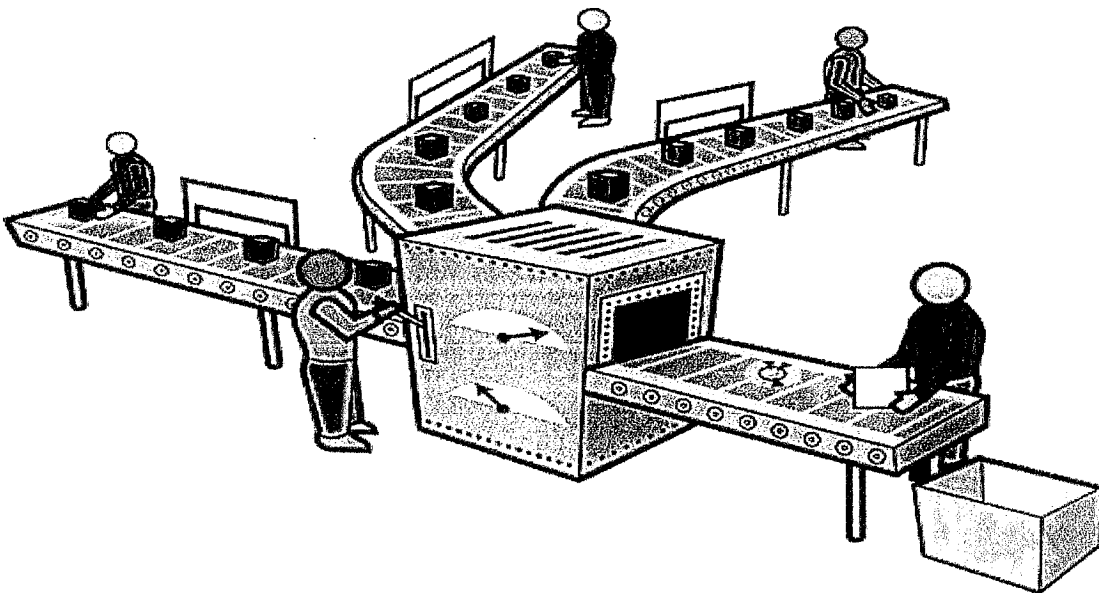


Building Vocabulary

Literacy in all content
areas...

Awareness of College and
Career Readiness Standards



Reading and Language Swoop In on Social Studies, Math, and Science in Grades 6-8



When two sets of data are strongly linked together we say they have a **High Correlation**.

The percentages (%) equal the strength of that relationship. Correlation is positive when the values increase together.

If there is strong correlation, then the points are all close together. If there is weak correlation, then the points are all spread apart.

- **+0.30.** A weak uphill (positive) linear relationship
- **+0.50.** A moderate uphill (positive) relationship
- **+0.70.** A strong uphill (positive)

The impact of Reading and Language on TerraNova Scores *

- Reading has a greater impact in Science than it does in Math
- Language has a greater impact in Math than it does in Science
- Reading skills include vocabulary, comprehension, and analysis, which are important in comprehending informational text as in Science
- Language skills include syntax, composition, and vocabulary, which are important in interpreting instructional text in the 2 languages of Math—words and numbers
- Both Reading and Language have a major impact on Social Studies

How do we know if our students can read and respond to what we put in front of them?

Correlated Data from TerraNova /Grades 6-8 without specifically measuring the impact of Reading and Language

Reading
Language

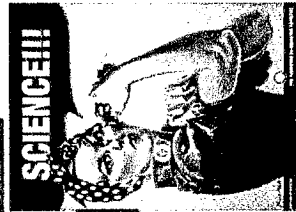
Correlated Data from TerraNova/ Grades 6-8 when specifically measuring the impact of Reading and Language

30%



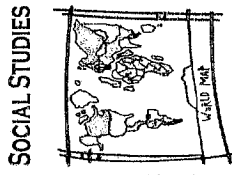
34%

40%



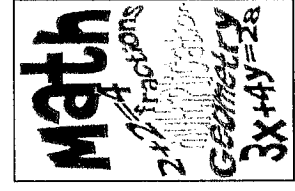
34%

37%



30%

65%



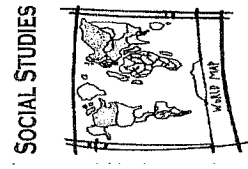
67%

72%



68%

68%



67%

*2014 Isles District TerraNova Scores -- correlations compiled by Dr. Candace Macken, graphic design by Mr. Ray Woods



