

*Literacy Success*

***ACTIVE READERS 7***

*Background Paper*



# Active Readers 7

## Background

***Adolescents entering the adult world today will need to perform more reading and writing tasks—and contend with a greater flood of information—than at any other time in human history.***

International Reading Association, *Policy Resolution on Adolescent Literacy* (1999)

Reading is an integral part of learning in all curriculum areas. Programming and services in the junior high years must ensure further development of students as independent, fluent readers. It is crucial that the junior high school program ensure and enhance the development of young adolescents as readers by providing high quality reading instruction for all learners and effective interventions for those students experiencing difficulties in their reading development.

The *Active Readers* junior high initiative will begin for grade 7 in 2002–03, expand into grade 8 in 2003–04, and into grade 9 in 2004–05. Implementation support is planned to extend to 2006–07.

*Active Readers 7* builds on the foundation of effective models and approaches to school improvement, that has been strengthened through the Junior High School Network Project, and on the success of *Active Young Readers: Grades Primary–6* initiatives.

## Junior High Network

The Junior High School Network Project centred on school improvement. It focussed on researching, developing, and promoting school models that are effective, inclusive, and committed to continuous improvement.

The project built a network of schools and other education partners committed to working collaboratively to support student learning and success. The project promoted effective change strategies to guide school-based decision making, planning, and implementation of improvements in school practices and programs. The project also recognized the importance of building strong support systems outside the school and promoted networking as a powerful strategy for supporting the school improvement process.

*Active Readers 7* firmly establishes increased support for students' development as readers as a priority for school improvement. This initiative calls for a whole-school focus and co-ordination of efforts to maximize the potential for improvement in reading achievement of students in grades 7, 8, and 9.

## Active Young Readers Grades Primary–6

*Active Young Readers: Grades Primary–3* was introduced in 2000–01 with sustained implementation support planned for four years. *Active Young Readers: Grades 4–6* was introduced in 2001–02 with sustained implementation support planned for four years.

The *Active Young Readers: Grades Primary–6* initiative comprises four key components:

- time—allocation of time for reading instruction and reading practice, including *Active Reading Hour* in grades primary–3 and *Learn to Read/Read to Learn* in grades 4–6, and effective use of instructional time
- resources—a range of learning resources for students to support a balanced reading program; professional resources for teachers, resource teachers, and administrators; and resources to assist teachers in assessing students’ strengths and learning needs as readers
- professional development—focussed on effective instruction, effective assessment, and effective classroom-based intervention
- early intervention and one-on-one support for students experiencing literacy difficulties—notably Reading Recovery™ in grade 1

## Components

The *Active Readers 7* initiative comprises four key components: time, resources, professional development, and a support strategy.

### Time

Both the quality and the quantity of instructional time focussed on literacy development are important factors in fostering students’ growth.

The *Time to Learn Strategy* paper includes the recommendation that boards and their schools review time for learning in English language arts/French immersion language arts, grades 7–9, and opportunities for literacy learning in other subject areas.

### *Time for Language Arts*

To support the literacy development of all students, a balanced language arts program requires a significant allotment of instructional time. The *Time to Learn Discussion Paper: Instructional Time Grades 7–9* (May 2002) recommends that schools set the goal of 60 minutes daily (300 minutes per week) for English language arts/French immersion language arts. This represents 20% of instructional time. *Program Policy for French Second Language Programs* (1998) notes that the total amount of time allotted for French and social studies in the extended core French program should be equal to the total amount of time allotted for English language arts and social studies in the English program.

### *Time for Reading*

The language arts curriculum recognizes that speaking, listening, reading, viewing, writing, and other ways of representing are interrelated and can be developed most effectively as interdependent processes. Within the context of language arts, classroom teaching time must provide opportunities for read-aloud, shared reading, guided reading, and independent reading.

The reading workshop approach is an effective way to organize these learning experiences [*Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum: Grades 7–9* (1998), p. 136].

It is expected that at least 33% of time allotted for language arts be committed to reading instruction, reading, and related activities. The reading workshop, for example, requires a significant block of time for instruction time, reading time, and sharing time.

Effective use of time in other subject areas will capitalize on opportunities to focus on the specific literacy requirements of those subjects to support and extend students' development as readers and learners.

## Resources

Resources provided to support *Active Readers 7* will include professional resources for teachers of English language arts, teachers of other subject areas, resource teachers, and administrators, as well as a range of learning resources for students.

