Office for Education Policy and Innovation

Evidence-based research for expert literacy teaching

Paper No. 12
October 2007

State Government Victoria
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Published by Education Policy and Research Division
Office for Education Policy and Innovation
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
Melbourne
October 2007

Authorised by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2 Treasury Place, East Melbourne, Victoria 3002

Also published on http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/research/researchpublications.htm

Authors
Claire Wyatt-Smith and Stephanie Gunn
Griffith Institute for Educational Research, Faculty of Education, Griffith University.

Edited by the Research Branch, Office for Education Policy and Innovation

This project was managed by the Research Branch, Office for Education Policy and Innovation

For more information contact:
Sandra Mahar
Research Manager
Email: research@edumail.vic.gov.au

Contents

Executive summary

This paper, *Evidence-based research for expert literacy teaching* was written to provide school leaders, literacy coordinators and teachers with high quality research-based information on how best to improve literacy skills to maximise student outcomes.

The paper provides an analysis of major current theoretical perspectives on literacy teaching, including the debate generated by three polarised positions about quality literacy education:

- the skills-based versus whole language debate
- the exclusively print-based approach versus multiliteracies
- the cultural heritage versus critical literacy theoretical models approach.

The paper explores some frameworks developed in the literacy field that represent a movement towards bringing these competing views together – a welcome development for schools seeking to ensure that every student is equipped with a full repertoire of literacy skills and competencies. The goal is to provide educators with a sound understanding of the theoretical models underlying competing views of literacy acquisition and application.

The paper also provides a discussion of the implications for practitioners of the different theoretical perspectives and points to practical strategies that teachers and schools can implement to improve the effectiveness of literacy teaching and learning.

The report presents summary tables that highlight the contrasting theoretical positions, key points of discussion and considerations for practice.

Introduction

This report has been developed to support improved literacy education for all students across all stages of schooling in Victoria. The report uses the earlier findings of *Literacy teaching and learning in Victorian schools* (Department of Education & Training 2006) and draws on additional recent major national and international literacy studies, meta-analyses and key theoretical debates to provide school leaders, literacy coordinators and teachers with best current research-based knowledge on improving literacy skills to maximise student outcomes.

A key premise of the paper is that a substantial proportion of school effectiveness can be attributed to teachers, learning support personnel and school leadership. A related view is that expert literacy teachers require deep understanding and knowledge of literacy processes and theory, including competing theoretical positions. The paper thus aims to provide teachers with a sound understanding of the theoretical models underlying competing views of literacy acquisition and application. By achieving a deep understanding and knowledge of these theoretical models and their empirical implications for literacy, teaching practice can be informed rather than confused by the debates.

For the purpose of this paper, the definition of literacy employed in the *Literacy teaching and learning in Victorian schools* project and espoused in the Australian Government's literacy policy (*Literacy for all: the challenge for Australian schools*) will be used:

> the ability to read and use written information, to write appropriately, in a wide range of contexts, for many different purposes, and to communicate with a variety of audiences. Literacy is integrally related to learning in all areas of the curriculum, and enables all individuals to develop knowledge and understanding. Reading and writing, when integrated with speaking, listening, viewing and critical thinking, constitute valued aspects of literacy in modern life (Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs 1998).

In accepting this definition as a point of reference, it is recognised that definitions of literacy evolve and that 'literacy is a social construct, a complex idea that means different things to different cultural groups at different times' (Department of School Education & Catholic Education of Victoria 1994).

Accounts of literacy education – competing views

Since the 1950s there has been an increasing polarisation of views and accounts of literacy, with contradictory views on teaching of literacy in all areas of schooling. Mills (2005) distils the complex debates and opposing views of literacy teaching into an 'organiser' of three sets:

- the skills-based versus whole-language debate
- the exclusively print-based approach versus multiliteracies
- the opposition between cultural heritage and critical literacy theoretical models.

Mills uses his organiser to introduce a practitioner's perspective that lessens the rhetorical, argumentative gap between theory and practice.

Skills-based versus whole-language

Differing world views or paradigms about the nature of literacy have resulted in conflicting views about how to teach reading. One of the most contentious debates in literacy pedagogy is the 'skills' versus 'whole-language' debate (Mills 2005). The clash of paradigms in this case contrasts the skills-based approach, focusing on literacy as a generic set of portable skills, with the whole-language approach, which draws on constructivist principles that emphasise the reproductive/repetitive role of the learner.

The skills-based view identifies the complex phenomenon of reading as component parts. Tasks are analysed and broken down and learning is seen as facilitated by directly teaching segments of a whole which can only be understood from the dynamics of the parts. Here, literacy is conceptualised as a neutral technology reflecting a 'scientific' approach and a focus on acquisition of 'basic' literacy skills through direct instruction (Soler 2002). The scientific approach assumes that any phenomenon can be observed from a detached, objective point of view with researchers exploring the relationships between component parts through a series of studies utilising a deductive process.

By contrast with the skills-based approach, the whole-language approach reflects a constructivist or contextual view of learners as active agents in their learning, who construct new knowledge in complex, challenging learning environments that provide 'authentic' tasks. Rather than offering direct instruction, teachers approach instruction within the students' 'zone of proximal development' (Vygotsky 1978) by providing assistance when required. This approach accepts that the observer and observed are connected and that subjectivity in research inquiry is an inseparable part of social phenomena. The differing world view between these two paradigms involves one (skills-based) emphasising identified units and individual skills in isolation. The other (whole-language) stresses use-in-context and meaning, even though both focus on the individual child (Rassool 2002).

Though the debate is broadly referred to as being about the features of effective literacy education, its focus has been predominately on reading. Within the skills-based approach to reading, knowledge of words is built from the part to whole, resulting in 'an emphasis on phonics, phonological awareness, common letter-strings and initial sound blendings in order to decode and write text' (Soler 2002). This

approach argues that explicit instruction or direct teaching methods are required for learners to obtain these skills.

There have been ongoing arguments both for and against the skills-based view of reading. Chall (1967), in her book, *The Great Debate*, concluded that the explicit teaching of phonics was essential for reading acquisition. Over 20 years later and after reviewing more than 600 studies on early reading, Adams (1990) did not advocate one approach over another but stressed the importance of letter knowledge and phonics instruction. Adams concluded:

> that awareness that spoken language is composed of phonemes is an extremely important predictor of success in learning to read…[and]…approaches in which systematic code instruction is included along with the reading of meaningful connected text result in superior reading achievement overall, for both low-readiness and better prepared students.

Snow, Burns and Griffin (1998) also provided a synthesis of available research on how to prevent reading difficulties and concluded that several strategies and requirements were necessary including a working understanding of how sounds are represented alphabetically. More recently there have been a number of national and international studies (Department of Education, Science and Training 2005a; Education and Science Committee 2001; National Reading Panel 2000; Rose 2006) which have reached the following similar conclusions.

- Systematic phonics instruction is highly effective in preventing reading difficulties (National Reading Panel 2000).
- Phonetic, word-level decoding skills are an important element in a balanced reading program (Education and Science Committee 2001).
- Systematic phonics instruction is critical if children are to be taught well although teachers must draw on an integrated approach to reading that includes phonics, fluency, vocabulary knowledge and comprehension (Department of Education, Science and Training 2005a).
- High quality, systematic, synthetic phonic work taught discretely and consistently should be the prime approach to establishing word recognition but it should be set within a broad and rich language curriculum that takes into account speaking, listening, reading and writing (Rose 2006).

While these more recent studies strongly advocate a skills-based approach with a focus on phonics instruction, there is recognition that the reading process involves more than word knowledge. However 'one of the key criticisms of the skills-based approach is that literate practice is regarded as a fixed, static body of decontexualised skills, rather than a dynamic, social semiotic practice varying across cultures, time and space' (Behrman 2002; Macken-Horarik 1997, cited in Mills 2005). These criticisms reflect concerns about literacy learning being viewed as single units and contextually discrete, with an emphasis on segmenting learning into parts, keeping the learner predominately passive. Concern has also been raised on such issues as generalisation and transfer of skills, as it is argued that genuine literacy situations found outside the classroom are absent in a decontextualised skills-based approach.

Concurrently, the skills-based approach has witnessed a movement away from viewing literacy, and reading in particular, as the neutral decoding of print to a view of literacy as a 'range of meanings produced at the interface of person and text, and the linguistic strategies and cultural knowledges used to "cue" into meanings embedded in the text' (Rassool 2002). In this more whole-language oriented approach, meaning is seen to develop from whole to part, or from meaningful units of language and from the highly contextualised to more abstract, where learners are viewed as being

inherently active and self-regulating, constructing their own knowledge without the need for explicit instruction. Advocates of this approach (e.g. Cambourne 2002; Goodman 1976; McInerney & McInerney 2006) argue that children learn to read through being read to and being immersed in a literacy-rich environment, with less reliance on processing every characteristic of the word and letter.

Advocacy has been intense on both sides of the debate. For example, Coles (2003; 2001), in defence of more constructivist approaches, claimed that the National Reading Panel report of 2000 misrepresented research findings in order to advocate for skills-based approaches.

However, it has been noted that research investigating comparisons between skills-based and whole-language approaches is difficult. For example, in a submission to the *Teaching children to read* inquiry (House of Commons 2005), Dr Morag Stuart indicated there are positive benefits for children who receive dedicated synthetic phonics programs, but warned that individual studies had significant limitations. She noted that it is very difficult to do comparative studies in actual sites of classroom practice and that there had not been 'any decisive research evidence determining the value of dedicated phonics programs directly compared to the mixture of phonics and other strategies' (House of Commons 2005). One study that has attempted such a comparison was undertaken in the United States. Using multiple sources of both quantitative and qualitative data, this study examined how the interpretations of learners differ in skills-based and whole-language classrooms. Dahl and Freppon (1995) found that the results presented a somewhat paradoxical picture:

> On one hand, some findings, particularly those from quantitative measures, indicated a number of similarities in learning outcomes as measured by the tasks assessing written language knowledge. The cross-curricular comparison also documented that children made progress in both approaches.
>
> On the other hand, many of the findings demonstrated that learners made different senses of reading and writing in light of their experiences. The significant difference in written narrative register was taken to reflect curricular differences. Whole-language learners generated significantly more syntactic and lexical features of story language, and they experienced extended exposure to and interaction with storybooks. In contrast, skills-based classrooms offered less emphasis on literature experiences.

