Literacy Strategies for the Multi-Ability Classroom
NYS Office of Children and Family Services

Peter Pappas
Suzanne Meyer
November 16, 2005

1. **Free write**: Get out a sheet of paper. Think about yesterday's session. **Write anything that comes to your mind** and don't stop writing for 5 minutes. When you're done compare at your table.

2. **Fishbowl**: Select two members at your table to **debate** the following statement *"This program is a nice idea, but we already have too much on our plates."* Others should observe and discuss the results of the debate.

3. **Graphic Organizer**: **Design an graphic organizer for the "program."** It could include major elements, challenges, opportunities. Then compare at table.

Agenda

1. Meeting the needs of the multi-ability classroom
2. Case study in professional development – input and review
3. Elements of rigorous and relevant professional development
4. Finalize trainer action plans

Literacy skills?
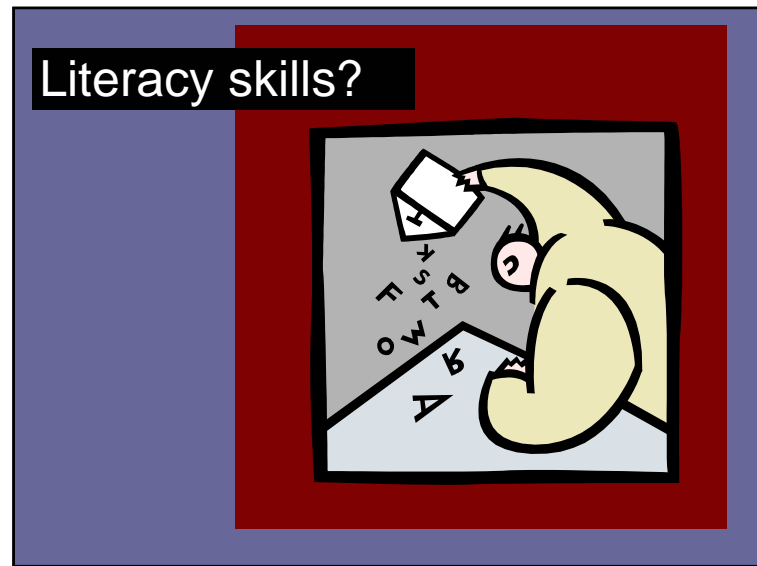
Literacy is *Constructing Meaning*

1. **Reading is thinking**. Well-written materials model good thinking.
2. Foundation for **expressive writing**.
3. Thoughtful readers become **thoughtful problem solvers** and better students.

Effective literacy **decoding and fluency**

Fluency "an effortless, smooth, and coherent oral production of a given passage … in terms of phrasing, adherence to author's syntax and expressiveness."

Effective literacy **demands fluency**

Fluency "an effortless, smooth, and coherent oral production of a given passage … in terms of phrasing, adherence to author's syntax and expressiveness."
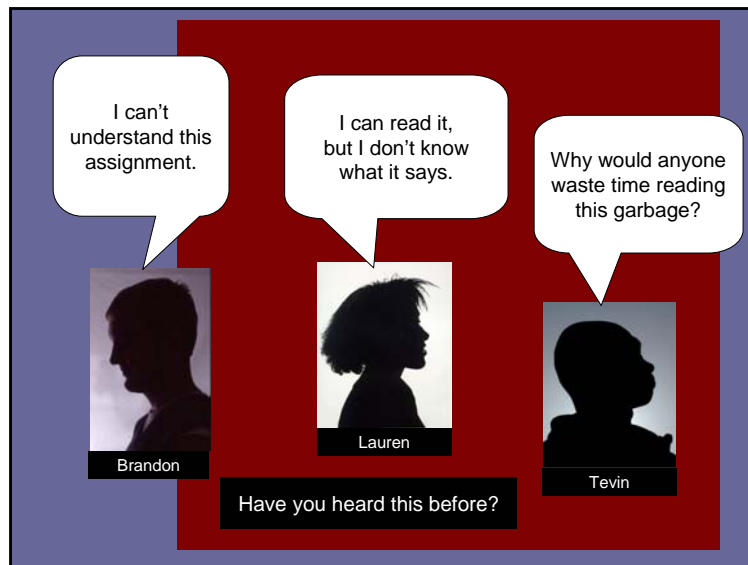
H3y gurl wh@t yooh do 2day?