Adolescent Literacy: Content Literacy and the Common Core

Joan Sedita

A major tenet of the 6-12 Common Core literacy standards is that content teachers outside of the ELA classroom emphasize literacy in their planning and instruction. One of the architects of the six major Common Core literacy shifts (Coleman) is that students should learn through domain specific texts in science and social studies classrooms. Rather than referring to the text, they should be expected to learn from what they read. The title of the literacy standards, *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects*, makes it clear that content teachers are key to ensuring that students have college and career ready literacy skills at graduation.

The most recent research on effective instruction for improving the literacy skills of adolescent students supports this emphasis on content literacy instruction. In the report *Academic Literacy Instruction for Adolescents*, Torgesen and colleagues (2007) noted that in order to meet adolescent literacy goals all teachers must be involved, especially since most middle and high school students spend most of their time in content-area classes and must learn to read expository, informational, content-area texts with greater proficiency. The report said, “Although reading strategies might be taught explicitly in a designated reading support class, students are unlikely to generalize them broadly to content areas unless teachers also explicitly support and elaborate the strategies’ use with content-area texts” (p. 12).

Reading Next (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004) identifies 15 elements of successful programs designed to improve adolescent literacy achievement in middle and high schools. Six of these elements directly address content literacy instruction: *direct, explicit comprehension instruction; effective instructional principles embedded in content; extended time for literacy; text-based collaborative learning; diverse texts; intensive writing.*

In 2008, the Institute of Education Sciences published the practice guide *Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices* (Kamil et al.). The goal of the guide was to present specific and coherent evidence-based recommendations that educators can use to improve literacy levels among students in Grades 4–12. The report made five recommendations about improving practice, three of which directly address content literacy instruction: (1) *Provide explicit vocabulary instruction*, (2) *Provide direct and explicit comprehension strategy instruction*, (3) *Provide opportunities for extended discussion of text meaning and interpretation.*

Regarding content writing instruction, *Writing Next* (Graham & Perrin, 2007) summarized the results of a large-scale statistical review of research into the effects of specific types of writing instruction on adolescents’ writing proficiency. The report identified eleven elements of effective writing instruction, and all eleven elements represent instruction that can be embedded in content classroom instruction for all students: (1) *Writing strategies*, (2) *Summarizing*, (3) *Collaborative writing*, (4) *Specific product goals*, (5) *word processing*, (6) *Sentence combining*, (7) *Prewriting*, (8) *Inquiry activities*, (9) *Process writing approach*, (10) *Study of models*, (11) *Writing for content learning.*

Content Literacy Alignment to Common Core Standards

It is important to note that the Common Core literacy standards *complement* rather than replace content standards in subject areas. Content teachers need to keep literacy achievement goals in mind along with coverage of content information. Which Common Core literacy standards are most associated with content literacy instruction? That is, which 6-12 literature and informational text standards should content teachers be most focused on? Here are my suggestions:

Reading Standards

- #1 & #2: Students should be able to determine what texts say explicitly and to summarize them, make logical inferences, and cite textual evidence to support conclusions.
- #4: Students should be able to interpret words and phrases as they are used in text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings.
- #5: Students should be able to analyze the structure of text, including how sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of text affect meaning.
- #8: Students should be able to synthesize and compare information from print and digital sources and critically evaluate the reasoning and relevance of text evidence.

- # 10: Students should be able to read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently.

Writing Standards

- #1, #2, & #3: Students should be able to write effective arguments, informative text, and narratives.
- #4, #5, & #6: Students should be able to use the writing process and make their writing appropriate to varying task demands, purposes, and audiences.
- # 10: Students should write routinely over extended and shorter time frames.

Language Standards

- #4: Students should be able to determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and reference materials.
- #5: Students should demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- #6: Students should acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level, and demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge.