Additionally, it was found that learners in whole-language classrooms showed greater interest in themselves as literacy learners and that they had a positive attitude towards literacy. By contrast, in the skills-based classroom these affective attributes were less evident except among the most proficient of readers and writers.

Conversely, the whole-language approach to literacy has been criticised as operating on broad assumptions, without sufficient support from empirical data. One such assumption is that 'written modes of language can be successfully taught through the reproduction of the conditions in which children acquire oral language' (Cambourne 1988, cited in Mills 2005). It is suggested that this assumption fails to acknowledge that oral language acquisition and formal literacy learning are two distinct processes and that, without instruction, some children will not develop or invent reading and writing skills spontaneously (Murphy 1991). Given this, a further criticism is that whole-language approaches emphasise implicit rather than explicit teaching practices that some believe (Delpit 1988) advantage the dominant cultural group over minority ethnic groups, students from low socio-economic backgrounds and those experiencing learning difficulties (Mills 2005). Here it is argued that rather than 'acquiring' the necessary reading and writing skills naturally some groups require clearly communicated and explicit teaching.

Rowe (2006) concurred with this view and, citing a number of research studies, noted:

> there is a strong body of evidence that exclusive emphasis on constructivist approaches to teaching are neither initially nor subsequently in the best interests of any group of students, and especially for those experiencing learning difficulties…For children from disadvantaged backgrounds who often do not have rich phonological knowledge and phonemic awareness upon which to base new learning, being taught under constructivist modes has the effect of compounding their disadvantage once they begin school.

Finally in 2005, Wilson commented that:

> Australian operational views of constructivism…confuse a theory of knowing with a theory of teaching. We confuse the need for the child to construct her own knowledge with a form of pedagogy which sees it as the child's responsibility to achieve that. We focus on the action of the student in the construction of knowledge rather than the action of the teacher in engaging with the child's current misconceptions and structuring experiences to challenge these misconceptions.
>
> We need, instead, a view of teaching, which emphasises that the role of the teacher is to intervene vigorously and systematically (Wilson 2005, cited in Department of Education, Science and Training 2005b).

Some have argued that the twofold opposition between these two views is unhelpful. Stanovich (2000), an advocate for phonological awareness training and proficient decoding, argued that there were more points of agreement between the opposing positions than disagreement. Stanovich provided a five-step strategy for overcoming the debate, arguing for both sides to look at the defining differences, which are probably few, and decide whether they are worth the cost of 'war'. Similarly Wheldall was quoted in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (10 April 2006) as saying that 'advocates of phonics and whole-language actually agree on far more than they disagree on. The point of departure lies solely in the importance the two camps attach to explicit and systematic instruction on how to decode words'. Coles (2003) sums up the debate by suggesting that:

> This is not a debate about whether or not phonemic awareness, phonics and other word skills contribute to learning to read. Everyone debating beginning reading education agrees that they do and that these skills should be taught. The question at issue is: how and to what extent should skills be taught, especially in relation to other strategies?
>
> The debate is also not about whether direct, systematic, and explicit instruction should be part of teaching. Here, too, everyone agrees that it should be. The question is: how much and when should it be part of reading instruction?

As Davis (2002) notes, the majority of teachers 'continue to use both of the major contested approaches – and others – as they seek to help children with different talents and backgrounds to learn to read'. Given this, Mills (2005) suggests that 'the debate should no longer be framed as 'either or' but 'when' and 'for which students'.

In summary, key differences between the skills-based versus the whole-language approach are highlighted in table 1.

Table 1: Key differences between skills-based and whole-language approach

Skills-based approach	***Whole-language approach***
▪ focuses on teaching decoding and encoding i.e. reading and writing ▪ reflects a more compartmentalised view with a focus on a generic set of portable skills	▪ draws on constructivist principles ▪ focuses on what knowledge the student brings to a learning situation and how that knowledge is used to construct new knowledge.

Table 2: Implications for practice

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Skills-based / whole-language</th></tr>
<tr><th>Skills-based</th><th>Whole-language</th></tr>
<tr><td>Focus
Whole understood from dynamics of parts
Focus on component parts where tasks are analysed and broken down into segmented parts – a generic set of portable skills
Claim a scientific approach to research – with detached objective point of view and use of deductive process
Instructional approach
Identifies units and individual skills in isolation
Learners are viewed as predominately passive where it is believed that without direct instruction some children will not develop or invent skills spontaneously
The role of the teacher is to intervene regularly and systematically using explicit instruction or direct teaching methods
Literacy instruction
Emphasis on letter knowledge and phonics instruction – systematic code instruction
Literate practice is regarded as a fixed, static body of skills with a focus on ‘basic’ literacy skills through direct instruction</td><td>Focus
Whole is viewed as more than the sum of its parts
Focus on contextual conditions and meaning-making
Approach accepts that the observer and observed are connected rendering objectivity impossible with subjectivity in research inquiry an inseparable part of social phenomena
Instructional approach
Stresses use in context and meaning
Learners are viewed as inherently active agents in their learning who construct their own knowledge in complex, challenging and collaborative learning environments involving authentic tasks
Teachers provide assistance and guidance when required
Literacy instruction
Emphasis is on moving from meaningful units of language and highly contextualised texts to more abstract aspects of language
Less reliance on processing every characteristic of the word and letter – learn to read through being read to and being immersed in a literacy-rich environment</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Discussion (Skills-based / whole language)
Recent national and international studies have been strong advocates for a skills-based approach with a focus on systematic direct teaching of phonics, particularly in the early years of school.
These studies also recognise that the reading process involves more than word knowledge with several other strategies and requirements necessary including the reading of meaningful connected text.
Several literacy researchers/ educationists have suggested that there is considerable agreement on the key issue of balance amongst various approaches. From this vantage point the question is, how much and to what extent phonics instruction (including phonemic awareness) should be prioritised over other skills and strategies, and when should it be part of reading instruction?</td></tr>
</table>

The challenge for the expert literacy teacher is not simply about choice of one approach over the other in all pedagogical contexts. Instead, it is to design literacy learning opportunities that deliberately draw on elements of each approach, separately and in combination, taking account of needs of individual students.

Print-based approaches versus multiliteracies

A recent twofold opposition that has emerged concerns 'exclusively print-based literacy practice versus multiliteracies practice' (Mills 2005). Some (Gee 1996; New London Group 1996, 2000) have argued that students must acquire multiple literacies to be able to fully participate in the new global community, which has witnessed the emergence of mass digital computer and online communications (Leu, Mallette, Karchmer & Kara-Soteriou 2005). The New London Group (1996) coined the term 'multiliteracies' to account for what they considered to be two principal aspects of the multidimensional nature of literacy:

1) the burgeoning variety of text forms associated with information and multimedia technologies
2) the context of culturally and linguistically diverse, but increasingly globalised and connected societies, along with the plurality of texts needed for them to interrelate.

Leu, Mallette et al. (2005), suggest a third aspect is the: 'fact that new technologies will appear repeatedly in our future, generating even newer literacies on a regular basis'. This will demand a consideration of how best to prepare students for new and continually changing literate futures including work, public and private lives. The need for such flexible preparedness requires a radical rethinking of literacy pedagogy, focusing on how technologies shape communication practices and meaning-making possibilities in local and global contexts (Wyatt-Smith & Elkins, forthcoming).

> **Multiliteracies:** literacy education that includes use of contemporary communication technologies and the multimodal ways in which meanings are made and shared, particularly in the context of culturally and linguistically diverse and increasingly global societies.

In Australia, educational policy is beginning to alert teachers to the need to reconsider literacy curricula in response to continuous and increasing rates of change and diversity in a multicultural society (Mills 2005). In these circumstances, the issue is not so much a debate about the need to consider new technologies but rather the relative emphasis that needs to be given to various 'multiliteracies' in school-based practice. It has been argued that while print-based literacy is necessary, new skills and competencies are required for improved life chances, particularly in the new world of work (The State of Queensland 2000). In addition, Lankshear and Bigum (1997) explain that 'whereas technology has been at best an ancillary consideration in literacy studies [to print-based practices] some more recent accounts begin to make the case that literacy and technology are integrally related'.

Literacy educators thus need to respond to rapidly changing forms of digital communications, cultural and linguistically diverse texts and contexts in schools through engaging with new pedagogy, curriculum and assessment (Mills 2005). This need for change has raised the issue of the relative 'comfort' of those required to respond to literacy pedagogy in new times. Lankshear and Bigum (1998, cited in Lankshear & Knobel 2003) address some of these issues by reference to a distinction made by Barlow (cited in Tunbridge 1995) between 'immigrant' (or outsider) and 'native' (or insider) mind-sets for new technologies. The distinction is made between those who have 'been born and grown up' in the IT world and those who have 'migrated' into this world. One (immigrant/outsider) affirms the world as the same as before, only more technologised; the other (native/insider) affirms the world as radically different, precisely because of the operation of new technologies (Lankshear & Bigum 1998). Lankshear and Knobel (2003) contend that:

> schools already face sizable cohorts of insiders largely indifferent to and bemused by the quaint practices of schooling…[which] institutionalises the privileging of the newcomer/outsider mind-set over the insider mind-set.

This raises the need to attend to teachers first, adequately preparing them to deal with new technologies, assisting them to understand the relationship to literacy and the potential for assisting students' literacy learning, even before addressing the needs of students (Lankshear et al. 1997).