H3y b@by wh@t meeh and u doin 2nite iz we goin out 2 eat?

Effective literacy **demands fluency**

- Some students do not yet read words with **enough fluency to facilitate comprehension**.
- Some **lack the strategies** to help them **comprehend what they read**.
- Some may **not be able to generalize their strategies to content-area literacy tasks**
- Some lack strategies **specific to particular subject areas**, such as math, science, or history.

I can't understand this assignment.

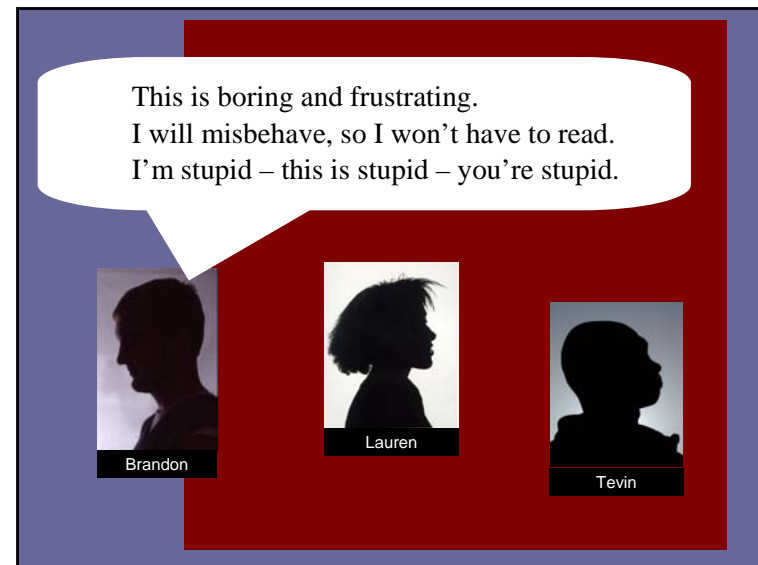I can read it, but I don't know what it says.

Why would anyone waste time reading this garbage?

Lauren
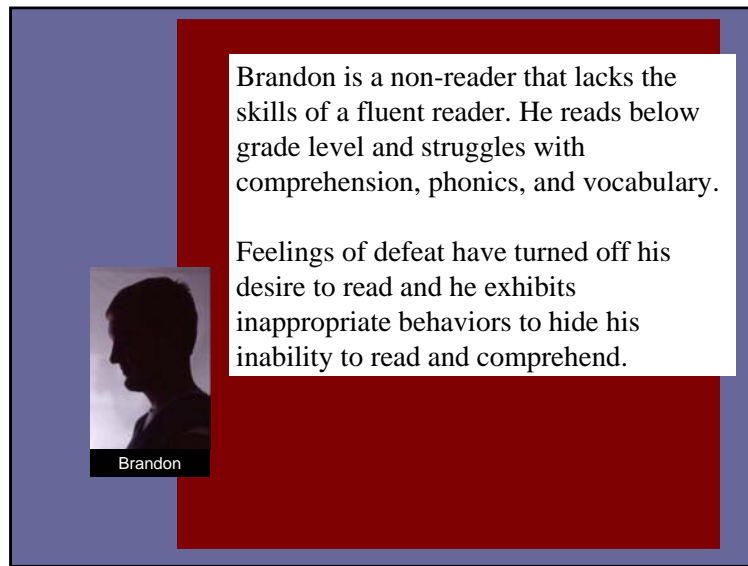
Brandon

Tevin

Have you heard this before?

