

# PART 1

## *Literacy in the 21st Century*

**E**ffective teachers create a nurturing classroom environment and provide high quality and engaging literacy instruction. They strive to make a real difference in the lives of their students. It's likely that you'll notice that teaching is different today than when you were a young adolescent. Our society has changed, and teachers face new challenges today that reflect these changes.

### *Student Diversity*

Middle-grade classrooms are culturally, linguistically, and academically diverse. Some students are learning to speak English at the same time they're learning to read and write. Some struggle with literacy, and others exceed grade-level standards. Teachers create culturally responsive and inclusive classrooms where all students are respected and everyone succeeds.

### *State and Federal Mandates*

Teachers tailor their instructional programs to emphasize grade-level standards while differentiating instruction to meet individual students' needs. They also juggle federal mandates that are designed to assist underachievers and eliminate the achievement gap.



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## High-Stakes Tests

Teachers teach test-taking strategies and prepare students for annual standardized achievement tests that measure students' literacy learning against grade-level standards. These assessments are controversial because of the time test preparation and administration takes away from teaching and because the results are used to make educational decisions about students and to evaluate teachers' effectiveness.

## Technology

New information and communication technologies, including Web browsers, word processors, presentation software, blogs, video cams, and social networking sites, affect our understanding of what it means to be literate and require that students learn new ways of communicating through reading and writing. Teachers teach the strategies and skills that students need to successfully use and adapt to rapidly expanding digital technology.

## WHAT'S AHEAD

In Part 1, you'll read these chapters:

**Chapter 1:** Becoming an Effective Literacy Teacher

**Chapter 2:** Examining the Reading and Writing Processes

**Chapter 3:** Assessing Literacy Learning

**Chapter 4:** Differentiating Instruction

These chapters lay the foundation for teaching reading and writing to young adolescents and preparing them to become productive citizens in the 21st century. You'll learn about how effective literacy teachers teach and assess students' learning and how to accelerate students' academic achievement.



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# CHAPTER 1

## *Becoming an Effective Literacy Teacher*



Literacy is the ability to use both reading and writing for a variety of tasks at school and outside of school. Reading is a complex process of understanding written text. Readers interpret meaning in a way that's appropriate to the type of text they're reading and to their purpose. Similarly, writing is a complex process of producing text; writers create meaning in a way that's appropriate to the genre and their purpose. Peter Afflerbach (2007b) describes reading as a dynamic, strategic, and goal-oriented process. The same is true of writing. *Dynamic* means that readers and writers are actively involved in reading and writing. *Strategic* means that readers and writers consciously monitor their learning. *Goal-oriented* means that reading and writing are purposeful; readers and writers have a plan in mind.

Our concept of what it means to be literate is changing. Traditional definitions of literacy focused on the ability to read words, but now literacy is considered a tool,

a means to participate more fully in the 21st century's digital society. Kist (2005) talks about *new literacies*—sophisticated technological ways to read and write multimodal texts incorporating words, images, and sounds—which provide opportunities for students to create innovative spaces for making meaning, exploring the world, and voicing their lives. These texts often combine varied forms of representation, including computer graphics, video clips, blogs, and digital photos, which students read and write differently than they do traditional books (Karchmer, Mallette, Karasoteriou, & Leu, 2005).

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## New Literacies

### The Internet

The Internet is rapidly changing what it means to be literate. It's becoming common to see students involved in these online activities:

- Posting blogs on the class website
- Completing webquests
- Participating in virtual book clubs
- Researching informational topics

These activities foster students' engagement with reading and writing.

Some students learn to surf the Web, locate and read information, and communicate using e-mail, instant messaging, and blogs outside of school; others, however, haven't had many digital experiences. Teaching students how to read and write online has become a priority so that they become fully literate in today's "flat" world.

Internet texts are different than books (Castek, Bevans-Mangelson, & Goldstone, 2006). They're a unique genre with these characteristics:

**Nonlinearity.** Hypertext lacks the familiar linear organization of books; instead, it's dynamic. Readers impose a structure to fit their needs and reconfigure the organization, if necessary.

**Multiple Modalities.** Online texts integrate words, images, and sound to create meaning. Readers need to know how to interpret each mode and how it contributes to the overall meaning.

**Intertextuality.** Many related texts are available online, and they influence each other. As students read, they prioritize, evaluate, and synthesize the information.

**Interactivity.** Webpages often include interactive features to engage readers and allow them to customize their searches, link to other websites, and play games.

Reading and writing on the Internet require students to become proficient in new ways of accessing, comprehending, and communicating information. Students navigate the Internet to search for information; coauthor online texts as they impose an organization; evaluate the information's accuracy, relevance, and quality; and synthesize information from multiple texts (Leu, Kinzer, Coiro, & Cammack, 2004).

Writing online differs from using paper and pencil, too. It's more informal, although most texts should be grammatically acceptable and use conventional spelling. Immediacy is another difference: Writers post their writing within seconds. Third, writers create multimodal texts with digital photos, video clips, and website links. The fourth difference is audience: Writers send e-mail messages to people in distant locations, including military parents serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, and their postings are read by people worldwide.

Literacy in the 21st century involves more than teaching students to read books and write using pen and paper; it's essential that teachers prepare students to use the Internet and other information-communication technologies successfully (Karchmer, Mallette, Kara-Soteriou, & Leu, 2005).

This text focuses on teaching reading and writing in the middle grades. Students at this level—fourth through eighth grades—are called *young adolescents*; they're beginning the transition to adulthood that's marked by significant physical, social, and intellectual changes. The National Middle School Association's *This We Believe* (2003) document explains that students in the middle grades are "forming the attitudes, values, and habits of mind that will largely direct their behavior as adults" (p. 1). Effective teachers use their knowledge about young adolescents to plan a relevant and challenging curriculum, design instruction that engages students and addresses their needs, and ensure students' success through ongoing assessment.

Teachers teach a diverse group of students in middle-grade classrooms. It's not unusual to have students reading at five or six grade levels, from second to seventh or eighth grade in a fifth-grade classroom, for example. Today, too many students read significantly below grade level, and they can't access information in grade-level

textbooks or learn independently by reading. Many are English learners or from minority and low socioeconomic groups. These students are in real danger of never being able to fully access information that will be crucial to their success in school and in the workplace. It's essential that teachers close the achievement gap so that all students can reach their potential.

Gambrell, Malloy, and Mazzoni (2007) recommend that teachers develop a vision of what they hope to achieve with the students they teach and then work to accomplish their plans. The goal of literacy instruction is to ensure that all students achieve their full literacy potential, and in that light, this chapter introduces eight principles of effective literacy instruction, and they provide the foundation for the chapters that follow.

## PRINCIPLE 1: *Effective Teachers Appreciate the Uniqueness of Young Adolescents*



Young adolescents undergo a significant transition from childhood to adolescence. You've probably noticed kids aged 10 to 14 undergoing tremendous growth spurts, experiencing turbulent emotions, exhibiting distasteful public behavior, or demonstrating idealism through community projects. These behaviors are typical. Some students begin the transition as early as fourth and fifth grades, and by sixth, seventh, and eighth grades, the progression is obvious. It's crucial that teachers understand these changes so that they can provide developmentally appropriate instruction (Brown & Knowles, 2007).

### *Characteristics of Young Adolescents*

Young adolescents experience dramatic physical, social, and intellectual changes during their transition to adolescence, and these changes directly affect their academic achievement.

**Physical Development.** Young adolescents undergo tremendous biological changes as their bodies mature, including growth spurts and the onset of puberty:

**Growth Spurts.** Boys and girls experience steady growth in height and weight before puberty; then physical development accelerates. This rapid growth increases students' nutrition and sleep needs.

**Puberty.** Girls, on average, reach puberty at age 11 and boys 2 years later. The onset of puberty causes observable changes in physical appearance, including breast growth in girls and voice change and facial hair in boys. These changes often make students self-conscious about their appearance.

The physical changes occurring during young adolescence are greater than in any other stage except the one from birth to age 3.

**Social Development.** Young adolescents strive toward independence during this stage. They broaden their social affiliations, search for identity, and address issues of social justice:

**Peer Groups.** Young adolescents yearn to belong to a group, and peer approval becomes as important as adult approval. They're extremely concerned about fitting

in and overreact to ridicule and rejection. Same-sex friendships flourish; girls look for emotional support through their friendships, and boys seek friends who will lend support in times of trouble. Some kids join gangs to be part of a group and ensure their physical safety.

**Search for Identity.** Students begin the search to find out who they are and where they're going in life. They struggle with issues of gender, ethnicity, culture, sexuality, and spirituality, especially when they're confronting views that differ from those of their family. Many kids are bullied verbally or physically, and this harassment threatens their emerging identity.

**Social Justice.** Young adolescents are idealistic. They're interested in what's "fair," and as they become increasingly aware of the world, kids become passionate about social issues such as peace, homelessness, and the environment.

During the transition from dependence and independence, students learn to socialize, begin to define their lifestyle, and experiment with new viewpoints.

**Intellectual Development.** Young adolescents' brains undergo significant changes that affect their cognitive capabilities:

**Reasoning Ability.** Most young adolescents think concretely. They think logically about objects for which they've had personal experience, classify objects into hierarchical relationships, and conceptually combine objects to form categories (Elkind, 1970). By age 14, however, students' thinking begins a gradual shift toward abstract reasoning.

**Metacognition.** Students grow in their ability to think metacognitively or reflect on their thoughts. They become more proficient in using cognitive strategies and monitoring their learning. They recognize that they can control their attitudes toward learning and assume more responsibility for their academic achievement.

**Intellectual Curiosity.** Young adolescents are inquisitive about the world and interested in learning about real-life situations. As they increasingly recognize what's meaningful, they're less willing to study topics that don't matter to them.

Young adolescents refine their ability to think conceptually and reflect on their thinking during the middle grades.

Between fourth and eighth grades, students are on an emotional rollercoaster as they adjust to their developing bodies, expanding social roles, and enhanced thinking abilities. Their development in the three domains occurs concurrently, but individual students' growth rates vary widely. Figure 1-1 presents excerpts from seventh and eighth graders' "I Am . . ." poems that exemplify characteristics of this transition.

## Instructional Implications

The dynamic changes that young adolescents undergo have important implications for literacy instruction (National Middle School Association, 2003). Literacy instruction should be developmentally appropriate and should embody these elements:

**Active Learning.** Students prefer activities where they're actively involved in using the information they're learning. For instance, they participate in student-led discussions, create graphic organizers, work in collaborative groups, and play games.

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### FIGURE 1–1 ◆ Excerpts From “I Am . . .” Poems

*I am a proud seventh grader.  
I pretend to be cool, but I'm not.  
I worry about what people think of me.  
I hope I'll survive middle school.  
I am a proud seventh grader.*

—Savannah

*I am a Pacific Islander from Tonga.  
I dream of going back home, but  
I understand it costs a lot of money.  
I worry that I might never get there.  
I am a Pacific Islander from Tonga.*

—Kolei

*I am just a kid.  
I touch my armpits to see if I have hair there.  
I worry that I'll never be an adult.  
I am just a kid.*

—Lucas

*I am a child with divorced parents struggling to survive.  
I feel my heart and it is shattered.  
I touch the chair where my father used to be.  
I wish my family was whole again.  
I am a child with divorced parents struggling to survive.*

—Jenny

*I am lost in the sorry of my heart.  
I wonder if I'll ever be found.  
I feel like I'm all alone.  
I cry out to God, and I am found.  
Now my heart sings with love.*

—Marta

**Social Interaction.** Young adolescents value opportunities to interact with peers, and teachers teach students how to develop respectful group relationships and work together to complete assignments. Then they regularly provide opportunities for students to read and write with partners and in small groups.

**Authentic Activities.** Reading real trade books, writing compositions to share with genuine audiences, and creating projects to address actual social problems are authentic activities. It's up to teachers to design instruction that meets state expectations or standards while appealing to students' interests.

**Strategy Instruction.** Because middle-grade students can reflect on their thinking, they can use cognitive and metacognitive strategies to comprehend fiction and non-fiction books and content-area textbooks. Teaching these strategies is crucial because beginning in fourth grade, students are expected to read and understand books with increasingly complex ideas and vocabulary.

**Individualization.** Middle graders exhibit a wide range of learning, cultural, and linguistic differences that affect their reading and writing achievement. Within any classroom, students' reading levels vary up to five or six grades, and their writing runs the gamut from basic to advanced, so teachers differentiate instruction to meet students' needs.

**Inquiry Learning.** Young adolescents are curious about the world and want to find answers to solve problems. As they read literature, students can research social issues they're reading about and take action to address them in their community, and in content-area units, students find answers to their own questions and create projects to share what they've learned.

When middle-grade teachers understand the developmental characteristics of their students and provide appropriate instruction incorporating these recommendations, they'll be more effective (Wormeli, 2001). Figure 1–2 describes the characteristics of effective middle-grade teachers, based on the recommendations for teaching young adolescents.

## PRINCIPLE 2: Effective Teachers Understand How Students Learn

**U**nderstanding how young adolescents learn influences how teachers teach. Until the 1960s, behaviorism, a teacher-centered theory, was the dominant view; since then, student-centered theories that advocate students' active engagement in authentic literacy activities have become more influential. The three most important theories are constructivism, sociolinguistics, and information processing. In the last few years, however, behaviorism has begun a resurgence as evidenced by the federal No Child Left Behind Act, renewed popularity of textbook programs, current emphasis on curriculum standards, and mandated high-stakes testing. Tracey and Morrow (2006) argue that incorporating multiple theoretical perspectives improves the quality of literacy instruction; accordingly, the stance presented in this text is that instruction should represent a realistic balance between teacher- and student-centered theories.

### Constructivism

Constructivist theorists describe students as active and engaged learners who construct their own knowledge. Learning occurs when students integrate new information with their existing knowledge. This theory is student centered because teachers engage students with experiences so that they construct their own knowledge.

**Schema Theory.** Knowledge is organized into cognitive structures called *schemas*, and schema theory describes how students learn. Piaget (1969) explained that learning is the modification of schemas as students actively interact with their environment.

FIGURE 1–2 ◆ Characteristics of Effective Middle-Grade Teachers

Characteristic	Description	Instructional Recommendations
<b>Professional Commitment</b>	Teachers are passionate about working with young adolescents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the physical, social, and intellectual characteristics of young adolescents.</li> <li>• Engage students in learning experiences that reflect these characteristics.</li> </ul>
<b>Classroom Community</b>	Teachers create a nurturing classroom community that's inviting, safe, and supportive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build strong relationships with students.</li> <li>• Respect and value cultural diversity.</li> <li>• Create a classroom culture where learning flourishes.</li> </ul>
<b>Literacy Curriculum</b>	Teachers create a literacy curriculum that's relevant, challenging, integrative, and exploratory. It includes reading and writing fiction and nonfiction and using reading and writing as tools for content-area study.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose literature that deals with diverse cultures and social issues.</li> <li>• Teach students how to read nonfiction and content-area textbooks.</li> <li>• Expand students' ability to express ideas through writing.</li> <li>• Use reading and writing as tools for content-area learning.</li> <li>• Encourage lifelong literacy habits.</li> </ul>
<b>Meaningful Instruction</b>	Teachers ensure that instruction is relevant and authentic, and they share their enthusiasm for reading and writing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage students in active and authentic reading and writing activities.</li> <li>• Have students work in groups.</li> <li>• Differentiate instruction.</li> <li>• Incorporate online literacy experiences.</li> <li>• Use multiple approaches to instruction.</li> <li>• Provide explicit instruction on literacy strategies.</li> </ul>
<b>High Expectations</b>	Teachers set high expectations and believe all students will succeed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate instructional goals clearly.</li> <li>• Link assessment and instruction.</li> <li>• Use a variety of assessment tools.</li> <li>• Teach students to self-assess their learning.</li> </ul>

Imagine that the brain is a mental filing cabinet, and that new information is organized with existing knowledge in the filing system. When students are already familiar with a topic, the new information is added to a mental file, or schema, in a revision process called *assimilation*, but when students study a new topic, they create a mental file and place the information in it; this more-difficult construction process is *accommodation*. Everyone's cognitive structure is different, reflecting their knowledge and past experiences.