### *Professional Resources*

Professional resources will include the following:

- *A Middle Mosaic: A Celebration of Reading, Writing, and Reflective Practice at the Middle Level*—Elizabeth Close and Katherine D. Ramsey, for English language arts teachers (distribution fall 2002)
- *Classroom Strategies for Interactive Learning*—Doug Buehl, for English language arts teachers and content area teachers (distribution fall 2002)
- *I Read It, but I Don't Get It: Comprehension Strategies for Adolescent Readers*—Cris Tovani, for English language arts teachers, content area teachers, and resource teachers (distribution fall 2002)
- *Promoting Literacy in Grades 4–9: A Handbook for Teachers and Administrators*—Karen D. Wood and Thomas S. Dickinson, for grade 7 administrators (distribution spring 2003)
- *Reading Reminders: Tools, Tips, and Techniques*—Jim Burke, one copy to each school with grade 7 (distribution fall 2002)
- *Strategic Reading: Guiding Students to Lifelong Literacy, 6–12*—Jeffrey D. Wilhelm, Tanya N. Baker, and Julie Dube, for English language arts teachers (distribution spring 2003)

Each member of *Active Readers 7* leadership teams will receive copies of all six professional resources.

Additional *Active Readers* professional resources will be selected during 2002–03. In addition, a selection of articles will be distributed to leadership teams for professional development activities. This selection will include articles from journals such as *Voices from the Middle* (NCTE), *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy* (IRA), and

*Middle School Journal* (NMSA), as well as articles from subject area journals.

### *Learning Resources*

Classroom collections for *Active Readers 7* have been acquired through the directed purchasing process to provide a collection for each English language grade 7 classroom (257 books per classroom, 405 classrooms).

Resources to support *Lecteurs Actifs 7* in French second language classrooms are being provided through French Second Language Program Services. Some of the resources in the *Active Readers 7* classroom collections—particularly the young adult literature—will be of interest to teachers of English language arts in the immersion program.

Learning resources for *Active Readers 7* classroom collections have been selected to reflect the age and the stage of social and emotional development of grade 7 students. These resources will support reading instruction in both English language arts and other subject areas, and their effective use by English language arts and content area teachers will be a focus for discussion in the context of professional development workshops.

Classroom collections comprise

- young adult literature (including fiction, poetry, drama)
- information text (including topics relevant to mathematics, health/personal development and relationships, social studies, science, etc.)
- resources for whole-class activities, six-packs of texts for small-group reading and reading instruction, and resources for independent reading

Resources have been selected for readers at the early, transitional, and fluent stages of development as follows:

- appropriately challenging resources for readers at the early stage of reading development for small-group and independent reading
- appropriately challenging resources for readers at the transitional stage of reading development for small-group and independent reading
- appropriately challenging resources for readers at a fluent stage of development for whole-class activities, small-group reading, and independent reading

## Professional Development

These resources will be available for distribution in early November. It is anticipated that in most boards classroom collections will be distributed to schools to reflect the time frame for *Active Readers 7* professional development workshops.

Classroom collections will be provided for grade 8 in 2003–04 and for grade 9 in 2004–05.

Additional learning resources to meet identified priorities will be selected during 2002–03 and distributed to schools for 2003–04. It is anticipated that these will include a Resource Support package (similar to collections provided for grades 4–6) as well as an Atlantic Canada Collection for middle/junior high schools.

The Department invites *Active Readers 7* leadership teams, board coordinators and consultants (programs, student services, race relations/cross-cultural understanding), teacher-librarians, and teachers of grades 7–9 to recommend outstanding resources that should be considered in this process.

The Department, school boards, and their leadership teams share leadership and support roles in the implementation of the *Active Readers 7* initiative. These responsibilities include the provision of professional development opportunities for grade 7 teachers—English/French language arts teachers, teachers of other subject areas, and resource teachers. It will be particularly important to ensure clarity about the ‘learn to read/read to learn’ focus and common approaches to be used across the curriculum.

Professional development will begin with two days of *Active Readers 7* in-service workshops for English/French language arts teachers, teachers of other subject areas, resource teachers, and administrators in 2002–03 and continue in 2003–04 and 2004–05. Professional development for *Active Readers 8* will begin in 2003–04 and continue in 2004–05 and 2005–06. Professional development for *Active Readers 9* will begin in 2004–5 and continue in 2005–06 and 2006–07.