This is boring and frustrating.
I will misbehave, so I won't have to read.
I'm stupid – this is stupid – you're stupid.
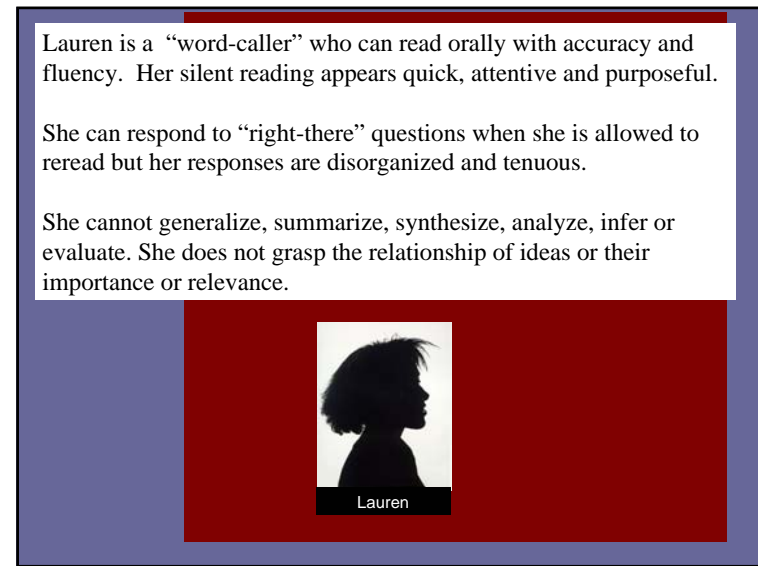
Brandon

Lauren

Tevin

Brandon is a non-reader that lacks the skills of a fluent reader. He reads below grade level and struggles with comprehension, phonics, and vocabulary.

Feelings of defeat have turned off his desire to read and he exhibits inappropriate behaviors to hide his inability to read and comprehend.

Brandon

Lauren is a "word-caller" who can read orally with accuracy and fluency. Her silent reading appears quick, attentive and purposeful.

She can respond to "right-there" questions when she is allowed to reread but her responses are disorganized and tenuous.

She cannot generalize, summarize, synthesize, analyze, infer or evaluate. She does not grasp the relationship of ideas or their importance or relevance.

Lauren

Why would anyone waste time reading this garbage?
I don't see why I have to do this work
I do not want to read or write.
There is no time that I am going to need this stuff!

Brandon

Lauren

Tevin

Tevin is a "turned-off reader" who is capable of decoding and comprehending, but is unchallenged and unmotivated.

He needs a strong "buy-in" or interest in the reading activity or assignment. He exhibits a negative attitude with most reading assignments.

He reflects his "don't care" attitude through body language and demeanor.

Tevin

Three different reasons for "poor literacy."

1. Brandon lacks basic decoding skills, and has poor word identification and vocabulary skills.

2. Lauren has the decoding skills, but she has not mastered basic comprehension strategies.

3. Tevin is capable of reading and comprehending material, but lacks the motivation to use the skills and strategies to read.

Let's use the tri-folds to see how you can support different types of non-readers.

We can't change the students, but we can impact their academic experience

Student ability	Academic experience		
	Low	Medium	High
High	Tevin	Alejandro	Zoe
Medium	Jamal	Lauren	Pablo
Low	Brittany	Marquis	Brandon

Three elements of the multi-ability classroom

1. Content– knowledge and skills you teach and how you give kids access to it
2. Process– what will students do to construct meaning and make sense
3. Product – what students will do to demonstrate their learning

Content

Process

Product

Student Makes Meaning

*Define
Summarize
Compare*
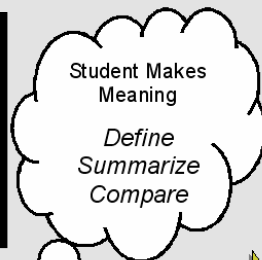
Inputs
*View
Listen
Read*

Outputs
*Design
Speak
Write*

Variability in the classroom

1. Content: The easiest to vary. You can decide what's essential learning vs. nice to know
2. **Process: Here's where to focus!**
3. Product: Will naturally differ based on student.

Process is getting the **content** to the **product**

- Thinking is thinking
  - Example - the process of comparing doesn't vary.
- What you do vary (by students) is the support you give them
  - Example - How do you scaffold the learning?
  - Example - Add a graphic organizer?

