

Reading Research Report

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Proposal

Reading curriculum to be reviewed/revised:

- Outcomes
- Standardize grading on subjective sections (summaries, paraphrasing, etc.)
- Supplemental materials (B-3) vs. Weekly Assignments (4-6: academic reading - packet?)
- Addition of writing components (critical thinking – reflections/inferences)
- Prefixes/Suffixes
- Vocabulary
- Midterms/finals (revise for textbooks and outcomes)
- Testing terminology

Instructor Reading Survey - Spring I, 2014

- Do the Making Connections Textbooks create good classroom teaching and learning?
5 Yes 1 No 1 No Answer
- No: It is essentially just a collection of readings (have to supplement activities).
- Supplemental comments:
 - Quality vs. Quantity
 - Need for more academic readings at the intermediate and higher levels.
 - Story based! Students seem to enjoy these and it creates a balance between literature and academic/non-fiction texts (which are heavily emphasized in the textbooks).
 - It brings some novelty to class and students are always involved in new materials.
 - A combination of both: story based for lower levels, more academic for high levels.
 - It uses a different type of thinking with a story line than academic reading.
 - Not common in academic classes. I don't enjoy reading or teaching literature.
- Connect Reading comments:
 - Students are used to low-context learning and do not have digital backgrounds.
 - Most students do not do the work. Students who need more skill work are the ones not using the program. Other students know the skills and it turns out to be more review for them than learning.
 - Students don't seem to like or benefit from these programs because they can't ask questions when they don't understand. We give enough homework already. (Teacher has not used Connect Reading.)
 - I'm not against using computer programs in reading classes; however, Connect Reading is not a program I'd use in the future.
 - More students like having activities they can access online.
- Vocabulary comments:
 - Not enough vocabulary, more translation work with a thesaurus.
 - Vocabulary needs to be critically processed and used contextually.
 - I think there are good words presented in the books, but they aren't practiced well.
 - More common vocabulary words. Some vocab taught from the book is contextual.
 - Self-selecting in independent readings - lists, writing words, Academic Word List.
- Reading topics to add:
 - statistics, reports, music, environment, geology, pre-history, sports

- business, science
- scientific reports
- Junior high/High school level textbooks for content-based reading.

- Skill based curriculum vs. content based curriculum:

3 skill based

3 content based

1 No Answer

- Skill based is good for training their mind.
- Content based could incorporate skills while focusing on critical thinking (needed for academics).
- Students study better when using context – better flow of learning.
- Preparation to read a lot, think critically, apply reading to other contexts.

Support for a Writing Component

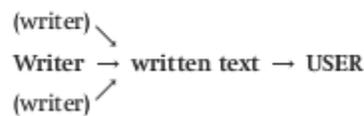
Many CEA accredited institutions have combined reading and writing in their programs. According to the Common European Framework of Reference, “the need and desire to communicate arise in a particular situation and the form as well as the content of the communication is a response to the situation” (p. 45). In addition, “others believe that in addition to exposure to comprehensible input, active participation in communicative interaction is a necessary and sufficient condition for language development...recognizing that learners do not necessarily learn what teachers teach and that they require substantial contextualized and intelligible language input as well as opportunities to use the language interactively, but that learning is facilitated, especially under artificial classroom conditions, by a combination of conscious learning sufficient practice to reduce or eliminate the conscious attention paid to low-level physical skills of speaking and writing as well as to morphological and syntactic accuracy, thus freeing the mind for higher-level strategies of communication” (p. 140).

Common European Framework of Reference

1.2. Writing



2.2. Reading



(p. 98)

To read, the reader must be able to:

- Perceive the written text (visual skills)
- Recognize the script (orthographic skills)
- Identify the message (linguistic skills)
- Understand the message (semantic skills)
- Interpret the message (cognitive skills)

To write, the learner must be able to:

- Organize and formulate the message (cognitive and linguistic skills)
- Hand-write or type the text (manual skills) or otherwise transfer the text to writing (p. 91)

6.4.7.1 In which ways should learners be expected or required to develop their vocabulary?

- a) by simple exposure to words and fixed expressions used in authentic spoken and written texts?
- b) by learner elicitation or dictionary, etc. look-up as needed for specific tasks and activities?
- c) through inclusion in context, e.g. in course-book texts and subsequent recycling in exercises, exploitation activities, etc.?

