

# Adolescent Literacy

## Supplemental Resources for NCTE's Policy Research Brief

*This document is a supplement to  
[Adolescent Literacy: A Policy Research Brief](#),  
produced by the National Council of Teachers of English.*

### Research Clips on Adolescent Literacy

*Research Clips are short research-based responses to questions about practice. For more detailed explanations and a list of related research, see <http://www.ncte.org/library/files/Publications/Newspaper/Chron0907ResearchBrief.pdf>*

### Approaches to Improving Adolescents' Literacy Learning

*What approaches respond to the unique needs of adolescent literacy learners?*

Research findings point to strategies that have been helpful in improving adolescent literacy achievement:

- Demystify content-specific literacy practices
- Motivate through meaningful choice
- Engage students with real-world literacy practices
- Affirm multiple literacies
- Support learner-centered classroom environments
- Foster social responsibility through multicultural literacy

### Characteristics of Adolescent Literacy

*What makes the experiences of adolescent literacy learners unique?*

Students experience many changes in their schooling and literacy practices during adolescence, including:

- engaging with new disciplinary content, texts, and writing tasks
- encountering new social literacy practices and drawing from various discourse communities in and out of school
- facing the challenges of engaging with academic literacy

### Teacher Behaviors That Improve Adolescent Literacy Instruction

*What strategies can teachers use to improve adolescent literacy instruction?*

Highly effective adolescent literacy teachers share the following qualities:

- teaching with approaches that foster critical thinking, questioning, student decision-making, and independent learning
- addressing the diverse needs of adolescents whose literacy abilities vary considerably
- possessing personal characteristics such as caring about students, being creative and collaborative, and loving to read and write
- developing a solid knowledge about and commitment to literacy instruction
- using significant quality and quantity of literacy activities, such as hands-on, scaffolding, mini-lessons, discussions, group work, student choice, ample feedback, and multiple forms of expression
- participating in ongoing professional development
- developing quality relationships with students
- managing the classroom effectively

## NCTE Policy Positions

*Adolescent Literacy: A Policy Research Brief*

<http://www.ncte.org/library/files/Publications/Newspaper/Chron0907ResearchBrief.pdf>

*NCTE Principles of Adolescent Literacy Reform: A Research Brief*

[http://www.ncte.org/library/files/About\\_NCTE/Overview/Adol-Lit-Brief.pdf](http://www.ncte.org/library/files/About_NCTE/Overview/Adol-Lit-Brief.pdf)

*A Call to Action: What We Know about Adolescent Literacy and Ways to Support Teachers in Meeting Students' Needs: A Position/Action Statement from NCTE's Commission on Reading May 2004*

<http://www.ncte.org/about/over/positions/category/read/118622.htm>

## NCTE Resources

Frequently Asked Questions about Adolescent and Young Adult Literacy (AYAL)

<http://www.ncte.org/edpolicy/literacy/about/122356.htm>

Key Terms: Adolescent and Young Adult Literacy <http://www.ncte.org/edpolicy/literacy/about/122379.htm>

2007 NCTE Legislative Platform Adolescent Literacy <http://www.ncte.org/about/issues/action/126958.htm>

## Useful Links

*Adolescent Literacy and the Achievement Gap: What Do We Know and Where Do We Go from Here?*

<http://www.all4ed.org/resources/CarnegieAdolescentLiteracyReport.pdf>

*Reading Next: A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy*

<http://www.all4ed.org/publications/ReadingNext/ReadingNext.pdf>

*The State of Writing Instruction in America's Schools: What Existing Data Tell Us*

(This publication can be found under the Research tab on the CELA site.)

<http://cela.albany.edu>

*Implementing the No Child Left Behind Act: Using Student Engagement to Improve Adolescent Literacy*

<http://www.learningpt.org/pdfs/qkey10.pdf>

*Adolescents and Literacy: Reading for the 21st Century*

<http://www.all4ed.org/publications/AdolescentsAndLiteracy.pdf>

*Supporting Adolescent Literacy in the Content Areas*

<http://www.alliance.brown.edu/pubs/perspectives/adlitcontent.pdf>

*Adolescent Literacy: Research Needs*

[http://www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/adolescent/research\\_needs.html](http://www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/adolescent/research_needs.html)

*The Literacy Coach: A Key to Improving Teaching and Learning in Secondary Schools*

<http://www.all4ed.org/publications/LiteracyCoach.pdf>

*ACT National Curriculum Survey 2005-2006*

<http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/NationalCurriculumSurvey2006.pdf>

*NAEP Reading Results: Executive Summary for Grades 4 and 8*

[http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading\\_math\\_2005/s0002.asp](http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2005/s0002.asp)