To introduce and support the concept of a whole-school focus on reading, it would be advantageous to involve—as appropriate, as soon as possible, and to the extent possible—teachers of other grades in the school and other members of the school staff in *Active Readers* in-service education and related professional development programs.

*Active Readers 7* will continue the triple focus of professional development—effective instruction, effective assessment, and effective intervention. Professional development will be designed to address

- effective instructional practices that support students’ development as readers, including implementation of specific strategies across the curriculum to meet learners’ needs

- effective classroom assessment practices that inform instruction in English/French language arts and other subject areas, including the identification of individual students' strengths and needs as readers
- effective classroom intervention practices that support learners who are experiencing difficulties
- ways to develop support strategies, including ways that a school-wide focus can support the reading development of all learners and offer increased support for learners experiencing literacy difficulties

### *Effective Instruction*

This component of professional development will emphasize ways to support students' development as strategic readers who apply appropriate strategies to a range of text types and reading tasks in both English language arts and other subject areas. Professional development will focus on increasing teacher expertise in

- using effective strategies and frameworks to teach reading
- providing explicit instruction focussed on specific learning needs
- providing explicit instruction in strategies for understanding, interpreting, and constructing a range of text types
- providing explicit instruction in the types of reading tasks, concepts, and strategies required for learning across the curriculum
- making effective use of a range of learning resources to reflect learners' needs and reading interests
- making optimal use of instructional time

Teachers of English/French language arts have particular responsibilities for structuring and organizing learning tasks appropriate to their students' stages of reading development and for explaining, demonstrating, and providing explicit instruction in reading strategies. Professional development will centre on helping them to

- create a supportive learning environment
- design developmentally appropriate learning experiences
- select accessible texts that provide a platform of reading success for their students
- identify appropriate levels of texts for guided reading and independent reading

Teachers of other subject areas also have an important role in supporting students' development as readers and enhancing their interest in reading. To help students learn in a particular subject area, teachers can explain the nature and uses of different kinds of texts used in that subject area and provide explicit instruction in the strategies and skills students need to read, use, and create those texts. Many reading strategies and skills can be taught and used in the context of health/personal development and relationships, mathematics, science, social studies, and elective courses, as well as language arts.

It is critical that these reading strategies be explicitly explained, modelled, and regularly incorporated into classroom learning across the curriculum. Frameworks will be provided for teaching reading strategies and guiding students to learn from reading,

Professional development will also explore reading/writing connections across the curriculum and ways that the integration of information technologies within English language arts and other subject areas can support learners' development as readers.

### *Effective Assessment*

This component of professional development will centre on increasing teacher expertise in

- assessing student learning at the classroom level
- making optimal use of both assessment information gathered at the classroom level and information about student learning from other sources (school, region, province) to inform instruction in all subject areas
- involving students in assessing their own growth and needs as readers in language arts and other subject areas

Professional development will explore ways to gather information to determine what reading strategies the student is applying successfully, what strategies the student needs to practise, and what strategies to introduce. That information can be gathered by both teachers of English language arts and teachers of other subject areas and can be used effectively to identify appropriate contexts across the curriculum for students to learn, practise, and use specific reading strategies.

In 2003–04, the Department will develop a classroom-based assessment resource to assist teachers in

- collecting information in a variety of contexts
- using multiple sources of information
- determining the student's stage of reading development
- identifying students' strengths as developing readers
- identifying students' specific learning needs

Effective use of assessment information informs instruction in all subject areas and assists teachers in designing learning experiences targeted to students' specific learning needs as readers in those subject areas.

Professional development for English language arts teachers will be designed to increase their expertise in tracking and documenting students' progress along the continuum of reading development and in communicating student progress, growth, and achievement to students and parents.



## *Effective Intervention*

Ways that classroom teachers, resource teachers, and other professional support staff can work effectively as a team to support students who are experiencing literacy difficulties will be particularly important focus of professional development for *Active Readers 7* in both 2002–03 and 2003–04.

Key concepts to be explored regarding intervention will include the following:

- classroom-based instruction and assessment as integral components in interventions developed and implemented for students experiencing literacy difficulties
- the importance of broadly based and ongoing assessment
- direct and specific connections between assessment information and interventions
- the importance of effective collaboration between the classroom teacher and other professionals who may also be involved in providing interventions/support (e.g., resource teacher, speech/language pathologist)
- the importance of ensuring that any intervention provided by professional support staff is directly related to the student's achievement of learning outcomes

It is expected that professional development of classroom teachers, resource teachers, administrators, and other professional staff in 2002–03 and 2003–04 will assist schools in developing and implementing classroom-based interventions to respond effectively to the needs of students who are transitional readers and to those of other students who are experiencing literacy difficulties.

