

*Literacy Instruction in the Content Areas:
Getting to the Core of Middle and High School Improvement*

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June 2007**

Selective Reading Guide

Follow the guidelines here to help you complete this reading as effectively as possible. Record your thoughts and answers to the questions in your journal.

p. 1 Scan this summary to get the general sense of this publication. All of these highlights are explained in more detail in the rest of the document.

Before you move on, answer the following questions in your journal:
What is the purpose of this summary? Who is the audience?

pp. 2-6 Pages 2-4 contain some important basic information about the seriousness of the literacy problems at various levels of our educational system. As you read these pages, focus on why integrating reading and writing into the content areas is important for our students' literacy levels. Then, underline what you think is the most important statement on pp. 5-6, and explain why you chose it.

p. 3 What sources on page 3 pique your interest? Why do they interest you?

pp. 7-14 Read this section slowly and carefully. These notions are the heart of this document.

pp. 7-8 According to these authors, how should we rethink literacy in the content areas? Do you agree with their assessment?

In what ways does literacy change from one discipline to another? To answer this question, draw a line down the center of a page in your journal; list a discipline on the left and your notes about it on the right.

pp. 10-14 This section presents a strong argument for blending reading and writing instruction in all teaching. Look closely at the reading samples from different disciplines. How do the excerpts vary by discipline? What do these excerpts imply about learning? About teaching? Check your conclusions with a teacher in another discipline.

In what ways do reading and writing in the disciplines support the literacy work done in the English classroom? In what ways is literacy development hindered without support from the disciplines? Reflect briefly on these two issues in your journal.

pp. 25-30 These pages contain four ways in which policymakers can encourage content area educators to teach reading and writing through their disciplines. Choose the recommendation that you think is most important to this process, and write a brief argument for its implementation at your school.

pp. 31-32 Highlight the most important sentence in each paragraph from the conclusion; then write a five-sentence summary of this section.

Further Thinking Do you think literacy ever becomes automatic over time? Or is it always a conscious effort?