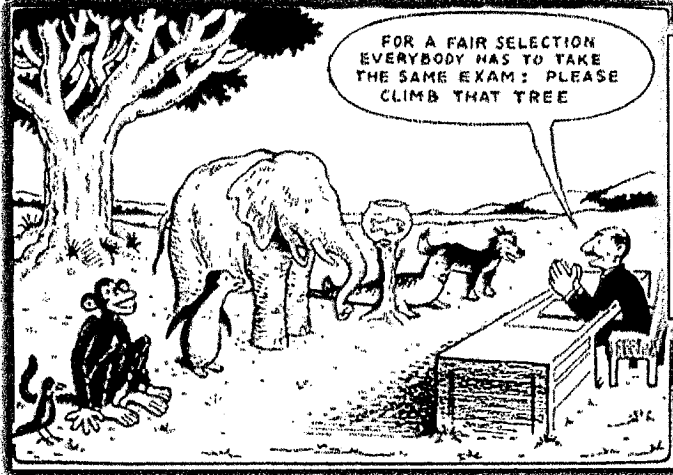
In addition to the specific standards listed above, I think it is also important for content area teachers to understand the focus of the Common Core on making sure students develop comprehension skills to understand steadily increasing complex texts. Students must learn to read and learn from complex text because this is the demand that will be placed on them in college and career. For too many years, content teachers have avoided using text as the vehicle to learn information because student-literacy skills were not sufficient. I like to use the metaphor that content teachers have been *giving the students fish*, but not *teaching them how to fish*. It is important for content teachers to understand that the Common Core asks that they not simply use more complex text – rather they need to do the more difficult task of teaching students how to read and understand subject-area text.

Joan Sedita is founding partner of Keys to Literacy, a literacy professional development organization that focuses on adolescent literacy. www.keystoliteracy.com

References

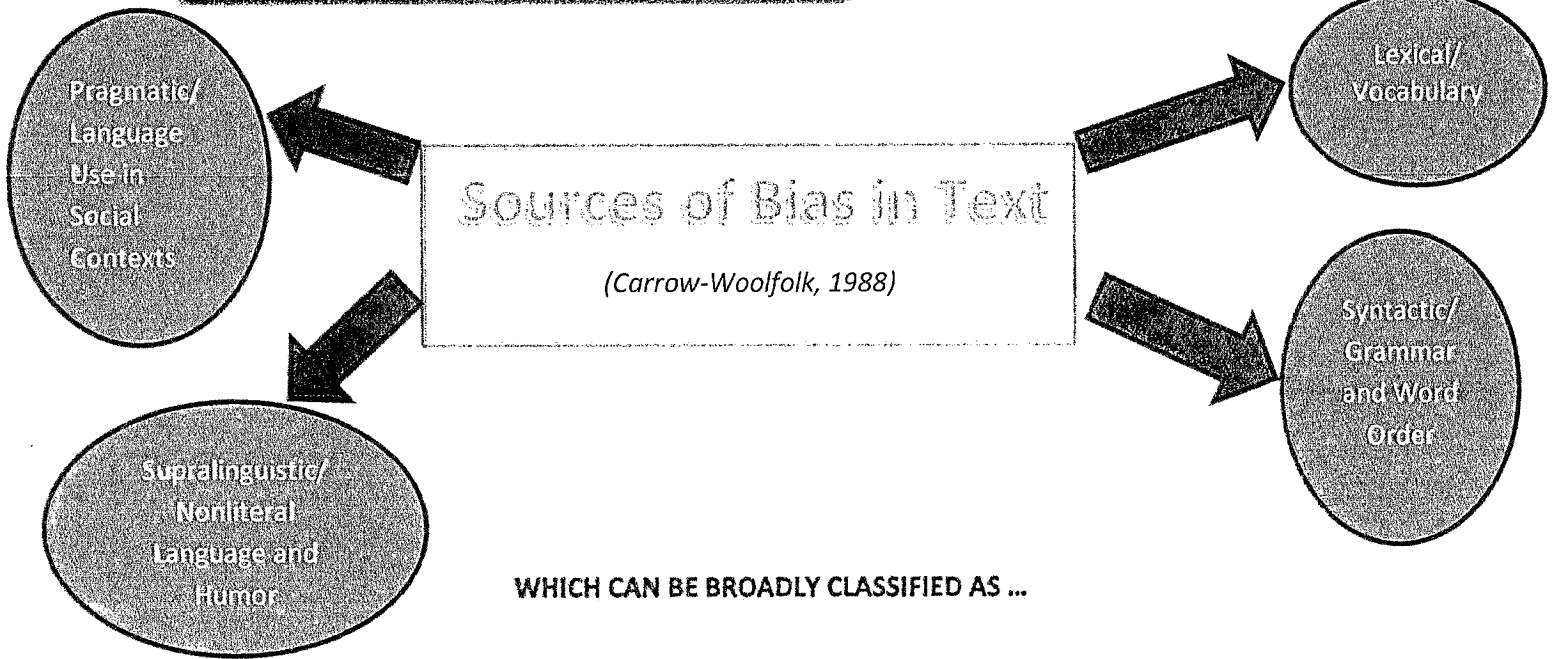
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What is Bias?

