

Educational Buzz Words to Use When Promoting Newspaper Programs

By Dr. Darla Shaw, Western Ct. State University

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Educational jargon is continually changing with each new piece of legislation and the advent of new learning strategies and brain research. To help you incorporate some of these terms into your marketing and educational programs I have compiled fifty key phrases along with where they would best be used.

Overall Program:

Authentic resource: The newspaper is considered an authentic resource as it is used on a daily basis by the greater portion of the population. Unlike a textbook that is usually only used when someone is in school, a newspaper has real world utility. It is important to stress this concept at newspaper workshops.

Standards based program: Assessment has become such a focal point of today's education. Teachers must teach to standards set by the state and national government. Since all testing is based on standards it is important for newspaper programs to include these standards in all their work. When the standards are included, materials and activities are essential and not considered supplemental in nature.

Multi-sensory program: Any good program today should involve reading, listening, and hands on activities. Teachers want to see how newspapers can

be used in a manipulative manner. They need to see that newspapers can address a variety of learning modalities so that individualization is possible.

Diversity: In the past we talked about multicultural literature and focusing on people of different races. Today we talk about diversity. This term relates to people of different backgrounds as well as people with different learning styles, special needs, and special talents.

ELL: English Language Learner has replaced what was previously known as ESOL or ESL.

Interdisciplinary: Newspaper curriculum materials should be interdisciplinary in nature. They should be able to be used for reading, writing, science, social studies, math, etc. in different combinations. They should NOT be an add-on. Newspaper curriculum materials should be an integral part of the curriculum

Multiple Intelligences linked: Newspaper program activities should include a variety of activities that feed on students' strengths: the verbal, the mathematical, the interpersonal (group work), the intrapersonal (sense of self), the arts, the musical, the body and

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movement, the naturalistic (out of doors) and the theoretical or abstract.

Best Practices: These are good models of lesson planning and execution. These models include the standards, initial response, modeling, guided practice, a focus on processing, an application component, and assessment.

Interactive Program: Research has repeatedly shown that students will not learn by just reading, or by just listening. They need to interact with the material and with others who are working on the same reading. Newspapers provide the interactive modality necessary for mastery of process.

Frameworks and Benchmarks: Teachers today must follow specified frameworks of standards in order for students to meet certain benchmarks set by the state and federal government. When developing newspaper programs and materials incorporate state frameworks and benchmarks to make teachers more receptive to regular newspaper usage. The state departments of education and the school systems must make these items available to the public.

Character Education Pillars: Newspaper articles link well to the six pillars of character education: honesty, bravery, respect, caring, responsibility, and citizenship. Use the term Character Education Pillars when selecting articles that represent these themes.

Mini-lesson: Teachers today must not lecture. They must use standards, the school curriculum and an examination of student work to prepare short skill based mini-lessons. These mini-lessons demonstrate to the students exactly what the teacher expects from them in their work and how to go about doing the work correctly.

Rubrics: So that teachers can properly assess student work today, he/she must develop a set of rubrics or criteria for each product that the student is expected to complete. When developing newspaper lessons make certain to include a set a rubrics for assessment purposes.

Family Literacy: With so many immigrants coming to our country, literacy today is not only for the students, it is for parents as well. We need newspaper nights where parents can learn to use newspapers with their children as well as tools for their own learning.

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Literate Environment: When talking to teachers promote using the newspaper pictures and articles to add to a literate environment. By having these materials on the bulletin boards and walls, students can quickly access new words and ideas.

Critical Thinking: Today's students are being taught to focus on the inferential and evaluative questions. The literal questions are merely embedded in the answers of the other two. Students need to be able to "think out of the box" to solve problems. Using real problems from the newspaper helps students to develop their critical thinking skills.

Learning Centers: Students do not always learn in a large group setting, they learn in cooperative groups and in learning centers. A newspaper center with all sorts of literacy activities is a great addition to the classroom.

Reflection/Metacognition: When students finish a reading there is still the reflective or metacognitive component. In this component the students are to ask themselves: What did I just do? Did it work successfully or not? If I had this assignment to do in the future what changes should I make?

Schema: Each student brings something different to a reading. Discuss what these special areas of expertise may be (skill or content wise). Explore the schema of the class and individual students before getting deeply into the material.