- d). by presenting words accompanied by visuals (pictures, gestures and miming, demonstrative actions, realia, etc.)?
- e). by the memorization of word-lists, etc. with translation equivalents?
- f). by exploring semantic fields and constructing ‘mind-maps’, etc.?
- g). by training in the use of monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, thesauruses and other works of reference?
- h). by explanation and training in the application of lexical structure (e.g. word formation, compounding, collocations, phrasal verbs, idioms, etc.)?
- i). by a more or less systematic study of the different distribution of semantic features in L1 and L2 (contrastive semantics)?

Users of the Framework may wish to consider and where appropriate state the ways in which vocabulary items (form and meaning) are presented to and learned by pupils and students.

(p. 150)

6.4.7.2 *Size, range, and control* of vocabulary are major parameters of language acquisition and hence for the assessment of a learner’s language proficiency and for the planning of language learning and teaching.

Users of the Framework may wish to consider and where appropriate state:

- *what size of vocabulary (i.e. the number of words and fixed expressions) the learner will need/be equipped/be required to control;*
- *what range of vocabulary (i.e. the domains, themes etc. covered) the learner will need/be equipped/be required to control;*
- *what control over vocabulary the learner will need/be equipped/be required to exert;*
- *what distinction, if any, is made between learning for recognition and understanding, and learning for recall and productive use?;*
- *what use is made of inferencing techniques? How is their development promoted?*

(p. 150)

Text Characteristics:

In evaluating a text for use with a particular learner or group of learners, factors such as linguistic complexity, text type, discourse structure, physical presentation, length of the text and its relevance for the learner(s), need to be considered.

- Linguistic complexity: particularly complex syntax consumes attentional resources that might otherwise be available for dealing with content; for example, long sentences with a number of subordinate clauses, non-continuous constituents, multiple negation, scope ambiguity, use of anaphorics and deictics without clear antecedents or reference. Syntactic over-simplification of authentic texts, however, may actually have the effect of increasing the level of difficulty (because of the elimination of redundancies, clues to meaning, etc.)
- Text type: familiarity with the genre and domain (and with assumed background and sociocultural knowledge) helps the learner in anticipating and comprehending text structure and content; the concrete or abstract nature of the text is also likely to play a role; for example, concrete description, instructions or narratives (particularly with adequate visual supports), for example, are likely to be less demanding than abstract argumentation or explanation
- Discourse structure: textual coherence and clear organization (for example, temporal sequencing, main points clearly signaled and presented before illustration of the points), the explicit rather than implicit

nature of information presented, the absence of conflicting or surprising information, all contribute to reducing information processing complexity

- Length of text: in general a short text is less demanding than a long text on a similar topic as a longer text requires more processing and there is an additional memory load, risk of fatigue and distraction (especially in the case of younger learners). However, a long text which is not too dense and contains considerable redundancy may be easier than a short dense text presenting the same information
- Relevance to the learner: a high level of motivation to understand due to personal interest in the content will help sustain the learner's efforts to understand (although it will not necessarily assist comprehension directly); while the occurrence of low frequency vocabulary may be expected to increase the difficulty of a text in general, a text containing quite specific vocabulary on a familiar and relevant topic is likely to be less demanding for a specialist in the field than a text containing wide-ranging vocabulary of a more general nature, and it may be approached with greater confidence

Encouraging learners to express their personal knowledge, ideas and opinions within a comprehension task may increase motivation and confidence, and activate linguistic competence related to the text. Embedding a comprehension task within another task may also help to make it inherently purposeful and increase learner involvement. (p. 165-166)

Type of response required:

While a text may be relatively difficult the type of response required by the task which is set may be manipulated in order to accommodate the learner's competences and characteristics. Task design may also depend on whether the aim is to develop comprehension skills or to check understanding. Accordingly, the type of response demanded may vary considerably, as numerous typologies of comprehension tasks illustrate.

A comprehension task may require global or selective comprehension, or understanding of important points of detail. Certain tasks may require the reader/listener to show understanding of the main information clearly stated in a text, while others may require the use of inferencing skills. A task may be summative (to be completed on the basis of the complete text), or may be structured so as to relate to manageable units (e.g. accompanying each section of a text) and thus making less demands on memory.

The response may be non-verbal (no overt response or a simple action such as ticking a picture) or a verbal response (spoken or written) may be required. The latter may, for instance, involve identifying and reproducing information from a text for a particular purpose or may, for example, require the learner to complete the text or to produce a new text through related interaction or production tasks.