**Inquiry Learning.** Dewey (1997) advocated an inquiry approach to develop citizens who could participate fully in democracy. He theorized that learners are innately curious and actively create their own knowledge, and he concluded that collaboration, not competition, is more conducive to learning. Students collaborate to conduct

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investigations in which they ask questions, seek information, and create new knowledge to solve problems.

**Engagement Theory.** Theorists examine students' interest in reading and writing because engaged students are intrinsically motivated; they do more reading and writing, enjoy these activities, and reach higher levels of achievement (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). Engaged students have self-efficacy or confidence that they will reach their goals (Bandura, 1997). Young adolescents with high self-efficacy are resilient and persistent, despite obstacles that get in the way of their success. These theorists believe that students are more engaged when they participate in authentic literacy activities with classmates in a nurturing classroom community.

Figure 1–3 summarizes constructivism and the other theories you're reading about.

**FIGURE 1–3** ◆ *Learning Theories*

<i>Orientation</i>	<i>Theory</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Applications</i>
<i>Student-Centered</i>	Constructivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describes learning as the active construction of knowledge</li> <li>• Recognizes the importance of background knowledge</li> <li>• Advocates collaboration, not competition</li> <li>• Suggests ways to engage students so they can be successful</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literature focus units</li> <li>• K-W-L charts</li> <li>• Reading logs</li> <li>• Thematic units</li> </ul>
	Sociolinguistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Views reading and writing as social and cultural activities</li> <li>• Explains that students learn best through authentic activities</li> <li>• Advocates culturally responsive teaching</li> <li>• Challenges students to confront injustices and inequities in society</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literature circles</li> <li>• Partner reading</li> <li>• Reading and writing workshop</li> <li>• Author's chair</li> </ul>
	Information Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommends integrating reading and writing</li> <li>• Views reading and writing as meaning-making processes</li> <li>• Explains that readers' interpretations are individualized</li> <li>• Describes students as strategic readers and writers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guided reading</li> <li>• Graphic organizers</li> <li>• Grand conversations</li> <li>• Reading logs</li> </ul>
<i>Teacher-Centered</i>	Behaviorism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focuses on observable changes in behavior</li> <li>• Views the teacher's role as providing information and supervising practice</li> <li>• Describes learning as the result of stimulus-response actions</li> <li>• Uses incentives and rewards for motivation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basal readers</li> <li>• Textbooks</li> <li>• Workbooks</li> <li>• Whole-class instruction</li> </ul>

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## Sociolinguistics

Vygotsky (1978, 1986) theorized that language organizes thought and is a learning tool. He recommended that teachers incorporate opportunities for students to talk with peers as part of the learning process. Vygotsky realized that students can accomplish more-challenging tasks in collaboration with adults than on their own but learn very little by performing easy tasks that they can already do independently, so he recommended that teachers focus instruction on students' *zone of proximal development*, the level between their actual development and their potential development. As students learn, teachers gradually withdraw their support so that students eventually perform the task independently. Then the cycle begins again.

**Sociocultural Theory.** Reading and writing are viewed as social activities that reflect the culture and community in which students live (Moll & Gonzales, 2004). Sociocultural theorists explain that students from varied cultures have different expectations about literacy and preferred ways of learning. Teachers apply this theory as they create culturally responsive classrooms that empower all students, including those from marginalized groups, to become successful readers and writers (Gay, 2000). Teachers are respectful of all students and confident in their ability to learn.

Teachers often use books of multicultural literature to develop students' cross-cultural awareness, including *Feathers* (Woodson, 2007), which examines the issue of race when a white boy is placed in an all-black sixth-grade classroom; *The Circuit* (Jiménez, 1999), which tells the moving story of a Mexican American boy and his migrant farming family; and *Project Mulberry* (Park, 2007), which portrays the conflict a Korean American girl feels as she tries to "fit in."

Culturally responsive teaching acknowledges the legitimacy of all students' cultures and social customs and teaches students to appreciate their peers' cultural heritages. This theory emphasizes that teachers are responsive to their students' instructional needs. When students aren't successful, teachers examine their instructional practices and make changes so that all students become capable readers and writers.

**Situated Learning Theory.** Learning is a function of the activity, context, and culture in which it occurs (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Situated learning theory rejects the notion of separating learning to do something from actually doing it and emphasizes the concept of apprenticeship, where beginners move from the edge of a learning community to its center as they develop expertise (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989). For example, to become a chef, you could go to cooking school or learn as you work in a restaurant; situated learning theory suggests that working in a restaurant is more effective. For literacy learning, students learn through authentic and meaningful activities. They join a community of learners and become more-expert readers and writers through social interaction with peers. The teacher serves as an expert model, much like a chef does.

**Critical Literacy.** Freire (2000) called for sweeping educational change so that students examine fundamental questions about justice and equity. Critical literacy theorists view language as a means for social action and advocate that students become agents of social change (Johnson & Freedman, 2005). This theory has a political agenda, and the increasing social and cultural diversity in American society adds urgency to resolving inequities and injustices.

One way that students examine social issues is by reading books such as *The Breadwinner* (Ellis, 2001), the story of a girl in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan who pretends

### FIGURE 1–4 ◆ Books That Foster Critical Literacy



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|---|---|
| Avi. (2003). <i>Nothing but the truth</i> . New York: Avon. (grades 6–8)                      | Haddix, M. P. (1998). <i>Among the hidden</i> . New York: Simon & Schuster. (6–8)                         |
| Bruchac, J. (2004). <i>The winter people</i> . New York: Puffin Books. (6–8)                  | Hesse, K. (2001). <i>Witness</i> . New York: Scholastic. (6–8)  |
| Bunting, E. (1999). <i>Smoky night</i> . San Diego: Voyager. (4–5)                            | Hiaasen, C. (2006). <i>Hoot</i> . New York: Yearling. (5–6)   |
| Curtis, C. P. (2000). <i>The Watsons go to Birmingham—1963</i> . New York: Laurel Leaf. (5–7) | Houston, J. W., & Houston, J. D. (2002). <i>Farewell to Manzanar</i> . Boston: Houghton Mifflin. (7–8)    |
| Ellis, D. (2001). <i>The breadwinner</i> . Toronto: Groundwood Books. (4–6)                   | Levine, E. (2007). <i>Henry's freedom box</i> . New York: Scholastic. (4–5)                               |
| Fleischman, P. (2004). <i>Seedfolks</i> . New York: Harper-Trophy. (4–6)                      | Lowry, L. (2006). <i>The giver</i> . New York: Delacorte. (6–8)   |
| Frank, A. (1993). <i>Anne Frank: The diary of a young girl</i> . New York: Bantam. (7–8)      | Ryan, P. M. (2002). <i>Esperanza rising</i> . New York: Blue Sky Press. (4–5)                             |
|   | Winter, J. (2008). <i>Wangari's trees of peace: A true story from Africa</i> . San Diego: Harcourt. (4–5) |

to be a boy to support her family, and *Homeless Bird* (Whelan, 2000), the story of an Indian girl who has no future when she is widowed shortly after her marriage. These stories and others listed in Figure 1–4 describe injustices that students can understand and discuss. In fact, teachers report that students become more engaged in reading about social issues and that their interaction patterns change after reading these stories (Lewison, Leland, & Harste, 2008).

Critical literacy emphasizes young adolescents' potential to become thoughtful, active citizens. The reason that injustice persists in society, Shannon (1995) hypothesizes, is because people don't "ask why things are the way they are, who benefits from these conditions, and how can we make them more equitable" (p. 123).

### Information-Processing Theory

The information-processing theory compares the mind to a computer and describes how information moves through a series of processing units—sensory register, short-term memory, and long-term memory—as it's stored (Tracey & Morrow, 2006). There's a control mechanism, too, that oversees learning. Theorists create models of the reading and writing processes to describe the complicated, interactive workings of the mind (Hayes, 2004; Kintsch, 2004; Rumelhart, 2004). They believe that reading and writing are related, and their models describe a two-way flow of information between what readers and writers know and the words written on the page.

**Interactive Model.** Reading and writing are interactive processes of making meaning. The interactive model of reading emphasizes that readers focus on comprehension and construct meaning using a combination of reader-based and text-based information. This model also includes an executive monitor that oversees students' attention, determines whether what they're reading makes sense, and takes action when problems arise (Ruddell & Unrau, 2004).

Hayes's (2004) model of writing describes what writers do as they write. It emphasizes that writing is also an interactive, meaning-making process. Students move through a series of stages as they plan, draft, revise, and edit their writing to ensure

that readers will understand what they've written. Writers use the same control mechanism that readers do to make plans, select strategies, and solve problems.

**Transactive Theory.** Rosenblatt's transactive theory (2004) explains how readers create meaning. She describes comprehension, which she calls *interpretation*, as the result of a two-way transaction between the reader and the text. Instead of trying to figure out the author's meaning, students negotiate an interpretation based on the text and their knowledge about literature and the world. Their interpretations are individualized because each student brings different knowledge and experiences to the reading event. Even though interpretations vary, they can always be substantiated by the text.

**Strategic Behaviors.** Young adolescents use strategic or goal-oriented behaviors to direct their thinking. They apply cognitive strategies to achieve a goal and metacognitive strategies to determine whether the goal is reached (Dean, 2006; Pressley, 2002b). Visualizing and drawing inferences are cognitive strategies that readers use, and organizing and revising are strategies for writers. Metacognitive strategies, such as monitoring and repairing, regulate students' thinking and help them solve problems. The word *metacognition* is often defined as "thinking about your own thinking," but more accurately, it refers to a sophisticated level of thought that students use to control their thinking (Baker, 2002). Metacognition is a control mechanism; it involves both students' active control of thinking and their awareness of their thinking.

## Behaviorism

Behaviorists focus on the observable and measurable aspects of students' behavior. They believe that behavior can be learned or unlearned as the result of stimulus-and-response actions (O'Donohue & Kitchener, 1998). Reading is viewed as a conditioned response. This theory is described as teacher centered because it focuses on the teacher's role as a dispenser of knowledge. Skinner (1974) explained that students learn to read by mastering a series of discrete skills and subskills in a planned sequence. Teachers use explicit instruction to present information in small steps and reinforce it through practice activities until students achieve mastery because each step is built on the previous one. Students practice skills by completing fill-in-the-blank worksheets. They usually work individually, not in small groups or with peers. Behavior modification is another key feature: Behaviorists believe that teachers control and motivate students through a combination of rewards and punishments.

## PRINCIPLE 3: Effective Teachers Create a Nurturing Classroom Culture

 Classrooms are social settings. Together, students and their teacher create a classroom community, and the environment strongly influences the learning that takes place (Angelillo, 2008). The classroom community should be inviting, supportive, and safe so young adolescents will be motivated to participate in reading and writing activities. Perhaps the most striking quality is the partnership that the teacher and students create: They become a "family" in which all members respect one

another and support each other's learning. Students value culturally and linguistically diverse classmates and recognize that everyone makes important contributions.

Think about the differences between renting and owning a home. In a classroom community, students and the teacher are joint "owners" where students assume responsibility for their own behavior and learning, work collaboratively with peers, complete assignments, and care for the classroom. This doesn't mean that teachers abdicate their responsibility; on the contrary, teachers are the guide, instructor, monitor, coach, mentor, and grader. Sometimes they share these roles with students, but the ultimate responsibility remains with the teacher.

## Characteristics of a Classroom Community

A successful classroom community has specific, identifiable characteristics that are conducive to academic achievement:

**Safety.** The classroom is a safe place that promotes in-depth learning and nurtures students' physical and emotional well-being.

**Respect.** Students and the teacher interact respectfully with each other. Harassment, bullying, and verbal abuse aren't tolerated. Students' cultural, linguistic, and learning differences are honored so that everyone feels comfortable and valued in the classroom learning environment.

**High Expectations.** Teachers set high expectations and emphasize that they believe that all students can be successful. Their high expectations promote a positive classroom environment where students behave appropriately and develop self-confidence. In addition, teachers design activities to challenge and support students' learning.

**Risk-Taking.** Teachers encourage students to take intellectual risks and to develop higher-level thinking skills. They also challenge students to explore new topics and to try unfamiliar activities.

**Collaboration.** Students work with peers on reading and writing activities and other projects. Because young adolescents value opportunities for social interaction and belonging to a group, working together often increases students' motivation and enhances their achievement.

**Choice.** Students make choices about books they read, the topics they write about, and the projects they pursue within parameters set by the teacher. When students have opportunities to make choices, they're more motivated to succeed, and they value the activity.

**Responsibility.** Students are valued members of the classroom community who are responsible for their learning, behavior, and the contributions they make. Teachers and students share learning and teaching responsibilities, and students assume leadership roles in small-group activities.

**Family and Community Involvement.** Teachers involve parents and community members in classroom activities and develop home-school bonds through special programs and regular communication. Researchers have found again and again that when parents and other adults in the community are involved in classroom activities, student achievement soars (Edwards, 2004).

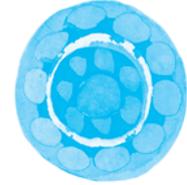


FIGURE 1–5 ◆ Interest Inventory Questions

<i>Personal Questions</i>	<i>Reading Questions</i>	<i>Writing Questions</i>
<i>What are your favorite things to do? hobbies?</i>	<i>What kinds of books do you like to read?</i>	<i>What kinds of writing do you do at school?</i>
<i>What sports do you play?</i>	<i>Who are your favorite authors?</i>	<i>What are your favorite writing genres?</i>
<i>What do you know a lot about?</i>	<i>What are your favorite genres?</i>	<i>What makes writing good?</i>
<i>What music do you like? movies?</i>	<i>What do you read besides books (e.g., comics, magazines)?</i>	<i>What do you do well as a writer?</i>
<i>What do you want to be when you grow up?</i>	<i>Where and when do you like to read?</i>	<i>What is hardest for you as a writer?</i>
<i>Who's in your family?</i>	<i>Where do you get reading materials?</i>	<i>What writing strategies do you use?</i>
<i>What do you do with your family?</i>	<i>What do you do well as a reader?</i>	<i>What are you doing to become a better writer?</i>
<i>What languages do you speak? read? write?</i>	<i>What is hardest for you as a reader?</i>	<i>What's your writing process?</i>
<i>What books and other reading materials do you have at home?</i>	<i>What reading strategies do you use?</i>	<i>How often do you write at home?</i>
<i>Where do you study at home?</i>	<i>What are you doing to become a better reader?</i>	<i>What do you write at home?</i>
<i>How do you use computers? the Internet?</i>	<i>How often do you read at home?</i>	<i>Do you use a dictionary and thesaurus? Why?</i>
<i>What 3 words best describe you?</i>	<i>Do you like to read?</i>	<i>Do you like to write?</i>

These characteristics emphasize the teacher's role in creating an inviting, supportive, and safe classroom climate for students (National Middle School Association, 2003).

