

This newsletter and the Secondary Student Achievement Professional Learning and Development initiative is funded by the Ministry of Education. The providers are The University of Auckland and Te Tapuae o Rehua consortium.

# National Newsletter: Secondary Literacy

Information and resources for leaders of literacy in secondary schools | Term 2 2015

Greetings to you all, Kia ora, Kia orana, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Mālō e lelei, Tālofa lava, Talofa ni.

**Denise, Irene, and Mal**

## National Workshops: Literacy in the Context of Social Studies

It was great to see that these workshops held during March were well attended around the country. Thank you to all participants for your energy and enthusiasm. Two comments from participants were:

*'The literacy in Social Studies workshop made me realize that I can't just take a literacy strategy or tool and use it, that I need to modify it in light of the subject specific literacy that is needed for explaining a Social Studies idea, for example, Human Rights.'*

*'The most useful aspect of the workshop was being with my school's literacy co-ordinator. This meant we could spend the day discussing how we could use this in our school context, and we could talk about how to share this across other departments in our school.'*

Where possible, Social Studies teachers are now working in collaboration with a Literacy Leader/teacher to inquire into an aspect of effective literacy practice in a year 9 or year 10 Social Studies class, with a focus group of students. We look forward to hearing about the progress of your inquiries.

## Inclusion

Schools continue to work on developing inclusive practices for all students. A recent addition to resources that can support teachers to feel more confident and capable in this work are the *Guides for Inclusive Educators*, located on TKI. This site presents a range of resources for Years 0 -13 teachers. It includes a range of video clips demonstrating inclusive practice within a variety of school settings. Follow this link: <http://inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/developing-an-inclusive-classroom-culture/>

## Inclusive practices for students with special needs in schools [ERO Report March 2015](#)

This report examines how well students with special education needs are included in New Zealand schools. The report provides an update on progress towards meeting the Government target that, by the end of 2014, 80 percent of New Zealand schools will be doing a good job and none should be doing a poor job of including and supporting students with disabilities.

## Words on Wellington Conference



**Registrations for the 2015 conference are now open.**

<http://www.eventuate.co.nz/nzla/>

**Earlybird registrations extended to 30 April**

- Share and collaborate on what is happening now, and in the future for literacy in both New Zealand and internationally.
- Consolidate and expand on your knowledge about 'the world of literacy'.
- Expand your portfolio of ideas and resources to ensure that both you and your students are receiving best practice literacy teaching.
- The 2015 Conference themes are **Critical, Cultural and Creativity**

*The 2015 Conference function includes a ticket to the **World of Wearable Arts Awards Show**. Tickets can only be guaranteed to Earlybird registrations—get in early so you don't miss out!*

## Fixed or growth mindset?

Recently Carol Dweck conducted seminars throughout NZ in which she discussed how to change students with fixed mindsets to develop growth mindsets.

Characteristics of a fixed mindset	Characteristics of a growth mindset
Look smart at all costs.	Learning at all costs.
It should come naturally (don't work hard).	Work hard, effort is the key.
In the face of setbacks it's about me. Hide mistakes and deficiencies.	In the face of setbacks, it's about learning. Confront mistakes and difficulties.

It is important to note that everyone employs a mixture of fixed and growth mindsets. None of us operates with a growth mindset in every aspect of our lives.

A fixed mindset develops when students are praised for their intelligence. When students are told, "You are bright, you can do this!" they may lessen their effort in case they don't achieve and are then shown to be not as bright as everyone thinks. On the other hand, when students are praised for their processes in learning, they develop a growth mindset. Processes include effort, choosing tasks with high complexity, persistence and seeking help.

Many students have fixed mindsets about **reading** and **writing**. A student with a fixed mindset might state, "I've never been any good at writing." Dweck suggests a student like this can develop a growth mindset when the teacher praises the student for:

- struggling with his or her writing
- strategies he or she employs while writing
- choosing challenging writing tasks rather than easy ones
- improvement

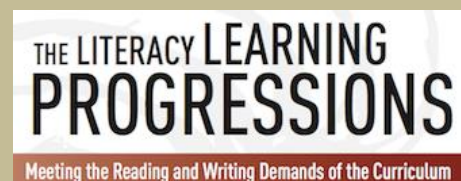
Before praising students for using the processes described above, teachers need to ensure that students learn these processes. For example, one teacher helped students learn that it is normal to struggle with writing by displaying quotes around the classroom from famous writers about how challenging they found the process. From Roald Dahl - "When you're writing, it's rather like going on a very long walk."

Mindset has been shown to have as much of an influence on student achievement as any economic variables. Students in poor communities who have growth mindsets have outperformed students in rich communities in district-wide United States assessments.



For more, view [Carol Dweck's TED talk](#):

*'The power of believing that you can improve'.*



<http://www.literacyprogressions.tki.org.nz/>

The progressions are relevant to all learning areas. They describe the specific literacy knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students draw on in order to meet the reading and writing demands of the curriculum from year 1 to year 10.

Teachers need to ensure that their students develop the literacy expertise that will enable them to engage with the curriculum at increasing levels of complexity and with increasing independence.

