



Literacy Links

June, 2006
Volume 2, Number 9

Monthly E-Newsletter of Maine Reading First



Upcoming Events

June 26 and 27 ~
Maine Reading First
Summer Institute,
"Scaffolding
Proficient Readers:
The Building Blocks
and Beyond",
Augusta Civic Center

July 16 ~
Annual Family
Literacy Day with the
Portland Sea Dogs,
First Lady Karen
Baldacci will kick off
the event, Maine
author/singer Phil
Hoose and his
daughter Hannah will
be there to sing and
autograph their book
Hey Little Ant.

Spotlight on...

Classroom Design

Effective classroom design supports literacy learning because it enables students to become independent, self-regulated learners who take ownership for achieving their own learning goals. Arrangement of the classroom environment should promote active engagement and cooperative learning while also accommodating various grouping structures:

- whole group (establishing a 'community' or whole-class meeting area)
- small group (establishing areas for small groups to work together and also meet with the teacher for direct instruction)
- independent (establishing areas for students to work independently or participate in one-on-one conferences, either teacher-student or student-student)

Traffic flow should be a primary consideration when designing the classroom. Students should be able to move freely around the room and teachers should have a clear and unobstructed view of students at all times.

Guidelines for classroom design should focus on three specific areas:

1. **Classroom Environment** ~The classroom environment should be rich with print which the students reference and use regularly. Much of the environmental print should be student-generated and correspond to the current theme of study.
2. **Organization of Materials** ~Materials in the classroom should be well-organized, clearly labeled, and easily accessible so both the teacher and students can locate, use, and return them efficiently.
3. **Classroom Library** ~The library should be highly visible and should 'jump out' upon entry into the classroom. In addition to its appeal, a classroom library should be an area of the room students love to use. A well-stocked classroom library includes several hundred to over a thousand titles across a variety of genres, themes, interest levels, and reading levels. The materials in the classroom library should be attractively displayed so students can easily access and accurately return the materials. Teachers can also involve students in the organization of the classroom library to increase their ownership for caring for the books.

Description of Instructional Idea...

Recommend a Book

Walk into a teachers' room at any school and you are bound to hear the following conversation, "Check out this great book I just finished. I couldn't put it down until the last page. I can't wait to hear what you think about it." Since adult readers constantly recommend books to family, friends, and

August 8 and 9~
Seamless Transitions
K-12 Literacy
Conference, "A Focus
on Comprehension
and Composition",
The University of
Maine, Orono

August 16 and 17~
DIBELS Train-the-
Trainer Session,
Spectacular Event
Center, Bangor

September 16~
Reading Rumpus, a
family day with
several Maine
authors and
illustrators including
Kevin Hawkes, John
and Ann Hassett,
Anne Sibley O'Brien,
Ethel Pockocki, Noah
Z. Jones, Lesis
Sochor, Cynthia
Lord, and Lynn
Plourde, Gardiner,
10 a.m.-3 p.m.

September 28-29~
New England
Reading Association
(NERA) Annual
Conference, Lowell,
MA (More
information about
this conference will
be forthcoming on
the website
(www.nereading.org))

coworkers, teachers should consider modeling and encouraging this process with students beginning in the primary grades.

Teachers can informally recommend books to students during interactive read aloud, shared reading, or guided reading sessions. These 'book talks' can include sufficient information to 'hook' the students into reading the book themselves.

In addition, teachers can create a chart where students can share their book recommendations with classmates. Possible columns to include on the chart are:

- recommendation from...
- recommending to...
- book title
- reason(s) for recommendation

Hanging this chart in a prominent place with a basket nearby where the 'recommended books' can be stored for others to peruse encourages students to share great books with others.

The 'Book Pass' technique designed by Janet Allen (Tools for Teaching Content Literacy, 1999) also offers students the opportunity to examine a variety of new books. A Book Pass can be used with small or large groups of students. Each student in the group receives a book and a Book Pass form (simple chart with columns for title, author, and comments). After previewing a book, students record their thoughts on the form. Next, the teacher calls, "Book Pass," and each student passes his/her book to their neighbor to preview. This process is repeated until the books have circled around the group. The books used in a Book Pass can focus on a specific genre, theme, author, or other category.