### *How to Create the Classroom Culture*

Teachers are more effective when they take the first 2 weeks of the school year to establish the classroom climate, learn about their students, and lay out their expectations. To get acquainted, teachers often have their students complete interest inventories. Students respond to a set of questions about their family life, personal interests and extracurricular activities, attitudes about literacy, and prior reading and writing experiences. Figure 1–5 lists questions that teachers can draw on to develop an interest inventory. Students can orally respond to the questions one-on-one with the teacher, answer the questions as a homework assignment, write an autobiographical essay, or create an autobiography box with photos and artifacts that they share in class. It's important that teachers also respond to the questions in the interest inventory to share information about themselves to establish rapport with their students.

Teachers explicitly explain classroom routines, such as how to work collaboratively with peers in a small group, and they set the expectation that students will adhere to them. They demonstrate literacy procedures, including how to use a **rubric** and how to participate in a **grand conversation**. Third, teachers model ways of interacting with classmates and solving problems that might develop.

Check the Compendium of Instructional Procedures, which follows Chapter 12, for more information on the highlighted terms.

Teachers are the classroom managers: They set expectations and clearly explain what's expected of students and what's valued in the classroom. The rules are specific and consistent, and teachers also set limits; students can talk quietly with peers when they're working together, for example, but they're not allowed to shout across the classroom or talk when the teacher's talking or when classmates are presenting to the class. Teachers also model classroom rules themselves as they interact with students. This process of socialization at the beginning of the school year is crucial to the success of the literacy program.

Not everything can be accomplished during the first 2 weeks, however; teachers continue to reinforce classroom routines and literacy procedures. One way is to have student leaders model the desired routines and behaviors; this way, peers are likely to follow the lead. Teachers also teach additional literacy procedures as students become involved in new types of activities. The classroom community evolves during the school year, but the foundation is laid during those first 2 weeks.

The classroom environment is predictable, with familiar routines and literacy procedures. Students feel comfortable, safe, and more willing to take risks in a predictable classroom environment. This is especially true for students from varied cultures, English learners, and struggling readers and writers (Fay & Whaley, 2004).

## STRUGGLING READERS AND WRITERS



### *More Reading and Writing*

**Struggling students need to spend more time reading and writing.**

Struggling students need to increase their volume of reading and writing. Allington (2006) recommends that teachers dramatically increase the amount of time struggling readers spend reading each day so that they can become more-capable and confident readers and develop greater interest in reading. Reading volume matters; better readers typically read three times as much as struggling readers do. This recommendation for increased volume applies to writing, too: Struggling writers need to spend more time writing.

In addition to explicit instruction and guided practice, students need large blocks of uninterrupted time for authentic reading and writing, and one of the best ways to provide this opportunity is reading and writing workshop. During reading workshop, students read self-selected books at their own reading level, and during writing workshop, they draft and refine compositions on self-selected topics. Practice is just as important for reading and writing as it is when you're learning to ride a bike or play the piano.

How much classroom time should students spend reading and writing? Although there's no hard-and-fast rule, Allington (2006) recommends that each day students spend at least 90 minutes reading and 45 minutes writing. Researchers have found that the most effective teachers provide more time for reading and writing than less effective teachers do (Allington & Johnston, 2002). It's often difficult for struggling students to sustain reading and writing activities for as long as their classmates do, but with teacher support, they can increase the time they spend reading and writing.

## PRINCIPLE 4: Effective Teachers Adopt a Balanced Approach to Instruction

**T**he balanced approach to instruction is based on a comprehensive view of literacy that combines explicit instruction, guided practice, collaborative learning, and independent reading and writing. It's grown out of the so-called "reading wars" of the late 20th century in which teachers and researchers argued for either teacher-centered or student-centered instruction. Cunningham and Allington (2007) compare the balanced approach to a multivitamin, suggesting that it brings together the best of teacher- and student-centered learning theories. Even though balanced programs vary, they usually embody these characteristics:

**Reading.** Teachers develop students' ability to comprehend fiction, nonfiction, functional texts (e.g., directions and nutritional labels), and Internet texts.

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**Writing.** Teachers teach students to use the writing process to communicate effectively through writing. They also teach writing genres and the six traits of effective writing.

**Explicit Instruction.** Teachers provide explicit instruction that addresses the state's literacy standards for their grade level, with the goal that all students achieve those expectations.

**Learning Tools.** Teachers teach students to use reading, talk, and writing as tools for learning online and in the content areas.

**Motivation.** Teachers use authentic and meaningful activities to engage students' interest.

Pearson, Raphael, Benson, and Madda (2007) explain that “achieving balance is a complex process that requires flexibility and artful orchestration of literacy’s various contextual and conceptual aspects” (p. 33). The characteristics of the balanced approach are embodied in an instructional program that consists of these components:

- ◆ Reading literature
- ◆ Reading nonfiction
- ◆ New literacies
- ◆ Literacy strategies and skills
- ◆ Oral language
- ◆ Vocabulary
- ◆ Comprehension
- ◆ Writing
- ◆ Spelling

**FIGURE 1–6** ◆ *Components of the Balanced Literacy Approach*

<i>Component</i>	<i>Description</i>
<i>Reading Literature</i>	Students read and respond to fiction and poetry and learn about genres, text structures, and literary features.
<i>Reading Nonfiction</i>	Students read nonfiction books, textbooks, and magazines and learn about genres, text structures, and nonfiction features.
<i>New Literacies</i>	Students use the Internet and other information-communication technologies to learn and communicate with others.
<i>Literacy Strategies and Skills</i>	Students use problem-solving behaviors called <i>strategies</i> and automatic actions called <i>skills</i> as they read and write.
<i>Oral Language</i>	Students use talk as they work with peers, participate in grand conversations, and give oral presentations.
<i>Vocabulary</i>	Students learn the meaning of words through wide reading and listening to books read aloud, and they apply word-learning strategies to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words.
<i>Comprehension</i>	Students use reader factors, including comprehension strategies, and text factors, including text structures, to understand what they're reading.
<i>Writing</i>	Students use the writing process and their knowledge about genres and the six traits to draft and refine reports, essays, poems, and other compositions.
<i>Spelling</i>	Students apply what they're learning about English orthography to spell words, and their spellings become more conventional.

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These components are described in Figure 1–6. Creating a balance is essential because when one component is overemphasized, the development of the others suffers.

A balanced literacy program integrating these components is recommended for all students in fourth through eighth grades, including struggling students, on-grade-level students, advanced students, and English learners (Braunger & Lewis, 2006).

## PRINCIPLE 5: Effective Teachers Scaffold Students' Reading and Writing

**T**eachers scaffold students' literacy development as they demonstrate, guide, and teach, and they vary the amount of support they provide according to the instructional purpose and students' needs. Sometimes teachers model how experienced readers read or guide students when they're revising their writing. Teachers use four levels of support, moving from more to less as students assume responsibility (Fountas & Pinnell, 2001). Figure 1–7 summarizes the levels of support—modeled, shared, guided, and independent—for literacy activities.

### Modeled Reading and Writing

Teachers provide the greatest amount of support when they model how expert readers read and expert writers write. When teachers read aloud, they're modeling: They read fluently and with expression, and they talk about their thoughts and the strategies they're using. When they model writing, teachers write a composition on chart paper or on an interactive whiteboard so that everyone can see what they're doing and how the text is being written. Teachers use this support level to demonstrate procedures, such as choosing a book to read or doing a **word sort**, and to introduce

FIGURE 1–7 ◆ A Continuum of Literacy Instruction

Level of Support	Reading	Writing
<b>High</b> ↑ <i>Modeled</i>	Teacher reads aloud, modeling how good readers read fluently and with expression. Books too difficult for students to read themselves are used.	Teacher writes in front of students, creating the text, doing the writing, and thinking aloud about writing strategies and skills.
<i>Shared</i>	Teacher and students read books together, with students following as the teacher reads. Books students can't read by themselves are used.	Teacher and students create the text together; then the teacher does the actual writing. Students may assist by spelling familiar words.
<i>Guided</i>	Teacher plans and teaches reading lessons to small, homogeneous groups using instructional-level books. Focus is on supporting students' use of strategies.	Teacher plans and teaches lessons on a writing procedure, strategy, or skill, and students participate in supervised practice activities.
↓ <b>Low</b> <i>Independent</i>	Students choose and read self-selected books independently. Teacher conferences with students to monitor their progress.	Students use the writing process to write stories, essays, and other compositions. Teacher monitors students' progress.

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new writing genres, such as writing an essay. Teachers often do a **think-aloud** to share what they're thinking as they read or write and the decisions they make and the strategies they use. Modeling has these purposes:

- Demonstrate fluent reading and writing
- Explain how to use reading and writing strategies, such as predicting, using context clues, and revising
- Teach the steps in a procedure for a literacy activity
- Show how reading and writing conventions and other skills work

### *Shared Reading and Writing*

Students assume partial responsibility for doing the work in shared reading and writing. Classmates work together, and teachers provide assistance when it's needed. Probably the best-known example is shared reading in which teachers read big books with young children. The teacher does most of the reading, but children join in to read familiar words and phrases. Teachers who work with older students also use shared reading (Allen, 2002). When a novel is too difficult for students to read independently, for example, teachers often read it aloud while students follow along, reading silently when they can in their own copies. Another shared activity is **readers theatre**, in which students assume the roles of characters and read the lines in a script together.

Teachers use shared writing in a variety of ways, such as when they write text that students dictate. Sometimes it makes sense for teachers to do the writing during a lesson because they can write more legibly and quickly. Teachers also use shared writing to make **K-W-L charts** and draw graphic organizers.

Teachers assist struggling students with activities at this level. To develop reading fluency, for example, teachers have students use **choral reading** to practice reading the lines of a poem. To teach writing, teachers use **interactive writing**. In this procedure, students compose a group text and then take turns writing it sentence by sentence on chart paper. Teachers provide assistance with spelling, Standard English grammar, and other conventions.

Students also use shared reading and writing when they work with partners or in small groups. Two students can often read a book together that neither one could read independently; similarly, several students can craft a better composition together than on their own.

This level differs from modeled reading and writing in that students actually participate in the activity rather than simply observing the teacher. In shared reading, students read along with the teacher, and in shared writing, they work together with classmates or the teacher. Shared reading and writing have these purposes:

- Involve students in literacy activities they can't do independently
- Have students share their literacy expertise with classmates
- Provide practice before students work independently

### *Guided Reading and Writing*

Teachers continue to support students during guided reading and writing, but students do the actual reading and writing themselves. In **guided reading**, small, homogeneous groups of students meet with the teacher to read a book at their instructional level. The teacher introduces the book and guides students as they read. Then students continue reading on their own while the teacher supervises. Afterward, they

discuss the book, review vocabulary words, and practice skills. Later, students often reread the entire book, or parts of it, independently.

Teachers plan structured writing activities and then supervise students as they write. For example, when students make pages for a collaborative book, it's guided writing because the teacher organizes the activity and supervises students as they work. Teachers also provide guidance as they conference with students about their writing.

**Minilessons** are another type of guided reading and writing. As teachers teach about strategies, skills, and genres and other text factors, they support students as they learn. They also provide practice activities and supervise as students apply what they're learning.

Teachers use guided reading and writing to provide instruction and assistance as students are actually reading and writing. Guided reading and writing have these purposes:

- Support students' reading in appropriate instructional-level materials
- Teach literacy strategies and skills
- Involve students in collaborative writing projects
- Teach students to use the writing process—in particular, how to revise and edit

### *Independent Reading and Writing*

Students apply the strategies and skills they've learned in authentic literacy activities. During independent reading, students usually choose their own books and work at their own pace as they read and respond to books. Similarly, during independent writing, students usually choose their own topics and move at their own pace as they develop and refine their writing. It would be wrong to suggest, however, that teachers play no role in independent-level activities; they continue to monitor students, but they provide much less guidance at this level.

Through independent reading, students learn how pleasurable reading is and, teachers hope, become lifelong readers. In addition, as they write, students come to see themselves as authors. Independent reading and writing have these purposes:

- Provide authentic and meaningful literacy experiences
- Create opportunities for students to apply the strategies and skills they've learned
- Develop lifelong readers and writers

Teachers working with fourth through eighth graders use all four levels. When teachers introduce a reading strategy, for instance, they model how to apply it. And, when teachers want students to practice a strategy they've already introduced, they guide students through a reading activity, slowly releasing responsibility to them. Once students can apply the strategy easily, they're encouraged to use it independently. The purpose of the activity, not the activity itself, determines the level of support. Teachers are less actively involved during independent reading and writing, but the quality of instruction that students have received is clearest because they're applying what they've learned.

## *PRINCIPLE 6: Effective Teachers Organize for Literacy Instruction*

 here's no one instructional program that best represents the balanced approach to literacy; instead, teachers organize for instruction by creating a program that fits their students' needs, their state's grade-level standards,

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and the school's curricular guidelines. The instructional programs teachers create should reflect these principles:

- Teachers create a community of learners in their classrooms.
- Teachers implement the components of the balanced approach.
- Teachers scaffold students' reading and writing experiences.

Teachers choose among a variety of instructional programs, combine parts of two or more programs, alternate programs, or add other components to meet their students' needs. Some of the programs are based on authentic literacy activities using trade books, and others are textbook based.

### Literature Focus Units

Teachers create literature focus units featuring high-quality novels and other trade books. The books are usually found in a district- or state-approved list of books that young adolescents are expected to read. They include *Charlotte's Web* (White, 2006), *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Lee, 2006), and other classics and award winners such as *Holes* (Sachar, 2008) and *The Tale of Despereaux* (DiCamillo, 2003). Everyone in the class reads and responds to the same book, and the teacher supports students' learning through a combination of explicit instruction and reading and writing activities. Through these units, teachers teach about genres, authors, and literary analysis, and in the process, they nurture students' interest in literature.

### Literature Circles

Students form small-group literature circles or book clubs to authentically read and respond to a novel or other trade book. Teachers select five or six books at varying reading levels that reflect the interests and reading levels of their students. Often, the books are related in some way—representing the same genre or the same topic, or written by the same author, for instance. Teachers collect multiple copies of the books and give **book talks** to introduce them. Then students choose a book and form a group to read and respond to it. They set a 5- to 10-day reading and discussion schedule and work autonomously, although teachers sometimes sit in on the discussions. Through the experience of reading and discussing a book together, students learn more about how to respond to books and develop responsibility for completing assignments.

### Reading Workshop

Students independently read books that they've chosen themselves and that are appropriate for their reading level (Atwell, 2007). Everyone reads while teachers conference with individual students. After finishing a book, students share it with the class and offer it to another student. Teachers also teach **minilessons** on reading strategies and skills. This workshop program is authentic; students read more like adults do, making choices, working independently, and developing responsibility. Teachers report that fourth through eighth graders particularly value the opportunity to make choices and read independently.

