Language Arts Journal of Michigan

Volume 23
Issue 2 *Twenty-First Century Literacy*

Article 2

2008

Preparing Students for Twenty-First Century Literacy

W. Douglas Baker
Eastern Michigan University

Kia Jane Richmond
Northern Michigan University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/lajm>

Recommended Citation

Baker, W. Douglas and Richmond, Kia Jane (2008) "Preparing Students for Twenty-First Century Literacy," *Language Arts Journal of Michigan*: Vol. 23: Iss. 2, Article 2.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.9707/2168-149X.1116>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks@GVSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Language Arts Journal of Michigan by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks@GVSU. For more information, please contact scholarworks@gvsu.edu.

Preparing Students for Twenty-First Century Literacy

W. Douglas Baker

Eastern Michigan University

Kia Jane Richmond

Northern Michigan University

Editors

As we move further into political, economic, and social uncertainty of the twenty-first century, questions about how, for what purposes and for what outcomes we educate children are critical for our collective future. The Spring/Summer issue of *LAJM* presents a range of articles that suggest ways of making visible to students how to engage in literate practices that will guide them to read and write in classrooms and beyond; for students, daily rigors of classroom expectations partially constitute the *real world* for them. We open with articles that remind us as teachers to observe students and to listen to them, and to develop links with communities outside of the classroom.

Helén Williams, through selected journal entries she wrote during student teaching, shows how she observed, listened to, and collaborated with students, learning from them and building opportunities for learning with them. **Kim Pavlock** and **Cathy Fleischer** describe the Family Literacy Project, which has provided parents with opportunities to support their children's development as writers. Through an overview of a series of workshops, Pavlock and Fleischer demonstrate how to encourage connections among parents, children and teacher practices that best contribute to the academic growth of children. **Kim Davis** follows with a discussion of how teachers can forge links with students between narrative and academic writing, arguing that by connecting the personal to the academic students learn how to participate in multiple communities.

The next section provides perspectives on classroom learning opportunities, particularly demonstrating how

teachers can integrate perspectives from research and practice to co-construct curricula with students. **Marcy Taylor** weaves together principles of Atwell's writer's workshop, Spandel's six-traits, and Gere et al.'s work on writing-on-demand, arguing that teachers need to "reclaim" writing instruction amid challenges and constraints of state-wide testing. Continuing with a thread from the Fall issue of *LAJM* on digital technology, **Lisa Chizek** models how she incorporated wikis with students in her composition and creative writing classes and, through classroom research, makes visible how she coordinated an example technology with constructivist pedagogy.

Building on Tom Romano's multigenre work, **Geneva Scully** describes how students gain more in-depth understanding of subject matter through writing and reading in multiple genres, and become more prepared to negotiate unfolding hypermedia forms of writing. **Julie Ann Mix-Thibault** describes further how to integrate instruction of the reciprocal nature of writing and reading, particularly through strategies that encourage students to link to the familiar and then stretch to the unfamiliar. **Nancy Joseph** concludes the section with a renewed call for implementing strategies that guide students to read across the content areas, particularly at the secondary school level, so students become more strategic as readers and thinkers and meet literacy demands of the twenty-first century.

In the final section, **Carol Sliwka** describes how she has incorporated historical fiction and young adult literature in social studies to provide links for students between narratives and key historical topics and concepts. **Rose Cherie Reissman** presents an approach to constructing a classroom museum, one that encourages students to engage with and demonstrate multiple literacies to reflect what the students have learned through an authentic community experience. In all of the contributions included in this issue, we see the importance of teachers, especially as they observe, listen to, and recognize interactions among students, students and curriculum and communities. **Tom Morrison** provides a tribute to an English teacher who has passed yet continues to influence his students. **Mary Ann Kruch** concludes with a retrospective on the impact Chris Crutcher had on the participants at Bright Ideas and, consequently, students.