companion Website** (www.ablongman.com/vacca8e) that provides online practice tests, activities, and additional Web resources to deepen and expand understanding of the text.

- **VideoWorkshop,** a new way to bring video into your course for maximized learning! This total teaching and learning system includes quality video footage on an easy-to-use CD-ROM plus a Student Learning Guide and an Instructor’s Teaching Guide. The result? A program that brings textbook concepts to life with ease and that helps your students understand, analyze, and apply the objectives of the course. VideoWorkshop is available for your students as a value-pack option with this textbook. (Special package ISBN required from your representative.) VW will eventually become part of an exciting new package online called “My Lab School” currently under construction. Watch for details.

- **My Lab School.** Discover where the classroom comes to life! From video clips of teachers and students interacting to sample lessons, portfolio templates, and standards integration, Allyn and Bacon brings your students the tools they’ll need to succeed in the classroom—with content easily integrated into your existing course. Delivered within Course Compass, Allyn and Bacon’s course management system, this program gives your students powerful insights into how real classrooms work and a rich array of tools that will support them on their journey from their first class to their first classroom.

- **Allyn and Bacon Digital Media Archive for Literacy.** This CD-ROM offers still images, video clips, audio clips, Web links, and assorted lecture resources that can be incorporated into multimedia presentations in the classroom.
• **Professionals in Action: Literacy Video.** This 90-minute video consists of 10- to 20-minute segments on Phonemic Awareness, Teaching Phonics, Helping Students Become Strategic Readers, Organizing for Teaching with Literature, and discussions of literacy and brain research with experts. The first four segments provide narrative along with actual classroom teaching footage. The final segments present, in a question-and-answer format, discussions by leading experts in the field of literacy.

• **Allyn and Bacon Literacy Video Library.** Featuring renowned reading scholars Richard Allington, Dorothy Strickland, and Evelyn English, this three-video library addresses core topics covered in the literacy classroom: reading strategies, developing literacy in multiple intelligences classrooms, developing phonemic awareness, and much more.

## Acknowledgments

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

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

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

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

R. T. V.
J. L. V.
The Content Area Reading collections give teachers the resources for comprehensive literacy instruction across subjects. The collections contain both informational texts and literature about the topics to encourage learning about content through a variety of text types. By reading different text types on a variety of academic topics at a range of complexity, students are able to develop the fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary necessary to read and understand the concepts and content taught in today's classrooms. The reading associated with content area courses reflects not only the concepts and ideas important to these subjects, but also the text structures used by those practicing the field. How are Content Area Texts Different Than Literature? Since most of the texts used in these subject areas are expository (informational) they require their readers to use different strategies for reading and comprehending them than they employ when reading literature. Consider the differences between a novel and a social studies textbook.