### Writing Workshop

Students do authentic writing on self-selected topics. They follow the writing process as they draft and revise their writing and conference with the teacher. Students spend



### Literature Circles

These eighth graders are participating in a discussion during a literature circle featuring Rodman Philbrick's *Freak the Mighty* (2001), the memorable story of two unlikely friends. The students talk about events in the story, returning to the book to read sentences aloud. They also check the meaning of several words in a dictionary that one student keeps on his desk. They've read half of the book so far, and their conversation focuses on the friendship Max and Kevin have formed. They talk about their own friends and what it means to be a friend, and they make predictions about how the story will end.

most of writing workshop involved in their own writing activities, but teachers also read high-quality literature aloud to the class and use these books as a model when they present **minilessons** on reading and writing strategies and skills. Reading and writing workshop are literacy apprenticeships that situated learning theorists recommend, and teachers have repeatedly reported that literacy workshops are more motivational than other literacy programs (Atwell, 1998).

### Basal Reading Programs

Commercially produced reading programs for fourth through sixth grades are known as *basal reading programs* or *basal readers*. These programs feature a textbook containing reading selections with accompanying workbooks, supplemental books, and related instructional materials at each grade level. Vocabulary, comprehension, grammar, writing, and spelling instruction is coordinated with the reading selections and aligned with grade-level standards. The teacher's guide provides detailed procedures for teaching the selections. Testing materials are also included so that teachers can monitor students' progress. Publishers tout basal readers as a complete literacy program, but effective teachers realize that they aren't.

### Language Arts Textbooks

Commercial literacy programs for sixth through eighth grades are often referred to as *language arts textbooks* or *literature anthologies*, and they're very similar to basal reading programs. These programs feature a textbook with a mix of classic and contemporary multicultural literature that includes short stories, feature articles, poems, and functional selections, such as directions, product information, and diagrams. Teachers follow

detailed instructions in teachers' guides for reading the selections and teaching literary analysis. Students write answers to questions included in the textbook, complete assignments in consumable workbooks, or take quizzes at the textbook's website. Detailed information about grammar, spelling, writing, and test-taking strategies is included in a special section at the back of the textbook or in a supplemental handbook.

### Specialty Textbooks

Some teachers use grammar, spelling, and writing textbooks and other commercial programs to provide instruction in these areas. The Write Source's collection of writing textbooks is probably the best known. Many grammar textbooks are available today that are little more than workbooks for identifying parts of speech and parts of sentences. Kiestler's *Giggles in the Middle: Caught'ya! Grammar With a Giggle for Middle School* (2006b) is a far more creative approach, and Killgallon's (1997, 2000) sentence-composing texts effectively link grammar and writing.

These instructional approaches can be divided into authentic and textbook programs. Literature focus units, literature circles, and reading and writing workshop are classified as authentic programs because they use trade books and involve students in meaningful activities. Basal readers, language arts textbooks, and other specialty textbooks, not surprisingly, are textbook programs that reflect behaviorist theories. Teachers generally combine these authentic and textbook programs because students learn best through a variety of reading and writing experiences. Sometimes the books that students read are more difficult or teachers are introducing a new writing genre that requires more teacher support and guidance. Some teachers alternate literature focus units or literature circles with reading and writing workshop and a textbook program, and others use some components from each approach throughout the school year. Figure 1–8 reviews these instructional programs.

## PRINCIPLE 7: Effective Teachers Differentiate Instruction

**B**ecause young adolescents vary in reading level, academic achievement, and English language proficiency, effective teachers differentiate instruction by adjusting their instruction and assignments so all students can be successful. The National Middle School Association's *This We Believe* (2003) document states that “teaching approaches should enhance and accommodate the diverse skills, abilities, and prior knowledge of young adolescents” (p. 25).

Tomlinson (2004) explains that the one-size-fits-all instructional model is obsolete, and that teachers respect students by honoring both their similarities and their differences. Differentiation is based on Vygotsky's idea of a zone of proximal development. If instruction is either too difficult or too easy, it won't be effective; instead, teachers provide instruction that addresses students' instructional needs.

### How to Differentiate Instruction

Teachers use varied instructional arrangements, instructional materials at students' reading levels, interest inventories to determine students' interests, and different assignments as they differentiate instruction. They monitor students' learning and make adjustments,

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FIGURE 1–8 ◆ *Instructional Programs*

Type	Program	Instructional Emphases
<b>Authentic Programs</b>	<b>Literature Focus Units</b> Teachers and students read and respond to a book of grade-appropriate high-quality literature together as a class.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experiencing high-quality literature</li> <li>• Examining genres</li> <li>• Modeling reading strategies</li> <li>• Learning vocabulary</li> </ul>
	<b>Literature Circles</b> Students form literature circles or “book clubs” to read and respond to a self-selected trade book.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working in small groups</li> <li>• Reading interesting books</li> <li>• Learning how respond to a book</li> <li>• Using discussion to deepen comprehension</li> </ul>
	<b>Reading Workshop</b> Students choose interesting trade books at their reading level and read them independently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doing authentic reading</li> <li>• Teaching strategies and skills in minilessons</li> <li>• Having students read books at their reading level</li> <li>• Reading aloud to students</li> </ul>
	<b>Writing Workshop</b> Students use the writing process to write books and other compositions on self-selected topics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doing authentic writing</li> <li>• Practicing the writing process</li> <li>• Teaching strategies and skills in minilessons</li> <li>• Having students share their writing with classmates</li> </ul>
<b>Textbook Programs</b>	<b>Basal Reading Programs</b> Students in grades 4–6 read selections in grade-level textbooks and participate in teacher-directed lessons and practice activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading short stories, excerpts from novels, and nonfiction articles</li> <li>• Teaching strategies and skills sequentially</li> <li>• Providing grade-level instruction for all students</li> <li>• Using workbooks for practice activities</li> </ul>
	<b>Language Arts Textbooks</b> Students in grades 6–8 read selections in grade-level textbooks and participate in teacher-directed lessons and practice activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading short stories, poems, and nonfiction texts</li> <li>• Providing grade-level instruction for all students</li> <li>• Teaching grammar, spelling, and writing skills</li> <li>• Teaching literary analysis</li> </ul>
	<b>Specialty Textbooks</b> Students use textbooks for teacher-directed lessons and practice activities to learn grammar, spelling, and writing strategies and skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing grade-level instruction on grammar, spelling, and writing</li> <li>• Completing practice activities</li> <li>• Using the textbook as a resource guide</li> </ul>

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when necessary, and they assess learning in multiple ways, not just using paper-and-pencil tests. Differentiation involves adjusting the content, the process, and the products:

***Differentiating the Content.*** Teachers identify the information that students need to learn to meet grade-level standards so that every student can be successful. They differentiate the content in these ways:

- Choose instructional materials at students' reading levels
- Consider students' developmental levels as well as their current grade placement in deciding what to teach
- Use assessment tools to determine students' instructional needs

***Differentiating the Process.*** Teachers vary instruction and application activities to meet their students' needs. They differentiate the process in these ways:

- Provide instruction to individuals, small groups, and the whole class
- Scaffold struggling students with more-explicit instruction
- Challenge advanced students with activities requiring higher-level thinking
- Adjust instruction when students aren't successful

***Differentiating the Products.*** Teachers vary how students demonstrate what they've learned. Demonstrations include both the projects that students create and the tests teachers use to measure students' learning. Teachers differentiate the products in these ways:

- Have students create projects individually, with partners, or in small groups
- Design projects that engage students with literacy in meaningful ways
- Assess students using a combination of visual, oral, and written formats

These three ways to differentiate instruction are reviewed in Figure 1–9.

## ***Student Diversity***

America's public schools are becoming increasingly diverse. More than a third of students come from minority backgrounds. Many large school districts have students from more than 150 countries who speak 130 or more languages at home; smaller districts are reporting similar changes. Teaching diverse learners is both exciting and challenging. Teachers' goal is to assist all students to meet or exceed grade-level standards.

***Grade-Level Students.*** Grade-level students are capable readers and writers. They can read grade-level trade books and textbooks and use comprehension strategies, including drawing inferences, to understand what they read. They're effective writers who use the writing process; develop and elaborate their ideas; choose appropriate language and style conventions; and eliminate most spelling, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation errors. They will achieve most grade-level literacy standards with high-quality instruction in a balanced literacy program and a nurturing classroom culture.

Grade-level instruction is appropriate for these students. Their background knowledge, academic vocabulary, and prior schooling have prepared them for success. Even so, many grade-level students face challenges such as reading content-area textbooks, learning spelling words, writing persuasive essays, or completing grammar exercises. Some are more-fluent readers, some prefer writing to reading, and some are more motivated than others. Teachers monitor these students' achievement to ensure that they're making expected progress.

**FIGURE 1–9** ◆ *Ways to Differentiate Instruction*

<i>Component</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Instructional Procedures</i>
<b>Content</b>	The information students need to learn to meet grade-level standards, and the instructional materials that teachers use to ensure that all students are successful.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose instructional materials at students' reading levels.</li> <li>• Consider students' developmental levels as well as their current grade placement in deciding what to teach.</li> <li>• Use assessment tools to determine students' instructional needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Process</b>	Teachers vary instruction and application activities to address students' developmental levels and learning needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide instruction to individuals, small groups, and the whole class.</li> <li>• Scaffold struggling students with more-explicit instruction.</li> <li>• Challenge advanced students with activities that require higher-level thinking.</li> </ul>
<b>Products</b>	Teachers vary the ways that students demonstrate what they've learned.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have students create projects individually, with partners, or in small groups.</li> <li>• Design projects that engage students in authentic and meaningful ways.</li> <li>• Assess students using visual, oral, and written formats.</li> </ul>

**Struggling Students.** Struggling students perform below grade-level standards; it's not unusual for these students to score 2 or more years below their grade-level placement on achievement tests. It's essential that teachers intervene by assessing students to determine their areas of weakness and then providing intensive and accelerated literacy instruction; if they don't, struggling students will fall farther and farther behind. The best intensive and accelerated instruction includes these components:

- Explicit instruction of reading and writing strategies and skills
- **Guided reading** lessons using texts at students' instructional reading level
- Lessons to build background knowledge and teach academic vocabulary
- Multiple daily opportunities to read and write
- Reading aloud to students from grade-level-appropriate fiction and nonfiction books

In the middle grades, time is the critical factor for helping struggling students because those who are more than 2 years below grade level rarely catch up with their grade-level peers quickly. It often takes several years to close the gap.

**Advanced Students.** Advanced students' academic achievement in reading and writing exceeds grade-level expectations, and they outperform their peers. Teachers focus instruction on expanding students' literacy knowledge so they remain engaged in learning. They

allow students to design many of their literacy projects, and they challenge advanced learners through activities such as these:

- Reading and responding to more-sophisticated literature individually and in literature circles
- Integrating technology into writing projects
- Pursuing community-based projects related to issues of social justice

The Spotlight feature on the next page introduces three eighth graders; one is a capable student who meets grade-level standards, one really struggles with reading and writing, and the third is a high-achieving student. Learning about these students helps to put a face on each type of learner, and in upcoming chapters, you'll learn more about these students' literacy development.

## Scaffolding English Learners

Students who come from language backgrounds other than English and aren't yet proficient in English are known as English learners (ELs). Many can converse in English but struggle with abstract academic language. These students benefit from participating in the same instructional programs that mainstream students do, but teachers make adaptations to create learning contexts that respect minority students and meet their instructional needs (Shanahan & Beck, 2006). Learning to read and write is more challenging because ELs are learning to speak English at the same time. Teachers scaffold ELs' oral language acquisition and literacy development in these ways:

**Explicit Instruction.** Teachers present more-explicit instruction on literacy strategies and skills because ELs are more at risk than other students (Genesee & Riches, 2006). They also spend more time teaching unfamiliar academic vocabulary (e.g., *homonym*, *paragraph*, *index*, *revise*, *summarize*).

**Oral Language.** Teachers provide many opportunities for students to practice speaking English comfortably and informally with partners and in small groups. Through conversations about topics they're learning, ELs develop both conversational and academic language, which in turn supports their literacy development.

**Small-Group Work.** Teachers provide opportunities for students to work in small groups because peers' social interaction supports their learning. As English learners talk with classmates, they're learning the culture of literacy.

**Reading Aloud to Students.** Teachers read aloud a variety of fiction and nonfiction books, including some that represent students' home cultures. As they read, teachers model fluent reading, and students build background knowledge and become more familiar with English vocabulary and written language structures.

**Background Knowledge.** Teachers organize instruction into units to build students' world knowledge about grade-level-appropriate concepts, and they develop ELs' literary knowledge through minilessons and a variety of reading and writing activities.

**Authentic Literacy Activities.** Teachers provide daily opportunities for students to apply the strategies and skills they're learning as they read and write for authentic purposes. English learners participate in meaningful literacy activities through literature circles and reading and writing workshop.

These recommendations promote English learners' academic success.

# Spotlight on . . .

## Young Adolescents

### Grade Level student



Almost-14-year-old Ales is a capable student. Her favorite color is pink, and she loves Hip Hop music. She's very knowledgeable about caring for animals because she helps her mother take care of their tropical fish tanks.

She's on the girls' basketball team at her school. Ales plays wing because she's strong and an excellent shooter.

Ales is part of a large blended family. She lives with her mother, stepdad, two sisters, two step-sisters, and a stepbrother. Her dad lives in Nevada, and she visits him every summer. Everyone in her family speaks English, but Ales wants to learn Spanish because so many people in her commu-

nity speak Spanish, and she wants to know what they're saying.

There's a computer with Internet access in a quiet part of her living room. Ales uses it for homework, and on weekends, she plays games and downloads the lyrics to new Hip Hop songs.

She reads a lot because her mom insists that she read for 30 minutes every night after finishing her homework.

Ales hopes to attend college in New York. She wants to become either a vet, because she loves animals, or a crime scene investigator, because it's an interesting career that she learned about by watching CSI on TV.

### STRUGGLING STUDENT



Eighth-grade Graciela is a struggling reader and writer. She's a native Spanish speaker who's lived in the United States all her life. This attractive 13-year-old is soft spoken and has a quick smile. She has big brown eyes and loves to wear black nail polish.

Graciela is an athlete. Last week, she ran an 8:32-minute mile in PE. She loves to play soccer and flag football with her girl-friends.

Troublemaker! That's what Graciela calls herself. Her mother had to attend school with her in first and second grades. She remembers being angry, pulling girls' hair, and hitting classmates. She doesn't know why she did it, but her behavior im-

proved in third grade once she learned English. She still gets in trouble when a teacher is grouchy or a classmate bothers her, and she overreacts.

She lives with her mom and her younger brother, who's a fifth grader. They speak Spanish at home and watch the Telemundo and Univision channels on TV. She says she doesn't do much homework or reading, but her mom buys Hispanic magazines for her.

Graciela likes to go to the movies with her friends. Scary movies are her favorite. She dreams of becoming a model, but her mother says she should be a doctor.

### ADVANCED STUDENT



14-year-old Kolei is a high-achieving student. His family came to the United States from the South Pacific island country of Tonga when his father was a child. Kolei has visited Tonga twice and wants to live there someday.

Kolei is poised and articulate. He describes himself as "a deep thinker." He's a native English speaker; he and his family speak English at home, and his grandmother taught him to speak and read Tongan and a bit of Tahitian.

There are six other people in Kolei's family: his mother, father, grandmother, and three siblings. He has an older brother and two younger sisters.

He's an integral part of his family's Polynesian catering and dancing business: He plays traditional Tahitian drums, has received awards for his dancing, and often helps out by lugging heavy trays of food.

Kolei's interested in fashion design and thinks it would be cool to be a supermodel. He watches Project Runway and Stylista, two fashion-themed reality-TV shows.