Clearly, past conceptions of exclusively print-based literacy 'need to be reconceptualised to account for the increasing range of textual practice that now counts as literacy' (Mills 2005). This involves more than the integration of literacy and technology; multiple modes of communication need to be considered including reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing (Lo Bianco & Freebody 1997). For example, it has been noted that:

> Traditional definitions that construe literacy as primarily reading and writing do not match the observed literacy environment of schooling in the post-compulsory years. In this environment, students are typically expected to coordinate multiple literacies simultaneously, drawing on listening, viewing, reading, writing, speaking and critical thinking (in order of apparent frequency) in complex and interrelated ways (Cumming, Wyatt-Smith, Ryan & Doig 1998).

The authors go on to argue that:

> Definitions of literacy in the singular, and of literacy across the curriculum are not helpful and more attention needs to be paid to curriculum literacies. Definitions of curriculum literacies need to be developed that are subject specific and that draw out and make clear informing assumptions about the nature of subject knowledge.

Here, multiple literacies are recognised as an interface between a specific curriculum and its literacies. This highlights the multifaceted nature of literacy in the face of new times and challenges for schools. The conceptualisation of curriculum literacies opens the space for reconsidering the role of schools and how they could be:

> the key sites in which new kinds of literacy and other changes to society will be expected to be addressed, yet there is some concern that what constitutes and has constituted school and schooling in 'old times' may not be appropriate in new times…[with a need] to examine and change school systems (which are products of old times) to better reflect and serve new times rather than tinker with the present school systems and structure (Teacher Education Working Party 2001).

For example, when looking at the impact of technological changes, Leu (Leu 2000, 2002; Leu, Mallette et al. 2005;) offers a number of key principles for consideration when dealing with the challenges presented to school systems today by new technologies and multiple modes of communication:

- New literacies as contextual – because literacy is constantly being redefined by ever newer technologies, learning how to learn will be as important as learning particular technologies, with literacy increasingly becoming a continuous learning task for everyone.
- The relationship between literacy and technology is transactional – technology helps define literacy, but new 'envisionments' of literacy by teachers may also redefine technology.
- New literacies are multiple in nature – we can no longer think in singular terms about literacy and literacy instruction. New forms of strategic knowledge are a key requirement as students navigate increasingly complex information sources.

- Critical literacies are central to new literacies – open networks with free publication mean that skills of critical thinking and analysis are crucial for everyone in order to evaluate the information encountered. The forces that guaranteed some degree of control over the accuracy of information in traditionally published works no longer routinely apply.
- Speed counts in important ways within the new literacies – quickly finding, evaluating, using and communicating information are central instructional issues. This poses important equity challenges if schools are to meet policy goals of supporting the future success in society of all students. A substantial number of students process information more slowly or differently from others, thus schools and teachers need to devote adequate attention and resources to develop creative and inclusive solutions. This is where the proliferation of new technologies offers much potential as well as challenge.
- Learning often is socially constructed within new literacies – social learning strategies are seen as central to future literacy education. As technologies rapidly change, no single teacher can be expected to keep up with them all. However, the teacher's role becomes even more important as classrooms need to orchestrate opportunities for students to learn from one another, to share and distribute different forms of knowledge and new literacies. Social interaction has been the main driver for burgeoning internet technologies, actively shaping the construction of knowledge. The social dimension of learning has increasing worldwide potential to foster understanding; facilitate problem-solving through sharing of intellectual capital; and unite people across very disparate cultures and countries.
- New literacies build on, but do not replace, previous literacies – traditional elements of literacy will continue to be important within the new literacies and could be argued to be even more important.

As made clear in these principles, the dominance of print-based literacy practice needs to be tempered in schools today. This does not suggest a need to replace print-based literacy (Mills 2005; Durrant & Green 2000). Rather, we 'need to acknowledge that conventional, hard-copy forms of "linear" texts will continue to co-exist with electronic hypertext for some time, and that old and new literacy technologies will frequently have complementary roles in a range of contexts' (Unsworth 2002). Given this, teacher learning and knowledge will need to incorporate and make the connections between written, visual, oral and digital contexts and the overriding social learning environment.

Table 3: Implications for practice

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Print-based approaches / multiliteracies</th></tr>
<tr><th>Print-based approaches</th><th>Multiliteracies</th></tr>
<tr><td>Literacy instruction
An emphasis exclusively on printed modes of communication
Construes literacy as primarily reading and writing – or print-based</td><td>Literacy instruction
Emphasises the multidimensional nature of literacy with:
greater variety of text forms associated with information communication technologies which are continually changing and generating new literacies
the plurality of texts coming from our culturally and linguistically diverse, globalised society
Involves coordination of multiple literate capabilities – listening, viewing, reading, writing, speaking and critical thinking</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Discussion (Print-based approaches / multiliteracies)
In this case the discussion is around relative emphases of each approach in school practice and how best to combine these approaches (new technologies and print-based literacy) to enhance learning. There is widespread agreement that print-based literacy is a necessary element in school practice but not sufficient in itself, with new skills and competencies required for the changing world of work.
The emergence of new technologies requires a radical rethinking of literacy pedagogy with consideration of multiple modes of communication (see p. 7) and a focus on how technologies shape communication practices in local and global contexts (Wyatt-Smith & Elkins, in press; Leu 2002).</td></tr>
</table>

While traditional (i.e. print-based) and new technologies have complementary roles in a range of contexts there is a need to change and enrich school curriculum design, instructional strategies, social learning environment and delivery modes to reflect new ways of using and creating knowledge.

Cultural heritage versus critical literacy

The final area of debate in literacy education is between cultural heritage and critical literacy perspectives. The cultural heritage model was identified by Dixon (1969) and 'dates back to the Greek view of literature as moral and spiritual influence…[which] emphasised the transmission of culture through the study of literature' (Cumming et al. 1998). This perspective considers that the most important outcome of literacy education is 'access to the cultural and linguistic heritage of a culture, expressed most richly in its canon of valued literacy works' (Freebody, Ludwig & Gunn 1995). Here there is a belief in the unchanging merit and meaning in historically ratified texts, but also implicit affirmation of the conservative systems of belief represented in these texts (Hollindale 1995, cited in Mills 2005).

Conversely, critical literacy 'requires a fundamental shift to viewing language as social practice, which is institutionally and culturally located in sites which are neither benign nor neutral' (Kamler & Comber 1996). Critical literacy draws upon a number of theoretical frameworks, is interdisciplinary and may be more accurately viewed as critical literacies. However, there are a number of 'shared assumptions: that literacy is a social and cultural construction, that its functions and uses are never neutral or

innocent, that the meanings constructed in text are ideological and involved in producing, reproducing and maintaining arrangements of power which are unequal' (Kamler & Comber 1996). Given this, as Green and Kostogriz (2002) explain, this kind of orientation in literacy education requires:

- an emphasis on literacy as sociocultural practice
- a keen awareness of the importance of social context, as well as of the reciprocal relationship between meaning and context
- renewed interest, therefore, in issues of history, culture and power.

Based on these requirements, Christie and Misson (2002) argue that the 'main thrust of much work in critical literacy is towards analysing representations to make apparent the inherent ideology … [and thereby] to render explicit the belief systems inscribed in the text and so negate their power'.

Cultural Heritage Approach to literacy education: teaching reading and writing as part of personal growth into the heritage of the culture.	**Critical Literacy Approach** to literacy education: reading and writing as part of the everyday social experience and the need to teach children to be critical analysts of text.

As with the preceding debates the various views of advocates for both the cultural heritage and critical literacy (or literacies) stances have been questioned. The cultural heritage perspective has been challenged on two fronts: first it is considered that the 'cultural heritage model seeks the reproduction of dominant cultural values of the past, and compliance with the literacy tastes of the most powerful' (Muspratt, Luke & Freebody 1997, cited in Mills 2005). The second challenge argues that arbitrary decisions play a role in the selection of 'valued' texts, resulting in primacy being given to certain authors, and historically ratified, often Anglo-Saxon texts, resulting in 'an excessively derivative and homogenised canon of literature' (Anstey & Bull 2003; Hollindale 1995). For example, certain genres such as picture books, popular texts, romance and science fiction are often systematically obscured from the valued literature canon (Wyatt-Smith 2000). Essentially it is argued that 'cultural heritage advocates need to acknowledge that their criteria for judging quality of literature reflects the dominant cultural interests and ideologies' (Mills 2005) pointing to a need to consider the interests of marginalised groups and the diverse purposes of literacy in today's society (Hollindale 1995; West 1992).

Critical literacy perspectives have also been subject to critique. One of the claims of critical literacy is that it has the potential to oppose and make evident the prevailing structures that limit access, entitlement and empowerment to those groups marginalised in society (Mills 2005). However, as Christie and Misson (2002) remind us:

> while excellent work has been done on teaching against discrimination…it is worth noting that this, like anything else in the classroom, can become a rather empty routine…[where] the students can produce the expected answer and mouth the appropriate sentiments without any notable impact on their actual attitudes.

Further, it has been argued that applying the principles of critical literacies in the classroom has not been an easy process with the theorising around these principles tending to be 'very remote from the experience and problems of classroom teachers whose concerns are elsewhere' (Hodgens 1996). In a recent longitudinal study it was found that there was relatively little critical literacy work occurring in the classrooms in the study and, although students were capable of engaging with critical dimensions

of literate practices, teachers were dealing with competing priorities as they introduced children to reading and writing (Comber, Badger, Barnett, Nixon & Pitt 2002). In addition to some difficulties in translating critical theory into classroom practice, Mellor and Patterson (2005) also note that 'there are readings that are not acceptable in the critical literacy classroom: racist or sexist readings for example'. Accordingly, pedagogy aimed at developing norm-free critical enquiry remains illusory. Instead, teaching of critical literacy can seek to build the capacity to examine and challenge norms rather than to escape entrenched societal frameworks of judgement. Thus critical literacy 'cannot make claims to non-normative modes of critique or to an inherent higher mission that promised inclusivity while excluding other useful methods of interacting with texts' (Mellor & Patterson 2005).