The long-term goal of *Active Young Readers* initiatives for the elementary years is that, by the end of grade 6, students are reading at the fluent stage of development and applying literacy skills strategically for learning in the content areas. However, a significant number of students beginning their junior high years will be at the transitional stage of reading development.

Students entering grade 7 still at the transitional stage of reading development or experiencing other literacy difficulties will require appropriate interventions and consistent, ongoing support across the curriculum to maximize their opportunities to grow as readers. Strategies for identifying students who are transitional readers and planning effective instruction, intervention, and support to meet the learning needs of these students will be a particular focus of professional development.

In English language arts, students who are transitional readers will require explicit reading instruction targeted to their developmental learning needs, a range of learning resources that they find accessible and engaging, and appropriate intervention and support to address the specific difficulties they are experiencing in their reading development.

In other subject areas, teachers can anticipate the difficulties these students may encounter with particular texts and reading tasks and provide appropriate support to help students actively engage in learning.

For students entering grade 7 as readers at the emergent or early stages of reading development, it is expected that intervention and support programming and services will already be in place. For these students, it will be important to plan a seamless transition from elementary to junior high, ensuring that there is no disruption in the provision of programming and services that address their reading difficulties.

### *Long-term Planning*

In terms of long-term planning for regional, families/clusters of schools, and site-based *Active Readers 7, 8, and 9* professional development in the coming years, the key consideration for leadership teams in designing in-service programs and other professional development initiatives will be building teacher and administrator expertise. Outcomes frameworks for professional development have been drafted to assist in this endeavour.

- Teachers of English language arts in the junior high school need to have expertise in reading instruction to identify and address students' specific needs.
- Resource teachers need to have reading specialist expertise in designing and providing effective intervention and support.
- Content area teachers need to know basic approaches to teaching reading strategies and skills as part of their subject-based teaching.
- Principals need to co-ordinate a school-wide approach to improving students' reading achievement.

***Professional development initiatives have the greatest impact when supported by strong leadership and collaboration.***

Professional development initiatives have the greatest impact when supported by strong leadership and collaboration.

In April and May 2003, the Department will provide two days of workshops in each region for board program and student services staff and for *Active Readers 7* school teams comprising the principal, a resource teacher, and a classroom teacher. The first day will focus on the key components of the *Active Readers* initiative with an emphasis on the instructional program, the role of administrators, and strategies for developing a whole-school focus on literacy.

The second day will focus on student services with an emphasis on the role of resource teachers and the provision of resource programming and services. *Supporting Student Success: Resource Programming and Services*, scheduled for distribution in fall 2002, will be a key reference for this workshop.

The Department will provide ongoing assistance and support to board leadership teams in

- expanding their membership to meet leadership and support needs in their boards
- creating, implementing, and evaluating plans and initiatives for their own professional development
- planning, implementing, and evaluating in-service education programs and other professional development activities for their regions and for families/clusters of schools
- providing opportunities (e.g., through the NSEL) for professional development in successful group facilitation focussed on practical frameworks for designing effective, interactive workshops

As regional leadership teams expand their membership and identify their own professional development needs, it will be important to consider effective strategies for developing and maintaining a school-wide focus on reading, as well as effective strategies for instruction, assessment, and intervention.

The school, as a professional learning community, plays a key role in maximizing and sustaining benefits of regionally-based professional development. Effective professional development at the school level requires a balanced approach that reflects identified school needs and individual needs. Professional development can take many forms, all of which should strengthen teaching and learning and be relevant to the teachers' needs and realities. Ensuring that teachers have input into their own professional growth is crucial.

Individual schools and families/clusters of schools will require ongoing support from board program and student services staff and *Active Readers* leadership teams in planning and implementing long-term professional development initiatives for administrators, English/French language arts teachers, resource teachers, and content area teachers. Meaningful professional growth in terms of the knowledge and expertise required to support students' development as active readers will require substantial time.

While teachers are central to student learning, all members of the school community are partners in the learning process. Long-term planning for a whole-school focus on literacy will consider how all partners can contribute to a comprehensive strategy to increase support for students' development as readers, including effective ways to

- increase the involvement of students, parents, and the community in planning, implementing, and evaluating school improvement initiatives centred on supporting students' development as readers
- establish/strengthen partnerships that can support positive change in policies, programs, and practices
- use school advisory councils and home and school associations to strengthen broad involvement of the community in literacy initiatives

## Support Strategy

A support strategy will need to focus not only on providing additional support to grade 7 students who are experiencing difficulties in their development as readers, but also on ways to provide ongoing and comprehensive support throughout the junior high years to students who continue to experience difficulties.