Kolei studies for more than 3 hours each night. He has a computer but rarely uses it because he's so busy doing homework. He wants to earn a doctorate and become a psychologist.

Teachers' attitudes about minority students and their understanding of how people learn a second language play a critical role in the effectiveness of instruction (Gay, 2000). It's important that teachers understand that ELs have different cultural and linguistic backgrounds and plan instruction accordingly. Most classrooms reflect the European American middle-class culture, which differs significantly from minority students' backgrounds. Brock and Raphael (2005) point out that "mismatches between teachers' and students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds matter because such mismatches can impact negatively on students' opportunities for academic success" (p. 5). Teachers and students use language differently. For example, some students are reluctant to volunteer answers to teachers' questions, and others may not answer if the questions are different than those their parents ask (Peregoy & Boyle, 2008). Teachers who learn about their students' home language and culture and embed what they learn into their instruction are likely to be more successful.

## PRINCIPLE 8: Effective Teachers Link Instruction and Assessment

**A**ssessment is an integral and ongoing part of both learning and teaching (Mariotti & Homan, 2005). Sometimes standardized high-stakes achievement tests are equated with assessment, but classroom assessment is much more than a once-a-year test. It's a daily part of classroom life: Teachers collect and analyze data from observations, conferences, and classroom tests, and then use the results to make decisions about students' academic achievement (Cunningham & Allington, 2007).

### Purposes of Classroom Assessment

Teachers use assessment for these purposes:

**Determining Reading Levels.** Because students within a classroom typically read at a wide range of levels, teachers determine students' reading levels so that they can plan appropriate instruction and match students with books.

**Monitoring Progress.** Teachers regularly assess students to ensure that they're making expected progress in reading and writing, and when students aren't progressing, teachers take action to get them back on track.

**Diagnosing Strengths and Weaknesses.** Teachers examine students' progress in specific literacy components, including fluency, comprehension, and spelling, to identify their strengths and weaknesses. Diagnosis is especially important when students are struggling or aren't making expected progress.

**Documenting Learning.** Teachers use a combination of test results and collections of students' work to provide evidence of their academic achievement and document that they've met grade-level standards.

These four purposes emphasize that teachers in fourth through eighth grades use assessment tools every day to make instructional decisions.

Assessment is linked to instruction; teachers use results of assessment to inform their teaching (National Middle School Association, 2003). As they plan appropriate instruction, teachers use their knowledge about students' reading levels, background knowledge, and strategy and skill competencies. Teachers monitor instruction that's in progress as they observe students, conference with them, and check their work to ensure that the instruction is effective and they make modifications, including

reteaching when necessary, to meet students' needs. Teachers also judge the effectiveness of their instruction after it's completed. It's easy to blame students when learning isn't occurring, but teachers must consider how they can improve their teaching so that their students will be successful.

### *Classroom Assessment Tools*

Teachers use a variety of informal assessment tools that they create themselves to monitor students' learning. These assessment tools include the following:

- Observation of students as they participate in instructional activities
- Examination of students' work
- Conferences with individual students
- Checklists to monitor students' progress
- Rubrics** to assess students' writing and other activities

These assessment tools support instruction, and teachers choose which one to use according to the kind of information they need. Teachers also administer commercial tests to individual students or the entire class to determine their overall reading achievement or their proficiency in a particular component—comprehension, for example. In upcoming chapters, you'll learn how to assess students' reading and writing and which assessment tools to use.

### *High-Stakes Tests*

The results of yearly high-stakes standardized tests also provide evidence of students' literacy achievement. The usefulness of these data is limited, however, because the tests generally are administered in the spring and the results aren't released until after the school year ends. At the beginning of the next school year, teachers do examine the results and use what they learn in planning for their new class, but the impact isn't as great as it would be for the teachers who worked with those students during the previous year. Administrators also use the results to evaluate teacher effectiveness by determining whether students met grade-level expectations.

## **CHAPTER 1** **Review**

### *How Effective Teachers Teach Reading and Writing*

- ▶ Teachers understand how the characteristics of young adolescents affect instruction.
- ▶ Teachers understand how learning theories influence literacy instruction.
- ▶ Teachers create a nurturing learning community in their classrooms.
- ▶ Teachers adopt a balanced approach to literacy instruction.
- ▶ Teachers link instruction and assessment.

**3rd proof**

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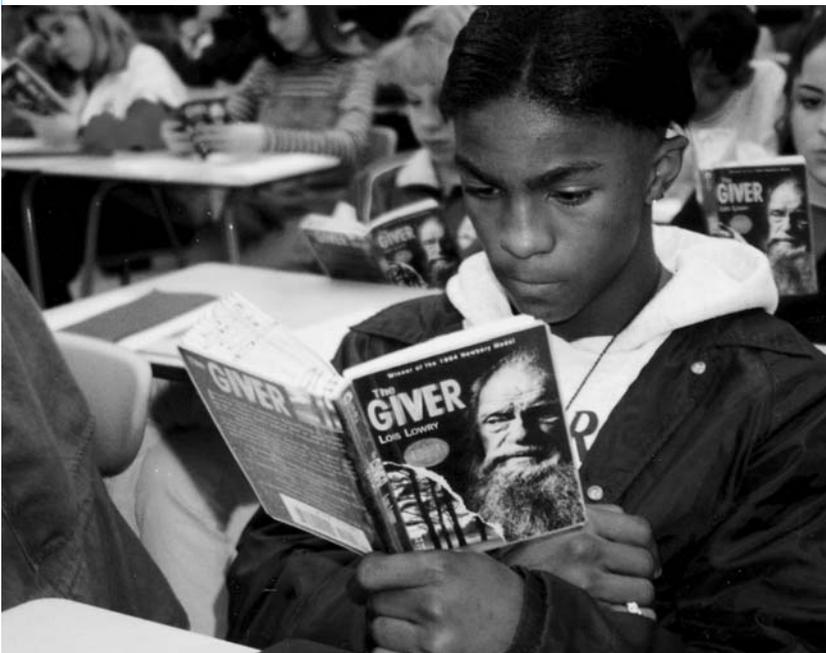
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## CHAPTER 2

# Examining the Reading and Writing Processes



Mrs. Goodman's Seventh Graders Read *The Giver*

The seventh graders in Mrs. Goodman's class are reading *The Giver* (Lowry, 2006b), a Newbery Medal winner.

In this futuristic story, 12-year-old Jonas is selected to become the next Keeper of the Memories, and he discovers the terrible truth about his community. Mrs. Goodman has a class set of paperback copies, and her students use the reading process as they read and respond to the story.

To introduce the book, Mrs. Goodman asks her students to get into small groups to brainstorm lists of all the things they would change about life, if they could; their lists include no more homework, no AIDS, no crime, no gangs, no parents, no taking out the garbage, and being allowed to drive cars at age 12. The groups hang their lists on the chalkboard and share them. Mrs. Goodman puts checkmarks by many of the items, seeming to agree with them. Next, she explains that they're going to read a story about life in the future. She explains that *The Giver* takes place in a planned utopian, or "perfect," society with the qualities that she checked on students' lists.

She passes out copies of the book and uses shared reading to read the first chapter aloud as students follow along in their copies. Then the class talks about the first chapter in a **grand conversation**, asking lots of questions: Why were there so many rules? Doesn't anyone drive a car? What does *released* mean? Why are children called a "Seven" or a "Four"? What does it mean that people are "given" spouses—don't they fall in

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love and get married? Why does Jonas have to tell his feelings? Classmates share their ideas and are eager to continue reading. Mrs. Goodman's reading aloud of the first chapter and the questions that the students raised generate interest in the story. The power of this story quickly grabs them all.

They set a schedule for reading and discussion. Every 3 days, they'll come together to talk about the chapters they've read, and over 2 weeks, the class will complete the book. They'll also write in **reading logs** after reading the first chapter and then five more times as they're reading. In these logs, students write reactions to the story. Maria wrote this journal entry after finishing the book:

*Jonas had to do it. He had to save Gabriel's life because the next day Jonas's father was going to release (kill) him. He had it all planned out. That was important. He was very brave to leave his parents and his home. But I guess they weren't his parents really and his home wasn't all that good. I don't know if I could have done it but he did the right thing. He had to get out. He saved himself and he saved little Gabe. I'm glad he took Gabriel. That community was supposed to be safe but it really was dangerous. It was weird to not have colors. I guess that things that at first seem to be good are really bad.*

Ron explored some of the themes of the story:

*Starving. He has memories of food. He's still hungry. But he's free. Food is safe. Freedom is surprises. Never saw a bird before. Same-same-same. Before he was starved for colors, memories and choice. Choice. To do what you want. To be who you can be. He won't starve.*

Alicia thought about a lesson her mother taught her as she wrote:

*As Jonas fled from the community he lost his memories so that they would go back to the people there. Would they learn from them? Would they remember them? Or would life go on just the same? I think you have to do it yourself if you are going to learn. That's what my mom says. Somebody else can't do it for you. But Jonas did it. He got out with Gabe.*

Tomas wrote about the Christmas connection at the end of the story:

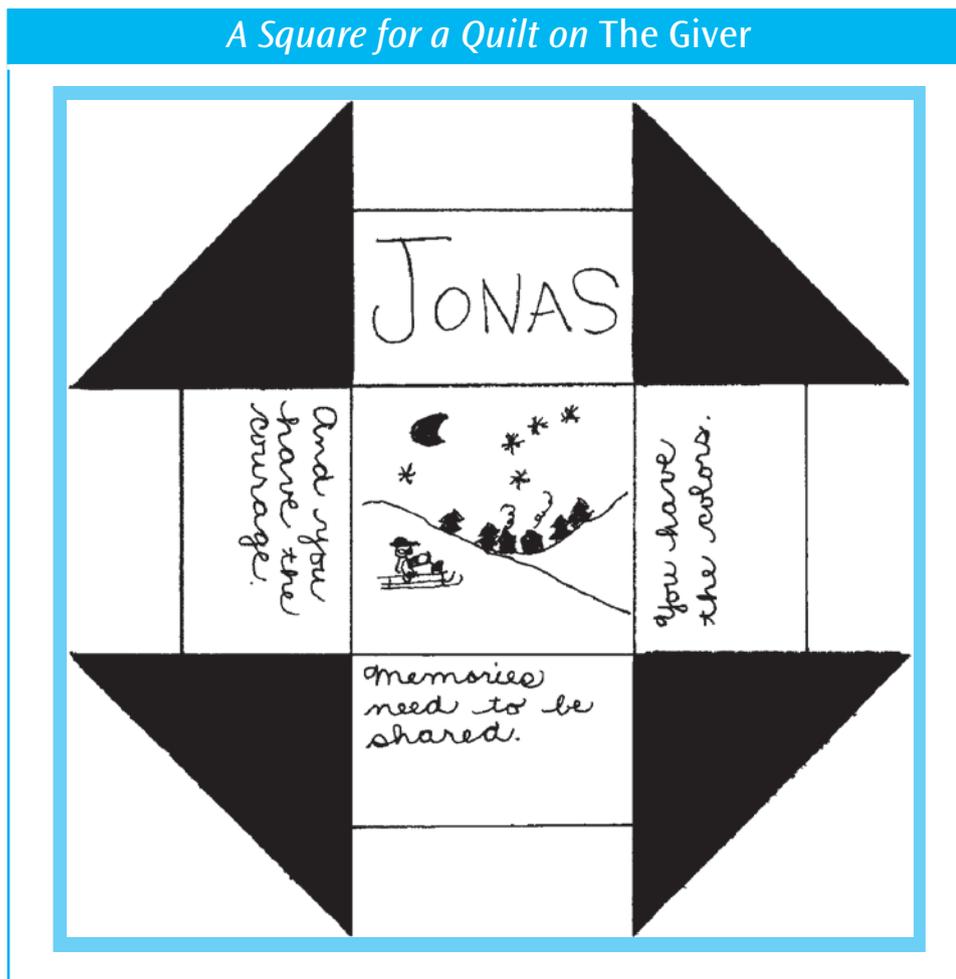
*Jonas and Gabe came to the town at Christmas. Why did Lois Lowry do that? Gabe is like the baby Jesus, I think. It is like a rebirth—being born again. Jonas and his old community didn't go to church. Maybe they didn't believe in God. Now Jonas will be a Christian and the people in the church will welcome them. Gabe won't be released. I think Gabe is like Jesus because people tried to release Jesus.*

During their grand conversations, students talk about many of the same points they raise in their journal entries. The story fascinates them—at first they think about how simple and safe life would be, but then they think about all the things they take for granted that they'd have to give up to live in Jonas's ordered society. They talk about bravery and making choices, and they applaud Jonas's decision to flee with Gabriel. They also wonder if Jonas and Gabe survive.

The students collect "important" words from the story for the classroom **word wall**. After reading Chapters 4, 5, and 6, they add these words to the word wall:

<i>relinquish</i>	<i>bikeports</i>	<i>regulated</i>	<i>infraction</i>
<i>invariably</i>	<i>gravitating</i>	<i>rehabilitation</i>	<i>stirrings</i>
<i>serene</i>	<i>chastisement</i>	<i>assignment</i>	<i>relieve</i>

### A Square for a Quilt on *The Giver*



Sometimes students choose unfamiliar or long words, but they also choose familiar words such as *assignment* that are important to the story. Students refer to the word wall for words and their spellings when they're writing. Later, Mrs. Goodman teaches a minilesson about root words using some of these words.

As students read the book, Mrs. Goodman teaches a series of **minilessons** about reading strategies. For example, after students read about colors in the story, she teaches a minilesson on visualizing. She begins by rereading excerpts about Jonas being selected to be the next Receiver and asks students to “draw” a mental picture of the scene. She talks about how important it is for readers to bring a story to life in their minds. Then students draw pictures of their visualizations and share them with partners.

Another minilesson is about literary opposites. Mrs. Goodman explains that authors often introduce conflict and develop themes using contrasts or opposites. She asks students to think of opposites in *The Giver*; one example she suggests is *safe* and *free*. The students suggest these opposites:

*alive—released*  
*choice—no choice*  
*rules—anarchy*  
*families—family units*

*color—black and white*  
*conform—do your own thing*  
*stirrings—the pill*  
*memories—no memories*

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Mrs. Goodman asks students to think about how the opposites relate to the story and how Lois Lowry made them explicit in *The Giver*. Students talk about how the community seemed safe at the beginning, but chapter by chapter, Lowry uncovered the community's shortcomings. They also talk about themes reflected in these opposites.

After they finish reading the book, the students make a quilt to probe the themes in the story: Each student prepares a paper quilt square with an illustration and several sentences of text. One quilt square is shown on the preceding page. The students decide to use white, gray, and black to represent the sameness of Jonas's community, add red for the first color Jonas saw, and include more colors in the center to represent Elsewhere.

Students also choose projects to work on individually or in small groups. One student makes a book box with objects related to the story, and two others read *Hailstones and Halibut Bones* (O'Neill, 1990), a collection of color poetry, and then write their own poems. One student makes an **open-mind portrait** of Jonas to show his thoughts the night he escaped with Gabe. Two groups form literature circles to read *Gathering Blue* (2006a) and *The Messenger* (2006c), two related books by Lois Lowry. Others write about their own memories, using the writing process to draft, refine, and publish their writing.

