

Improving literacy-related instruction in the content areas

An early and highlighted statement in the recent report on adolescent literacy published by the National Association of State Boards of Education asserts that:

Literacy is the linchpin of standards-based reform... the explicit instruction of literacy skills in the context of content-area learning supports student achievement not only in reading and writing, but across the curriculum. (2005, p. 18)

This is an extremely important idea, and one consistent with the major points we have made about the role of content-area teachers in supporting improvements in adolescent literacy. If content-area teachers adopt instructional practices that lead students to become more strategic readers, more able to think deeply and reason from text, more focused on high standards of comprehension and learning, more engaged in meeting important learning goals through their reading and study, and more able to retain essential content from their classes, many of the most important goals of educational reform and improvement will have been met.

Source: Joseph, Debra, et al. *Academic Literacy Instruction for Adolescents: A Guidance Document from the Center on Instruction*. Portsmouth: NH, 2007.