The time allowed for the response may be varied so as to decrease or increase task difficulty. The more time a listener or reader has to replay or reread a text, the more he or she is likely to understand and the greater the opportunity to apply a range of strategies for coping with difficulties in understanding the text. (p. 166)

69 Accredited Universities

- 25 Documented Teaching Reading/Writing together (36% of Universities)
Ashland University, Drexel University, Georgetown University, Indiana University, Ohio University, Lewis & Clark College, Old Dominion University, (Rutgers) The State University of New Jersey, Saint Michael's College, San Francisco State University, State University of New York at Albany, State University of New York at New Paltz, The Ohio State University, The University of Alabama, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, University of Delaware, University of Southern Mississippi, Wayne State University, Western Michigan University, University of Florida, University of Illinois at Chicago, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University of Kansas, University of Oregon, University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee

“Reading offers an opportunity to learn about a variety of topics while the skills of skimming, identifying main ideas, finding supporting details, drawing inferences, and other important reading techniques are developed. Vocabulary is stressed at each level, as is the goal of increased reading speed. At the advanced level, materials which will help prepare a student for the kinds of assignments given in a university course are utilized.

This class focuses on both process and the end result of writing. Students spend considerable time writing in class and as homework. Whereas beginning students focus on writing grammatical sentences and paragraphs, more advanced students are given the opportunity to explore and develop the techniques of using rhetorical structures most commonly used in academic writing. These include description, narration, persuasion, and analysis, among others.”

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey –

Class

Outcome: “The main goal of this course is to...

Foundations: Reading and Writing (Foundation).

...to introduce basic comprehension and sentence construction to use within every day communication tasks. The learner is expected to recognize and write the letters of the alphabet, answer simple questions, and retell important information about reading selections. At the end of the course, the student will be able to identify general topic and main ideas in simple texts and write simple complete connected sentences on a given topic.”

Reading and Writing to Communicate (Beginner).

...promote word attack skills and expand from writing simple sentences to various types [of] sentences in a basic paragraph. The learner is expected to explain the importance of titles for a reading and to develop better control over basic mechanics and punctuation. At the end of the course, the student will be able to identify affixes and use that information to predict the meaning of unknown words and to write simple, correctly formatted paragraphs.”

Effective Paragraphs (High Beginner).

... identify and analyze the parts within a reading passage and apply that information into producing short, cohesive paragraphs written in different rhetorical forms. The learner is expected to apply reading strategies and context clues in order to build vocabulary and comprehension skills in reading short passages and use different transitional devices in writing. At the end of the course, the student will be able to determine voice and theme of a reading and write a paragraph of at least 5-7 sentences using correct paragraph format with better control over coherence and cohesion.”

Functional Reading and Writing (Low Intermediate).

...build on vocabulary and reading comprehension in order to write 2-3 paragraphs about one topic. The learner is expected to connect and analyze concepts between two readings and write several paragraphs in different rhetorical modes. At the end of this course, the student will be able to analyze readings for theme, purpose, and audience, and apply writing skills to functional tasks such as official requests, personal statements, letters of complaint, business letters, and e-mails for both formal and informal communication.”

Developing Composition Skills I (Intermediate).

... develop inferential reading skills and to introduce the process of essay writing. The learner is expected to read and comprehend longer reading passages with accuracy while skimming and scanning at a greater speed and incorporate critical thinking skills in both reading and writing tasks. At the [end] of this course, the student will be able to be familiar with peer editing skills to proofread and improve their own writing in order to write several multiple paragraph essays in several different rhetorical forms.”

Developing Composition Skills II (Post Intermediate).

... read and comprehend long complex passages with greater control of reading techniques in both academic and non-academic reading passages and to refine the expository techniques in academic essays. The learner is expected to utilize critical thinking, inferences, and logical reasoning skills to analyze complex passages and be able to interactively respond to reading material in oral and written form. At the end of this course, the student will be able to analyze readings and to write multiple paragraph essays which incorporate outside sources and proper citation.”

*Essays Reading and Writing
(College Preparation).*

... read longer authentic texts and react with the text in oral and written forms. The learner is expected to write in prescribed academic formats and include MLA and/or APA in-text citation in longer essays. At the end of this course, the student will be [able] to write three page essays with multiple text references.”

