

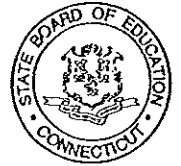
CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL HIGH SCHOOL
READING PROGRAMS IN NEW TIMES:
A STUDY OF CONNECTICUT HIGH SCHOOLS



Connecticut Association for Reading Research
in cooperation with
Connecticut Reading Association
and
Connecticut State Department of Education



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



May 2001

The Connecticut Association for Reading Research, a special interest council of the Connecticut Reading Association and the International Reading Association, has spent over a year developing the enclosed report on effective reading practices in Connecticut high schools. The recommendations of this study grew out of a questionnaire and interviews with principals, English department heads, and reading/language arts consultants, in addition to a review of recent national research.

The Connecticut State Department of Education has been involved in this study from its inception, through the drafting of the questionnaires to the final report. The data and recommendations should be of interest to administrators, school board members, and anyone who is concerned about adolescent literacy. The Connecticut Association for Reading Research gives its permission to copy the report for distribution within your district.

The study is intended to open dialogue on reading at the secondary level. We urge careful reading of the report as an important source of information on Connecticut high schools and thoughtful consideration of the recommendations for effective practices.

If you have questions about the report, you are invited to contact Jean Klein at CARR, 203-426-9200, or Joe Gambini at CSDE, 860-566-5409.

Sincerely,

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ESH:jg
Enclosure

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Additional copies of this report are available through the Connecticut Association for Reading Research, c/o Jean Klein, Research Chair, 3 Budd Drive, Newtown, CT 06470. Please send a check for \$6.00, payable to the Connecticut Association for Reading Research, to cover the cost of printing and postage.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Reading instruction frequently ends with elementary school, and in middle and high schools is often limited to at-risk students. And yet the literacy demands of the adolescent increase in complexity; the vocabulary load alone is heavy and specialized. In this century, it is inappropriate to end reading instruction in the elementary grades. Advanced reading strategies must be taught in secondary schools if students are to become critical thinkers, able to deal with increasingly abstract concepts. Moreover, reading strategy instruction should be part of all academic subjects.

In March, 2000, the Connecticut Association for Reading Research (CARR) began a study of Connecticut's high schools to answer the question, "What are the characteristics of successful reading programs at the secondary level?" At the time the study began, very little research had been reported on secondary school reading programs. CARR's study in 1997, *Literacy for All: Reading/Language Arts Programs and Personnel in Connecticut Schools*, included a survey of high school programs, describing what was happening in Connecticut schools. The present study enlarges upon the recommendations in the earlier study and defines reading instruction that works with today's adolescents. These are new times which require new approaches to literacy and a broadening of what it means to be literate in contemporary society. Further, we must prepare our secondary students for a fast-changing world with literacy demands we can only imagine. The old transmission method of learning, lecture and notetaking, will not reach today's adolescent. We must change our pedagogy to include interactive ways of learning, where the student is an active participant and self-evaluator who makes connections to his or her world. Today's adolescent needs to see relevance in academic learning to become tomorrow's responsible, caring adult who values diversity. We want our students to be thinkers and lifelong learners who are compassionate as well.

CARR's study has taken over a year to complete. Questionnaires were sent to 22 high schools that met the following criteria: (1) They are among the highest scoring within their Educational Reference Group (ERG) on the Response to Literature section of the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT); (2) have shown at least a 10% gain on the Response to Literature section of the CAPT between 1997 and 1999; and (3) have at least 50% of their students achieving standard on the Response to Literature section of the CAPT. The Response to Literature section was chosen as a comparison since the standard involves a reading rubric. Fifteen schools responded to the questionnaire and are the subject of this report. Interviews were also conducted in seven of these schools to add qualitative information to the quantitative data.

These 15 schools have strong administrative support for reading across the curriculum. Reading strategies are integrated into all content areas. Wide reading is characteristic of these schools, not only with challenging texts but with varied reading materials as well. Study skills are both integrated into the content areas and offered as separate courses for both college-bound and struggling readers. The English curriculum is rigorous and provides for advanced students as well as assistance for those who struggle with language arts. Professional development focuses on reading strategies in all content areas, and is particularly strong in the schools that have reading/language arts consultants. Help for struggling readers is also particularly strong in the schools that have reading/language arts consultants. Help is provided in other schools through summer programs, supplemental classes, after-school and in-school tutoring, and elective study. Not only is the curriculum aligned with CAPT, and assessment and benchmarks developed locally, but

reading strategies are embedded in daily instruction across the disciplines. Students are active participants in their own learning with student-directed lessons and self-evaluation incorporated in content classes. Collaboration and cooperation, with open-ended questions and discussion, lead students to stretch their thinking. Motivation is a key to adolescent learning, and these schools find ways to captivate the students to invest in their own learning as intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic rewards are also used to develop intrinsic motivation. A special effort is made to coordinate the high school and middle school curriculum for a well-articulated reading program. The schools surveyed included every ERG except ERG I, thus supporting the notion that all students can learn and learn well.