What training do teachers need to address the needs of the multi-ability classroom?
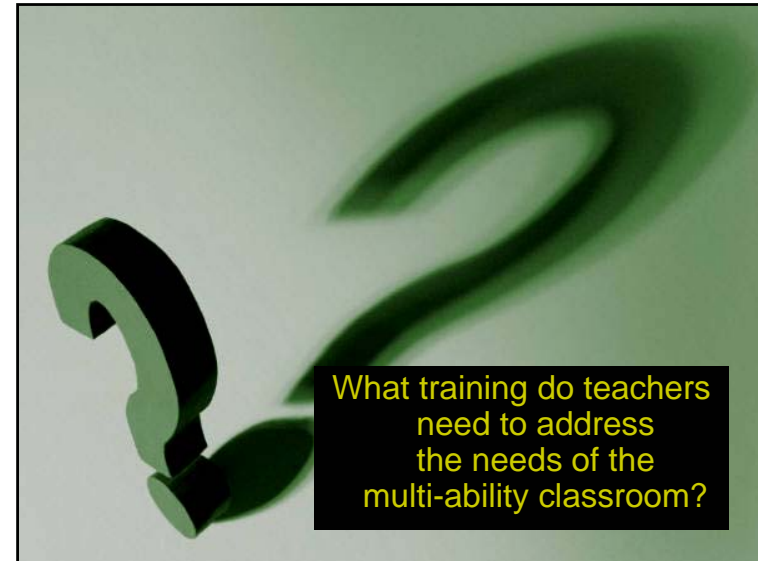
Learning Strategies are tools.

How do we add to our toolbox?

Literacy in the 21st century will mean the ability to find information, decode it, critically evaluate it, organize it into personal digital libraries and find meaningful ways to share it with others.

Information is a raw material – students will need to learn to build with it

Presented by Peter Pappas and Suzanne Meyer
Content Reading Strategies that Work | www.edteck.com/read
Copyright © 1997-2006, Peter Pappas|www.peterpappas.com

The Rigor and Relevance Framework

Rigor

6
5   C   D
4   Content / Process / Product
3
2   A   B

1   Relevance

      1   2   3   4   5
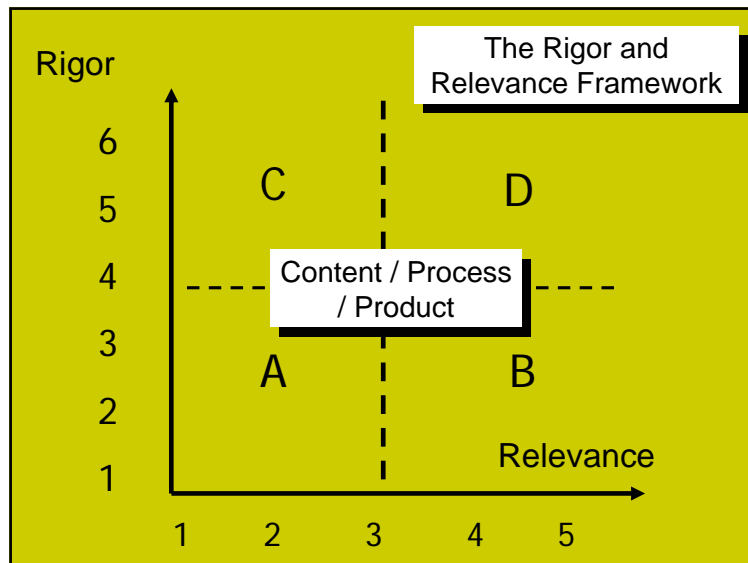
Rigor: Bloom's taxonomy

Evaluation: appraise, defend, predict

Synthesis: compose, design, develop

Analysis: compare, contrast, categorize

— — — — — — Basic Skills — — — — — —

Application: demonstrate, illustrate, solve

Comprehension: describe, explain

Knowledge: memorize, name, recognize, recall

See the connection between listening viewing, reading and thinking (HOTS)

Getting the **spoken message** right

"So what you're saying is..."

Getting the **visual message** right

"So what the artist is saying is..."

Getting the **written message** right

"So what the author is saying is ..."

Make it relevant with real-world connections

Bridge the separation between learning and life

Using skills and knowledge in school ⟷ Using skills and knowledge for myself in the real world

Help students to make connections and deepen understanding … "What's going on here? What do you see that makes you think so?"