## Whole-School Focus

A whole-school focus on reading maximizes opportunities for students to achieve developmentally appropriate levels of reading competence.

Reading difficulties are a barrier to learning success in all subject areas, and teachers of all subjects areas have a role to play in addressing this concern. Resource teachers, library staff, and other professional staff are also key participants in developing and maintaining a whole-school focus on reading.

From the beginning of this multi-year initiative—whatever the school size and structure (in terms of grade levels)—it will be important to inform, include, and involve the whole school staff in *Active Readers* initiatives as soon as possible and to the greatest extent possible.

All teachers and others in the school who support student learning will benefit from opportunities to participate in *Active Readers* professional development, related activities, and discussion on ways schools can effectively respond to the needs of students experiencing literacy difficulties.

The first three components of the *Active Readers* initiative—time, resources, and professional development—are primarily focussed on strengthening the delivery of the instructional program and support services. The commitment of teachers throughout the school to practices that support students' development as readers will provide the impetus for students' literacy success.

Developing a whole-school focus on reading will also involve strengthening collaboration with students, parents, and other members of the school community. Further discussion on ways to create a whole-school focus on will take place during 2002–03 with board staff, *Active Readers 7* team leaders and leadership teams, and principal/classroom teacher/resource teacher school teams.

## School Improvement Planning

Ways to actively engage students, parents, and other members of the school community as partners in the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating a support strategy will be a particular focus of *Active Readers 7* professional development in 2003–04

The school improvement planning process provides a mechanism and an opportunity for the development of a support strategy centred on identified priorities for increasing students' success as readers.

Each school can best determine its own priorities and the scope of a viable strategy for increasing students' reading success with due regard for other components of the school improvement plan. The organizational structure of the school (grade levels, etc.) and other factors specific to the school and school community will also shape the nature of the support strategy.

Schools might consider, for example, one or a combination of the following:

- an examination of current school policies, approaches, and practices that have an impact on students' development as readers
- strategies for enhancing family and community involvement and support for students' reading development
- ways to address the specific needs of students who require targeted support
- professional development
  - whole-school focus on teaching reading strategies
  - students' developmental needs; implications for instruction and assessment
  - approaches for actively engaging students in reading
  - effective use of library resources (staff, programs, services, collections)
  - effective use of reading assessment information in the context of specific subject areas
  - reading requirements of specific subject areas (texts, tasks, particular strategies and skills)
  - effective use of learning resources to support students' needs
- student involvement, e.g., peer tutoring programs
- ways to collect baseline data and continue to gather data on students' reading development over time
- ways to celebrate and build on students' reading success

In future years, as school improvement efforts are focussed on providing increased support for students experiencing reading difficulties and improving student achievement in reading, schools might consider what information on related actions and data

(indicators of improvements in students' opportunities and abilities to achieve reading success) to include in their annual reports.

The Department will provide professional development and resources for leadership teams, administrators, and school advisory councils to assist schools in addressing this aspect of the *Active Readers* initiative.

### *Next Steps*

During 2002–03, the Department will work with boards' professional staff (program and student services), *Active Readers 7* team leaders and leadership teams, and school principal/classroom teacher/resource teacher teams to more fully develop the support strategy component of the *Active Readers* initiative.

A key element in developing the support strategy will be the delineation of the role of resource programming and services in supporting students' reading success as well as the roles of administrators, classroom teachers, and other professional staff.

The introduction of the *Reporting Policy Framework* and the process of developing and piloting report card templates in 2002–03 offer opportunities to examine effective ways of communicating with parents and students regarding students' progress, growth, and achievement as readers.

Ways to establish mechanisms for tracking and reporting on student progress, growth, and achievement will also be explored with junior high schools involved in the school accreditation pilot initiative beginning in 2002–03.

### *Time Line*

The goal we are working toward is that schools will be well positioned to respond effectively to the needs of students entering grade 7 in September 2004.

A provincial elementary reading and writing assessment program is being developed for administration in grade 6. It is anticipated that the first administration of this assessment will be in fall 2003. This assessment will provide individual student results.