As students' progress through schooling, they need to be able to read and write increasingly complex texts and to engage with increasingly complex tasks.

The progressions provide a useful reference point when teachers are gathering information about students' literacy strengths and needs, in order to plan effective programmes of learning.

## Thinking about ideas, prior to writing

Explicit instruction in writing is needed to build students' skills and create successful writers, who write for a variety of purposes and a variety of audiences, in all learning areas.

**Metacognitive Strategies** can assist students to think about and process their ideas prior to writing. By making their thinking visible, and sharing with others, students have the opportunity to discuss, reflect on, and clarify their understanding of content.

One such strategy is **Think Aloud**:

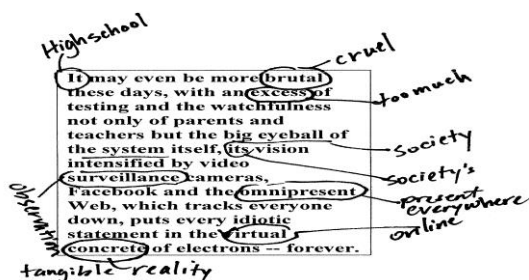
1. Teacher selects a piece of text relevant to context.
2. Demonstrate your thinking strategies by thinking aloud and simultaneously underlining and writing your responses, predictions, questions, connections etc., on the text.
3. Invite students to share their observations of your thinking process.
4. Invite students to share what they were thinking about the text.
5. As students build this skill, they can work with a partner (think/pair/share) or a group to share their thinking, clarify questions, and so on.

By sharing and organizing their thoughts before the discussion, students will have much more insightful ideas to base their writing on.

It can be quite challenging to model the Think Aloud process for your students, and can take a bit of practice. Here is an example of one teacher's experience:

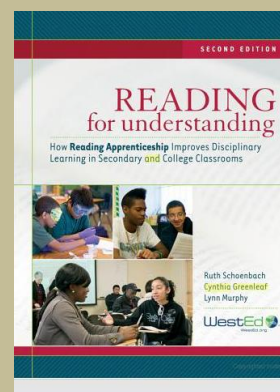
*'I found myself falling into explaining the short story to them rather than talking about my thinking...as soon as I started making connections to other things I lead myself very quickly into explaining the story instead of talking about my thinking techniques. That was hard to resist.'* (Schoenbach, Greenleaf & Murphy, 2012, pp106).

As a further development, you may work with students to develop **Talking to the Text /Annotating a text**. This is essentially a silent, written form of Think Aloud.



In writing from sources, students must learn to carefully read texts and collect evidence from those texts. As part of writing in a learning area, students could learn to annotate a text. Highlighting /annotating is also a good way to pick out specific language within a text that you can quote in the writing. By annotating a text, students become active readers, asking and answering questions, making connections both to prior knowledge and other texts, and summarizing—vital reading strategies to help in writing.

For further information on Metacognitive Strategies:



Ruth Schoenbach, Cynthia Greenleaf, Lynn Murphy (2012)

## Metacognitive Bookmarks

You may wish to provide students with a bookmark for keeping track of the thinking process they could use e.g.

### Predicting

I think this is....

In the next section I think...

### Visualising

I picture...

I can see...

### Questioning

I wonder about...

Could this mean...

### Making Connections

This is like...

This reminds me of...

### Identifying a problem

I got confused when...

I'm not sure of...

I didn't expect...

### Problem-Solving

I'll re-read this part...

I'll read on and check back...

### Summarising

The main idea is...

I think the key concept is...

So what they are saying is...

## Summary of items from newsletters 2013-2014



Here is a reminder of some of the items we have included in previous newsletters. All newsletters can be accessed from: <http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Secondary-middle-leaders/Professional-learning-and-development/E-newsletters>

### 2014

#### Term 1

- PISA
- E-learning
- Digital Literacy

#### Term 2

- Quality Teaching
- Cynthia Greenleaf – Researcher/practitioner
- Questions to elicit thinking

#### Term 3

- Vocational Pathways
- NZTA Resources
- Using school-based exams information
- Developing writing using common acronym

#### Term 4

- Literacy support for external assessments
- Developing Critical Literacy- analysing and critiquing texts
- Supporting Māori learners

### 2013

#### Term 1

- UE Literacy requirements
- Improving writing in an NCEA learning area

#### Term 2

- Focusing on continuous improvement
- Pasifika Learners – Resources, research practice, links

#### Term 3

- Supporting writing in senior secondary classes – annotated student exemplars
- Māori student achievement – reports, links, case studies
- Exploring teachers' beliefs about literacy

#### Term 4

- Examples of Collaborative Practice
- Developing Middle Leader and Literacy Leader capability
- Youth Guarantee
- Public Achievement Information

### 2012

#### Term 4

- Role of the Literacy Leader
- Literacy Pathways
- NCEA Literacy Requirements
- Review: Elizabeth Moje on Disciplinary Literacy

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## Some Useful Links

### International Literacy Association

<http://www.reading.org/>

### Secondary Literacy Online

<http://literacyonline.tki.org.nz/Literacy-Online/Secondary-Literacy>

### NZQA Literacy

<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/qualifications/ncea/subjects/literacy-and-numeracy/>