Another area of critique has been the view that critical literacy practices, and indeed high levels of literacy more generally, will resolve many social ills. As Comber and Hill (2000) assert, 'a process of 'literacisation' seems to have occurred, where literacy becomes both the problem and the solution across a range of spheres of life'. Rather, it is recognised that multiple factors influence marginalisation in society and a promise that critical literacy means employment has not been evident for literate adults experiencing unemployment (Auerbach 1989; Hollindale 1995). That is, 'mastery of high levels of critical literacy does not automatically ensure that social class and power structures are transcended by the individual' (Mills 2005). Despite concerns about the efficacy of critical literacy pedagogy, its importance is emphasised by Fairclough (1990), who argues: 'How can we recognise the shackles that tradition has placed upon us? For if we can recognise them, we are also able to break them'.

Table 4: Implications for practice

Cultural heritage / critical literacy	
Cultural heritage	**Critical literacy**
Literacy instruction ▪ Emphasises the transmission of culture through the study of literature perceived to be of high quality ▪ Merit ascribed to canonical works – other genres (e.g. picture books, popular texts, digital texts, romance and science fiction) are perceived to be of lesser value ▪ Meaning is understood to reside in the text	**Literacy instruction** ▪ Emphasises that literacy and culture are fundamentally intertwined and that texts are ideologically saturated ▪ Emphasises language use is context dependent, involves not only knowledge of generic structure and other linguistic features but also knowledge of how text conveys attitudes and values ▪ There is need to consider the diverse purposes of literacy and to make available for scrutiny the belief systems presented in texts
Discussion *(cultural heritage / critical literacy)* ▪ On one side there is belief in the unchanging merit and meaning in historically ratified texts, but also implicit affirmation of the conservative systems of belief represented in these texts (Hollindale 1995). ▪ On the other side texts are viewed as 'ideological and involved in producing, reproducing and maintaining arrangements of power which are unequal' (Kamler & Comber 1996, p. 1) ▪ 'While mastery of high levels of critical literacy does not automatically ensure that social class and power structures are transcended by the individual' (Mills 2005, p. 77) broadly speaking there is agreement that schools should continue to provide opportunities for critical thinking in the classroom (Leu 2000).	

The expert literacy teacher knows how to work with traditional valued texts while building in critical thinking opportunities for students to discover the ideological work of the texts in the world.

Frameworks for coordinating the varying views

While the differing views on literacy education have been presented as discrete, in classroom practice teachers routinely combine them in various ways to support student learning. This highlights the importance of teachers' explicit knowledge and strategic intent in combining different elements for specific instructional purposes and to meet students' identified learning needs and stages of development.

Quality literacy education involves teachers in:

- knowing that they are drawing on particular combinations
- knowing how these approaches in combination open up (or close down) learning opportunities for students
- monitoring the impact of these approaches and collecting assessment evidence to determine student outcomes within whole-school planning approaches.

This balancing and combining of approaches does not mean hitting a mid-point between contrasting views but rather, a careful consideration of multiple theoretical views from across a range of sometimes contradictory methods or perspectives (Anstey & Bull 2003; Reid & Green 2004). This critical synthesis involves teachers in bringing together a connective web of theory and approaches to provide each child with a quality learning experience (O'Shea et al. 1998).

As Pressley (2005) describes: 'balanced teaching is the orchestration of many components'. It is about masterful teachers weaving together these various approaches and views in response to the unique needs of individual students in local contexts.

Several literacy scholars have provided frameworks that attempt to capture the multiple perspectives and dimensions of literacy to make available to students the full repertoire of skills and competencies required in today's society. A summary table of these frameworks is provided below based on Unsworth (2002).

Table 5: Multiple perspectives and dimensions of literacy

Dimensions of literate practice (Unsworth 2002)	***Three dimensions (Durrant & Green 2000)***	***Four roles of the literacy learner (Freebody & Luke 1990)***
Recognition - involves learning to recognise and produce the verbal, visual and electronic codes that are used to construct and communicate meanings.	**Operational** - involves being able to read and write within a range of contexts in an adequate and appropriate manner employing conventional print and electronic media.	**Code-breaker** - the practices required to 'crack' the codes and systems of written and spoken language and visual images.
Reproduction - involves understanding and producing conventional visual and verbal text forms that construct and communicate the established systematic knowledge of cultural institutions.	**Cultural** - involves understanding texts and information in relation to the contexts - real life practices - in which they are produced, received and used. Here literacy acts are not only context specific but also entail a specific content. Rather than being literate in and of itself but of being literate with regard to something, some aspect of knowledge or experience.	**Text participant** - the practices required to build and construct cultural meanings from texts. That is, how do the ideas represented in the text string together? What cultural resources can be brought to bear on the text?
Reflection - which necessitates an understanding that all social practices, and hence all literacies, are socially constructed. Because of this, literacies are selective in including certain values and understandings and excluding others. This entails interrogating the visual and verbal codes to make explicit how other choices of visual and verbal resources construct alternative views.	**Critical** - it is based on the understanding that social practices and their meaning systems are always selective and sectional; they represent particular interpretations and classifications. It involves being able to innovate, transform, improve and add value to social practices and the literacies associated with them.	**Text user** - the practices required to use texts effectively in everyday, face to face situations. That is, how do the uses of this text shape its composition? What do I and others do with this text?
		Text analyst - the practice required to analyse, critique and second-guess text. That is, what kind of person, with what interests and values, could both write and read this naively and unproblematically? What is this text trying to do to me? In whose interests? Which positions, voices and interests are at play? Which are silent and absent?

None of these frameworks is advocating a particular order for teaching or a hierarchy for working with the different dimensions of literacy. Rather, they provide a useful template for coordinating and addressing these different dimensions simultaneously where 'literate practice is ideally an integrated expression of all the roles and dimensions in question' (Durrant & Green 2000).

Key messages from the research

This section documents the key messages from recent major studies and meta-analyses that draw on a range of different methodological and disciplinary perspectives on literacy education. It offers different 'lenses' through which to explore effective provision of literacy education. It is considered that a sound basis for action comes from evidence from multiple sources, where no single study, methodology or finding is considered a sufficient basis for action. The professional challenge for teachers is to use their expertise to draw from the wide variety of information in order to better serve their practice. More important than ever are guiding educational policy frameworks aimed at nurturing and empowering the developmental capacities of all students so that they will be flexibly prepared for a satisfying and contributing future life.

The key guiding propositions below have been distilled from published literacy education research and represent a synthesis of findings and insights about quality literacy learning in schooling. The focus therefore is necessarily on students, teachers and classroom practices, schools and school leadership, and communities.

Literacy is multidimensional

Fundamental changes in society (e.g. the emergence of radio, television and mass digital computer and online communications) require new ways of thinking about literacy.

To be a literate member of current society students need to master three overlapping media of communication:

- *Oral* – the systems of spoken language which include spoken English and other community languages
- *Written* – the systems of alphabetic writing and print culture which include reading, writing, handwriting and spelling
- *Multi-mediated* – the blended systems of linguistic and non-linguistic sounds, and visual representations of digital and electronic media (The State of Queensland 2000).

While there appears to be an international and national focus on the 'basic skills' (e.g. phonics) most studies acknowledge the multidimensional nature of literacy (Education and Science Committee 2001; National Reading Panel 2000).

Several studies support an integrated approach to literacy education to include 'the development of oral language, vocabulary, grammar, reading fluency, comprehension, and the literacies of new technologies' (Department of Education, Science and Training 2005a).

Instructional approaches need to be systematically organised in response to diagnosed student need

A number of stages of schooling have been proposed that suggest the value of a model of intervention that addresses different levels of need. This model needs to conceptualised within the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's broader framework of inclusive provision for the learning needs of all students.

Literacy education also needs to take account of the major transitions during schooling and ensure continuity between classrooms and year levels.

As students experience several transitions during schooling (preschool and primary years, primary and secondary years) it is important to be aware of the need to put programs in place to foster a seamless transition between the stages of schooling (Hill et al. 1998).

Important also are the transitions between classrooms and year levels. Whole-school planning and involvement in literacy initiatives need to be emphasised to ensure continuity of programs, initiatives and any new innovations. The importance of school leadership and specialist support for whole-school approaches is discussed further below (Cumming et al. 1998; Department of Education, Science and Training 2005a; Dilena & van Kraayenoord 1996; Lankshear et al. 1997).

Effective management of transitions includes ongoing dialogue and sharing of information between the various levels of schooling and if possible a highly trained specialist teacher responsible for linking the whole-school planning process (Department of Education, Science and Training 2005a). Regardless of whether such a specialist teacher can be deployed, coordination of transitions will be enhanced by the proactive involvement of all staff.

All teachers are teachers of literacy and need to teach explicitly the literacy demands of curriculum learning in all stages of schooling

Literacy teaching is viewed as continuing through schooling in all areas of the curriculum and is seen as the responsibility of all teachers (i.e. primary, middle and secondary years).

Teachers need to be aware of the interface between a specific domain and its literacies. As teachers plan and design curricular tasks they need to identify and take into account the specific literacy demands of the particular curriculum area (Cumming et al. 1998; Wyatt-Smith & Cumming 2003).

Effective, supportive leadership is a critical factor in providing a systematic, whole-school approach to literacy education

Effective provision requires staff and school leadership to work in a coordinated manner with opportunities for regular professional exchanges and collaboration. It is important for school leaders to ensure there is an infrastructure for necessary resources and support (including time) for ongoing professional development and creation of learning opportunities with other schools (Department of Education, Science and Training 2005b; Education and Science Committee 2001; House of Commons 2005; Rose 2006).

Where possible, the employment of a literacy specialist is recommended (Department of Education, Science and Training 2005a; Snow et al. 1998) to coordinate a whole-school literacy program ensuring continuity and to assist teachers to identify students at risk of failure, to offer informal and formal professional development to colleagues, organise support, maintain and analyse a database on performance outcomes, and monitor progress. The involvement of an expert should not be used to

vest responsibility for addressing literacy in one area but rather can be most effectively used as a coaching model where teachers are provided with opportunities to observe, critique and reflect on good practice.

