



SAMPLE MATERIAL

Four Dimensions of Reading Apprenticeship®

Saline Middle School, Michigan

Three Fires Middle School, Michigan

Topic: Adolescent Literacy

Practice: Comprehension Strategies

Washtenaw Intermediate School District offers a professional development program to its member schools, such as the Saline and Three Fires Middle Schools, which follows the Reading Apprenticeship® framework and the four dimensions presented here. Through its Adolescent Literacy Initiative, the district has used this framework¹ to train teachers to implement research-based instructional practices for successful student learning in the middle and high school grades.

¹ Refer to: <http://www.wested.org/cs/sli/print/docs/sli/resource.htm>



The Reading Apprenticeship® Framework

Reading Apprenticeship is an approach to reading instruction that helps young people develop the knowledge, strategies, and dispositions they need to become more powerful readers. It is at heart a partnership of expertise, drawing on what teachers know and do as discipline-based readers, and on adolescents' unique and often underestimated strengths as learners. Reading Apprenticeship helps students become better readers by:

- engaging students in more reading—for recreation as well as for subject-area learning and self-challenge;
- making the teacher's discipline-based reading processes and knowledge visible to students;
- making students' reading processes, motivations, strategies, knowledge, and understandings visible to the teacher and to one another;
- helping students gain insight into their own reading processes; and
- helping them develop a repertoire of problem-solving strategies for overcoming obstacles and deepening comprehension of texts from various academic disciplines.



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Dimensions of Reading Apprenticeship®

SOCIAL DIMENSION

- Creating safety
- Investigating relationships between literacy and power
- Sharing book talk
- Sharing reading processes, problems, and solutions
- Noticing and appropriating others' ways of reading

PERSONAL DIMENSION

- Developing reader identity
- Developing metacognition
- Developing reader fluency and stamina
- Developing reader confidence and range
- Assessing performance and setting goals

COGNITIVE DIMENSION

- Getting the big picture
- Breaking it down
- Monitoring comprehension
- Using problem-solving strategies to assist and restore comprehension
- Setting reading purposes and adjusting reading processes

KNOWLEDGE-BUILDING DIMENSION

- Mobilizing and building knowledge structures (schemata)
- Developing content or topic knowledge
- Developing knowledge of word construction and vocabulary
- Developing knowledge and use of text structures
- Developing discipline- and discourse-specific knowledge

In other words, in a Reading Apprenticeship classroom, the curriculum expands to include *how* we read and *why* we read in the ways we do, as well as *what* we read in subject area classes.

Reading Apprenticeship involves teachers in orchestrating and integrating four interacting dimensions of classroom life that support reading development. These dimensions are woven into subject-area teaching through **metacognitive conversations** – conversations about the thinking processes students and teachers engage in as they read.

- **Social:** The social dimension draws on adolescents' interests in peer interaction as well as larger social, political, economic, and cultural issues. A safe environment is created for students to share their confusion and difficulties with texts, and to recognize the diverse perspectives and resources brought by each member.
- **Personal:** This dimension draws on strategic skills used by students in out-of-school settings; their interest in exploring new aspects of their own identities and self-awareness as readers; and their purposes for reading and goals for reading improvement.
- **Cognitive:** The cognitive dimension involves developing readers' mental processes, including their repertoire of specific comprehension and problem-solving strategies. Importantly, the work of generating cognitive strategies that support reading comprehension is carried out through classroom inquiry.
- **Knowledge-Building:** This dimension includes identifying and expanding the knowledge readers bring to a text and further develop through personal and social interaction with that text, including knowledge about word construction, vocabulary, text structure, genre, language, topics and content embedded in the text.

In Metacognitive Conversation, these four dimensions are integrated as teachers and students work collaboratively to make sense of texts, while simultaneously *engaging in a conversation about what constitutes reading and how they are going about it*. This metacognitive conversation is carried on both internally, as teacher and students reflect on their own mental processes, and externally, as they share their reading processes, strategies, knowledge resources, motivations, and interactions with, and affective responses to texts.

For more information about Reading Apprenticeship see *Reading for Understanding: A Guide to Improving Reading in Middle and High School Classrooms*, by Ruth Schoenbach, Cynthia Greenleaf, Christine Cziko and Lori Hurwitz; Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco, CA, ©1999.