From Best Practices to Next Practices: Teaching For Transfer

Scholastic
Comprehensive Literacy Summit
Adria Klein, Ph.D.
afk1183@gmail.com
@adriaklein_read

Our 21st Literacy Journey: Three Shifts in the Standards
• Build Content Knowledge
• Use evidence from text when speaking or writing
• Practice with complex texts

These Shifts Require New Resources for Meeting Grade Level Expectations to Implement Effective Literacy Instruction

We are shifting from...
Balanced Literacy to
Balanced Literacy on Standards
From Now to Next: Part III
What is the Difference OR Is There a Difference?

- **Balanced Literacy** is an approach characterized by a variety of instructional designs and delivery systems.
- **Workshop** is an instructional design; There are many types of Workshops.
- **Small Group Reading** is a best practice used in both Balanced Literacy classrooms and the Workshop model.

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21st Century Literacy Expectations

Three Questions to Keep in Mind

1. What *knowledge sources* are needed to make effective decisions?
2. What *strategies and skills* are needed to make effective decisions?
3. What is the *role of the curriculum* in shaping these knowledge, skills and strategies?

Adapted from Linda Dorn (2016)

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How is the Balanced Literacy classroom organized?
What does the literacy block include?
How is the instructional time designed?

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Start with the Why

![Diagram showing the why, how, and what in a circular relationship]
Gradual Release of Responsibility in Teaching and Learning is about TRANSFER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Teacher Control</th>
<th>I Do</th>
<th>I Do</th>
<th>You Do</th>
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<tr>
<td>You Watch</td>
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<td>Modeling</td>
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Levels of Teacher Support Across the School Day

aR1183@gmail.com

Big Idea: Teaching for Transfer

Transfer is “the practice of applying knowledge or meaning from a familiar context to an unfamiliar context.”

Transfer-by-design: continuously providing scaffolded learning opportunities for students to prove understanding—and make deeper meaning—by “moving” their understanding.

Using Self-Transfer to Drive 21st Century Assessment by Terry Heick

Big Idea: Teaching for Transfer

Build three types of background knowledge:

**Topical** (content) knowledge
- What is the topic to be learned?

**Strategic** knowledge
- What strategies should I use to help me learn the content?

**Text Structure/Conventions** Knowledge
- What structures and features of text does the author use to help me understand the content?

Dorn, L. and Soffos, C. (2017) *Teaching for Deep Comprehension*
Understanding by Design
Grant Wiggins went into further detail about transfer in his article:

Clarifying Transfer And How It Impacts What We Think Students Understand

Why is Transfer Important?
It forces the student to consider many important questions, including:
• What do I know?
• How do I know it?
• Where and how can I use what I know?

Cognitive Moves
Students are typically required to make four different cognitive moves to transfer learning successfully:

1) independently realize what the question is asking and think about which answers/approaches make sense here;

Cognitive Moves
Transfer only is demanded and elicited when there is some element of novelty in the task and thus strategic thought and judgment is required by the performer.
Near to Far Transfer

- **Near**: Near transfer occurs when there is little ‘distance’ from how the content was learned to where it’s applied (the transfer target)

- **Far**: Far transfer occurs when there is great ‘distance’ from how the content was learned to where it’s applied (think assessment)

  Zull, (2012) *The Art of Changing the Brain*

Again...What is Transfer?

If you only can recall and state something you don’t really understand it. You have to be able to explain and justify its meaning and applicability – a Meaning goal – and you also have to be able to apply it into settings where it is needed, without being prompted to do so or shown exactly how to do so = TRANSFER.

The Fourth Shift...

For 21st Century Literacy Expectations, We Must Shift from Mastery to Transfer with a higher degree of Engagement. This involves a different approach to text and a different type of lesson design.

The Fourth Shift: Gradual Release of Responsibility Focusing on TRANSFER

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Levels of Student Control
Across All Settings in and out of School

afk1183@gmail.com
The Fourth Shift

So, how do we teach for transfer?

The concept is based on transfer, the idea of amplifying core literacy instruction in small group support services, rather than isolating and possibly working in a silo or uncoordinated way that works against transfer.

Klein, A., et al. (September/October, 2017). Literacy and Language Learning as Partners in the Classroom. Principal. NAESP.

Using Chunks and Shorter Texts at Complex Levels, NOT Lower Level Texts!

Thin-slicing is a term used in psychology and philosophy to describe the ability to find patterns in events based only on “thin slices” or narrow windows of experience.

Thin-slicing refers to the ability of unconscious to find patterns in situations and behavior based on a very narrow slice of experience.

(Gladwell, 2005, p. 231)
In other words...
We don’t need to eat the whole cake to know if it is good; we only need a thin-slice.

(Gladwell, 2005, p. 231)

How Does Thin-slicing Apply to the Classics?
Think about the possible focus for the first two paragraphs of Dicken’s Great Expectations:
My father’s family name was Pirrip.
My first name was Philip, but as a small child, I couldn’t pronounce either name and didn’t utter anything longer or more explicit than Pip. So I called myself Pip and came to be called Pip.

Teaching for Transfer in Small Groups
Classroom-based Interventions include:
• Familiar Routines within Lessons
• Daily Contact or in a Consistent Pattern
• Close Supervision/Observation of Tasks
• Short, Focused Lessons
• Learning Linked to Other Classroom Activities and Transfer Emphasized

Klein, A. (1992) Scholastic Balanced Literacy

Ours was the marsh country, down by the river, and twenty miles to the sea. My first, most vivid impression was on a raw afternoon towards evening. At such a time, I found out for certain that a bleak place overgrown with nettles was the churchyard. This was where my father, Philip Pirrip, and Georgiana, his wife and my mother, were dead and buried. Beyond the churchyard was the river. The sound of wind rushing was in fact the sea. And the small, shivering boy who was growing afraid of it all and beginning to cry, was me. Pip.
“The illiterate of the future are not those who can't read or write but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn.”

Alvin Toffler, American writer and futurist

Teaching Forward...
to prepare students to read a book that not yet been written and media that has not yet been created.

afk1183@gmail.com

"When one teaches, two learn"
-Robert Heinlein

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