Interdisciplinary Collaboration

**Integrating Literacy Across Content Areas**

Essential Questions

How can teachers outside of English/Language arts support literacy effectively?

How should lessons and experiences be designed to meet those expectations?  What will instruction and learning look and sound like?

What instructional supports do teachers in my division need to meet the expectations?

**Vocabulary Development**

Vocabulary is learned dynamically

“Vocabulary instruction should provide students with opportunities to encounter words repeatedly and in a variety of contexts” (Stahl, 2005)

“When children ‘know’ a word, they not only know the word’s definition and its logical relationship with other words, they also know how the word functions in different contexts” (Stahl & Kapinus, 2001)

Vocabulary is learned contextually

“Using a contextual approach to instruction produced greater vocabulary gains than lessons that emphasized learning word definitions” (Nash & Snowling, 2006).

Encountering text and words dynamically

What effect does this have on instruction?

* Consider what “The Vocabulary List” implies
* A hierarchy of meanings that is static
* Context isn’t important
* Meaning transcends content area

Vocabulary may or may not be intuitive in the content area

The problem (and missed opportunity) of vocabulary work devoid of context

* Culture - A growth of microorganisms, viruses, or tissue cells in a specially prepared nutrient medium under supervised conditions
* Culture - the beliefs, behaviors, objects, and other characteristics common to the members of a particular group or society.

How can these definitions present an opportunity for authentic vocabulary instruction within the content area?

Teaching Writing vs. Assigning Writing

-Consider the importance of explicitly teaching the writing process for your discipline. Simply assigning writing with which students may or may not be familiar can set them up for failure

The best writing instruction is integrated with content, not divorced from it

Writing as a replacement for multiple choice assessment

* As a replacement for multiple choice assessment, writing may happen in a vacuum with no links to source materials.

*This type of writing can often just be ASSIGNED*

Writing to generate analytical responses to course content

* Integrates all of the English SOL strands
* Increases the amount of time students spend writing AND analyzing information, effectively doubling instructional time with no impact on your content
* Is a transferrable skill that improves literacy and analysis across all content areas

*This type of writing must be TAUGHT*

Effective writing instruction means writing is embedded across all contents as a content-specific set of skills

* Think about what it means to write for YOUR content area
* How can students learn to write like a historian… a scientist… a mathematician?
* How can student writing be generated as a response to the kind of information and text that students encounter in your content… from laboratory data to primary sources.

*These are all skills that must be TAUGHT*

History and Social Science Essential Understandings that support literacy instruction:

 All students should:

Analyze and interpret primary and secondary sources

Interpret charts, graphs, and pictures

Use evidence to draw conclusions and make generalizations

Compare and contrast historical and political perspectives

Assess cause and effect

Explain connections across time and place

Exercise citizenship skills

Conduct historical investigations

Science Standards of Learning Goals that support literacy instruction:

Use scientific processes to safely investigate the natural world;

Develop the scientific knowledge, skills, and attributes to be successful in college, explore science-related careers and interests, and be work-force ready ;

**Develop scientific dispositions and habits of mind (collaboration, curiosity, creativity, demand for verification, open-mindedness, respect for logical and rational thinking, objectivity, learning from mistakes, patience, and persistence);**

**Possess significant knowledge of science to be informed consumers with the ability to communicate and use science in their everyday lives and engage in public discussions;**

**Make informed decisions regarding contemporary civic, environmental, and economic issues;**

Math Essential Understandings that support literacy instruction:

*Mathematical Communication*

*Students will communicate thinking and reasoning using the language of mathematics, including specialized vocabulary and symbolic notation, to express mathematical ideas with precision. Representing, discussing, justifying, conjecturing, reading, writing, presenting, and listening to mathematics will help students clarify their thinking and deepen their understanding of the mathematics being studied. Mathematical communication becomes visible where learning involves participation in mathematical discussions*