Information from this assessment, together with information gathered through classroom assessments, will assist grade 6 and grade 7 teachers in planning and implementing effective instruction, intervention, and support to meet the specific learning needs of individual students who are experiencing literacy difficulties.

Transition planning in the spring of 2004 will be a key element in ensuring that grade 7 classroom teachers, resource teachers, and others who support student learning are aware of students' specific learning needs and are ready to respond effectively to those needs.

In-service education programs and other professional development opportunities provided in both 2002–03 and 2003–04 will assist schools and teachers in planning how best to respond to the needs of these students as they enter grade 7 in September 2004.

## **Active Readers 7 Implementation Leadership and Support**

The program for the *Active Readers 7* Implementation Leadership Workshop, scheduled for October 2–4, 2002, will provide professional development sessions for leadership team members and assist them in planning in-service education workshops and other professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators in their boards.

### **Boards**

The Department will provide ongoing support to board leaders and leadership teams for the implementation of *Active Readers 7* including support for

- the expansion of leadership teams
- leadership teams' planning sessions
- ongoing professional development of members of leadership teams
- the provision of additional professional resources and related materials
- the provision of regional in-service workshops and related initiatives

The Department has made a commitment to build school board leadership in language arts to support teachers in schools. In 2001–02 and 2002–03, the Department provided implementation support grants to assist boards in providing regional leadership for *Active Young Readers: Grades Primary–6* initiatives.

The Department recognizes the importance of regional leadership in supporting schools' efforts to effect improvement in areas identified as priorities, such as literacy. The Department will work with boards to address the need for regional leadership for *Active Readers 7–9* initiatives.

### **Schools**

The Department recognizes the pivotal role of principals in leading and supporting the implementation of *Active Readers* initiatives in their schools and will provide *Active Readers* professional development workshops for middle/junior high principals, beginning in spring 2003.

Principals and school advisory councils will share leadership roles in working with teachers and others in the school community to develop and implement a support strategy centred on improving the reading development and achievement of their students. This process will involve school staff in assessing and building on the school's current

strengths in providing effective reading instruction and responding effectively to students' needs for intervention and support. It will also involve schools in considering what changes may be needed in their current practices to better meet the needs of students who are experiencing reading difficulties.

Teachers must have a sense of ownership in developing and implementing a strategy to improve reading in their schools. Commitment to improving students' reading achievement will require teachers to accept that some changes may be needed in their teaching approaches—the way they themselves work. Teachers are more likely to commit to improvement when they agree on priorities and contribute to the shaping a plan tailored to the school's circumstances—a plan that makes sense to them.

Principals have a key role in helping their staff to develop and establish a clear, shared vision and direction for the *Active Readers* initiative and in co-ordinating and monitoring the implementation of a support strategy. While the strength of any school improvement initiative lies in the commitment of the whole staff group, a school leadership team may be required to manage the student support strategy. Board level leadership and support may be required to enable schools to implement and follow through with the support strategy.

## Department

The Department will

- identify the requisite knowledge and skills teachers need to acquire and apply in English language arts, in other subject areas, and in the provision of resource programming and services
- identify and communicate effective whole-school approaches to supporting students' reading development
- design and conduct related workshops for administrators, board leadership teams, and school teams
- design and conduct summer institutes to support implementation of *Active Readers 7–9*
- liaise with boards and other education partners re the professional development needs of teachers and administrators
- liaise with universities re related pre-service and in-service teacher education programs
- explore related issues re requirements for pre-service education, specialist certification, etc.
- explore related issues re requirements for in-service education, required literacy education courses, etc.
- develop a communications plan and related materials for parents and the general public regarding the *Active Readers 7–9* initiative
- work with boards to review levels of resource support currently in place in junior high schools
- identify the pre-service and in-service professional development requirements of resource teachers



## **Outcomes Framework to Inform Professional Development for English Language Arts Teachers**

To be effective, professional development experiences for teachers, like all learning experiences, must reflect and respond to their individual learning needs, building on their prior knowledge and experiences. It is recognized that English language arts teachers will be at different stages on the continuum of professional development required to expand their knowledge base and extend their repertoire of effective practices. It is also recognized that effective professional development is ongoing and requires long-term commitment and long-range planning.

The following outcomes framework is intended to assist leadership teams, administrators, school staffs, and individual teachers in planning and designing appropriate professional growth experiences, for themselves and for others, over time and in a range of contexts. It provides the “big picture” for professional development in reading education and reference points which may be helpful in determining the focus of in-service sessions and identifying learning needs for future professional development opportunities.