Student motivation and engagement are critical determinants of quality literacy outcomes

Student motivation, engagement and self-efficacy are important for improved literacy outcomes. Student engagement is related to how competent and confident students are about their literacy abilities.

Development of competence may involve a number of strategies including:

- the co-development of core learning goals by the teacher and students
- real world connections
- interesting texts and tasks (e.g. debating and oral performances, use of technology, role-play, movies, videos, games, production of magazines)
- encouraging positive relationship and collaboration among students in a learning community
- positive feedback for successful engagement with literacy practices (Alloway et al. 2002; Alvermann 2001; Guthrie & Wigfield 2000; Snow et al. 1998).

Ultimately it is important to teach the skills and literacy practices that will enable students to assume their role as participating members of society (Department of Education & Training 2006).

Monitoring and assessment are essential elements in literacy provision at both an individual and program level

Assessment can be understood as involving the systematic collection of evidence of student learning over time and in a range of contexts. When assessment is understood as evidence-based practice, learning and teaching can be effectively informed by that evidence.

The use of continuous and varied means of monitoring and assessment are essential to build up detailed information profiles at both class and individual student levels to inform planning and teaching and permit timely responses when difficulty or delay is apparent (Curriculum Corporation 1999; Department of Education, Science and Training 2005a; Hill et al. 2002; Louden et al. 2000; Snow et al. 1998).

When considering the multidimensional nature of literacy, no single assessment tool or type of tool (e.g. paper and pencil) can provide all necessary information. No decisions about an individual's education should be made on the basis of test scores alone; there is a need for multiple sources of evidence (American Educational Research Association 2000).

In addition to student-focused assessment, monitoring of any particular program or intervention effectiveness needs to be an integral element of a school's responsibility for educational evaluation and accountability. Schools need to be informed about the potential value of innovative assessment instruments for the formulation of better targeted programs (The State of Queensland 2000). However, use of any innovative assessment tools needs to be compatible with Departmental education policy provisions and be selected with a view to their technical validity and appropriateness for the purposes intended

Classroom talk is a key medium for learning with clarity of classroom talk essential for effective literacy education

> We need to support the development of effective collaboration and communication skills using new communication technologies if we wish to prepare children for their futures in a world where these skills are so important (Leu, Kinzer et al. 2004).

An important dimension of literacy is the oral medium with a focus on listening, speaking, and classroom talk. Talk (teacher and student) should be at the heart of the enacted curriculum. Effective learning is a socially interactive process that is conducted primarily through talk and active listening on the part of the teacher and the student (Department for Education and Children's Services 1995).

Student talk may assist teachers to gain a greater depth of knowledge about students' learning and provide improved opportunities for immediate follow-up and re-teaching compared to written forms of assessment. A variety of activities that promote productive student talk allows students to revisit and refine their knowledge and skills (Cormack & Wignall 1998).

Clarity of classroom talk is essential. Teachers need to examine the clarity of their talk and ensure they make clear the particular focus or goal of any literacy activity.

Students' answers may be heard as an analysis of teacher questions (talk), rather than as a lack of student understanding or knowledge (Freebody et al. 1995).

Teachers need to be mindful of the extended periods of listening placed on students and to constantly check how students are engaging with and making meaning of the classroom talk (Cumming et al. 1998).

The emergence of new technologies requires a rethinking of literacy pedagogy

The impact of new technologies needs to be addressed with possibilities ranging from the use of technology as an instructional tool for assisting with teaching basic word skills, to a blending of traditional literacy with mastery of new technologies enabling new literacies and new ways of expression (Leu 2002; Leu, Mallette et al. 2005).

It is important that teachers have opportunities to gain competence and confidence in the new technologies in face of a student body that has grown up in the IT world (Lankshear et al. 1997).

Productive home-school partnerships are a contributing factor for effective literacy provision

Parents and carers are an important part of effective provision with parents being offered more choice in relation to their children's education (e.g. Tutorial Voucher) but also expected to take more responsibility (Louden et al. 2000).

Several writers (Leler 1983; Louden et al. 2000) have suggested that schools facing the challenge of developing productive partnerships work on a developmental basis moving through several levels from schools as transmitters of expertise, to schools as sharers of expertise, and finally to school and home as equal sources of information and experience.

Other factors for ensuring productive partnerships include:

- whole-school involvement
- employment of key staff to facilitate partnerships

- professional development of all staff
- movement from deficit views towards some family backgrounds to recognising homes of children from ethnic and disadvantaged backgrounds as rich sources of literate practices (Cairney & Ruge 1998; Freebody et al. 1995).

It is important to acknowledge and respond to student diversity

When considering the increasing diversity of the student population it is important to develop a clear, consistent professional vocabulary for discussing and planning literacy programs to meet the diverse range of students. This vocabulary should inherently reject stereotypic deficit views and affirm high expectations of the learning capacity of all students. The school and teacher knowledge of their student and community populations should be sufficiently broad and inclusive so that the needs of all students are addressed comprehensively. Given this, there is a need for pre-service and ongoing professional development to ensure positive and effective teacher understanding of diverse student populations (The State of Queensland 2000).

Building teacher capacity is vital with a substantial proportion of school effectiveness attributed to teachers

A substantial proportion of school effectiveness can be attributed to teachers with teacher effects being cumulative and additive (Hattie 2003; Hill & Rowe 1998; Louden, Rohl et al. 2004). There is a need for a greater focus on teacher education in both pre-service and in-service programs.

For pre-service programs, there is a need for more time to be devoted to preparing teachers to teach literacy and an improvement of professional experience components of programs in terms of length, quality and structure (Louden, Rohl et al. 2005).

For in-service programs short, one-off courses are deemed insufficient. Rather, teachers require ongoing, coordinated approaches to professional development (Louden, Rohl et al. 2005). This should include:

- time to work and collaborate with colleagues within schools and within clusters of schools
- opportunities to talk with and observe expert teachers, and be able to reflect on teacher practice
- intensive, sustained, theoretically-based yet practically-situated learning
- opportunities to observe good practice, to be involved in coaching and mentoring processes and to take time for reflection.

Appendix 1: Guidelines for action

Guidelines for action	Useful resources
Key Message: Literacy is multidimensional	
Does the school's literacy provision include, in the early years: explicit instruction and practice in word skills (e.g. phonemic awareness) in concert with other aspects of reading (vocabulary knowledge, fluency, comprehension, use of text and critical analysis of text); and competence in other dimensions of literacy - writing, viewing, speaking, listening, critical thinking and the new technologies?	**Literacy Professional Learning Resource:** The Literacy Professional Learning Resource provides support and guidelines for effective practice for classroom teachers and school leaders. http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/literacy/default.htm **Literacy Key Concepts - VELS Level 1-6** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/literacy/concepts/default.htm **Oral language and schooling – Speaking and listening** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/literacy/concepts/7orallang.htm **Learning to read** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/literacy/concepts/8learntoread.htm **Systematic teaching of phonics** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/literacy/concepts/10systeach.htm **Comprehension** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/literacy/concepts/9comprehension.htm **Fluency** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/literacy/concepts/11readfluency.htm **English Developmental Continuum P-10 (including phonological and text level knowledge)** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/englishcontinuum/default.htm **Eight Areas of Literacy Knowledge:** the theoretical model that covers a range of Literacy knowledge to build systematic and broad pedagogic practice to support student learning. http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/teachlearn/student/8areas.pdf **Victorian Essential Learning Standards - English Level 1** http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/essential/discipline/english/level1.html#lfeng1#lfeng1 **Victorian Essential Learning Standards - English Level 1** http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/essential/discipline/english/level2.html#focus#focus

Guidelines for action	Useful resources
Key Message: Literacy is multidimensional	
Does the school's literacy provision include a well-integrated program where the demands of the various literacy dimensions are the focus of explicit teaching and assessment and are situated in the curriculum?	**Literacy Professional Learning Resource** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/literacy/default.htm **Literacy demands with the Victorian Essential Learning Standards** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/literacy/concepts/kcl1velsdemands.htm **Teaching strategies** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/literacy/strategies/default.htm **Assessment** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/literacy/assessment/default.htm
Key Message: Instructional approaches need to be systematically organised over time in response to diagnosed student need	
Does the school's literacy provision include a three-wave approach, with early high quality classroom programs, early intervention for those at risk of falling behind, followed by a range of interventions for those older students experiencing difficulties in literacy?	**English Developmental Continuum P-10 -** assists teachers to identify the range of student learning levels within their English classes**.** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/englishcontinuum/default.htm#1 **The English Developmental Continuum P-10 and ESL students** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/englishcontinuum/esl_student.htm **Literacy and students from low socio-economic backgrounds** http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/blueprint/fs1/equity/literacy.htm **Literacy Professional Learning Resource - Key Concepts** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/literacy/concepts/default.htm **Reading Recovery** http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/eys/rr/index.htm **Making a Difference**: A literacy development program for middle years students. Copies of the manual and supporting video were sent to all Victorian government schools in May 2004.