*Academic Reading and Writing
(College Preparation).*

... read academic texts and respond to them in oral and written scholarly formats. The learner is expected to read through a variety of material and analyze the text while responding to any type of essay question. At the end of this course, the student will be able to evaluate, interpret, and insert evidence in order to write a 5-10 page paper with citations and documentation of outside sources.”

*Advanced Reading and Writing
(College Preparation).*

... read and appraise authentic texts and produce essays on the collegiate level. The learner is expected to assess and analyze a variety of materials and texts and use them to respond to academic essay prompts. At the end of this course, the student will be able to research and defend his or her opinion in a 5-10 page paper which would include citations and documentation of outside sources.”

University of Florida –

Reading/Writing 10 (Beginning) –

- identify the main idea and supporting details of a short paragraph written with simple sentences
- scan for specific words in a text
- demonstrate most sound-to-letter correspondences by reading short passages aloud
- write sentences and a brief paragraph using limited everyday vocabulary with accurate spelling
- copy a five-sentence paragraph correctly

Reading/Writing 20 (High-Beginning) –

- identify and demonstrate comprehension of the main ideas and some supporting details of controlled passages of up to 4 paragraphs
- scan for specific information in a text
- skim for and correctly identify the main idea of a text
- write a summary of up to 5 sentences of the main idea of a reading
- write paragraphs with a right and left margin
- write paragraphs indenting the first line
- write a narrative paragraph with a topic sentence and unity
- write a descriptive paragraph with a topic sentence and unity
- accurately use periods in written assignments
- use commas correctly in compound sentences in written assignments

Reading/Writing 30 (Intermediate) –

- read and demonstrate comprehension of the main ideas and supporting details of a simplified newspaper article
- identify a paraphrase
- write a process paragraph with appropriate topic sentences, supporting sentences, and concluding sentences with unity and coherence
- write a compare and contrast paragraph with appropriate topic sentences, supporting sentences, and concluding sentences with unity and coherence
- write a cause and effect paragraph with appropriate topic sentences, supporting sentences, and concluding sentences with unity and coherence
- use commas in lists in written assignments

Reading/Writing 40 (High-Intermediate) –

- read and demonstrate comprehension of the main idea and most supporting details of a short newspaper article

- read and demonstrate comprehension of passages ranging from two to three pages long on general interest academic topics
- write a brief summary of a simplified academic text
- write a timed comparison/contrast essay, which includes a general to specific introduction, supporting body paragraphs, specific to general conclusion, and simple transitions
- write a timed cause/effect essay, which includes a general to specific introduction, supporting body paragraphs, specific to general conclusion, and simple transitions
- write a timed descriptive essay, which includes a general to specific introduction, supporting body paragraphs, specific to general conclusion, and simple transitions
- demonstrate usage of comma in complex sentences with depend clause first
- demonstrate emerging usage of semicolons and colons in sentences
- identify incidences of plagiarism
- recall the consequences of plagiarism

Reading/Writing 50 (Low-Advanced) –

- read and demonstrate comprehension of the main ideas and most supporting details of unsimplified magazines, texts
- summarize a newspaper article on a social, scientific, political issue or topic
- articulate/identify a writer's purpose and audience in class discussions and on comprehension tests
- write a timed 5-paragraph essay synthesizing information from two or more sources with compound and complex sentences with punctuation that is diverse and includes accurate use of commas, quotations marks, and semi-colons
- write an essay which uses effective and varied transition signals to accurately demonstrate relationships between ideas
- identify incidences of plagiarism
- recall the consequences of plagiarism

Reading/Writing 60 (Advanced) –

- read and demonstrate comprehension of the main idea and most supporting details of a text on an unfamiliar topic
- synthesize concepts and data from a group of readings or a series of graphs and charts in written assignments
- write a timed, 5 paragraph argument essay using elements of argument, counterargument, and, optionally, concession
- write a short, academic research paper with appropriate citations, quotations, and references, and single quotation marks, brackets and ellipses when needed
- paraphrase and summarize the main ideas of several readings on the same topic
- find academic resources in the library and on the internet for research paper
- demonstrate an understanding of a wide range of academic vocabulary and figurative language
- identify incidences of plagiarism
- recall the consequences of plagiarism

CIEP Writing 7 (Outcomes with a reading component)

- Identify the structure of a research based journal article (e.g., abstract, references, discussion...).
- Summarize a research-based *quantitative* journal article and integrate ideas gleaned from the article with personal opinion and/or experience in order to reflect on them
- Summarize a research-based *qualitative* journal article independently and integrate ideas gleaned from the article with personal opinion and/or experience in order to reflect on them
- Select appropriate, reliable, vetted, and substantive resources