***English language arts teachers are expected to teach students to read for meaning.***

To do this English language arts teachers need to know

- the process of constructing meaning from print through interaction between the mind of the reader and the text, involving
  - the integration and co-ordination of the four cueing systems or systems of information: pragmatic, semantic, syntactic, and graphophonic
  - the reading strategies of sampling, predicting, and confirming/self-correcting that proficient readers use as they identify words and comprehend text
  - the extension of the meaning-making process to whole texts as readers respond to the ideas they encounter in a text
- the interrelationship of reading, writing, and oral language and their contribution to language proficiency
- the range of texts that are appropriate for students in terms of
  - reading difficulty
  - interest to both male and female students
  - genre and form
  - racial/ethnocultural diversity
  - maturity and sophistication of text
  - text type, patterns, and structure

**English language arts teachers are expected to assess the reading development of their students in order to plan effective instruction for them.**

To do this English language arts teachers need to know

- the reading behaviours that characterize emergent, early, transitional, and fluent stages of development so that they can monitor students' growth as readers
- appropriate use of assessment tools to gather information about students' understanding of the reading process, their knowledge of language, their attitudes, and their strategies
- effective strategies for gathering information about reading development, such as oral reading analyses, reading conferences, interviews, checklists, retellings, anecdotal records, self-assessment, surveys, interest inventories, work samples, portfolios, reading logs, response journals, and rubrics
- planning strategies for whole class, small group, and individual instruction on the basis of the assessment of learners' reading development
- effective ways to communicate with students and their parents regarding students' strengths, growth, and learning needs

**English language arts teachers are expected to organize instruction to facilitate students' reading growth.**

To do this English language arts teachers need to know

- the components of a balanced reading program: teacher read-aloud, shared reading, guided reading, independent reading
- classroom management and organizational strategies to facilitate whole-class, small-group, and individual instruction
- instructional strategies and frameworks for teaching reading, such as modelling, demonstrations, mini-lessons, reading conferences, literature circles, and reading workshops
- planning strategies for whole class, small group, and individual instruction on the basis of the assessment of students' reading development
- effective practices for supporting and extending students' development as readers within the context of language arts and other subject areas
- effective practices for collaboration with others who share responsibility for supporting students' reading development
- effective practices for linking classroom instruction to home support
- effective ways to develop, implement, and evaluate specific outcomes for individual program plans

See also "The Teacher's Role," *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum* (1996), pp. 44–45, and "The Role of the Teacher in the Reading Classroom," *Atlantic Canada English Language Arts: Grades 7–9* (1998), p. 142.

## **Outcomes Framework to Inform Professional Development for Teachers of Reading in the Content Areas**

To be effective, professional development experiences for teachers, like all learning experiences, must reflect and respond to their individual learning needs, building on their prior knowledge and experiences. It is recognized that content area teachers will be at different stages on the continuum of professional development required to expand their knowledge base and extend their repertoire of effective practices and strategies that support students' development as readers. It is also recognized that effective professional development is ongoing and requires long-term commitment and long-range planning.

The following outcomes framework is intended to assist leadership teams, administrators, school staffs, and individual teachers in planning and designing appropriate professional growth experiences, for themselves and for others, over time and in a range of contexts. It provides the "big picture" for professional development in reading education and reference points which may be helpful in determining the focus of in-service sessions and identifying learning needs for future professional development opportunities for content teachers.

***Content area teachers are expected to teach students to read for meaning.***

To do this content area teachers need to know

- the features, structure, and patterns of various information texts and the corresponding demands on the reader
- the integration of various sets of knowledge that contribute to meaning making including
  - personal experience
  - literary knowledge
  - world knowledge
- the reading strategies of sampling, predicting, and confirming/self-correcting that proficient readers use as they identify words and comprehend text

***Content area teachers are expected to assess the reading development of their students in order to plan effective instruction for them.***

To do this content area teachers need to know

- the reading behaviours that characterize emergent, early, transitional, and fluent stages of development so that they can monitor students' growth as readers
- effective strategies for gathering information about students' understanding of concepts and ideas relevant to the subject area curriculum and the influence reading has on their level/degree of understanding
- planning strategies for whole class, small group, and individual instruction on the basis of the assessment of learners' reading development

**Content area teachers are expected to organize instruction to facilitate students' reading growth.**

To do this content area teachers need to

- assist readers of informational text throughout the reading process by supporting comprehension at all stages of reading
  - before (activating)
  - during (acquiring)
  - after (applying)
- model and teach literacy skills relevant to specific curriculum areas
- know classroom management and organizational strategies to facilitate whole-class, small-group, and individual instruction
- collaborate effectively with others who share responsibility for supporting students' reading development

See also "The Teacher's Role," *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum*, pp. 44–45.