Guidelines for action	Useful resources
Key Message: Literacy education needs to take account of the major transitions during schooling and ensure continuity between classrooms and year levels	
Does the school's literacy provision include a whole-school planning approach with particular attention to fostering a seamless transition and continuity of approaches and pedagogy across the year levels?	**English Domain – Characteristics of effective schools** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/improvstudlit.htm
Does the school's literacy provision include transition programs during key junctures of transition between school levels (e.g., pre-school-primary school; primary-secondary school)?	**Pre-School** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/aboutschool/preschool/default.htm **Choosing & Enrolling in School - primary and secondary school, changing schools** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/aboutschool/enrolling/default.htm **Life at School** - homework, travelling to and from school, care outside of school hours, students with disabilities, financial assistance, voluntary contributions and charges, attendance, uniforms, communication between school & community http://www.education.vic.gov.au/aboutschool/lifeatschool/default.htm **Your Child's Health and Wellbeing** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/aboutschool/childhealth/default.htm **Parent Participation at School** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/aboutschool/participation/default.htm **Student Reports** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/aboutschool/studentreports/default.htm **Curriculum - Victorian Essential Learning Standards,** information and communications technology; languages at school**.** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/aboutschool/curriculum/default.htm **Stages at School** - Prep to Year 4; Years 5 to 8; Years 9 to 10; Years 10 to 12; VCAL (Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning); VCE (Victorian Certificate of Education) http://www.education.vic.gov.au/aboutschool/stages/default.htm

Guidelines for action	Useful resources
	Careers and Planning for the Future http://www.education.vic.gov.au/aboutschool/careers/default.htm **Leaving School Before End of Year 12** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/aboutschool/leaving/default.htm
Key Message: All teachers are teachers of literacy and need to explicitly address the literacy demands of curriculum learning throughout all stages of schooling	
Does the school's literacy provision include a distribution of literacy support across the years of schooling while recognising that initial early support is crucial in reducing the number of students requiring support in the later years?	**Reading Recovery Program** A short-term, early literacy intervention, which helps students in Year 1 who have not yet established effective reading and writing processes. Students receive a series of daily, individual, thirty-minute Reading Recovery lessons from a specially trained teacher in addition to the regular classroom reading and writing program. www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/eys/rr/index.htm **Reading Assistance Voucher Programme** An Australian Government initiative aimed at improving the literacy skills of school students. This web site provides information for parents and carers, tutors, and schools about the program and who is eligible to receive assistance. http://www.readingtuition.edu.au/
Does the school's literacy provision include an awareness of the interface of a specific curriculum and its literacies (i.e. curriculum literacies) taking into account the specific literacy demands of the particular curriculum area?	**Making Intervention Work** A collection of case studies examining approaches to literacy intervention by some of the top-performing Restart schools. http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/teachlearn/student/makinginterventionwork.pdf

Guidelines for action	Useful resources
Key Message: Effective, supportive leadership is a critical factor in providing a systematic, whole-school approach to literacy education	
Does the school's literacy provision include: ▪ an infrastructure of necessary resources and ongoing support for literacy initiatives including opportunities and time for regular professional exchanges? ▪ the appointment of a well-qualified literacy specialist as a member of the school leadership team, charged with ensuring continuity of literacy focus across the school, offering informal and formal professional development to colleagues, identifying students at risk of failure, conferring with parents and teachers, organising support, maintaining and providing an analysis of a database on performance outcomes, and monitoring progress?	**The Developmental Learning Framework for School Leaders** The Developmental Learning Framework for School Leaders describes the critical capabilities that leaders need to establish the conditions under which high quality learning and teaching takes place. The Leadership Framework describes development within five domains of leadership – Technical, Human, Educational, Symbolic and Cultural - and distinguishes between levels of proficiency. The key purpose of the Leadership Framework is to assist teachers and school leaders to participate in professional learning that is relevant to their development needs. The Leadership Framework can be used in a variety of ways, for example: ▪ Self-assessment ▪ Performance and development reviews ▪ Principal selection ▪ Coaching and mentoring ▪ Leadership induction and planning ▪ Designing professional learning activities for teachers and school leaders. The Leadership Framework is available for teachers and school leaders to self assess their leadership capabilities. http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/teachlearn/leader/developmental_learning_framework_20070418.pdf
Key Message: Explicit provision in the timetable for literacy education is important for coverage of the full-range of literate capabilities	
Does the school's literacy provision include suitable allocation of time for regular uninterrupted daily literacy lessons (primary)?	Powerful teaching approaches within the reading hour of the daily two-hour literacy block. Teaching Readers in the Classroom, a component of the Early Years Literacy Program provides a structure for classroom planning and organisation that together with the teaching of writing and speaking and listening constitutes a daily two-hour literacy block. The program includes a range of effective teaching approaches that foster improved literacy learning. The teacher works intensively with small groups of students whilst other students work independently at learning centres or tasks <http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/eys/lit/lcentres.htm> to consolidate their

Guidelines for action	Useful resources
	literacy skills. Reading to students, language experience and shared reading are teaching approaches recommended to develop the literacy skills of beginning readers. The amount of uninterrupted time for literacy learning was found to be positively related to children's progress, as was their engagement in reading. **ACER Research Developments Issue 9** http://www.acer.edu.au/documents/RD09_Summer02.pdf
Does the school's literacy provision include careful pacing and sequencing of lessons and time to take account of the specific literacy demands of the particular curriculum area?	**Effective literacy teaching** *Time on task and participation* Several research studies identify time on task as critical to student success and a key element of effective literacy teaching and learning (Hall & Harding 2003; Louden et al. 2005; Pressley 2005; Topping & Ferguson 2005: Wray, Medwell, Fox & Poulson 2000). High levels of student engagement and participation are characteristics of effective literacy teaching (Louden et al. 2005; Hall & Harding 2003). The skill of an effective literacy teacher is further evident in the ability to maintain this engagement. Effective literacy teachers use a variety of strategies to motivate students to engage in literacy activities and to keep students on task. These strategies include setting time limits for literacy tasks, regularly refocusing students' attention to the task at hand and encouraging students to self–regulate their activity (Hall & Harding 2003; Wray et al. 2000). Pressley (2005) identified that effective literacy teachers encourage students to do as many set literacy tasks as possible for themselves, that is, to be independent learners (p.7) Literacy teaching and learning in Victorian schools. Paper No. 9 Part A, August 2006 (PDF - 343Kb)
Key Message: Student motivation and engagement are critical determinants of quality literacy outcomes	
Does the school's literacy provision include the use of well-documented practices that ensure optimum student motivation and engagement (e.g., co-development of core learning goals, use of real world connections and interesting texts and tasks, positive feedback)?	**Student Motivation and Engagement** A recently released Schooling Issues Digest on Student Motivation and Engagement (Frydenberg et al. 2005), suggested that students' patterns of motivation and engagement are reflected in the strategies they use for learning. That is, students who aim to understand and master tasks tend to use elaborate strategies and perform better. Those whose aims are to impress others employ more superficial memorisation strategies. http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/school_education/publications_resources/schooling_issues_digest/ **Understanding Year 9 students** The motivation and engagement of students should be the core objective of a successful teaching and learning model in order for students to have a depth of understanding that is beyond the knowledge about 'facts' and to allow them to apply their learning across disciplines (p.12).

Guidelines for action	Useful resources
	http://www.det.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/publ/research/publ/UnderstandingYear9_PartA-rpt.pdf **Monitoring, assessing and differentiating** Meeting the individual needs of students is recognised as an important element of effective literacy teaching and learning (Hall & Harding 2003; Louden et al. 2005). The process of meeting individual learning needs is based on monitoring, assessment and differentiation of teaching strategies and learning programs. Wray et al. (2000) found that effective teachers are diagnostic in the ways in which they approach assessing and monitoring children's reading and writing and are able to generate explanations as to why children read or write as they do are able to focus on possible underlying causes of the child's reading and writing difficulties are able to offer reasons for their conclusions and to make these detailed judgements quickly have very clear assessment procedures, including focused observation and systematic record–keeping (pp.10-11). Literacy teaching and learning in Victorian schools. Paper No. 9 Part A, August 2006 (PDF - 343Kb)
Key message: Monitoring and assessment are essential elements in literacy provision at both an individual and program level	
Does the school's literacy provision include ▪ the use of continuous and varied means of assessment, including systematic diagnostic techniques, to inform planning and teaching at an individual and class level? ▪ a collection of relevant evidence to regularly review the mix of programs, to ascertain program effectiveness based on student outcomes?	**Monitoring, assessing and differentiating** Meeting the individual needs of students is recognised as an important element of effective literacy teaching and learning (Hall & Harding 2003; Louden et al. 2005). The process of meeting individual learning needs is based on monitoring, assessment and differentiation of teaching strategies and learning programs. Wray et al. (2000) found that effective teachers are diagnostic in the ways in which they approach assessing and monitoring children's reading and writing and are able to generate explanations as to why children read or write as they do are able to focus on possible underlying causes of the child's reading and writing difficulties are able to offer reasons for their conclusions and to make these detailed judgements quickly have very clear assessment procedures, including focused observation and systematic record–keeping (pp.10-11). **Literacy teaching and learning in Victorian schools. Paper No. 9 Part A, August 2006 (PDF - 343Kb)**. http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/publ/research/publ/Literacy_Teaching_and_Learning_Paper_9-rpt-v1.00-20060831.pdf

Guidelines for action	Useful resources
Key message: Classroom talk is a key medium for learning with clarity of classroom talk essential for effective literacy education	
Does the school's literacy provision include an awareness of the key role of teacher talk in facilitating classroom learning with particular attention to clarity about what is to be learnt, listening purposefully to student talk as a way of gaining an awareness of student understandings and hearings of teacher talk, and being mindful of the extended periods of listening placed on students?	**Teacher Talk** The effectiveness of the classroom teaching and learning practices hinges on the effectiveness of the interaction practices. In order to identify what is learnt by our students it is necessary to establish what teachers talk about and how students hear what the lesson is about; that is, how they mutually engage the literacy through their interactions. http://wwwfp.education.tas.gov.au/english/word/Groves.doc
Key message: The emergence of new technologies requires a rethinking of literacy pedagogy	
Does the school's literacy provision include preparation of teachers to engage with the demands and potentials of new technologies?	**Victorian Education Channel – Teacher** The ePotential Resource has been produced to support teachers as they develop their capabilities to integrate ICT into their learning and teaching. The resource underpins the eLearning Professional Learning Strategy and supports teachers to see the potential of ICT for powerful learning. The continuum and survey tool provide teachers and school leaders with a framework and benchmarks for ongoing development. http://epotential.education.vic.gov.au/ **Digital Learning Resources** Digilearn is the new portal for accessing exciting Digital Learning Resources for use in the classroom. These resources include 'The Learning Federation' Learning Objects and Digital Resources. Access is available from within your school and outside of school if you login with your PIN and your edumail password. https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/dlr