Scaffolding: A good teacher needs to support or scaffold student learning through structure. When planning newspaper lessons, make certain that the student has the structure of a graphic organizer, a foldable, note taking, retelling, modeling or some other format to assist in the development of the process.

Reading Programs:

Reading First: This is the key area of the Leave No Child Behind Legislation. Students must be deeply entrenched in the five following areas: Phonics and Phonemic Awareness, Vocabulary Development, Comprehension and Interpretation, and Fluency. These areas can all be effectively taught through proper newspaper usage.

Phonemic Awareness/Phonics: When students are learning to read instead of reading to learn, they are dealing with phonemic awareness and phonics. They are learning word parts and how to put them together to form actual words. The newspaper is a

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wonderful source of big bold titles that can be cut and pasted to form all types of new words from a particular word base.

Shared Reading: When someone is reading a newspaper article to the students but stopping from time to time to interact with the students (asking questions, talking about vocabulary, and making predictions based on pictures) this is shared reading. In this reading the teacher is in control and the activity is basically a listening activity.

Guided Reading: In this type of reading the students are reading on their own, or with another student, with a particular focus. Here the student is in charge. To prepare students for this type of reading a teacher would have taught a mini-lesson to show students what process they needed to use while reading.

Read-a-louds: It is very acceptable for teachers to read a loud to their students when the material is too difficult. However, even when the material is being read aloud, difficult vocabulary words should be covered before the reading. Students can understand material that is read a loud , three or four grade levels higher than they can actually read independently. Newspaper articles are often read to younger students

as the reading level is too high for them, but the listening level is not.

Degrees of Reading Power: Instead of assigning a particular grade level to a reading, today the difficulty level of a reading piece is listed as Degrees of Reading Power. On permanent record cards the reading level is listed as a DRP.

Reading Rate Formats: When students are using the newspaper, teachers should use the terms skim (get a preview or overview of key information), scan (locate specific information only), or phrase read (read material carefully for examination or discussion purposes). Use these terms in your publications and workshops.

Initial Response to Reading: Before a student begins to read a newspaper article he/she should be instructed to look at the picture, the captions and skim the material to get an overview and set up an initial response to the reading. He/she can change the initial response but it is important to have an initial response in order to begin the closer reading.

Fluency: Fluency is one of the five key areas in the Reading First Section of No Child Left Behind. Fluency means that a student can orally and silently read a pas-

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sage without stumbling over the words. Rereading the same newspaper article several times helps students build fluency.

Author's/Reporter's Craft: Teachers do not teach writing from a grammar book alone. Today they look more to good authors and good reporters for models of writing. Students learn to analyze an authors/reporter's style and try and adopt the techniques that they feel will work for them. By collecting a series of articles from the same reporter or columnist a student can learn a great deal about writer's craft.

Essential and/or Focus Questions: Students today are not to start reading without a preview of material and the setting up of an essential question or a series of focus questions that form the basis for the reading. This preview and setting up of essential or focus questions helps students to interact with the material instead of just reading words. When providing newspaper materials provide an essential question or have the students develop their own.

Open-Ended Reader Response Questions: Today's students are expected to answer more open ended reader response questions than multiple choice

questions. The reader response questions are usually evaluative in nature and require the student to return to the text.

Making Connections: It is essential for students to make connections with the newspaper article that they are reading. They have three types of connections they can make: Text to self, Text to another text, movie, TV program, and Text to world. The newspaper is a natural for the text to world connection.

Taking a Critical Stance: The most essential skill that teachers are looking for students to develop in reading today is answering the critical stance question. After a student has read an article the teacher can pose the critical stance question to be answered, but it works best if the student can pose his/her own question. The student must also remember to back up his/here statement with two or three key points.

Lenses: When students are reading a newspaper article they need to look at the article through different points of view or lenses. They can no longer just look at the article from the viewpoint of the reader alone.

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Graphic Organizers/Foldables: To help students to organize information from the newspaper they are taught to use graphic organizers and foldables. Foldables are like graphic organizers, but 3D in nature. Both organizers help students retell key information before putting the information to print.

Retelling: The key to better comprehension and interpretation is retelling of key information. This retelling can come from graphic organizers or foldables. Before having students complete a newspaper summary, have them do a retelling.

