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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL's) Center for Literacy is to improve the reading achievement of all students by providing assistance to schools, districts, education service agencies, and state education agencies in defining and implementing research-based best practices in literacy. The Center for Literacy established the Regional and National Network of Research and Professional Organizations (referred to as the Literacy Research Network) to examine current trends in literacy research on a national level. The topic of the Annual Meeting of the Literacy Research Network, held on November 6-7, 2002, in Naperville, Illinois, was secondary content-area reading. This report on the meeting is divided into the following sections: Introduction; Secondary Content-Area Reading; Elementary Reading Assessment; and Reference List (n=15). Papers in the report are: Keynote Address: "Adolescent Literacy Instruction: Insights and Strategies for Making It More Meaningful" (Donna E. Alvermann); "Using Digital Media with At-Risk Adolescents" (David G. O'Brien); "Using Multiple Texts to Teach Content" (Cynthia R. Hynd); "Research on Teacher Reflection: Promising Directions" (Thomas W. Bean); "Cultural Modeling: Bridging Students' Cultural Funds of Knowledge and Reading Comprehension in Response to Literature" (Carol D. Lee); "Illinois Snapshot of Early Literacy" (Roberta Buhle); "Michigan Literacy Progress Profile (Faith Stevens); "The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills" (Susan M. Smartt); and "An Overview of Classroom-Based Diagnostic Tools That Support the Connection of Assessment and Instruction" (Laurie Elish-Piper). Appendixes contain biographies of speakers, a reading list of Donna E. Alvermann, and selected references of David G. O'Brien. (NKA)

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# *Report*

# *of the*

# *Literacy Research Network*

# *Annual Meeting*

# *November 6–7, 2002*

# *Naperville, Illinois*

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# Report of the Literacy Research Network

## November 6–7, 2002

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"Applying Research and Technology to Learning"

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Report of the Annual Meeting of the Literacy Research Network

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We would like to extend appreciation to the following individuals for their presentations related to secondary content-area reading, which was the topic for the first day of the meeting:

- Donna E. Alvermann, Ph.D., University of Georgia (keynote address)
- David G. O'Brien, Ph.D., University of Minnesota
- Cynthia R. Hynd, Ed.D., University of Illinois at Chicago
- Thomas W. Bean, Ph.D., University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- Carol D. Lee, Ph.D., Northwestern University

Also, we would like to thank the following individuals for their presentations on elementary reading assessment on the second day of the meeting:

- Roberta Buhle, Ph.D., Naperville Community Unit School District 203
- Faith Stevens, Michigan Department of Education
- Susan M. Smartt, Ph.D., Smartt Johnson and Associates, Nashville, Tennessee
- Laurie Elish-Piper, Ph.D., Northern Illinois University

Special thanks are also extended to the members of NCREL's Literacy Research Network for their participation and input.

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# Introduction

## About NCREL

The North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) is one of ten regional educational laboratories funded by the United States Department of Education. It is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping schools—and the students they serve—reach their full potential.

Since 1984, NCREL has been providing research-based resources and assistance to educators, policymakers, and communities in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Its Midwest region is home to more than 20 percent of the nation's schools, teachers, and students. The ultimate goal of NCREL is to help its clients apply proven practices to create productive schools where all students can develop their skills and abilities. NCREL draws on the latest research and best practices to strengthen and support schools and communities to help them achieve this goal.

## Center for Literacy

The primary purpose of NCREL's Center for Literacy is to improve the reading achievement of all students by providing assistance to schools, districts, education service agencies (ESA), and state education agencies (SEA), in defining and implementing research-based best practices in literacy. NCREL's literacy staff identifies resources, develops materials, and helps schools in improving the reading achievement of all students, and when appropriate, uses technology to support its efforts.

The Center for Literacy's scope of work proposes activities that include research, policy, and practice. These activities are designed to improve literacy and literacy instruction throughout NCREL's seven-state region. In connection with these activities, the Center for Literacy established a Regional Literacy Network to support these efforts in addressing the literacy needs and critical issues across NCREL's region. In addition, the Center for Literacy sought to broaden its scope of work by establishing a Literacy Research Network.

## The Literacy Research Network

NCREL's literacy agenda includes providing leadership through collaboration with regional and national organizations in an effort to discuss the national literacy agenda and to establish a shared knowledge base. This knowledge includes research, best practices, tools, and resources for the improvement of students' reading achievement, particularly for at-risk and special-needs students.

To implement this agenda, the Center for Literacy established the Regional and National Network of Research and Professional Organizations—referred to as the Literacy Research Network—to examine current trends in literacy research on a national level. Members of the Literacy Research Network include national and regional literacy researchers.