- What do you think this will be about?
- What might you do in a similar situation?
- What does this remind you of in your own life?
- How might this be different if it happened in another time period?
- If you were telling this story, how would it end?
- What do you think would happen if... ?

Two essential questions:

"Has our school forged a common vision of teaching and learning?"

"How have we organized to accomplish this vision?"

It's more than new names, structures and programs - it's about quality instruction

- Consistent focus on **common instructional strategies** in a student-centered classroom
- **Engage the entire school** in thinking critically about student achievement
- A **professional development program** that models good instruction

Support our teachers:

- Receive training in instructional strategies
- Observe skilled teachers in action
- Reflect on current practice with their peers

Presented by Peter Pappas and Suzanne Meyer
Content Reading Strategies that Work | www.edteck.com/read
Copyright © 1997-2006, Peter Pappas|www.peterpappas.com

The **content, process** and **product** of professional development

- Content – the art and science of educating students
- Process– professional development that grows your knowledge and skills
- Product – the "tool box" of strategies, techniques, and approaches that teachers can use to facilitate learning

What is the content, process and product of our professional development?

Professional Development
Spring 2006

1. Improve literacy and writing skills for struggling and special needs students
2. Provide specific lessons for use in multi-ability classrooms
3. Support student core content and vocational mastery
4. Build on three years OCFS training in rigor and relevance
5. Foster faculty teamwork and critical reflection on instructional practice

Looking for your feedback
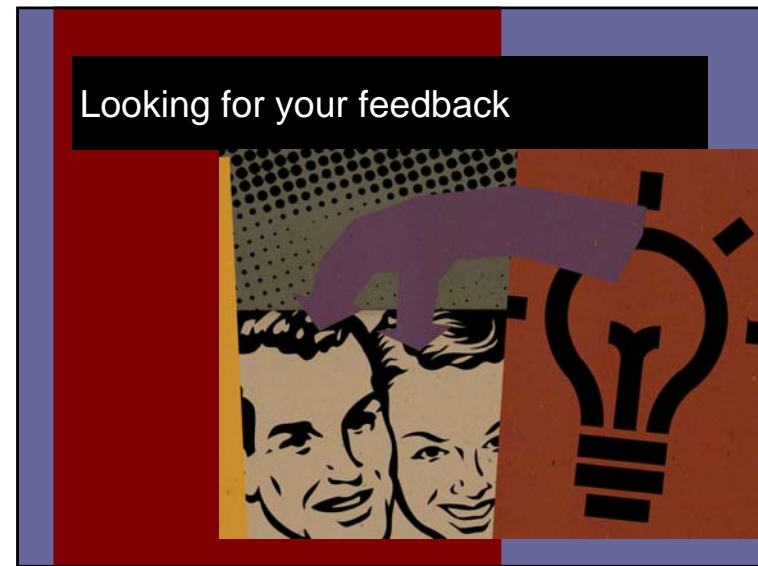
Strategies in Action: Looking at student work

Goal 1: Must be feasible and produce results

- Provide examples of successful writing projects completed by high needs and struggling students.
- Participating teachers had little prior experience in "publishing."
- These projects helped students build literacy skills
- Student motivation improved with the opportunity to express themselves.

Goal 2: Can't add to the overcrowded curriculum

- Realize teachers already have too much on their plates – it must fit
- Specific lessons and strategies for integrating this activity into their specific content / vocational areas
- Must work in multi-ability classrooms.

Goal 3: Good fit for teachers and students

- Teachers will be given specific step-by step instruction for implement the project.
- Teachers will have an opportunity to adapt the model to suit their personal skills and teaching styles.
- Not dependent on access to technology.
  - Student work in either hard copy or digital format.
  - Student work could include typed or handwritten
  - Original illustrations and selected clipart.

Goal 4: Be flexible to meet diverse needs and challenges

- Customize these project ideas for use with your specific students and courses.
- Select from a variety of writing prompts in three broad categories - core content, vocational or interpersonal.
- Implement the project with some or all of their students.
- Publications may include student work from single or multiple teachers or collections of work from multiple facilities.

- Multiple copies returned to the participating students, teachers and faculties.
- Digital versions?

Publish and share