Summary of Professional Literacy Text...

Teaching for Deep Comprehension:

A Reading Workshop Approach

Linda Dorn and Carla Soffos (authors of several professional texts including Apprenticeship in Literacy and Scaffolding Young Writers) have collaborated again to create a valuable resource specifically focused on comprehension. The chapters in this text intertwine theoretical background with practical suggestions for teaching comprehension. Dorn and Soffos also advocate the important connection of oral language with reading and writing. An 85-minute DVD accompanies this text with snapshots of teaching comprehension in a variety of settings. Numerous resources are also available in over 30 pages of appendices at the end of the book.

Teaching for Deep Comprehension by Linda Dorn and Carla Soffos was published in 2005 by Stenhouse Publishers and the ISBN is 1571104038.

Children's Literature Title...

Why?

Written and illustrated by Lila Prap

Ever wonder why zebras have stripes? This clever book will answer this and several other questions students may have about the unique characteristics of animals. In addition to sharing the actual answers to the questions (The stripes on zebras distinguish them from other zebras because each zebra has a different stripe pattern.), this book also offers humorous hypotheses which readers will enjoy. (Zebras have stripes because they can't decide whether they like black or white or they escaped from a prison.)

Why? was published in 2005 by Kane/Miller Book Publishers, Inc. and



"Words mean more than what is set down on paper. It takes the human voice to infuse them with deeper meaning."
 Maya Angelou



"Read all the best books first, or you will not have a chance to read them at all."
 Henry David Thoreau

the ISBN is 1929132808.

News from Maine Reading First...

DIBELS Train-the-Trainer Session...

Maine Reading First will be sponsoring a Train-the-Trainer session for the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) facilitated by consultants from the Eastern Regional Reading First Technical Assistance Center. This 1½ day session will occur on August 16 and 17 at Spectacular Event Center in Bangor. Additional details and the registration form for this training session are attached to this edition of *Literacy Links*. It is recommended to submit registrations for this event as soon as possible since spaces are limited.

There are still openings for the 3rd Annual Maine Reading First Summer Institute...REGISTER NOW!

The 3rd Annual Maine Reading First Summer Institute, "Scaffolding Proficient Readers: The Building Blocks and Beyond", will be held from 9:00-3:30 p.m. on June 26 and from 8:30-3:00 p.m. on June 27 at the Augusta Civic Center. Details and registration information about the 3rd Annual Maine Reading Summer Institute are available for download on the Maine Reading First website at <http://www.maine.gov/education/rf/summerinstitutes.htm>

Check it out...

- Raising Readers is an initiative to promote the health and literacy of all young children in Maine. As part of a young child's regular well-child visits between the ages of birth and five years, Raising Readers gives each child a new book. This translates into a dozen books for every child in the state by age five. Raising Readers first began distributing books in May 2000 and, within 5 years, over 600,000 books were shared with 100,000 Maine children. Some of the titles distributed to children include Barn Cat by Carol Saul, Box of Animal Crackers by Jane Dyer, and Giraffes Can't Dance by Giles Andreae. When children attend their 5-year-old well-child visit, they receive a special book, Raising Readers: A Collection of Stories from Maine. This book was created by Maine authors to commemorate the first group of children who 'graduated' from Raising Readers in May, 2005. Raising Readers also works with health care providers to provide training in the areas of early childhood literacy and adult literacy. More information about the success of the Raising Readers initiative can be found on the following website, <http://www.raisingreaders.net>

Newsletter Archives

There are several earlier editions of *Literacy Links* available at <http://www.maine.gov/education/rf/homepage.htm>

Edition	Spotlight Topic
March, 2005	Maine Reading First
April, 2005	Maine Reading First Course
May, 2005	Reading Fluency
June, 2005	Vocabulary
September, 2005	Phonemic Awareness

October, 2005	Phonics
November, 2005	Comprehension
December, 2005/January, 2006	DIBELS
February, 2006	Literacy Centers
March, 2006	Interactive Read Aloud
April, 2006	Nonfiction
May, 2006	Word Walls



For additional information about any of the items in this newsletter or to sign up to receive this e-newsletter, please email janet.trembly@maine.gov

Click here to view the Maine Reading First website
<http://www.maine.gov/education/rf/homepage.htm>