## Secondary Content-Area Reading

This topic was selected in response to a growing regional and national concern about the reading achievement of high school students. It is an issue that has arisen partly due to the requirements of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. To meet the needs of educators interested in adolescent literacy achievement, several experts in this field were convened to share information about their work.

**Keynote Speaker**
Dr. Donna E. Alvermann, distinguished research professor in the Department of Reading Education at the University of Georgia, delivered the keynote address. Dr. Alvermann is known nationally and internationally as a leader in the field of adolescent literacy instruction. She provided an overview of the current state of adolescent literacy research and instruction that served as a framework for the more specific presentations that followed.

Dr. Alvermann discussed the literacy trends of adolescents of the "Net Generation," stating, "Many adolescents of the Net Generation find their own reasons for becoming literate—reasons that go beyond reading to acquire school knowledge of academic texts." Dr. Alvermann said that according to the position statement of the IRA's Commission on Adolescent Literacy (Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999), some 20 million kids of the Net Generation engage in multiple literacy practices, adding, "They e-mail; they instant message; they surf the Web...They participate in online chat rooms; they do read their teachers' handouts of the notes with bulleted items...But they do very little reading in the traditional textbook."

She emphasized that although adolescents have these multiple literacies at their fingertips, academic literacy is not unimportant. "It is important to get kids engaged in school learning, not just textbook learning, but text broadly defined whether it is a visual text, icons, reading something off the Internet screen, or a tradebook--it is important to get the kids engaged with text."

Dr. Alvermann said that one of the three major components of academic literacy instruction is engagement, along with motivation and self-efficacy, and that one of the ways to engage kids is through discussion. She said they see class discussion as helping them comprehend what their teachers assign, that they believe small-group discussion and groups that include "talk-alikes" are good, and that task and topic influence whether or not they will engage in a discussion.

She stressed, "Teachers are aware that they are dealing with a different kind of student today with the availability of all the information on the Internet. Teachers are using music and other forms to teach kids, and that is broadening the concept of what literacy is all about."

Dr. Alvermann added, "I am especially interested in readers that struggle with text at all levels but particularly with those who are deemed at risk of dropping out. For these struggling readers, literacy instruction has to be embedded in the curriculum. It is very difficult to get teachers to do this if they are not interested in literacy instruction. The notion is that kids learn to read in the first few grades and, therefore, when they get to upper grades they should be reading to learn. That's a myth. Kids at the upper levels need help in learning to read just as much as kids at the lower grade levels. They just need it in different ways. I think we need to think about differences being strengths, not deficits. When kids cannot do something in a print text and I watch them working on the Internet after school, I observe that these very same kids who are about to drop out of school do have multiple literacies. They have ways of compensating for what they can't do. I think we should be looking at what they can do as strengths and not deficits."

In summarizing, Dr. Alvermann emphasized the following:

- Students' perceptions of their competencies as readers and writers, their level of motivation, and their background knowledge must be taken into account.
- To be effective, instruction must be embedded in the regular curriculum and make use of multiple forms of texts read for multiple purposes in a variety of learning contexts.
- It is important that teachers create opportunities for youth to engage actively in projects that extend academic literacy.

Dr. Alvermann provided a reading list on adolescent literacy instruction to the audience (see Appendix B).

**Research Presentation**

Dr. David G. O'Brien, professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Minnesota, presented information and discussed the research on using digital media with "at-risk" adolescents. His overview included the following:

- Media use and trends
- What are digital trends?
- How digital media transform notions of literacy and texts
- Popular media texts and adolescents
- How digital media engage "at-risk" adolescents
- Redefining assessment and competency in the mediasphere

In discussing media use and trends, Dr. O'Brien cited a survey by the Pew Internet & American Life Project (Levin and Arafeh, 2002). Findings from the survey revealed that three in five children under the age of 18—and more than 78 percent of children between the ages of 12 and 17—go online. Not surprisingly, one of the most common activities that youth report undertaking online is *schoolwork.* When asked what source they relied on for their last big report written in school, 71 percent of teens in the U.S. with Internet access reported that the Internet was their major source (24 percent cited library sources).

Dr. O'Brien stated, "Yet, little is known about student use of the Internet for schoolwork or about their attitudes towards the broader learning that can take place online. Many schools and teachers have not yet recognized—much less responded to—the new ways students communicate and access information over the Internet. Students report that there is a substantial disconnect between how they use the Internet for school and how they use the Internet during the school day and under teacher direction."