## **Outcomes Framework to Inform Professional Development for Administrators**

To be effective, professional development experiences for principals must reflect and respond to both shared and individual needs for information and experiences that will enable them to better support the teachers and learners in their schools and plan for continuous improvement in the teaching and learning of reading in English language arts and other subject areas.

The following framework provides the broad range of teacher knowledge related to the teaching of reading in English language arts and other subject areas that administrators should have awareness of and outlines the scope of administrative responsibility for cultivating the positive environment in which such teaching must take place.

This framework is intended to assist leadership teams, school administrators' groups, and individual principals in planning and designing appropriate professional growth experiences, for themselves and for their teachers, over time and in a range of contexts. It provides the "big picture" for professional development in literacy education and reference points which may be helpful in determining the focus of in-service sessions and identifying learning needs for future professional development opportunities.

***Administrators are expected to have a thorough understanding of the principles underlying effective practice.***

Administrators need to have a thorough understanding of

- the essential graduation learnings and English language arts curriculum outcomes (*Foundation for the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum*)
- the principles that underlie effective reading instruction (*Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum: Grades 7–9* pp. 131–142)

***Administrators are expected to support effective reading instruction at each grade level and in all subject areas.***

To do so, administrators need to have an awareness of the nature of reading instruction in English language arts, including

- the curriculum outcomes informing the reading strand of literacy development
- reading as a process of constructing meaning from print through interaction between the mind of the reader and the text
- cueing systems
- the reading strategies proficient readers use to comprehend text
- the components and frameworks of a balanced reading program: teacher read-aloud, shared reading, guided reading, and independent reading
- the interrelationship of reading, writing, and oral language and their contribution to language proficiency

- the need for appropriate texts to support children’s reading growth— texts that represent
  - a range of reading difficulty
  - the diverse interest of both male and female students
  - diverse cultural perspectives
  - a range of genre and form
  - varied levels of maturity and sophistication

Administrators also need to have an awareness of the literacy demands/requirements in other subject areas, including

- the features, structure, and patterns of various information texts and the corresponding demands on the reader
- the need to assist readers of informational text throughout the reading process by supporting comprehension at all stages of reading
  - before (activating)
  - during (acquiring)
  - after (applying)
- the need for modelling, explicit instruction, and mini-lessons focussed on the literacy skills relevant to each subject area
- the need for a range of texts that can be used for independent reading and for instruction and in a variety of groupings, including
  - whole class
  - small group
  - partners
  - individual

***Administrators are expected to understand the role of effective intervention in literacy development.***

To do so, administrators need to have an awareness of

- the variety of reasons why intervention may be necessary
- the components of effective intervention

***Administrators are expected to support teachers’ use of effective classroom strategies.***

To do so, administrators need an awareness of

- the need for structured time every day devoted to literacy instruction
- classroom management and organizational strategies that whole-class, small-group, and individual instruction
- instructional strategies and frameworks such as modelling, demonstrations, mini-lessons, reading conferences, literature circles, and reading workshops

**Administrators are expected to support effective assessment of students' reading development.**

To do so, administrators need to have a awareness of

- the role of assessment in a balanced reading program
- the stages of reading development (transitional, fluent) and their occurrence across grades
- appropriate use of strategies to assess students' reading development and to identify their strengths and learning needs
- the effective use of assessment results to inform teaching

**Administrators are expected to promote a collaborative environment where teachers plan for use of resources and share ideas and information related to practice and students' growth as readers.**

To do so, administrators need to

- provide a leadership role in literacy and encourage lead teachers to offer support for staff
- facilitate mentorships for teachers who wish to change their instructional practices or develop new ones
- promote collaboration between classroom teachers and resource teachers to provide intervention and consistent, ongoing support for students experiencing literacy difficulties
- promote collaboration among teachers to explore and build on natural affinities among subject areas
- promote collaboration among English language arts teachers, teachers of other subject areas, and library staff to support students' growth as readers
- support ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers
- support teachers as readers and show themselves to be readers
- facilitate communication between teachers and parents/guardians

See also "The Principal's Role," *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum*, p. 44.