Levels of Questions: Bloom's taxonomy listed six levels of questions. Today we focus on the three most important levels: the literal (on the line), the inferential (between the lines), and the evaluative (beyond the lines). When planning newspaper programs focus on the inferential and evaluative questions.

Picture Walks/Visualizations: Language arts today is comprised of the following: reading, writing, speaking, listening, visualization (picture walks) and technology usage. Reading the photos and graphs in a newspaper is not only for the primary grades but important at all levels.

Literacy Circles: This strategy is used when reading chapter books or newspaper articles. Each student is put in a group and reads with a particular purpose: discussion leader, vocabulary person, quote person, connector, predictor, etc. When the reading is complete each person leads a discussion based on his/her focus area.

Jigsaw: This is a newspaper strategy where three or four newspaper articles are chosen on different levels. Each student in class is put in a group and reads only one article. However, in addition to reading the article, he/she must take notes on the article, retell the article to his group, and answer questions on this article. This technique is called a jigsaw because when all three or four people have completed the task the puzzle is complete.

Touchstone Article: A touchstone article is one that is so special in nature it can be used for a classroom discussion, for a response essay, or for a journal entry. Many times such an article is read more than once for deeper meaning.

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WRITING:

Writer's Workshop: Writing today is not taught through only a grammar book. It is taught through examination of good writing, through keeping a writing journal, to listening to the writing of others, to peer editing, etc. Students also often select their own topics. These topics can easily come from the newspaper.

Seed Ideas: When a student is looking for ideas for his/her writing, he/she can look to the newspaper as a resource. These ideas would be considered seed ideas as they can eventually grow into a meaningful piece of writing.

Summarization: When students are taught to summarize non-fiction they should be instructed to use the newspaper format for writing: the 5 W's and an H. Research has shown that this is one of the most successful summarization techniques because of the strong structure that it provides.

Journaling: If students are going to have ideas and information for writing they need to keep a journal. In this journal students should collect quotes, vocabulary words, photos, graphs, articles, poems, and anything else that will help develop a good piece of writing. There is an endless supply of journaling ideas found daily in the newspaper.

Thought Shots and Snap Shots: These two terms are used to help students write. When students are looking at a news photo where there are no words, just facial expressions, ask the students to predict the thoughts of people in the picture. This technique would be known as a Thought Shot. When students are looking at a descriptive news photo have them describe the photo in words so that the person has a picture or snapshot in his/her head. This technique would be known as a Snap Shot. These two techniques are finally transferred to a student's own writing.

Writing Process: When students are doing an important piece of writing they go through the following stages: brainstorming of ideas, outlining, first draft, conferring with peers and/or teacher, editing and revising, second draft, more conferring, final draft, and publication. This process can be linked to essay writing that is connected to the reading of several related newspaper articles.

Prompt Writing: When students are taking a standardized writing test they are usually given a writing prompt or scenario on which to write. Due to a limited amount of time students are not able to go through the entire writing process. In the lower grades the students must be able to do a narrative writing. In the middle grades they must be able to do an

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expository writing. In the upper grades they have to be able to complete a persuasive writing piece. All three of these formats can be found in the newspaper.

Annotation: Students today need to be able to take notes, but they also must be taught to annotate or make appropriate comments on the text. The newspaper is wonderful for teaching this skill as students can annotate directly on the newsprint.

Simulation: Today students do not always show their comprehension through a test. They show their comprehension through developing products that are often simulations. For example: mock trials, mock interviews, news casts, classroom newspapers, press conferences, etc. are all examples of simulations that utilize the newspaper and test comprehension skills.

Technology:

Infographics: Today's students are not going to spend much time in the real world writing essays. They will, however, need to develop infographics for purposes of communication. Infographics are usually about 60 % words and 40% pictures. Models for this product are found in the newspaper.

NewsWeb Quest: Students today are given questions to answer though the use of newspapers, periodicals and the internet. Teachers are being told to use the textbook as only one possible resource. Newspapers are now being used for standardized testing purposes and products more than textbooks. The timeliness of a newspaper is hard to beat.

Multigenre Research: Instead of the typical research paper, an alternative type of research is being used here. This research is product oriented. The products can be taken from the newspaper format: hard news articles, feature articles, comics, political cartoons, print ads, classified ads, editorials, letters of advise, sports articles, weather articles, financial articles, etc.