He added, "Since not every student has access to the Internet outside of school, the vast majority of students report that their teachers do not make homework assignments that require the use of the Internet. Most students noted that teachers feel it unfair to make assignments involving Internet use because some students in the class do not have access to the Internet at home. Students insist that policy makers take the "digital divide" seriously and that they begin to understand the more subtle inequities among teenagers that manifest themselves in differences in the quality of student Internet access and use."

In discussing the impact of digital technologies, he said relatively little is known about the impact of new emerging technologies on literacy learning (Leu, 2002).

Dr. O'Brien concluded with the following implications:

- Need to devote more time in school to connect with kids' lives in the mediasphere—one form of culturally responsive instruction.
- Need to provide more opportunities in school with digital media for all kids to level the playing field of the digital divide that exists outside of school.
- Need to define competence in relation to media, including but not limited to print—giving up some historically grounded, institutionalized practices.
- Need for new ways to assess literate competence by accounting for new literacies and new media (reading, writing, arranging, intermedial connections).
- Need to move beyond computer education and traditional media analysis and production to critical, reflexive, and "productive'analytic" tools, with accompanying need to "take charge" of new media—to *use* new media to teach with and about it. (Luke, 2002)

Dr. O'Brien provided the audience with a list of selected references related to adolescent literacy instruction in a digital world (see Appendix C).

**Research Presentation**

Dr. Cynthia R. Hynd, professor of reading, writing, and literacy at the University of Illinois at Chicago, provided information and discussed research on using multiple texts to teach content.

Dr. Hynd began by discussing why it is important to use multiple texts based on the following components:

- *Disciplinary knowledge*-—the understanding of how knowledge is constructed, shared, and evaluated in a given field. It includes knowledge of the task in which disciplinary experts engage. Dr. Hynd stated, "Reading multiple texts requires reading the way disciplinary experts do when they make sense of their field."

- *Strategic knowledge*—an understanding of the processes used to construct knowledge (Alexander, 1997; Alexander & Judy, 1988). Dr. Hynd explained, "Cross-textual strategies are needed to make sense of multiple texts."
- *Intertextuality*—making cross-textual comparisons and contrasts (Hartmann, 1995). She said, "To make sense of multiple texts, readers must make complex comparisons and contrasts across texts.
- *Reading to form opinions*—reading for the purpose of figuring out what you will believe whether or not you will change your current beliefs. Dr. Hynd added, "Students must resolve the conflict when reading multiple texts. Purposes for reading include deciding what to believe."
- *Critical thinking*—thinking about the ideas in texts using analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Bloom, 1956). Dr. Hynd explained, "Deciding what to believe in multiple texts requires critical thinking."
- *Epistemology*—beliefs about how knowledge is constructed and what it means to know (Perry, 1970). Dr. Hynd commented, "Students' naïve epistemological beliefs that "knowledge is certain" and that "authorities know" are challenged with multiple texts."

She talked about the kinds of reading and the importance of paying attention to the *central* features of text as well as the *peripheral* features.

Dr. Hynd described an example of using multiple texts in the case of history with the Tonkin Gulf Incident. A study was conducted with students in a "learning to learn" class where they were given background texts, conflicting texts including that of a retired military officer, a former secretary of state, and historians. They were also given a documentary of the years of President Lyndon B. Johnson and text of a former secretary of defense. Dr. Hynd shared data on how students change their ideas about knowledge and their perceptions of historians as documenters, synthesizers, arbiters, and biasers. She demonstrated from the study how students struggle with subjectivity, objectivity, and relativism, and how they change strategies and ideas about history.

In conclusion, she discussed how using multiple texts can be applied to other content areas such as science, English, and citizenship.

**Research Presentation**

Dr. Thomas W. Bean, professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, discussed the research on teacher reflection and its promising directions.

He began by using an example of teacher reflection in a graduate content-area literacy course involving the following:

> Scaffolding (professor's prompt): Literature that students encounter in secondary schools is often of little relevance to them. Consider the quandary in light of three layers of discourse (local, institutional, and societal). What institutional forces

(constraints, values, etc.) might be contributing to a lack of personally and culturally relevant literature in secondary schools?

In describing one teacher's reflective response, Dr. Bean said, "There should be a balance between the classics and self-selected, quality novels. Many teachers are not aware that a wide range of quality literature exists out there. And, they would rather dictate what their students will read."