**T**he reading process that Mrs. Goodman uses represents a significant shift in thinking about what students do as they read. Mrs. Goodman understands that readers construct meaning as they negotiate the texts they're reading. She knows that it's quite common for two students to read the same book and come away with different interpretations because meaning doesn't exist on the pages of a book; instead, comprehension is created through the interaction between readers and the texts they're reading. This individualized view of readers' interpretations reflects Rosenblatt's transactive theory (2004).

The reading process involves a series of stages during which readers comprehend the text. The term *text* refers to all reading materials—stories, maps, newspapers, cereal boxes, e-mail, and so on; it's not limited to basal readers and other textbooks. The writing process is a similar recursive process involving a variety of activities as students gather and organize ideas, draft their compositions, revise and edit their drafts, and, finally, publish their writings. Students learn to apply the writing process to craft and refine their compositions—autobiographies, reports, poems, and essays.

## The Reading Process

**R**eadng is a constructive process of creating meaning that involves the reader, the text, and the purpose within social and cultural contexts. The goal is comprehension, understanding the text and being able to use it for the intended purpose. Readers don't simply look at the words on a page and grasp the meaning; rather, reading is a complex process involving these essential components:

**Fluency.** Students become fluent readers once they recognize most words automatically and read quickly and expressively. This is a milestone because students have limited cognitive resources to devote to reading, and beginning readers use

most of this energy to decode unfamiliar words. In contrast, most students in fourth through eighth grades are fluent readers who devote most of their cognitive resources to comprehension.

**Vocabulary.** Students think about the meaning of words they're reading, choosing appropriate meanings, recognizing figurative uses, and connecting them to their background knowledge. Knowing the meaning of words influences comprehension because it's difficult to understand when the words being read don't make sense.

**Comprehension.** Students use a combination of reader and text factors to understand what they're reading: They predict, connect, monitor, repair, and use other comprehension strategies as well as their knowledge of genres, organizational patterns, and literary devices to create meaning.

These components are supported by scientifically based reading research (National Reading Panel, 2000). As you continue reading, you'll learn how to teach and assess each one.

Teachers use the reading process to involve students in activities to teach, practice, and apply these components. The reading process is organized into five stages: prereading, reading, responding, exploring, and applying. This process is used no matter which instructional program teachers have chosen, even though some of the activities at each stage differ. Figure 2–1 summarizes the reading process.

### Stage 1: Prereading

The reading process begins before readers open a book: The first stage, prereading, occurs as readers get ready to read. In the vignette, Mrs. Goodman built her students' background knowledge and stimulated their interest in *The Giver* as they talked about how wonderful life would be in a "perfect" world. As readers prepare to read, they activate background knowledge, set purposes, and make plans for reading.

**Activating Background Knowledge.** Students have both general and literary background knowledge (Braunger & Lewis, 2006). General knowledge is world knowledge, what students have acquired through life experiences and learning in their

FIGURE 2–1 ◆ Key Features of the Reading Process

#### Stage 1: Prereading

- Activate or build background knowledge and related vocabulary.
- Set purposes.
- Make predictions.
- Introduce key vocabulary words.
- Preview the text.

#### Stage 2: Reading

- Read independently or with a partner.
- Read with classmates and the teacher using shared or guided reading.
- Listen to the teacher read aloud.
- Apply reading strategies and skills.

#### Stage 3: Responding

- Write in reading logs.
- Participate in grand conversations or other discussions.

#### Stage 4: Exploring

- Study vocabulary words.
- Collect sentences.
- Examine genre and other text factors.
- Learn about the author.
- Participate in minilessons.

#### Stage 5: Applying

- Construct projects.
- Read related books.
- Evaluate the reading experience.

3rd proof

home communities and at school, and literary knowledge is what students need to read and comprehend a text, including information about reading, genres, and text structures. Students activate their world and literary background knowledge in this stage. They think about the title of the book, look at the book's cover and inside illustrations, and read the first paragraph to trigger this activation.

When students don't have adequate background knowledge to read a text, teachers build their knowledge base. They do this by teaching reading strategies and skills, providing information about genres and explaining how reading varies according to genre, enriching students' knowledge about a topic, and introducing key vocabulary words. It's not enough just to build students' knowledge about the topic; literary knowledge is also essential!

**Setting Purposes.** The purpose guides students' reading. It provides motivation and direction for reading, as well as a mechanism for students to monitor their reading to see if they're fulfilling their purpose. Sustaining a single purpose while students read the text is more effective than presenting students with a series of purposes (Blanton, Wood, & Moorman, 1990). Sometimes teachers set purposes for reading, and sometimes students set their own purposes. In literature focus units and basal reading textbooks, teachers usually explain how students are expected to read and what they'll do after reading. In contrast, students set their own purposes for reading during literature circles and reading workshop; they choose texts that are intrinsically interesting or that explain something they want to learn more about. As students develop as readers, they become more effective at choosing books and setting their own purposes.

**Planning for Reading.** Once students activate their background knowledge and identify their purpose, they take a first look at the text and plan for reading. Their plans vary according to the type of selection they're preparing to read. For stories, they make predictions, often basing them on the book's title or cover illustration. If they've read other stories by the same author or in the same genre, students use this information in making predictions. Sometimes students share their predictions orally, and at other times, they write them in **reading logs**.

When students are preparing to read nonfiction books and content-area textbook chapters, they preview the selection by flipping through the pages and noting section headings, illustrations, and diagrams. Sometimes they examine the table of contents to see how the book is organized, or they consult the index to locate specific information to read. They also notice highlighted terminology that's unfamiliar to them. To help students plan, teachers often use **anticipation guides** and **prereading plans**.

## Stage 2: Reading

Students read the book, textbook chapter, or other selection during the reading stage. Outside of school, most people usually read silently and independently, but in the classroom, teachers and students use five types of reading:

- ◆ Independent reading
- ◆ Partner reading
- ◆ Guided reading
- ◆ Shared reading
- ◆ Reading aloud to students

Check the Compendium of Instructional Procedures, which follows Chapter 12, for more information on the highlighted terms.

These types vary in the degree of scaffolding teachers provide: Teachers provide little or no support during independent reading, and the most support when they're reading aloud. Teachers consider the purpose for reading, students' reading levels, and the number of available copies of the text as they decide which type of reading to use.

**Independent Reading.** Students read silently by themselves, for their own purposes, and at their own pace. It's essential that the books students read independently are appropriate for their reading level; otherwise, they won't be successful. Independent reading is authentic; it's the way students develop a love of reading and come to think of themselves as readers. When the reading selection is too difficult for students to read independently, teachers use another type of reading to scaffold students so they'll be more successful.

**Partner Reading.** Students share the reading task with a classmate, and they can often read selections together that neither one could read independently (Friedland & Truesdell, 2004). Students either take turns reading to each other or read in unison. They help each other identify unfamiliar words, and they take a minute or two at the end of each page or section to talk about what they've read. When the book's too difficult for students to read independently, this social activity is a good alternative.

Partner reading is also an effective way to work with English learners and struggling readers who need more reading practice; however, unless students know how to work collaboratively, the activity often deteriorates into the stronger of the two readers reading to the other.

**Guided Reading.** Teachers use **guided reading** lessons to teach small groups of students who read at the same level (Allen, 2000; Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). They choose books at students' instructional level. Teachers introduce the book and support students' reading. Students do the actual reading themselves, and they stop after reading each chapter or so to talk about what they've read and the strategies they're using to comprehend. Teachers also direct students' attention to important vocabulary words, the book's genre or text structure, or another topic. It often takes several days to a week or two to finish the book. These lessons usually last 25 to 30 minutes and are held every day or every other day.

**Shared Reading.** Teachers use shared reading to read books that students can't read independently (Allen, 2002). Teachers distribute copies of the book to students, and students follow along as the teacher reads aloud. Sometimes students who are fluent and entertaining readers take turns reading sections aloud, but the goal isn't for everyone to have a turn reading. Often the teacher begins reading, and when a student wants to take over the reading, he or she begins reading aloud with the teacher; then the teacher drops off and the student continues reading. After a paragraph or two, the teacher or another student joins in and the first student drops off. Many teachers call this technique "popcorn reading." Shared reading differs from reading aloud because students follow along in their copies as the teacher reads.

**Reading Aloud to Students.** Teachers use the **interactive read-aloud** procedure to read aloud books that are developmentally appropriate but written above students' reading levels (Fisher, Flood, Lapp, & Frey, 2004). As they read, teachers actively engage students in making predictions, asking questions, identifying big ideas, and making

FIGURE 2–2 ◆ *Types of Reading*

Type	Strengths	Limitations
<p><b>Independent Reading</b> Students read a text on their own without teacher scaffolding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students develop responsibility.</li> <li>• Students learn to select texts.</li> <li>• Students participate in an authentic experience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students may not choose texts at their reading levels.</li> <li>• Teacher has little involvement or control.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Partner Reading</b> Two students take turns as they read a text together.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students collaborate and assist each other.</li> <li>• Students become more-fluent readers.</li> <li>• Students talk to develop comprehension.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One student may simply read to the other.</li> <li>• Teacher has little involvement and control.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Guided Reading</b> Teacher supports students as they apply reading strategies and skills to read a text.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher teaches reading strategies and skills.</li> <li>• Students read books at their reading level.</li> <li>• Teacher monitors students' reading.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple copies of texts at the appropriate reading level are needed.</li> <li>• Teacher controls the reading experience.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Shared Reading</b> Teacher reads aloud while students follow along in individual copies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher models how to use reading strategies.</li> <li>• Teacher emphasizes in-depth comprehension.</li> <li>• The classroom culture is enhanced.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A class set of books is needed.</li> <li>• Text may be too difficult or too easy for some students.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reading Aloud to Students</b> Teacher reads aloud and actively involves students in the experience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have access to books they can't read themselves.</li> <li>• Teacher models fluent reading and how to use reading strategies.</li> <li>• Students build background knowledge and vocabulary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have no opportunity to read.</li> <li>• Students may not be interested in the text.</li> </ul>

connections. In addition, teachers model their use of reading strategies with **think-alouds** (Cappellini, 2005). There are many benefits of reading aloud, including introducing vocabulary, modeling comprehension strategies, and increasing students' motivation (Rasinski, 2003).

The five types of reading are compared in Figure 2–2. In the vignette at the beginning of this chapter, Mrs. Goodman used a combination of these approaches. She used shared reading as she read the first chapter aloud, with students following in their own copies of *The Giver*. Later, students read together in small groups, with a partner, or independently. As teachers plan their instructional programs, they include reading aloud, teacher-led student reading, and independent reading each day.

### Stage 3: Responding

Students respond to what they've read and continue to negotiate their understanding after reading; this stage reflects Rosenblatt's (2005) transactive theory. Two ways that students make tentative and exploratory comments immediately after reading are by writing in reading logs and participating in grand conversations or other discussions.

3rd proof

**Writing in Reading Logs.** Young adolescents record their thoughts and deepen their understanding of what they've read in **reading logs**. As they write, students unravel their thinking and, at the same time, elaborate on and clarify their responses. These journals are called *reading logs* when students are writing about stories and poems, but when they're writing about nonfiction articles and books and content-area textbooks during thematic units, the journals are known as **learning logs**.

Students construct reading logs by stapling together 10 to 12 sheets of paper. They decorate the covers, keeping with the theme of the book, and they write entries after reading. Sometimes students choose topics for their entries; at other times, teachers pose questions to guide students' thinking. Teachers monitor students' entries by reading and responding to them. Because these journals are learning tools, teachers rarely correct students' spellings; instead, they focus their responses on the students' ideas, but they expect students to spell the book's title, characters' names, and common words correctly.

**Participating in Discussions.** Students talk with peers as they respond to books. Discussions about stories are called **grand conversations**. Peterson and Eeds (2007) explain that in grand conversations, students share their personal responses and tell what they liked about the text. After sharing personal reactions, they shift the focus to "puzzle over what the author has written and . . . share what it is they find revealed" (p. 61). Although the talk is primarily among the students, teachers participate by asking questions to stimulate students' thinking and by sharing information in response to questions that students ask. Too often, discussions become "gentle inquisitions" during which students recite answers to factual questions; however, the focus in grand conversations is on deepening students' comprehension.

Students also talk about nonfiction books and chapters in content-area textbooks. They share what interested them, but teachers also focus students' attention on the big ideas and the relationships among them.

Discussions can be held in small groups or as a class. When students meet in small groups, they have more opportunities to talk, but fewer viewpoints are expressed in each group; and when they meet as a class, there's a feeling of community, and the teacher can be part of the group. Teachers often compromise by having students begin in small groups and then come together as a class so that the groups can share what they discussed.

### Stage 4: Exploring

This stage focuses on instruction: Middle graders delve into the selection to study academic vocabulary, collect sentences, examine the genre, and learn about the author. Teachers also teach minilessons on reading strategies and skills. When the reading selections are brief, students often reread them during the exploring stage.

**Studying Academic Vocabulary.** Teachers and students add key vocabulary to the **word wall** posted in the classroom and use the words for word-study activities, including drawing word maps, doing **word sorts**, completing a **semantic feature analysis**, and playing word games.

**Collecting Sentences.** Students also locate "important" sentences in the selection that are worthy of examination because they contain figurative language, employ an interesting sentence structure, express a theme, or illustrate a character trait. Students often

copy the sentences onto sentence strips to display in the classroom, and sometimes they use them in **double-entry journal** entries.

**Examining Genre and Other Text Factors.** Students learn about genre, text structure, and literary devices using the selection they're reading as an example. They often create posters with genre information, make graphic organizers to highlight the selection's structure, and search through the text for examples of literary devices.

**Learning About the Author.** Teachers share information about the author of the featured selection and encourage students to view the author's website or read a biography or autobiography about him or her, if there's one available. They also introduce other books the author has written and invite students to read them.

**Teaching Minilessons.** Teachers present **minilessons** on procedures, concepts, strategies, and skills (Angelillo, 2008). They introduce the topic, provide information, and make connections between the topic and examples in the featured selection. In the vignette, Mrs. Goodman presented minilessons on visualizing and root words using examples from *The Giver*.

## Stage 5: Applying

Readers move beyond the text in this final stage, creating projects to apply what they've learned. These projects take many forms, including creating a mural about the book's theme, designing a webquest, writing and performing a script based on the book, reading other books by the author, or getting involved in a community project related to an issue raised in the book. Figure 2-3 presents a list of application projects. Usually students choose the project they want to do and work on it independently, with a partner, or in a small group, but sometimes the class decides to work together. In Mrs. Goodman's classroom, for example, some students wrote color poems while classmates read other books by Lois Lowry or wrote about memories. During this stage, students often conference with the teacher to reflect on their understanding and value the reading experience.

## Reading Strategies and Skills

Students use reading strategies and skills. Strategies represent the thinking that readers do as they read, and skills are quick, automatic behaviors that don't require any thought. For example, readers use the connecting strategy to compare the story they're reading to their own lives, the world around them, and other books they've read. They're actively thinking as they make connections. On the other hand, noticing quotation marks that signal a character's dialogue is a skill; students don't have to think about what these punctuation marks are signaling because they recognize their meaning automatically. The terms *strategy* and *skill* can be confusing; sometimes they're considered synonymous, but they're not.

Strategies are deliberate, goal-directed actions (Afflerbach, Pearson, & Paris, 2008). Readers exercise control in choosing appropriate strategies, using them flexibly, and monitoring their effectiveness. Strategies are linked with motivation. Afflerbach and his colleagues explain that "strategic readers feel confident that they can monitor and improve their own reading so they have both knowledge and motivation to succeed" (p. 370). Strategies reflect the information-processing theory. In contrast, skills



### FIGURE 2–3 ◆ Application Projects

#### Visual Projects

- Design a graphic organizer or model about a book.
- Create a collage to represent the theme or big ideas in a book.
- Make a book box and fill it with objects and pictures representing the book.
- Construct a paper quilt about a book.
- Create an open-mind portrait to probe the thoughts of one character.