- Conduct a search for library materials (e.g. peer-viewed journal articles, magazine articles, and books) using different browsers such as subject-specific electronic resources, the Rod Library online catalog UNISTAR, and general databases
- Identify and locate the full-text of paper-based journal and magazine articles
- Locate student-centered research areas of the Library
- Identify sources of research assistance available in the library
- Integrate information from a variety of sources

Writing 7 Statistics

	# of Students	Reading Level	# Pass	# Fail	Reason Fail
Spring I 2013	8	7-Exit	6	2	Did not attend/complete research paper.
Spring II 2013	13	6-Exit	12	1	Only attended one class day.
Summer 2013	3	6-Exit	3	0	
Fall I 2013	6	6-Exit	5	1	Did not turn in all assignments.
Fall II 2013	5	6-Exit	5	0	

Writing 2-6 Teacher Survey Comments – Spring I, 2014

Integration of grammar and writing textbooks –

- “Most of the time I teach them separately.”
- “Separate. There is NO linkage between the grammar and writing texts.”
- “I generally dedicate 1 separate hour to each book per 2-hour class period.”
- “I teach strictly from the grammar book for 1 hour and the writing book for 1 hour. Very rarely do I teach simultaneously. If I do, it has been for a specific grammar point and how it is applied in writing.”
- “I mostly do one hour from each, maybe a little more for grammar.”
- “I usually taught one hour with each book – separately. This was not ideal, but it was difficult to integrate the two. I did try to integrate the writing more into the grammar by using some of the topics/prompts in the Focus on Grammar book during the ‘grammar hour’ to do in-class journal writing that elicited the grammar being taught.”
- “I teach from each book separately. We do one hour of writing, take a short break, then do one hour of grammar.”

Grammar used in writing –

- “Yes... students often refer to the grammar books as I do compel them to use the structures in their compositions. I try to cross pollinate as much as I can but as the topics of the grammar and writing are so different, it’s very hard to unify the context of the two texts.”
- “Writing ‘class’ is mainly focused on writing techniques, otherwise you can quickly arrive at what is termed ‘linguistic overload.’”
- “I teach writing class focusing mainly on the writing techniques with some grammar remediation.”
- “Writing class is usually focused on writing techniques, but I try to tie in the grammar topics we have been learning about. I see many students referring to the grammar book during in-class writing, though.”
- “Focused almost entirely on paragraphs. Really only thesis and topic sentence are evaluated on a sentence level.”
- “I didn’t often notice students referring back to the grammar books during the ‘writing hour.’ The writing textbook focused more on writing techniques, so that was generally the focus of the writing portion of the class. If students asked me to look over a draft during writing class and there were grammatical errors related to grammar concepts being taught, I took time to explain to them using the board but rarely did we refer back to the grammar book for this. I did notice students using their grammar textbooks during the writing midterm and final exams because they were allowed to and they were hyper-aware of the need for correct grammar in those situations.”

- “We do not often refer back to the grammar book for writing. The writing book has some grammar components that I do cover. The only time we use the grammar book in relation to writing is for their journal assignments, as the grammar book has several ‘from grammar to writing’ prompts that I use as journal assignments.”

Writing used in grammar –

- “In grammar mostly sentences.”

- “The workbooks that accompany the grammar book and the online component that takes the place of the workbook both have discrete point writing tasks. These tasks are effective in getting students to use the grammar on a topic appropriate for that particular grammar structure. As a result, I use these prompts from the workbook to serve as ‘journal’ prompts.”

- “A typical grammar class of fortunate events starts with trying to understand a concept, practicing the concept by using the exercises in the text, having the students use the concept in a personal context (verbally), and then having students write sentences that are shared with the class in the aim of correcting any errors and making the sentences better, stronger, bigger.”

- “It is mainly focused on creating grammatically correct sentences.”

- “We focus on grammatically correct sentences during the grammar portion.”

- “Other than the grammar exercises in the textbooks, which were generally discrete point, my primary technique for having them practice grammar was through in-class journals (2-3 paragraphs in length) that specifically elicited the new grammar.”

- “In grammar, we mostly focus on discrete point topics, but they do have to write in grammar class. I have them write short stories, describe pictures, etc. so that they can use the grammar right away in their writing.”