He discussed reflective threaded discussions and their advantages:

- Multiple viewpoints on an issue
- Challenges to simplistic thinking and reflection
- Moves reflective discourse beyond local classroom context

He then cited the following findings from a review of 54 studies on reflection:

- It is treated as a problem-solving activity related to field experiences.
- It is too often a solitary act (e.g., personal journal reflection).
- Too little scaffolding is offered in most studies (Roskos, Vukelich, & Risko, 2001).

In discussing the importance of teacher reflection, he referred to Florio-Ruane (2001). "Teachers need to study the webs they have learned to create and in which they are suspended not only because they may differ from the webs of their students, but also because, as webs, they both support and ensnare."

He provided an operational definition of reflection as follows:

- May involve journaling or e-mail conversations.
- Usually dialogic, "based on instructor writing or discussion prompts designed to provide a general scaffold for reflection" (Bean & Stevens, 2002).
- May involve video cases of teaching (Hiebert, Gallimore, & Stigler, 2002).

In discussing the role of reflection, Dr. Bean said, "The reflective teacher is a 'noble ideal' but 'not well understood' (Roskos et al., 2001), and few studies have documented the use of dialogic reflection to critically examine educational discourse (Bean & Stevens, 2000)." He added, "There is a growing need for more public reflection and discussion about teaching." He emphasized that tools for reflection should include a critical literacy framework (e.g., critical discourse analysis) and attention to how discourse positions learners in a classroom.

Dr. Bean shared with the audience a study that was designed to explore the role of dialogic, online reflections in disrupting preservice and inservice teachers' notions of adolescent and content-area literacy instruction (Bean & Stevens, 2002). His description included the methodology, participants, procedures, stereotypical views of adolescents, preservice and inservice results, and categories and examples of responses.

**Research Presentation**

Dr. Carol D. Lee, associate professor in the School of Education and Social Policy at Northwestern University, spoke on the topic of cultural modeling. She began by framing a problem that is pervasive across American high schools, that there is "too little rich reading in content area classrooms," and, as a consequence, students are not able to perform the complex literacy tasks that are necessary in school. This problem, she added, is not confined to children of color or poor children but is pervasive throughout secondary schools.

"The demands of reading at the secondary level are quite different than those of the elementary school," Dr. Lee explained. In the study of literature in particular, "Textbooks do not address what it means to read literature." Reading literature differs from other high school reading in that students are "trying to learn about [themselves] in addition to learning about content (i.e., knowledge of authors, literary traditions, and historical trends in national literatures)."

The purpose of cultural modeling is to make the tools used in making meaning from literature public and explicit and connecting those tools to what students know and do in their lives outside of school. Dr. Lee described several aspects of understanding culture:

- It may be viewed through the lens of language, ethnicity, profession, gender, or age.
- Human development takes place in the context of routine cultural practices.
- There are no universal norms for cultural practices.

Dr. Lee asks teachers to ask themselves the following question about their students: "Is there any place within their experiences outside of school where they're engaged in something that bears some relationship to this thing that I want them to do in school?" The task of the teacher is, then, to use that knowledge to build literary practices that can be applied to canonical texts in the English classroom. Through this process, the teacher takes culture and places it "at the center, at the heart, of instruction on at least three dimensions":

- What students believe and do outside of school, their cultural funds of knowledge.
- The subject matter as a cultural practice, the way experts in the domain think and act.
- The classroom as a culture, the routine practices within the class.

Through videotapes of real students in urban classrooms, Dr. Lee demonstrated the theory of cultural modeling at work. Using a rap called "The Mask," she drew from the students the kind of thinking they needed to use to make meaning of the song. She also presented an example of a discussion of a rap with a teacher unfamiliar with the genre or the particular work. In this situation, she said that who is teaching and who is learning become reversed, because the students know the text better than the teacher. This teacher, however, has specialized knowledge about the kinds of literary analysis tools that the students need to gain from the experience and is able to use this knowledge to make

connections that help them transfer what they were learning to longer, more difficult texts.

Finally, Dr. Lee closed with several video clips of students using the tools they had learned to analyze various aspects of the 1998 novel *Beloved* by Toni Morrison. In the videos, African-American students at an urban school are engaged in deep analysis and interpretation of the novel. They are, as Dr. Lee said, "sharing the value of playing that game," the game of solving the puzzles of literature.

In conclusion, Dr. Lee referred to the title of her presentation, "Every Shut Eye Ain't Sleep," saying, "There are kids whose eyes we think are shut who really have deep, deep knowledge."

**Panel Discussion**
The individual presentations were followed by a panel discussion during which the researchers responded to questions from the audience. The questions dealt with a wide range of topics relevant to adolescent literacy.

One question addressed the role of identity development in literacy practices of adolescents, and panel members responded with suggestions for further readings in that area. This discussion prompted a question about the goals of adolescent literacy learning and the ways in which these goals help students transfer what they are learning to larger, more complex texts. In response to a question about helping students at-risk of not completing high school, the panelists suggested focusing on authentic literacy activities, looking at students' experiences and background, and examining instruction, particularly at how talk is structured in instruction. Issues of professional development were also addressed as panelists shared their thoughts about integrating literacy into content-area instruction.

Dr. Alvermann closed with concluding remarks about the panel discussion and the presentations throughout the day. She emphasized the difficulty of change in a culture such as high school instruction and the importance of time and patience in the process. She concluded by encouraging those attending the meeting to "toot their own horns" because, "We need to tell more people the good things that are happening in schools."

## Elementary Reading Assessment

The second day of the meeting focused on elementary reading assessment through presentations and interactive discussion. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 places significant emphasis on the achievement of beginning readers through the programs, Reading First and Early Reading First. This portion of the meeting provided information on a variety of programs and methods to screen, diagnose, and assess early readers.

**Presentation:** *Illinois Snapshot of Early Literacy (ISEL)*
Dr. Roberta Buhle, reading coordinator at Naperville, Illinois Community Unit School District 23, and a developer of Illinois Snapshot of Early Literacy (ISEL), provided



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information on ISEL's development and how it is used. She explained that ISEL is a reading inventory available in English and Spanish and is teacher-administered and scored. It includes the following measures:

- Alphabet recognition
- Letter-sound relationships
- Phonemic awareness, blending, and segmentation
- Spelling
- Comprehension
- Word recognition
- Print awareness (graded passages at first grade)

The instrument's goal is to assist teachers in identifying students who are at risk of reading failure so that appropriate, research-based, early intervention can be provided. Dr. Buhle emphasized that effective early intervention will reduce the number of students who do not learn to read and will increase the number of students who meet or exceed the Illinois Learning Standards.

**Presentation:** *Michigan Literacy Progress Profile (MLPP)*
Faith Stevens, English language arts consultant in the Michigan Department of Education, and a member of Michigan's Reading First management team, discussed the Michigan Literacy Progress Profile (MLPP). The MLPP is an assessment instrument designed for use with individual children. She emphasized that it is *not* used to compare or categorize students. The MLPP is aligned with the Michigan Curriculum Framework, which includes English language arts content standards and benchmarks. It consists of the following components:

- Eleven performance assessments
- Record sheets
- Individual Literacy Progress Profiles
- Portfolios
- Instructional suggestions for teachers and parents

The assessments are divided into two types: *milestone* and *digging deeper*. She explained that a milestone behavior is one that requires the learner to use multiple skills to construct meaning in an intentionally integrated strategic manner. Milestone assessments include comprehension, writing, oral language, oral reading fluency, attitudes, and self-perception. Digging deeper assessments include phonemic awareness, known words activity, hearing and recording sounds, single word and decodable word list, letter and sound identification, and concepts of print.

She discussed a preschool assessment, Playful Literacy and You (PLaY), which uses MLPP K-3 and adapts the elements for developmentally appropriate application to learning experiences for children from birth through kindergarten.

Ms. Stevens shared with the group the extensive teacher training required for MLPP as well as that required for the training of trainers. She also discussed Michigan's Read,

Educate, and Develop Youth (R.E.A.D.Y.) program. This program was designed to reach parents of young children and strengthen their involvement in the early childhood years so that children develop the language and literacy skills needed to enter school.

**Presentation:** *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)*
Dr. Susan M. Smartt, of Smartt Johnson and Associates in Nashville, Tennessee, is a national reading consultant. She provided an overview of the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) *measure.* She explained that these are brief fluency measures of critical early literacy skills used as follows:

- To identify students at risk *early.*
- To evaluate effectiveness of instruction.

She emphasized the importance of a team approach when using DIBELS and to include those people who have a vested interest in reading outcomes such as the classroom teacher (crucial), principal, special-education teacher, reading specialist, speech and language specialist, school psychologist, and paraprofessionals. She added that DIBELS can be used as a benchmark assessment for "wellness checks" and for monitoring for growth.

Dr. Smartt discussed why it is important to focus on basic early literacy skills and identified the following:

- Reading trajectories are established early.
- Established reading trajectories are difficult to change.
- Traditional reading tests identify reading trajectories too late.

According to Juel (1994), children who fall behind in first-grade reading have only a *one in eight* chance of ever catching up to grade level. Seventy-four percent of children who are poor readers in third grade remain poor readers in ninth grade.

She discussed the five critical areas of knowledge and skill in reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension strategies) and how the use of DIBELS can support these through the following features:

- Measures "vital signs" of growth in early literacy skills.
- Efficient—takes 10 to 15 minutes per child.
- Sensitive to change over short periods.
- Subtests available in multiple forms.
- Reliability and validity are established through many years of research.
- Easy to understand.
- Assesses skills that are being taught.
- Computerized scoring gives information useful for several purposes.
- Inexpensive to use in terms of time, resources, and materials.

**Presentation:** *An Overview of Classroom-Based Diagnostic Tools That Support the Connection of Assessment and Instruction*
Dr. Laurie Elish-Piper, associate professor and reading clinic director at Northern Illinois University, provided an overview of classroom-based diagnostic tools that support the

connection of assessment and instruction. She used examples of classroom-based assessments and descriptions of what they measure.

She summarized what teachers want from literacy assessments as follows:

- Daily or very frequent information related to specific goals.
- Identification of student strengths and needs.
- Information to plan appropriate instruction.

She then described how these assessments will be helpful to teachers in the following ways:

- They can be used over and over again to gather ongoing information about student reading performance and progress.
- They can be used in the context of regular classroom reading instruction.
- They can inform instruction.

Dr. Elish-Piper identified the following classroom-based assessments and what they measure:

- Running records that measure strategies used by readers, cueing systems used by readers (can do miscue analysis), and accuracy rate-reading levels.
- Fluency scales and checklist and words per minute, which measure fluency (phrasing, smoothness, and pace), and reading rate.
- Retellings, which measure comprehension of narrative text (listening and reading), and comprehension of expository text (listening and reading).

She distributed samples of running records, a multidimensional fluency scale, and record sheets of retellings for narrative, story, and information text, and she discussed how to use them.

**Panel Discussion**

Following the presentations on diagnostic and assessment tools, the audience was asked to break into groups to talk about the implications that stand out for them and to prepare questions for presenters who then convened for a panel discussion.

The first questioner asked how the developers of the various tools provided for consistency in their use across school districts. Faith Stevens (Michigan) responded by describing the intensive training program that is required for participation in the Michigan Literacy Progress Profile (MLPP). This program also provides support within the buildings for teachers using the instrument. Dr. Buhle (Illinois) added that a person with a literacy background must help teachers interpret the data generated by the tool. Dr. Elish-Piper (Illinois) spoke about the importance of the training of reading specialists to be literacy leaders in their schools.

The second question dealt with the number of reading courses required for certification of elementary teachers. Dr. Elish-Piper stated that Northern Illinois University (NIU) requires 12 credits, which is more than the minimum set by the state. Ms. Stevens

responded that in Michigan six credits are required. Other panelists commented that the Reading First initiative is forcing states to look more carefully at their certification requirements in reading.

An audience member mentioned the role of agency in children's literacy learning and asked the panelists if there were provisions for portfolio assessment in any of the assessment programs. Dr. Elish-Piper answered by saying that at NIU, she encourages her undergraduate students and the teachers in the professional development schools to engage children in discussing how they are reading texts.

The final question referred to the role of parents in the process of learning to read. Dr. Buhle reported that teachers were using the summary sheet that comes with the ISEL results at parent-teacher conferences. Faith Stevens described a program called Family Fundamentals that contains a variety of activities for children and their parents.

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# Appendices

# Appendix A
# Biographies of Speaker and Presenters

## Donna E. Alvermann, Ph.D.

Donna E. Alvermann, Ph.D., is a professor of reading education and a Distinguished Research Professor at the University of Georgia. Her research focuses on adolescent literacy. From 1992 to 1997, she codirected the National Reading Research Center (funded by the U.S. Department of Education). The recipient of a major research grant from the Spencer Foundation in 1999, she is currently finishing a grant on adolescent literacy awarded by the Carnegie Corporation.

Dr. Alvermann is a former president of the National Reading Conference and a former chair of the American Reading Forum. She cochaired the International Reading Association's first Commission on Adolescent Literacy from 1997 to 2000. She is a current editor of *Reading Research Quarterly*, the flagship journal of the International Reading Association. Prior to that, she was associate editor of the *Journal of Literacy Research*. In 1997, Dr. Alvermann was awarded the Oscar Causey Award for Outstanding Contributions to Reading Research, and in 1999, she was elected to the Reading Hall of Fame.

She has authored or coauthored more than 90 published articles and 40 chapters. Her books include *Adolescents and Literacies in a Digital World* (2002); *Content Reading and Literacy: Succeeding in Today's Diverse Classrooms* (Third Edition, 2002); *Struggling Adolescent Readers: A Collection of Teaching Strategies* (2000); *Popular Culture in the Classroom: Teaching and Researching Critical Media Literacy* (1999); and *Reconceptualizing the Literacies in Adolescents' Lives* (1998).

## David G. O'Brien, Ph.D.

David G. O'Brien, Ph.D., is a professor of literacy education at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. He previously held a faculty position at Purdue University in literacy and language education and received a doctorate in reading education from the University of Georgia.

His scholarship and teaching focus on the literacy practices of adolescents. He has studied how adolescents use literacy to learn content across the disciplines and also how their teachers learn to integrate literacy practices into various disciplines in middle and high school instruction. His research is collaborative; it is conducted within a community of practice with the intent of improving adolescents' literacy skills and practices concurrently with improving their teachers' abilities to meet the needs of a range of learners.

For nearly a decade, Dr. O'Brien has explored how at-risk or struggling adolescent learners become disengaged from literacy participation in school; he has examined ways these students can be motivated to engage in school-based literacy tasks. Most recently, he has studied the use of electronically mediated literacy, using computers and related technologies to engage at-risk high school students. He has also collaborated with two school-based colleagues to construct a new program for these students. Currently, he is constructing some frameworks for redefining struggling learners' literacy competence in media-rich environments.

## Cynthia R. Hynd, Ed.D.

Cynthia R. Hynd, Ed.D., is a professor in the Reading, Writing, and Literacy program at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) and the coordinator of secondary education in the College of Education, Department of Curriculum and Instruction. She is also a consultant with the Center for Literacy at UIC and conducts a reading endorsement program for secondary teachers in the Chicago Public Schools.

Dr. Hynd received her doctorate in reading education from the University of Georgia in 1984. She was on the faculty of Georgia State University from 1984 to1986 and taught at the University of Georgia from 1986 to 2001. She has been a public school teacher and has taught reading instruction to elementary through college-level teachers. She also has taught academic literacy to college students.

In addition, Dr. Hynd has conducted research and published articles about various topics in content-area literacy, focusing on the learning of counterintuitive concepts from text and on critical thinking using multiple texts. She was coeditor of the *Journal of Literacy Research* and spent three years working on a teacher education project titled "Reading/Writing for Critical Thinking" in the former Soviet Republic of Georgia.

## Thomas W. Bean, Ph.D.

Thomas W. Bean, Ph.D., is a professor of reading and literacy and coordinator of doctoral studies in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Dr. Bean is an internationally known scholar in content-area literacy with numerous research and applied publications. He is the coauthor of 15 books, 21 book chapters, and 88 journal articles. His research explores readers' responses to multicultural young-adult literature as well as studies of inservice and preservice teachers' reflective practices.

He was recently honored with the University of Nevada College of Education Distinguished Researcher Award. He is a founding member of the International Reading Association's Adolescent Literacy Commission and a coauthor of *Adolescent Literacy: A Position Statement* (1999). He also is a coauthor of the widely used text, *Content Area Literacy: An Integrated Approach (2001),* now in its seventh edition.

Dr. Bean earned his Ph.D. in secondary education and reading from Arizona State University. His M.A. in education and an Oregon Reading Specialist credential are from Southern Oregon State College. He earned his B.A. in English and his secondary teacher credential from the University of Hawaii at Manoa and the University of Hawaii at Hilo, respectively.

## Carol D. Lee, Ph.D.

Carol D. Lee, Ph.D., is an associate professor of education and social policy in the learning sciences program in the School of Education and Social Policy at Northwestern University.

She has taught reading at the high school, elementary, and junior college levels for more than 25 years in the city of Chicago. She is the former president of the National Conference on Language and Literacy and currently serves as the chair of the Standing Committee on Research of the National Council Teachers of English. Her research focuses on systematic ways of drawing on the background experiences of students of color in order to teach complex problem solving in reading and composing. She has conducted research and professional development in the Chicago Public Schools.

Nationally, Dr. Lee lectures and conducts professional development in literacy. She is the author of two books and numerous journal articles in the field of literacy research. She has served or currently serves as a consultant on projects involving literacy and teacher education with the Chicago Public Schools, the National Academy of Education, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, the Rand Corporation, and the National Center for Education and the Economy.

She holds a B.A. in the teaching of secondary school English from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. She received an M.A. in English and a Ph.D. in education (curriculum and instruction) from the University of Chicago.

## Roberta Buhle, Ed.D.

Roberta Buhle, Ed.D., currently is working in the areas of teacher education, assessment to inform instruction, and bilingual and English as a second language issues (especially with children who speak Spanish as a first language). She is the reading coordinator for Naperville Community Unit School District 203, where she is developing and coordinating a teacher initiative to write a new language arts curriculum.

Dr. Buhle is also a principal investigator in the Advanced Reading Development Demonstration Project (ARDDP), which operates through National-Louis University and is cofunded by the Chicago Public Schools and the Chicago Community Trust. The goal of ARDDP is to foster relationships with the Chicago Public Schools and university literacy researchers and to develop leadership capacity among the teachers to enable them to lead literacy staff development in their schools.

She also developed the Illinois Snapshot of Early Literacy (ISEL) K-2, a reading inventory in English and Spanish that assists teachers in identifying students at risk of reading failure. ISEL will be used as an assessment tool to inform classroom instruction and intervention initiatives in connection with the grant from ARDDP.

Dr. Buhle developed and researched Project Leap, an early reading intervention tutorial, and she codeveloped and researched Read and Relax, a classroom program to increase reading fluency. She also developed and researched the Kindergarten Literature Program, which was funded through a grant from the Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement.

She completed her master's degree in the area of teaching and learning from Northwestern University with a focus on social-cultural issues. Her doctoral work was in teacher education and tutorial intervention at National-Louis University.

## Faith Stevens

Faith Stevens is an English language arts consultant at the Michigan Department of Education and is a member of Michigan's Reading First management team.

As Michigan's Reading First consultant, she participated in the development of Michigan's Reading First proposal submitted to the U.S. Department of Education. She oversees the implementation of this new federal grant program in funded districts and the statewide professional development of all K-3 teachers and K-12 special education teachers in early reading instruction as required by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

She is also a trainer for the Michigan Literacy Progress Profile (MLPP), a collection of assessment tools used to determine children's progress in their development of written and oral language. She teaches a balanced literacy course, Literacy Initiative for Teachers, for one of Michigan's regional literacy centers.

Stevens has served in a variety of capacities in Michigan schools for many years. She began her career as a middle school English language arts teacher, later moving to the positions of reading consultant, K-12 department chair, and elementary instructional coordinator.

## Susan M. Smartt, Ph.D.

Susan M. Smartt, Ph.D., was educated at Peabody College of Vanderbilt University and Tennessee State University. She has worked as a teacher, reading specialist, principal, school psychologist, consultant, and teacher trainer. For 17 years, she has been in private practice as an educational diagnostician and learning specialist focusing primarily on reading and attention disorders.

During the 2001–02 school year, she directed a No Child Left Behind pilot reading program in a metropolitan Nashville elementary school. She is a member of the United States Department of Education's Reading First expert review panel. She provides consultation, technical assistance, and professional development to state departments of education nationwide.

Dr. Smartt recently served on a statewide task force to rewrite the learning disabilities eligibility criteria for the state of Tennessee and was principal author of a section related to early identification, prevention, and intervention for the Tennessee state evaluation manual. She is currently serving in her fourth year as president of the Tennessee branch of the International Dyslexia Association. Her published works focus on themes involving parents in early literacy intervention and connecting research to classroom practice.

## Laurie Elish-Piper, Ph.D.

Laurie Elish-Piper, Ph.D., is an associate professor of reading in the Department of Literacy Education at Northern Illinois University. She directs the Reading Clinic and teaches reading courses for undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students, including practicums in reading assessment and instruction. Dr. Elish-Piper also coordinates a school-university partnership that allows her to work closely with inservice and preservice teachers in the area of reading.

Prior to her current position, she worked as an elementary and middle school teacher and an educational therapist in a clinical setting. She also has developed, implemented, and evaluated family literacy programs for inner-city parents and their young children.

Dr. Elish-Piper is active in many professional organizations in the field of reading. She serves on the board of directors for the College Reading Association as well as the board of directors for the American Reading Forum. In addition, she chairs the Alpha Upsilon Alpha Committee of the International Reading Association and the Parents and Reading Committee of the Illinois Reading Council. She is the coeditor of *Exploring Adult Literacy* and serves on editorial boards for *The Reading Teacher, Illinois Reading Council Journal,* and several other publications.

Dr. Elish-Piper's research, publications, and presentations focus on family literacy, reading and writing strategies, supporting struggling readers, and literacy assessment. She has authored or coauthored more than 50 publications, including the book *Teaching Beginning Readers: Linking Assessment and Instruction (2002)* with Jerry Johns and Susan Lenski.

# Appendix B
# Reading List of Dr. Donna E. Alvermann


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