Guidelines for action	Useful resources
Key message: Productive home-school partnerships are a contributing factor for effective literacy provision	
Does the school's literacy provision include working together with the community to establish productive two-way partnerships which acknowledge the school and home as equal sources of experience and support?	**Community Involvement** Our education system relies on input from the local community, bringing together parents, teachers and students (children and adults), and drawing on the experiences of people outside the classroom. http://www.education.vic.gov.au/community/default.htm
Key message: It is important to acknowledge and respond to student diversity	
Does the school's literacy provision include: ▪ engaging with issues of student diversity including exploration of, and respect for, community knowledge, students' home backgrounds and the impact of cultural and linguistic backgrounds? ▪ critical reflection by teachers of their accounts and assumptions about diversity and the professional vocabulary employed for discussing and planning literacy programs to meet the diverse range of students?	**Learning Diversity Resources** The range of learning and teaching resources available reflect the diversity of the local community and its education needs. http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/learningdiversity.htm

Guidelines for action	Useful resources
Key Message: Teacher education is vital with substantial proportion of school effectiveness attributed to teachers	
Does the school's literacy provision include: ▪ an allocation of professional development resources for the establishment of coordinated and ongoing approaches to professional development in literacy education? ▪ professional development that is intensive, sustained, research and theory based; involves practically-situated learning, with opportunities to observe good practice; and include coaching and mentoring processes with time for reflection on changes?	**Seven principles of highly effective professional learning** http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/teachlearn/teacher/ProfLearningInEffectiveSchools.pdf **Teacher Professional Learning Resources** A range of professional learning resources and programs available for teachers, including awards, fellowships, and curriculum-focused professional learning. http://www.education.vic.gov.au/proflearning/teacher.htm

Glossary

Technical term	*Definition*
Constructivist view	The constructivist view to literacy education focuses on the knowledge the student brings to a learning situation and how that knowledge is used to construct new knowledge.
Critical literacy approach	The critical literacy approach (also referred to as critical-cultural approach) to literacy education sees reading and writing as part of the everyday social experience and the need to teach children to be critical analysts of text.
Cultural heritage approach	The cultural heritage approach to literacy education sees teaching reading and writing as part of personal growth into the heritage of the culture.
Decode	To analyse spoken or graphic symbols of a familiar language to ascertain their intended meaning.
Deictic	A deictic word has its meaning determined by the context in which it is used. Words such as ‘you’, ‘this’, ‘now’ and ‘there’ are deictic.
Digital immigrant	A digital immigrant is an individual who has migrated into the digital (or Information and Communications Technology) world and has an outsider’s mind-set for new technologies.
Digital native	A digital native is an individual who has been ‘born and grown up’ in the digital (or Information and Communications Technology) world and has an insider’s mind-set for new technologies.
Explicit instruction	Explicit instruction (also referred to as direct instruction) is based on behaviourist principles and involves teaching a fixed sequence of skills acquisition.
Instructivist approach	Instructivist approach to literacy education focuses on knowledge that is external to the individual but the individual needs to know about and therefore needs to receive instruction on.
Multiliteracies practice	Multiliteracies practice in literacy education includes use of contemporary communication technologies and the multimodal ways in which meanings are made and shared, particularly in the context of culturally and linguistically diverse and increasing globalised societies.
Phoneme	A phoneme is the smallest contrastive unit of sound in a word. There are approximately 44 phonemes in English (the number varies depending on the accent). A phoneme may have variant pronunciations in different positions; for example, the first and last sounds in the word 'little' are variants of the phoneme /l/. A phoneme

Technical term	*Definition*
	may be represented by one, two, three or four letters.
Phonemic awareness	Ability to perceive that streams of speech are made up of separate sounds, called phonemes.
Phonetic	Phonetic is the study of the sounds of human speech. It is concerned with the actual properties of speech sounds (phones), and their production, audition and perception.
Phonic	The system of sound-letter relationships used in reading and writing. The study of the relationship between the letters in written words and the sounds in spoken words.
Print-based practice	Print-based practice in literacy education construes literacy as primarily reading and writing and focuses exclusively on printed modes of communication.
Skills-based approach	Skills-based approach focuses on teaching decoding and encoding reading and writing and reflects a more compartmentalised view with a focus on a generic set of portable skills.
Synthetic phonic	Teaching students explicitly to convert letters into sounds (phonemes) and then blend the sounds to form recognisable words.
Systematic phonics instruction	A systematic phonics approach involves teaching a planned sequence of phonic elements,
Whole-language approach	A whole-language approach represents a philosophy about reading rather than any one instructional method. According to this philosophy, language is a natural phenomenon and literacy is promoted through natural, purposeful language function. It has as its foundation current knowledge about language development as a constructive, meaning-oriented process in which language is viewed as an authentic, natural, real-world experience, and language learning is perceived as taking place through functional reading and writing situations.
Zone of proximal development	Zone of proximal development (ZPD) refers to the student's range of ability with and without assistance from a teacher or a more capable peer. On one end of the range is the student's ability level without assistance. On the other end of the range is the student's ability level with assistance.

References

Adams, MJ 1990, *Beginning to read: Thinking and learning about print*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA.

Alloway, N, Freebody, P, Gilbert, P & Muspratt, S 2002, *Boys, literacy and schooling: Expanding the repertories of practice*, Department of Education, Science and Training, Canberra, ACT.

Alvermann, DE 2001, 'Effective literacy instructions for adolescents', Executive summary and paper commissioned by the National Reading Conference, National Reading Conference, Chicago, IL.

American Educational Research Association 2000, 'Protection against high-stakes decisions based on a single test', viewed 16 August 2007, <www.aera.net>.

Anstey, M & Bull, G 2003, *The literacy labyrinth,* 2nd edn, Prentice Hall, Sydney.

Auerbach, E 1989, 'Towards a socio-contextual approach to family literacy', *Harvard Educational Review*, vol. 59, no. 2, pp. 165-180.

Behrman, E 2002, 'Community-based literacy learning', *Reading Literacy and Language*, vol. 36, no. 1, pp. 1-28.

Cairney, TH & Ruge, J 1998, *Community literacy practices and schooling: Towards effective support for students*, Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs, Canberra, ACT.

Cambourne, B 2002, 'Towards the development of a literacy of pedagogy', ALEA Conference, Perth, September.

Chall, JS 1967, *Learning to read: The great debate,* McGraw Hill, New York.

Christie, F & Misson, R 2002, 'Framing the issues in literacy education', in J Solar, J Wearmouth & G Reid (eds), *Contextualising difficulties in literacy development: Exploring politics, culture, ethnicity and ethics*, Routledge Falmer, London.

Coles, G 2001, 'Reading taught to the tune of the 'scientific' hickory stick: Ideology and reading research', *Phi Delta Kappan,* vol. 83, no. 3, pp. 204-216.

Coles, G 2003, *Reading the naked truth: Literacy, legislation, and lies*, Heinemann, Portsmouth, NH.

Comber, B 1997, 'Literacy, poverty and schooling', *English in Australia*, vol. 119-120, pp. 22-34.

Comber, B, Badger, L, Barnett, J, Nixon, H & Pitt, J 2002, 'Literacy after the early years: A longitudinal study', viewed 2 October 2007, <www.myread.org/readings_literacy.htm>.

Comber, B & Hill, S 2000, 'Socio-economic disadvantage, literacy and social justice: Learning from longitudinal case study research', *The Australian Educational Researcher,* vol. 27, no. 3, pp.79-97.

Cormack, P & Wignall, P 1998, *Classroom discourse project*, Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs, Canberra, ACT.

Cumming, JJ, Wyatt-Smith, CM, Ryan, J & Doig, SM 1998, *The literacy-curriculum interface: The literacy demands of the curriculum in post-compulsory schooling*, Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs, Canberra.

Curriculum Corporation 1999, *Assessment of literacy and numeracy in the early years of schooling: A collaborative project on current literacy and numeracy entry level assessment materials*, Melbourne.

Dahl, KL & Freppon, PA 1995, 'A comparison of innercity children's interpretations of reading and writing instruction in the early grades in skills-based and whole language classrooms', *Reading Research Quarterly,* vol. 30, no. 1, pp. 50-74.

Davis, OL 2002, 'When will the phonics police come knocking?', in J Solar, J Wearmouth & G Reid (eds), *Contextualising difficulties in literacy development: Exploring politics, ethnicity and ethics*, Routledge Falmer, London.

Delpit, L 1988, 'The silenced dialogue: power and pedagogy in education other people's children', *Harvard Educational Review,* vol. 58, no. 3, pp. 280-98.

Department for Education and Children's Services 1995, *Now you're talking*, DECS, Adelaide.

Department of Education & Training 2006, *Literacy teaching and learning in Victorian schools*, DE&T, Melbourne, viewed 2 October 2007, <http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/publ/research/publ/Literacy_Teaching_and_Learning_Paper_9-rpt-v1.00-20060831.pdf >.

Department of Education, Science and Training 2005a, *Teaching reading, national inquiry into the teaching of literacy: Report and recommendations,* DEST, Canberra, viewed 2 October 2007, <http://www.dest.gov.au/nitl/report.htm>.

Department of Education, Science and Training 2005b, *Teaching reading, national inquiry into the teaching of literacy: Literature review,* DEST, Canberra, viewed 2 October 2007, <http://www.dest.gov.au/nitl/report.htm>.

Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs 1998, *Literacy for all: The challenge for Australian schools*, DEETYA, Canberra.

Department of School Education & Catholic Education of Victoria 1994, *Keys to Life, professional development program for secondary subject teachers,* Department of Education, Melbourne.

Delina, M & van Kraayenoord, CE (eds) 1996, *Whole school approaches to literacy assessment and reporting*, Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs, Canberra, ACT.

Dixon, J 1969, *Growth through English,* National Association for the Teaching of English, London.

Durrant, C & Green, B 2000, 'Literacy and the new technologies in school education: meeting the L(IT)eracy challenge?', *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy,* vol. 23, no. 2, pp. 89-108.

Education and Science Committee 2001, *Me Panui Tatou Katoa – Let's all read,* Report of the Education and Science Committee on the inquiry into the teaching of reading in New Zealand, House of Representatives, Wellington, NZ.

Fairclough, N 1990, *Language and power*. Longman, London.

Freebody, P, Ludwig, CM & Gunn, S 1995, *Everyday literacy practices in and out of schools in low socio-economic urban communities,* Department of Employment, Education and Training, Canberra.

Gee, JP 1996, *Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology in discourses*, 2nd edn, Taylor & Francis, London.

Goodman, K 1976, 'Reading a psycholinguistic guessing game', in H Singer & RB Ruddell (eds), *Theoretical models and processes of reading*, International Reading Association, Newark, DE.

Green, B & Kostogriz, A 2002, 'Learning difficulties and the new literacy studies', in J Solar, J Wearmouth & G Reid (eds), *Contextualising difficulties in literacy development: Exploring politics, ethnicity and ethics*, Routledge Falmer, London.

Guthrie, J & Widfield, A 2000, 'Engagement and motivation in reading', in M Kamil, P Mosenthal, P Pearson & R Barr (eds), *Handbook of reading research*, vol. 3, pp. 813-834, Erlbaum, Mahwah, NJ.

Hall, K & Harding, A 2003, 'A systematic review of effective literacy teaching in the 4 to14 age range of mainstream schooling', in *Research Evidence in Education Library,* EPPI- Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education London.

Hattie, JA 2003, 'Teachers make a difference: What is the research evidence?', Background paper presented at the 2003 ACER Research Conference, Melbourne, viewed 2 October 2007, <http://www.acer.edu.au/documents/RC2003_Hattie_TeachersMakeADifference.pdf>.

Hill, S, Comber, B, Louden, B, Rivalland, J & Reid, J 1998, *100 children go to school: Connections and disconnections in literacy development in the year prior to school and the first year of school*, Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs, Canberra, ACT.

Hill, PW & Rowe, KJ 1998, 'Modelling student progress in studies of educational effectiveness', *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, vol.9, no.3, pp. 310-333.

Hill, S, Comber, B, Louden, W, Rivalland, J & Reid, J 2002, *100 children turn 10: A longitudinal study of literacy development form the year prior to school to the first four years of school*, Department of Education, Science and Training, Canberra, ACT.

Hodgens, J 1996, 'Changing education', editorial, *Journal for Teachers and Administrators,* vol. 3, pp. 1-3.

Hollindale, P 1995, 'Children's literature in an age of multiple literacies', *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy,* vol. 18, no. 4, pp. 148-158.

House of Commons Education and Skills Committee 2005, *Teaching children to read: Eighth report of session 2004-5,* The Stationery Office Limited, London, UK.

Kamler, B, & Comber, B 1996, 'Critical literacy: not generic – not developmental – not another orthodoxy', *Changing Education,* vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 1-5.

Lankshear, C & Bigum, C 1998, *Literacies and technologies in school settings: Finding from the field*, Paper presented at the Australian Literacy Educators' National Conference, Canberra.

Lankshear, C, Bigum, C, Durrant, C, Green, B, Honen, E, Morgan, Q, Murray, J, Snyder, I & Wild, M 1997, *Digital rhetorics: Literacies and technologies in education – current practices and future directions*, Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs, Canberra.

Lankshear, C & Knobel, M 2003, *Changing knowledge and the classroom*, Open University Press, Buckingham.

Leu, DJ Jr 2000, 'Literacy and technology: Deictic consequences for literacy educatioin in an information age', in ML Kamil, PB Mosenthal, PD Pearson & R Barr (eds), *Handbook of reading research,* vol. III, pp. 229-249, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Mahwah, NJ.

Leu, DJ Jr 2002, 'The new literacies: Research on reading instruction with the Internet', in AE Farstrup & SJ Samuels (eds), *What research has to say about reading instruction*, pp. 310-336, International Reading Association, Newark, DE.

Leu, DJ Jr, Kinzer, CK, Coiro, JL & Cammack, DW 2004, 'Toward a theory of new literacies emerging from the internet and other information and communication technologies', in RB Ruddell & NJ Unrau (eds), *Theoretical Models and Processes of Reading*, 5th edn, International Reading Association.

Leu, DJ Jr, Mallette, MH, Karchmer, RA & Kara-Soteriou, J 2005, 'Contextualizing the new literacies of information and communication technologies in theory, research and practice', in RA Karchmer, MH Mallette, J Kara-Soteriou & DJ Leu (eds), *Innovative approaches to literacy education: Using the Internet to support new literacies,* International Reading Association, Newark, DE.

Lo Bianco, J & Freebody, P 1997, *Australian literacies*, Language Australia, Victoria.

Louden, W, Chan, L, Elkins, J, Greaves, D, House, H, Milton, M. Nichols, S, Rivalland, J, Rohl, M & van Kraayenoord, C 2000, *Mapping the territory*, Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, Canberra, ACT.

Louden, W, Rohl, M, Barratt-Pugh, C, Brown, C, Cairney, T, Elderfield, J, House, H, Meiers, M, Rivalland, J & Rowe, K 2004, *In teachers' hands: Effective literacy teaching practices in the early years of schooling*, Department of Education, Science and Training, Canberra, ACT.

McInerney, DM & McInerney, V 2006, *Educational psychology: Constructing learning*, 4th edn, Pearson Education Australia, Frenchs Forrest, NSW.

Mellor, B & Patterson, A 2005, 'Critical literacy: Theory, pedagogy and the historical imperative', in R Beach, J Green, M Kamil & T Shanahan (eds), *Multidisciplinary perspectives on literacy research*, pp. 455-480, Hampton Press, Cresskill, NJ.

Mills, K 2005, 'Deconstructing binary oppositions in literacy discourse and pedagogy', *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy*, vol. 28, no. 1, pp. 67-82.

Murphy, W 1991, 'Understanding language: A thumbnail sketch', *English in Australia*, vol. 97, pp. 25-35.

Muspratt, S, Luke, A & Freebody, P (eds) 1997, *Constructing critical literacies,* Hampton Press, Creskill, NJ.

National Reading Panel 2000, *Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction,* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, Washington, DC.

New London Group 1996, 'A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Designing social futures', *Harvard Educational Review,* vol. 66, no. 1, pp. 60-92.

New London Group 2000, *Multiliteracies: Literacy learning and the design of social futures,* Routledge, London.

O'Shea, LJ, O'Shea, DJ & Algozzine, R 1998, *Learning disabilities: From theory toward practice*, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey.

Pressley, M 2005, 'Balanced elementary literacy instruction in the United States', in N Bascia, A Cumming, A Datnow, K Leithwood & D Livingstone (eds), *International Handbook of Educational Policy,* Part 2, pp. 645-660, Springer, Dordrecht.

Rassool, N 2002, 'Literacy: In search of a paradigm', in J Solar, J Wearmouth & G Reid (eds), *Contextualising difficulties in literacy development: Exploring politics, ethnicity and ethics*. Routledge Falmer, London.

Reid, J & Green B 2004, 'Displacing method(s)? Historical perspective in the teaching of reading', *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy*, vol. 27, no. 1, pp. 12-26.

Rose, J 2006, *Independent review of the teaching of early reading*, Department for Education and Skills, London.

Rowe, K 2006, 'Effective teaching practices for students with and without learning difficulties: Constructivism as a legitimate theory of learning AND teaching?', Background paper to keynote address presented at the NSW DET Office of Schools Portfolio Forum, Australian Council for Educational Research, Melbourne.

Snow, CE, Burns, MS & Griffin, P (eds) 1998, *Preventing reading difficulties in young children,* National Academy Press, Washington, DC.

Soler, J 2002, 'Policy contexts and the debates over how to teach literacy', in J Solar, J Wearmouth, & G Reid (eds), *Contextualising difficulties in literacy development: Exploring politics, ethnicity and ethics*, Routledge Falmer, London.

Stanovich, KE 2000, 'Romance and reality', in N Padak, TV Rasinski, JK Peck, BW Church, G Fawcett, JM Hendershot, JM Henry, BG Moss, E Pryor, KA Roskos, JF. Baumann, DR Dillon, CJ Hopkins, JW Humphrey & DG. O'Brien (eds), *Distinguished educators on reading: Contributions that have shaped effective literacy instruction*, International Reading Association, Newark, DE.

Teacher Education Working Party 2001, *Literacy in teacher education: standards for preservice programs,* Queensland Board of Teacher Registration, Brisbane.

The State of Queensland 2000, *Literate futures report of the literacy review for Queensland state schools*, Education Queensland, Brisbane.

Tunbridge, N 1995, 'The cyberspace cowboy', *Australian Personal Computer,* September.

Unsworth, L 2002, 'Changing dimensions of school literacies', *The Australian Journal of Language and Literacy*, vol. 25, no. 1, pp. 62-77.

Vygotsky, L 1978, *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.

West, A 1992, 'Reading against the text: Developing critical literacy', in Domains of Literacy Conference, University of London.

Wray, D, Medwell, J, Poulson, L & Fox, R 2000, *Effective teachers of literacy: Summary of findings*, viewed 2 October 2007, <http://www.tda.gov.uk/upload/resources/doc/l/literacy.doc>.

Wyatt-Smith, CM 2000, 'The English literacy interface in senior school: Debates in Queensland', *English in Australia*, vol. 127-128, pp. 71-79.

Wyatt-Smith, CM & Elkins, J forthcoming, 'Multimodal reading and comprehension in online environments', in DJ Leu, J Coiro, M Knobel & C Lankshear (eds), *Handbook of Research on New Literacies*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Wyatt-Smith, CM & Cumming, JJ 2003, 'Curriculum literacies and assessment', *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice,* vol. 10, p. 1, pp. 47-60.