



Reading Power in the Content Areas

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Content

- reading skills
- strategies for integrating reading across the curriculum
- reading assessment strategies
- vocabulary skills
- direct instruction
- comprehension
- critical reading skills

Reading Power in the Content Areas is a staff development program for teachers in grades 6-12 designed to assist teachers in integrating reading skills and strategies into their classroom instruction. The program is based on the assumption that when teachers integrate reading skills and strategies across the curriculum and in all content areas, students will not only improve their reading ability, but also will increase their success in the content areas.

Most content-area teachers receive little preparation in teaching reading, and most middle grade students need continued instruction in reading. Because content-area textbooks are often challenging for students to read, middle grade teachers in all content areas need a repertoire of strategies to help students learn and apply reading strategies to enable them to use their textbooks in all content areas as an information source.

Reading Power in the Content Areas helps middle grades teachers gain knowledge and skills to assess students' reading skills; integrate speaking, listening, reading, and writing into all content areas; develop instructional tools to use with students; and teach comprehension strategies, word skills, study skills, and critical reading skills.

The program was developed in 1972, approved for dissemination by the National Diffusion Network in 1974, and reauthorized by the U.S. Department of Education in 1994 for use in grades 6-12.

Context

- diverse school settings, including urban, suburban, and rural
- diverse student populations

PROGRAM CONTEXT

Reading Power in the Content Areas has been implemented in numerous and diverse schools and districts throughout the country. Designed originally as a high school program, it is now available for grades 6-12. The program has been successfully used in a very diverse school setting with a wide range of students, including at-risk, low-income, and minority students.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



The initial staff development includes a one- or two-day workshop. During the workshop, teachers learn reading concepts and strategies, assessment techniques, and instructional strategies related to integrating reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking in all content areas. Specific instructional strategies help teachers teach vocabulary, comprehension, critical reading and thinking skills, study skills, organization, and test-taking skills.

Beyond the initial training, ongoing staff development activities are jointly planned and conducted on-site by the project coordinator and local coordinator. The focus of these activities is to support and monitor implementation. On-site follow-up is provided six to eight months following the initial training by project staff. An implementation checklist guides the local coordinator in monitoring ongoing implementation and serves as a self-monitoring tool for teachers. In addition, a local coordinator serves as a coach for teachers to support the transfer of new skills into the classroom.

Training is provided by the program developer or certified trainers who have experience using Reading Power in the Content Areas in their own classrooms. The training engages participants in cooperative and collaborative activities and allows time for designing appropriate instructional materials for the classrooms.

Process

- training
- demonstrations
- modeling
- follow-up including electronic support, additional training, group meetings, and coaching

Intended Audience

- entire school
- entire department or team
- individual teachers

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Reading Power in the Content Areas provides teachers with the knowledge, strategies, and skills to improve students' learning in all content areas by helping students learn and apply reading strategies to acquire and process information. Students' achievement in reading, as measured on a norm-referenced test, increased significantly within a single school year.



EVIDENCE OF INCREASED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT



Success Indicators

- norm-referenced test
- district-level test

Reading Power in the Content Areas was originally designed as a 9th-12th grade program and adapted for grades 4-8. It has been implemented in diverse sites within the United States and its territories. Original evidence of effectiveness was collected in grades 9-12. In 1994, the primary site for middle school implementation was Lanai, Hawaii.

The overall effectiveness of Reading Power in the Content Areas in the middle grades was determined through the use of a pre-and post-norm-referenced test comparison. The national norm group served as the control group. Annual test score data and NCE scores were used for all analyses. The NCE gain of 11.9 for the Lanai, Hawaii, 208 eighth-grade students on the Gates-MacGinzie total reading battery was significant at .05. Similar results were found for students in grades 9-12 in three other districts in the United States.

At a California middle school, eighth-grade students advanced more than 8 standard scores (RIT) in a single year on the Sacramento Achievement Levels Test (SALT). This gain shows two years' improvement in one calendar year, which is well above the expected standard score gain of 4 for one year's growth.

THE BOTTOM LINE



Reading is an essential learning process for students in all content areas. Reading Power in the Content Areas helps teachers acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and strategies to improve students' ability to read content-area texts by actively interacting with the text. Students' reading achievement increases and students gain strategies to construct meaning from text.

SAMPLE SITES



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DOCUMENTATION

National Diffusion Network.(1996). *Educational Programs That Work:The Catalogue of the National Diffusion Network*. Longmont, CO:Sopris West.