#### Writing Projects

- Rewrite a story from a different point of view.
- Write another episode, a prequel, or a sequel.
- Write simulated letters from one character to another.
- Create a found poem using words and phrases from a book.
- Write a poem on a topic related to a book.
- Keep a simulated journal from one character's viewpoint.
- Write an essay to examine the book's theme or a controversial issue.
- Create a multigenre project about a book.

#### Reading Projects

- Read other books from the text set.
- Read another book by the same author.
- Research a question related to a book.

#### Talk and Drama Projects

- Perform a readers theatre presentation of an excerpt from a book.
- Create a choral reading using an excerpt from a book and have classmates read it.
- Write a script and present it.
- Dress as a book character and sit on the "hot seat" to answer classmates' questions.
- Present a rap, song, or poem about a book.

#### Internet Projects

- Write a book review and post it online.
- Investigate an author's website and share information from it with classmates.
- Create or complete a webquest about the book.
- Create a multimodal project about the book using text, images, and sounds.
- Research online for information on a topic related to the book.

#### Social Action Projects

- Write a letter to the editor of the local newspaper on a topic related to a book.
- Get involved in a community project related to a book.

are automatic actions that occur without conscious awareness; the emphasis is on their effortless and accurate use. Skills are associated with behaviorism. They're used in the same way, no matter the reading situation. It's crucial that students become both strategic and skilled readers.

**Reading Strategies.** Readers use strategies for different purposes during the reading process:

**Word-Identification Strategies.** Students thoughtfully apply phonic, syllabic, and morphemic analysis to identify unfamiliar words.

**Word-Learning Strategies.** Students analyze word parts and use context clues to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words.

**Comprehension Strategies.** Students predict, draw inferences, monitor, and use other strategies to understand what they're reading.

**Study Strategies.** Students take notes and use text features to identify big ideas when they're reading content-area textbooks.

**Test-Taking Strategies.** Students choose the best answer for multiple-choice questions on standardized tests and respond to prompts on writing tests.

You'll learn more about these types of strategies in upcoming chapters.

**Reading Skills.** Readers also use skills. Phonics skills are probably the best known, but, like strategies, students apply their knowledge of skills throughout the reading process:

**Word-Identification Skills.** Students use phonics rules, divide words into syllables, and separate root words and affixes to identify unfamiliar words.

**Word-Learning Skills.** Students identify synonyms, recognize metaphors, notice capital letters signaling proper nouns and adjectives, and use other word-learning skills.

**Comprehension Skills.** Students recognize details and connect them to big ideas, separate fact and opinion, and use other comprehension skills.

**Study Skills.** Students consult an index and notice boldface terms in the text to help them locate and remember information.

Students often use these skills in connection with strategies; the big difference is that strategies are used thoughtfully and skills are automatic, once they've been learned.

**Minilessons.** Teachers provide explicit instruction about reading strategies because students don't acquire the knowledge simply by reading (Pressley, 2000). They need to learn three types of information about a strategy:

- Declarative knowledge—what the strategy does
- Procedural knowledge—how to use the strategy
- Conditional knowledge—when to use the strategy (Baker & Brown, 1984)

Let's examine the declarative, procedural, and conditional knowledge for the questioning strategy, which is a comprehension strategy that students use to ask themselves questions while they're reading. They use it direct their reading, monitor whether they're understanding, and construct meaning (declarative knowledge). They ask themselves questions such as "What's going to happen next?" "How does this relate to what I know about . . . ?" and "Does this make sense?" (procedural knowledge). Students use this strategy while they're reading to activate background knowledge, monitor their reading, and signal the repair strategy, if they run into problems (conditional knowledge).

Teachers present **minilessons** to teach students about strategies. They explain the strategy and demonstrate how to use it; then students practice using it with teacher guidance and supervision before applying it independently. Through this instruction, students develop metacognitive awareness, the ability to think about their strategy use (Paris, Wasik, & Turner, 1991). The feature on page 44 presents a list of guidelines for strategy instruction.

Teachers demonstrate readers' thought processes using **think-alouds** (Wilhelm, 2001). Teachers explain what they're thinking while they're reading so that students become more aware of how capable readers think: they set a purpose for reading, make

## Guidelines for Strategy Instruction

- ▶ Teach strategies in minilessons using explanations, demonstrations, think-alouds, and practice activities.
- ▶ Provide step-by-step explanations and modeling so that students understand what the strategy does, and how and when to use it.
- ▶ Provide both guided and independent practice opportunities so that students can apply the strategy in new situations.
- ▶ Have students apply the strategy in content-area activities as well as in literacy activities.
- ▶ Teach groups of strategies in routines so that students learn to orchestrate the use of multiple strategies.
- ▶ Ask students to reflect on their use of single strategies and strategy routines.
- ▶ Hang charts of strategies and strategy routines students are learning, and encourage students to refer to the charts when they're reading and writing.
- ▶ Differentiate between strategies and skills so that students understand that strategies are problem-solving tactics and skills are automatic behaviors.

connections, ask questions, summarize what's happened so far, draw inferences, evaluate the text, and make other comments that reflect their thinking. Next, students practice thinking aloud to become more-strategic readers and improve their ability to monitor their comprehension.

Students record their strategy use on small self-stick notes. Teachers distribute pads of notes and explain how to use them. Students can focus on a single strategy or a group of strategies. They write comments about the strategies on these notes while they're reading and place them in the margin of the pages so they can locate them later. Afterward, students share their notes and talk about their strategy use in a class discussion or a conference with the teacher.

## The Writing Process

The writing process is a series of five stages that describe what students think and do as they write; the stages are prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. The labeling of the stages doesn't mean that the writing process is a linear series of neatly packaged categories; rather, research has shown that the process involves recurring cycles, and labeling is simply an aid to identifying writing activities. In the classroom, the stages merge and recur as students write. The key features of each stage are shown in Figure 2-4.

### Stage 1: Prewriting

Prewriting is the "getting ready to write" stage. The traditional notion that writers have a topic completely thought out and ready to flow onto the page is ridiculous: If writers wait for ideas to fully develop, they may wait forever. Instead, writers begin

### FIGURE 2–4 ◆ Key Features of the Writing Process

#### Stage 1: Prewriting

- Choose a topic.
- Consider the purpose.
- Identify the genre the writing will take.
- Engage in rehearsal activities to gather ideas.
- Use a graphic organizer to organize ideas.

#### Stage 2: Drafting

- Write a rough draft.
- Use wide spacing to leave room for revising and editing.
- Emphasize ideas rather than mechanical correctness.
- Mark the writing as a “rough draft.”

#### Stage 3: Revising

- Reread the rough draft.
- Participate in writing groups.
- Make substantive changes that reflect peers’ feedback.
- Conference with the teacher.

#### Stage 4: Editing

- Proofread the revised draft.
- Correct mechanical errors.
- Conference with the teacher.

#### Stage 5: Publishing

- Make the final copy.
- Share the writing with an appropriate audience.

tentatively—talking, reading, brainstorming—to see what they know and in what direction they want to go. Prewriting has probably been the most neglected stage in the writing process; however, it’s as crucial to writers as a warm-up is to athletes. Murray (1982) believes that at least 70% of writing time should be spent in prewriting. During prewriting, students choose a topic, consider purpose and form, and gather and organize ideas for writing.

**Choosing a Topic.** Students should choose their own topics for writing—topics that they’re interested in and know about—so that they’ll be more engaged, but that isn’t always possible. Sometimes teachers provide the topics, but it’s best when teacher-selected topics are broad so students can narrow them in the way that’s best for them.

**Considering Purpose and Form.** As students prepare to write, they need to think about the purpose of their writing: Are they writing to entertain? to inform? to persuade? Setting the purpose for writing is just as important as setting the purpose for reading, because purpose influences the decisions students make about form or genre. Young adolescents refine their knowledge of narrative and poetic genres, and they learn to use new forms, including essays.

## STRUGGLING READERS AND WRITERS



### The Writing Process

**Struggling writers need to use the writing process.**

Many struggling students don’t like to write, and they avoid it whenever possible because they don’t know what to do (Christenson, 2002). Teachers need to review the writing process with these students. Interactive writing, a procedure normally used with young children, is a good way to demonstrate the activities at each stage and the strategies writers use, including organizing and revising. Because it’s a group activity, students are more willing to participate.

Once they’re familiar with the stages in the writing process, students apply what they’ve learned to write collaborative compositions. Each student drafts a paragraph or short section and then moves through the writing process; this way, the workload is manageable for both students and their teachers. Once students know how to use the writing process, they’re better prepared to write independently.

Struggling writers who don’t understand the writing process often think they’re finished once they write a rough draft; they don’t realize that they have to revise and edit their writing to communicate more effectively. The key to enticing struggling writers to revise and edit is to help them develop a sense of audience. Many novice writers write primarily for themselves, but when they want their classmates or another audience to understand their message, they begin to recognize the importance of refining their writing. Teachers emphasize audience by encouraging students to share their writing from the author’s chair. Lots of writing and sharing are necessary before students learn to appreciate the writing process.

**Gathering and Organizing Ideas.** Students engage in prewriting activities to gather and organize ideas for writing. To gather ideas, they brainstorm lists of words, do Internet research, read books, and talk about ideas with peers. Students often make graphic organizers to visually display their ideas and the relationships among them. Their choice of graphic organizer varies with the writing genre; to write a persuasive essay, for example, students use a diagram with sections to develop ideas for each argument.

### Stage 2: Drafting

Students write the first draft, beginning tentatively with the ideas they've developed through prewriting activities. Their drafts are usually messy, reflecting the outpouring of thoughts with cross-outs, lines, and arrows as they think of better ways to express ideas. Students write quickly, with little concern about legible handwriting, spelling correctness, or careful use of capitalization and punctuation.

When they write rough drafts, students skip every other line to leave space to make revisions. They use arrows to move sections of text, cross-outs to delete sections, and scissors and tape to cut apart and rearrange text, just as adult writers do. Wide spacing is crucial. Some students make small *x*'s on every other line of their papers as a reminder to skip lines. They write only on one side of a page so their rough drafts can be revised more easily.

Students label their drafts by writing *rough draft* in ink at the top or by using a ROUGH DRAFT stamp. This label indicates to the writer, peers, parents, and administrators that the composition is a draft in which the emphasis is on content, not mechanics; it also explains why the teacher hasn't marked errors or graded the paper.

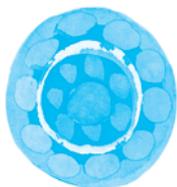
Instead of writing drafts by hand, many students use word processing to compose rough drafts and polish their writing. There are many benefits of word processing: Students are often more motivated when they use computers, they tend to write longer pieces, and it's easier to make revisions. Their writing looks neater, and they use spell-check programs to identify and correct misspelled words.

### Stage 3: Revising

Writers refine the ideas in their compositions. Students often break the writing process cycle as soon as they complete a rough draft, believing that once they've jotted down their ideas, the writing task is complete. Experienced writers, however, know they must turn to others for reactions and revise on the basis of these comments. Revision isn't just polishing; it's meeting the needs of readers by adding, substituting, deleting, and rearranging material. *Revision* means "seeing again," and in this stage, writers see their compositions again with the help of classmates and the teacher. Revising consists of three activities: Students reread their rough drafts, get feedback on their writing, and make revisions based on the feedback they've received.

**Rereading the Rough Draft.** After finishing their rough drafts, writers wait a day or two, then reread them from a fresh perspective, as a reader might. As they reread, students make some changes right away and place question marks by sections that need work; it's these trouble spots that students ask for help with in their writing groups.

**Getting Feedback.** Middle graders meet in **writing groups** to share their rough drafts with classmates, who respond to the rough draft and suggest possible revisions. Writing groups provide a scaffold in which teachers and classmates talk about plans and strategies for writing and revising.



In some classrooms, writing groups form whenever four or five students finish writing their rough drafts; they gather around a conference table or in a corner of the classroom and take turns reading their drafts aloud. Classmates listen and respond, offering compliments and suggestions for revision. Sometimes the teacher joins the writing group, but if he or she is involved in something else, students work independently.

In other classrooms, teachers organize the writing groups. Students get together when everyone in the group is ready to participate. Sometimes the teacher joins these groups, responding along with students, or the groups can function independently. Lists of groups and their members are posted in the classroom. One student in each group is designated as the leader, and that role typically changes each quarter.

**Making Revisions.** Students make four types of changes to their rough drafts: additions, substitutions, deletions, and moves (Faigley & Witte, 1981). They often use a blue pen to cross out, draw arrows, and write in the space left between the double-spaced lines of their rough drafts so that revisions will show clearly; that way, teachers can see the types of revisions students make by examining their revised rough drafts. Revisions are an important gauge of students' growth as writers.

Many teachers set up revising centers to give students revision options: They can talk with a classmate about the ideas in their draft, examine the organization of their writing, consider their word choice, or check that they have included all required components in the composition. A list of revising centers is shown in Figure 2–5. Teachers introduce these centers as they teach writing, and then students work at a couple of them either before or after participating in a writing group. Teachers usually provide a checklist of center options that students put in their writing folders, and then they check off the centers that they complete. Through these center activities, students develop a repertoire of revising strategies and personalize their own writing process.

### Stage 4: Editing

Editing is putting the piece of writing into its final form. During the first three stages, the focus has been on the content of students' writing; now it changes to mechanics, the commonly accepted conventions of written Standard English. They consist of capitalization, punctuation, spelling, sentence structure, usage, and formatting considerations specific to poems, scripts, letters, and other writing genres. The use of these commonly accepted conventions is a courtesy to those who will read the composition.

Students are more efficient editors if they set the composition aside for a few days before beginning to edit. After working so closely with a piece of writing during drafting and revising, they're too familiar with it to notice many mechanical errors; with some distance, students are better able to approach editing with a fresh perspective and gather the enthusiasm necessary to finish the writing process. Then students proofread to locate errors and then correct them.

**Proofreading.** Students proofread their rough drafts to locate and mark possible errors. Proofreading is a unique type of reading in which students read slowly, word by word, hunting for errors rather than reading quickly for meaning. Concentrating on mechanics is difficult because of our natural inclination to read for meaning; even experienced proofreaders often find themselves focusing on meaning and thus overlook errors that don't inhibit comprehension. It's important, therefore, to take time to explain proofreading and to demonstrate how it differs from regular reading. Teachers display a revised draft on an overhead projector and read it several times, each time hunting for a particular type of error. During each reading, they read slowly, pronouncing each

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FIGURE 2–5 ◆ *Revising and Editing Centers*

Type	Center	Activities
<b>Revising</b>	Rereading	Students reread their rough drafts with a partner, who offers compliments and asks questions.
	Word Choice	Students choose 5–10 words in their rough drafts and consult a thesaurus for more-specific or more-powerful synonyms.
	Graphic Organizer	Students draw a diagram to illustrate the organization of their compositions, and they make revisions if their organization isn't effective or their writing isn't complete.
	Highlighting	Students use highlighter pens to mark topic sentences or sensory details in their rough drafts, depending on the teacher's direction.
	Sentence Combining	Students combine short sentences to improve the flow of their writing.
<b>Editing</b>	Spelling	Students work with a partner to proofread their writing. They locate misspelled words and consult a dictionary to correct them. Students may also check for specific errors in their use of recently taught skills.
	Homonyms	Students check their rough drafts for homonym errors (e.g., <i>there–their–they're</i> ), and after consulting a chart posted in the center, they correct the errors.
	Punctuation	Students proofread their writing to check for punctuation marks. They make corrections as needed, and then highlight the punctuation marks in their compositions.
	Capitalization	Students check that each sentence begins with a capital letter, the word <i>I</i> is capitalized, and proper nouns and adjectives are capitalized. Afterward, students highlight all capitalized letters in their compositions.
	Sentences	Students analyze the sentences in their rough drafts and categorize them as simple, compound, complex, or fragment on a chart. Then they make any necessary changes.

word and touching it with a red pen to direct their attention, and they mark possible errors as they're noticed.

Editing checklists help students focus on particular types of errors. Teachers can develop checklists with 8 to 10 items appropriate for the grade level; for example, a fifth-grade checklist might contain items such as using commas in a series, indenting paragraphs, capitalizing proper nouns and adjectives, and spelling homonyms correctly. Teachers revise the checklist during the school year to focus on skills that have recently been taught.

A seventh-grade editing checklist is presented in the Assessment Tools feature on the next page. Pairs work together to edit their rough drafts. First, students proofread their own drafts, searching for errors in each category listed on the checklist. After completing the checklist, students sign their names and then trade checklists and drafts: Now they become editors and complete each other's checklist. Having both writer and editor sign the checklist helps them take the activity seriously.

**Correcting Errors.** After students proofread their drafts and locate as many errors as they can, they correct the errors independently or with an editor's assistance. Some errors are easy to correct, some require use of a dictionary, and others involve instruction from the teacher. It's unrealistic to expect students to locate and correct every mechanical error in their compositions: not even published books are always error-free!

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## Assessment Tools

### Seventh-Grade Editing Checklist

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author Editor

#### END PUNCTUATION

Check that each sentence has end punctuation.

#### COMMAS

Check that commas are used for these purposes:

- before a conjunction to create a compound sentence
- after a subordinate clause in a complex sentence
- in a list of items
- after an introductory word or phrase
- setting off interruptions
- separating adjectives
- in dates

#### APOSTROPHES

Check that apostrophes are used for these purposes:

- in contractions
- to show ownership

#### SEMICOLONS

Check that semicolons are used to connect sentences without conjunctions in a compound sentence.

Author: \_\_\_\_\_ Editor: \_\_\_\_\_

Once in a while, students may change a correct spelling or punctuation mark and make it incorrect, but they correct far more errors than they create.

Students also work at editing centers to identify and correct specific types of errors; a list of editing centers is also shown in Figure 2–5. Teachers often vary the activities at the center to reflect the types of errors students are making. Students who continue to misspell common words can check for these words on a chart posted in the

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center. Or, after a series of lessons on capitalizing proper nouns and adjectives, for example, teachers will organize one center to focus on applying the newly taught skill.

Editing can end after students and their editors correct as many mechanical errors as possible, or after students meet with the teacher for a final editing conference. When mechanical correctness matters, this conference is important. Teachers proofread the rough draft with the student, and they identify and make the remaining corrections together, or the teacher makes checkmarks in the margin to note errors for the student to locate and correct independently.

### Stage 5: Publishing

Students bring their compositions to life by making final copies and by sharing them with an appropriate audience. When they share their writing with real audiences of classmates, parents, and the community, students come to think of themselves as authors. Publication is powerful: Students are motivated not only to continue writing but also to improve the quality of their rough drafts through revising and editing (Weber, 2002).

One of the most popular ways for students to publish their writing is by making books. Students construct booklets by stapling or sewing sheets of writing paper together and adding covers made of cardboard covered with fabric, contact paper, or wallpaper.

The best way for students to share their writing is to sit in a special chair called the *author's chair* and read their writing aloud. Afterward, classmates ask questions, offer compliments, and celebrate the completion of the writing project. Sharing writing is a social activity that helps writers develop sensitivity to audiences and confidence in themselves as authors. Beyond just providing the opportunity for students to share writing, teachers need to teach students how to make appropriate comments as they respond



#### Author's Chair

These fifth graders take turns sitting in the special author's chair to read their published writings aloud to classmates. It's a celebratory activity, and after reading, students ask questions and offer compliments. These students have learned to show interest in their classmates' writing and to think about the writing so that they can participate in the discussion that follows the reading. Afterward, another student is chosen to share, and the process is repeated. As students are sharing their writing from the author's chair, they learn to think of themselves as writers and consider their audience more carefully when they revise and edit their writing.

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to their peers' writing. Teachers also participate, and they serve as a model, demonstrating how to respond to students' writing.

Here are some other ways for students to share their writing:

- Read it to parents and siblings
- Share it at a back-to-school event
- Place it in the classroom library
- Read it to students in other classes
- Display it as a mobile or on a poster
- Contribute it to a class anthology
- Post it on the class website
- Submit it to the school's literary magazine
- Display it at a school or community event
- Submit it to a literary magazine or an e-zine (online literary magazine)

The best literary magazines are *Stone Soup* and *Skipping Stones*. *Stone Soup* contains writing and artwork by kids ages 8–13. At its website ([www.stonesoup.com](http://www.stonesoup.com)), you can download a sample issue and listen to students reading their own works.



## New Literacies

### Online Publication Sites

The Internet offers unlimited opportunities for students to display their writing online, share it with a global audience, and receive authentic feedback from readers (McNabb, 2006). When students create multimodal compositions that incorporate audio, video, animation, or graphics, electronic publication is essential so that readers can fully experience them. Students are using new literacies when they implement multimodal technologies to express their ideas and engage in online communication (Labbo, 2005).

Here's a list of the best online publication sites:

**Cyber Kids**, at [www.cyberkids.com](http://www.cyberkids.com)

This site publishes original writing by 10- to 14-year-olds, including multimodal stories.

**Kids' Space**, at [www.kids-space.org](http://www.kids-space.org)

This website posts students' art, writing, and music from around the world. In the writing category, young adolescents' stories, play scripts, and poems are invited.

**KidsWWwrite**, at [www.kalwriters.com/kidswwwrite](http://www.kalwriters.com/kidswwwrite)

Students' stories and poems are published in this e-zine.

**Poetry Zone**, at [www.poetryzone.ndirect.co.uk](http://www.poetryzone.ndirect.co.uk)

This British website posts students' poetry in the Poetry Gallery.

**Stories From the Web**, at [www.storiesfromtheweb.org](http://www.storiesfromtheweb.org)

This website accepts submissions of students' stories, play scripts, poems, raps, and songs.

Students can use Internet search engines to locate new e-zines. It's inevitable that some online publication sites will shut down, but others will spring up to take their place.

Each electronic magazine posts its own submission information that students should read and follow. Most e-zines specify that students' submissions must be original, and that writing dealing with violent or offensive topics or employing inappropriate language won't be published. Submissions must be ready for posting; it's naïve to assume that an editor will format students' writing or correct mechanical errors. Students usually complete an online information sheet and e-mail their writing to the e-zine's website, and parents must submit a permission statement.

Students can also display their writing on the class website for others to read and respond to in guest books, blogs, and e-mail messages (Weber, 2002). If the teacher doesn't have a class website, students can work with their teacher to create one and post their writing there.

Subscription information is available there as well as directions for submitting students' writing. *Skipping Stones* is an international magazine for kids ages 8–16 that accepts stories, articles, photos, cartoons, letters, and drawings. This award-winning publication focuses on global interdependence, celebrates cultural and environmental richness, and provides a forum for kids from around the world to share ideas and experiences. To read excerpts from the current issue and to get information about subscribing and submitting writing to *Skipping Stones*, visit the magazine's website at [www.skippingstones.org](http://www.skippingstones.org). Many teachers subscribe to these magazines and use the compositions as mentor texts or models when they're teaching writing. Other literary magazines worth considering are *Magic Dragon* ([www.magicdragonmagazine.com](http://www.magicdragonmagazine.com)) and *New Moon: The Magazine for Girls and Their Dreams* ([www.newmoon.org](http://www.newmoon.org)). Too often, literary magazines are labors of love rather than viable financial ventures, so even highly esteemed and popular magazines go out of business. Students should always check that a literary magazine is still accepting submissions before sending their writing.

## Writing Strategies and Skills

Young adolescents augment their repertoire of writing strategies and knowledge about writing skills during the middle grades. They learn to regulate their use of writing strategies effectively and expand their knowledge about sentence and paragraph structure and writing mechanics.

**Writing Strategies.** Writing strategies are like reading strategies; they're tools students use deliberately to craft effective compositions. Students apply many of the same strategies for both reading and writing, such as activating background knowledge, questioning, repairing, and evaluating, and they also use some strategies that are specific to writing. Dean (2006) explains that using the writing process makes writers more strategic, and writers use a variety of strategies at each stage:

**Prewriting Strategies.** Students use generating ideas, organizing ideas, and other strategies before beginning to write.

**Drafting Strategies.** Students use strategies such as narrowing the topic to focus on ideas while writing the first draft.

**Revising Strategies.** Students use rereading, elaborating ideas, choosing precise words, and other strategies to communicate their ideas more effectively.

**Editing Strategies.** Students use strategies including proofreading and checking the dictionary to identify and correct spelling and other mechanical errors.

**Publishing Strategies.** Students use strategies such as designing the layout to prepare the final drafts of their compositions and share them with classmates and other authentic audiences.

Students apply these writing strategies purposefully as they draft and refine their writing.

**Writing Skills.** Writing skills are automatic actions that students learn to use quickly and accurately during the writing process. Students learn these five types of skills:

**Content Skills.** Students use their knowledge about main ideas and details to organize information into paragraphs and longer compositions. These skills are most important during the drafting and revising stages.



**Word Skills.** Students use their knowledge about precise words and vivid verbs during drafting and revising to make their writing clearer and more lively.

**Sentence Skills.** Students use their knowledge about types of sentences to make their writing more interesting to read. These skills are most useful during drafting and revising.

**Grammar Skills.** Students use grammar skills to correct any nonstandard English errors during editing.

**Mechanical Skills.** Students apply spelling, capitalization, and punctuation skills to make their compositions more readable, especially during the editing stage.

Writers use strategies thoughtfully and skills automatically as they develop and refine compositions. Through a combination of instruction and opportunities to practice the writing strategies and skills, young adolescents become more-effective writers.

**Minilessons.** Teachers use **minilessons** with demonstrations and **think-alouds** to teach writing strategies and skills, and then students apply what they're learning during guided practice and independent writing projects. These strategies and skills are often reflected in **rubrics** that teachers and students use to assess students' writing.

## Reading and Writing Are Reciprocal Processes

**R**eading and writing are reciprocal; they're both constructive, meaning-making processes. Researchers have found that reading leads to better writing, and that writing has the same effect on reading (Spivey, 1997). Not surprisingly, they've also learned that integrating instruction improves both reading and writing (Braunger & Lewis, 2006; Tierney & Shanahan, 1996). It's possible that students use the same type of thinking for both reading and writing.

### Comparing the Two Processes

The reading and writing processes have comparable activities at each stage (Butler & Turbill, 1984). A comparison of the two processes is shown in Figure 2–6. For example, notice the similarities between the activities in the third stage of reading and writing—responding and revising, respectively. Fitzgerald (1989) analyzed these two activities and concluded that they draw on similar author–reader–text interactions. Similar analyses can be made for other stages as well.

Tierney (1983) explains that reading and writing involve concurrent, complex transactions between writers as readers and readers as writers. It seems natural that writers read other authors' books for ideas and to learn about organizing their writing, and they also read and reread their own writing as they revise to communicate more effectively. The quality of these reading experiences seems closely tied to success in writing. Thinking of readers as writers may be more difficult, but readers participate in many of the same activities that writers use—activating background knowledge, setting purposes, determining importance, monitoring, repairing, and evaluating.

### Classroom Connections

Classroom activities often involve both reading and writing, and making connections between reading and writing is a natural part of literacy instruction. Students read and

**FIGURE 2–6** ◆ *A Comparison of the Reading and Writing Processes*

	<i>What Readers Do</i>	<i>What Writers Do</i>
<b>Stage 1</b>	<b>Prereading</b> Readers use knowledge about <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the topic</li> <li>• reading</li> <li>• genres and other text factors</li> </ul>	<b>Prewriting</b> Writers use knowledge about <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the topic</li> <li>• writing</li> <li>• genres and other text factors</li> </ul>
<b>Stage 2</b>	<b>Reading</b> Readers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use word-identification strategies</li> <li>• use comprehension strategies</li> <li>• monitor reading</li> <li>• create meaning</li> </ul>	<b>Drafting</b> Writers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use spelling strategies</li> <li>• use writing strategies</li> <li>• monitor writing</li> <li>• create meaning</li> </ul>
<b>Stage 3</b>	<b>Responding</b> Readers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respond to the text</li> <li>• deepen meaning</li> <li>• clarify misunderstandings</li> <li>• expand ideas</li> </ul>	<b>Revising</b> Writers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respond to the text</li> <li>• deepen meaning</li> <li>• clarify misunderstandings</li> <li>• expand ideas</li> </ul>
<b>Stage 4</b>	<b>Exploring</b> Readers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• examine the impact of words and literary language</li> <li>• explore structural elements</li> <li>• compare the text to others</li> </ul>	<b>Editing</b> Writers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify and correct mechanical errors</li> <li>• review paragraph and sentence structure</li> </ul>
<b>Stage 5</b>	<b>Applying</b> Readers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• create projects</li> <li>• share projects with classmates</li> <li>• reflect on the reading process</li> <li>• feel success</li> <li>• want to read again</li> </ul>	<b>Publishing</b> Writers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make the final copy</li> <li>• share their writing with genuine audiences</li> <li>• reflect on the writing process</li> <li>• feel success</li> <li>• want to write again</li> </ul>

then write or write and then read: They write **reading log** entries after reading to deepen their understanding of what they've read, for example, or they make a **semantic feature analysis** to organize the information they're reading in a content-area textbook. Similarly, students read rough drafts aloud to make sure they flow and then read them to classmates to get feedback on how well they're communicating, or they use a structural pattern from a poem they've read in one they're writing. Shanahan (1988) offered these recommendations for connecting reading and writing so that students develop a clearer understanding of literacy:

- Involve students in daily reading and writing experiences.
- Make the reading–writing connection explicit to students.
- Emphasize both the processes and the products of reading and writing.
- Set clear purposes for reading and writing.
- Teach reading and writing through authentic literacy experiences.

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It's not enough, however, for students to see themselves as readers and writers; they need to grasp the relationships between the two roles and move flexibly between them. Readers think like writers to understand the author's purpose and viewpoint, for instance, and writers assume alternative viewpoints as potential readers.

## CHAPTER 2 Review

### *How Effective Teachers Use the Reading and Writing Processes*

- ▶ Teachers use the reading process—prereading, reading, responding, exploring, and applying—to ensure that students comprehend the texts they read.
- ▶ Teachers use independent reading, partner reading, guided reading, shared reading, and interactive read-alouds to share fiction and nonfiction books with students.
- ▶ Teachers teach students how to use the writing process—prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing—to write and refine their compositions.
- ▶ Teachers understand that reading and writing are reciprocal meaning-making processes.

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