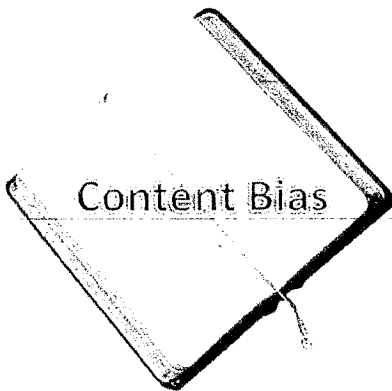


Bias is the presence of some characteristic in text that results in differential performance for individuals of the same ability but from different racial/ethnic, gender, cultural, or religious groups.

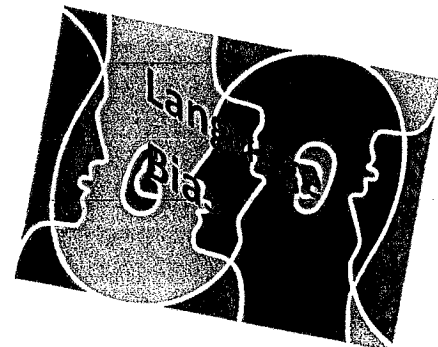
Adapted from Hambleton & Rogers, 1995



WHICH CAN BE BROADLY CLASSIFIED AS ...



AND



Does the text contain content that is unfamiliar to different groups?

Does the content of the text reflect information or skills that may not be expected to be within the educational background of all students?

DOES THE TEXT CONTAIN WORDS THAT HAVE DIFFERENT MEANINGS FOR DIFFERENT GROUPS?

DOES THE TEXT CONTAIN DIFFICULT VOCABULARY?

Three Tiers of Words

Tier One words are the words of everyday speech usually learned in the early grades. They are not considered a challenge to the average native speaker, though English language learners of any age will have to attend carefully to them.

Tier Two words (what the Standards refer to as *general academic words*) are far more likely to appear in written texts than in speech. They appear in all sorts of texts. Tier Two words often represent subtle or precise ways to say relatively simple things. Because Tier Two words are found across many types of texts, they are highly generalizable.

Tier Three words (what the Standards refer to as *domain-specific words*) are specific to a domain or field of study and key to understanding a new concept within a text. Because of their specificity and close ties to content knowledge, Tier Three words are far more common in informational texts than in literature. Recognized as new and “hard” words for most readers, they are often explicitly defined by the author of a text, repeatedly used, and otherwise heavily scaffolded.

Sorting Activity

Place the following words under the appropriate Tier
by referring to the descriptions above.

relative	cloud	accumulate	arm	misfortune	Impressionism
lava	carburetor	legislature	pizza	circumference	house
school	walk	expectation	falter	eclipse	aorta
vary	friend	itemize			

Tier One Words	Tier Two Words	Tier Three Words

R.A.F.T. pre-writing

Name: _____ Subject: _____

Role	Audience	Format	Topic

Vocabulary terms to use in R.A.F.T. writing:

Ideas to include: