Reflective Teaching in Language Arts

Numerous resources for teaching English are available online and can help you think reflectively about what you teach and how to do it more effectively and reflectively. Comprehensive sites for teaching English include:

The first set of links is on the Common Core State Standards on English Language Arts: [http://www.corestandards.org/](http://www.corestandards.org/)

The Common Core State Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers. With American students fully prepared for the future, our communities will be best positioned to compete successfully in the global economy. This is a link to the Common Core State Standards Initiative website.

[http://myboe.org/portal/default/Content/Viewer/Content?action=2&sclId=306591](http://myboe.org/portal/default/Content/Viewer/Content?action=2&sclId=306591)

This is a link to the State of California Department of Education's professional development website in implementing the Common Core State Standards, Brokers of Expertise.


Smarter Balanced is a state-led consortium developing assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards in English language arts/literacy and mathematics that are designed to help prepare all students to graduate high school as college- and career-ready.


Susan Ohanian's website for critiques of the Common Core of State Standards.


This space School Matters explores issues in public education policy, and it advocates for a commitment to and a re-examination of the democratic purposes of schools. If there is some urgency in the message, it is due to the current reform efforts that are based on a radical re-invention of education, now spearheaded by a psychometric blitzkrieg of "metastasizing testing" aimed at dismantling a public education system that took almost 200 years to build.


The National Council of Teachers of English is devoted to improving the teaching and learning of English and the language arts at all levels of education. This mission statement was adopted in 1990: "The Council promotes the development of literacy, the use of language to construct personal and public worlds and to achieve full participation in society, through the learning and teaching of English and the related arts and sciences of language."
Home page of the International Reading Association. (IRA) include classroom teachers, reading specialists, consultants, administrators, supervisors, college teachers, researchers, psychologists, librarians, media specialists, students, and parents. IRA's esteemed publications include The Reading Teacher, directed toward preschool, primary, and elementary school educators, and the Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, directed toward teachers of older students. IRA's website includes links to resources on such topics as adolescent literacy and teaching for comprehension.

Home page of the National Writing Project. Established in 1974, brings teachers together in summer and school-year programs around the country. These programs are led by classroom teachers who have developed expertise for facilitating dialogues about teaching. The Writing Project’s teachers-teaching-teachers programs serve over 100,000 teachers annually at 189 project sites across the country.

Provides information and resources for K-12 balanced literacy instruction.

Professor of English Education and Director of the Institute for Urban and Minority Education (IUME) at Teachers College, Columbia University, Ernest Morrell studies the relationships between language, literacy, culture and power in society. In particular, he designs and examines interventions aimed at facilitating literacies of power and freedom among urban youth, as well as strategies for developing effective literacy educators in urban contexts. He provides resources for educators in Critical Literacy and Urban Youth (New York: Routledge, 2007).

Lucy Calkins, education professor at Teachers College, Columbia University, is founding director of the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project. A balanced literacy advocate, Calkins is widely respected for her ideas on how to teach children to read and write, and she has inspired a generation of teachers to help the youngest children become confident writers. Her most recent book, written with Mary Ehrenworth and Christopher Lehman, is Pathways to the Common Core: Accelerating Achievement (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2012).

In For a Better World: Reading and Writing for Social Action (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2001), Katherine Bomer and Randy Bomer offer guidance for teachers in implementing reading and writing workshops. Specifically, they focus on developing critical literacy while also developing democratic, socially just classrooms.
The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) sponsors a site called The Assembly for the Teaching of English Grammar (http://www.ateg.org), which is described as a national forum for grammar instruction. NCTE also has an online position paper on teaching writing The National Writing Project has links to a PDF version and a printable version of its publication “30 Ideas for Teaching Writing” at http://www.writingproject.org/cs/nwpp/print/nwpr/922.

http://www.teachingliterature.org/teachingliterature/

Designed to introduce prospective English teachers to current methods of teaching literature in middle and high school classrooms, this popular textbook explores a variety of innovative approaches that incorporate reading, writing, drama, talk, and media production. Each chapter is organized around specific questions that English educators often hear in working with pre-service teachers. The text engages readers in considering the dilemmas and issues facing literature teachers through inquiry-based responses to authentic case narratives.

http://teacher2b.com/literature/literature.htm

This web site, The English Teacher: Teaching Literature – Fiction and Non-Fiction, contains units for teaching facets of literature analysis and appreciation for both fiction and non-fiction literature. All of these units have been used in the classroom. They have been used with students ranging from 9th grade to college. Teachers should choose the units they feel are most suitable for the classes they are teaching. Materials on this site can be used for classroom teaching.

Computer-based writing tools can help novices learn to write more like experts. Such tools include word processors, idea organizers, process prompts, and text analyzers. See Kozma in Resources at the end of this section.

Two different technologies can help students apply graphic organizers to their writing. CMAP, the online concept mapping software, is available free online to educators (http://cmap.ihmc.us); however, only concept maps are available. Sponsored by the Institute for Human and Machine Cognition, it allows the user to make links to videos, images, and web pages, thereby increasing the modalities and depth of written communications.

Inspiration is another graphic organizer software application; it has many different graphic organizer structures for representing information. It also includes modifiable templates so that the writer doesn’t have to build the structure from scratch. There are seven different Language Arts specific templates:

Characteristics of the primary character
Comparison and contrast
Literary web
Mythic journey
Persuasive
Poetic analysis
Vocabulary
Although the software is not free, the price is reasonable and a free 30-day trial version can be downloaded at the company’s Web site. Recognizing the power and value of this software, many school districts have opted to get a site license for all their schools.

Additional Adolescent Literacy resources are available online at a Web site sponsored by the International Reading Association (http://www.reading.org/General/Default.aspx?page=/resources/issues/focus Adolescent.html&mode=redirect), which includes lesson plans for middle and high school classes and special materials for adolescent girls.

The American Federation of Teachers has many useful reading resources, including descriptions of successful programs, tips for parents, and teacher-to-teacher discussions. The English Language Arts homepage has resources grouped by school level, with elementary grades pre-K-5 and secondary grades 6-12. A page on reading strategies has hot links for more depth of information on each of 22 strategies with a checklist to highlight their use before, during, and/or after reading. In addition to information on teaching reading, it has tools such as videotapes, information on best practices, links to other useful sites, and resources for teaching literature, writing, and thinking.

The National Capital Language Resource Center has extensive information on language instruction, including Goals and Techniques for Teaching Reading, Strategies for Developing Reading Skills, Developing Reading Activities, Using Textbook Reading Activities, Assessing Reading Proficiency, and Resources. Although developed as a resource for college faculty, the ideas can easily be used by middle and high school teachers. www.nclrc.org

A description of Deshler’s school-wide approach to adolescent literacy, using his research-validated Strategic Instruction Model, with its “content enhancement routines” and the Content Literacy Continuum framework, is available online at http://www.aasa.org/publications/saarticledetail.cfm?ItemNumber=5872&snItemNumber=950. This approach involves intervening with both teachers and students to use strategies that promote literacy in the content areas.

Representative Studies on Reflective Teaching in Language Arts


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Resources in Technology and Language Arts


National Writing Project. 30 Ideas for Teaching Writing. 2007. Retrieved April 8, 2013 from

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