The recommendations in this report grew out of the questionnaire results and the interviews coupled with the latest research. Toward the latter part of the year 2000, we began to see a focus on adolescent literacy in the national research. These studies are carefully delineated in this report to support the following recommendations.

CARR recommends:

1. A broadened view of literacy and the notion of text learning.
2. Reading strategy instruction in all content areas.
3. Direct instruction of vocabulary in all content areas as essential to comprehension development.
4. Literacy assessments that inform instruction, with self-evaluation as an integral part of the learning process of adolescents.
5. Classrooms that create an environment that not only honors diverse backgrounds and experiences but stretches adolescent thinking and motivates literacy.
6. Access to a reading/language arts consultant on site for every teacher and student to guide reading instruction in all content areas.
7. Better coordination of special education teachers with reading/language arts consultants and classroom teachers.
8. Professional development to help classroom teachers learn to use extended time periods advantageously for literacy development of students.
9. Use of technology in secondary reading instruction where appropriate.
10. Content reading instruction for all secondary academic teachers, both preservice and inservice.

Schools that are successful in teaching their adolescent students to read and write well in this technological and information age are using these approaches to learning. We do not need to abandon all forms of transmission pedagogy that has heretofore dominated the secondary classroom, but the secondary teachers in this study are successful because they are creating classrooms where students are active participants in their own learning, and the activities have personal relevance. The teachers in these successful schools know that the best questions do not have a single right answer and that optimum learning will

take place only when the teacher pays attention to the social contexts in which learning occurs.

New times offer new challenges. Our Connecticut schools must meet the demands of the adolescent world of today and of the future. Literacy in the 21st century has a new meaning, but that meaning is continually changing in ever widening contexts. The schools in this report are already on the way toward increased literacy for their students. It is not enough, however, for schools to have only one or two of these characteristics; all the characteristics described in this report must be present if our students are to be literate and prepared for the future world in which they will live.

INTRODUCTION

In 1997 the Connecticut Association for Reading Research (CARR) published a two-year study entitled, *Literacy for All: Reading/Language Arts Programs and Personnel in Connecticut Schools* (Klein, Monti, Mulcahy-Ernt, and Speck, 1997). The study reviewed programs in elementary, middle, and high schools and gave recommendations for qualified reading personnel, professional development, job descriptions and lines of communication, university reading programs, and specialist certification. Since the study was distributed, some of the recommendations have been implemented; particularly, certification requirements in reading for the year 2003 for classroom teachers, content area teachers 7-12, special education teachers, and reading/language arts consultants K-12 will change dramatically.

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has been very active in working with school districts in improving instruction in grades K-3, with the Early Literacy Academies and Early Reading Success Panel institutes. The report of the latter committee, *Connecticut's Blueprint for Reading Achievement: The Report of The Early Reading Success Panel* (Connecticut State Department of Education, 2000), has provided primary grades with early intervention strategies for grades K-3.

In our previous study, CARR's concern was with the fact that over a third of Connecticut's school districts do not have reading/language arts consultants to diagnose student strengths and needs as well as to determine the effectiveness of the instructional program, both schoolwide and districtwide. Nationwide the emphasis has been on research in primary grades but is beginning to shift toward middle and high schools. Realizing the special needs of adolescents, the International Reading Association has begun to turn its attention to adolescent literacy. Frequently, middle and high schools do not have reading/language arts consultants to provide models of good classroom practices to enable adolescents to become strategic readers of texts that are ever increasing in complexity.

Thus, CARR undertook this study of Connecticut high schools to answer the question, "What are the characteristics of successful reading programs at the secondary level?" We decided not to survey all our Connecticut high schools but as a starting point to study those schools that were most successful on the Response to Literature section of the grade 10 Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT), since that section used a reading rubric. Accordingly, we identified 22 high schools that fit the following criteria:

1. Schools that are among the highest scoring within their Educational Reference Group (ERG) on the Response to Literature section of the 1999 CAPT.
2. Schools that have shown at least a 10% gain on the Response to Literature section of the CAPT as significant improvement within the three-year period 1997 through 1999. (At the time this study began, CAPT test results were available up to 1999 only.)
3. Schools that have at least 50% of their students achieving the standard set for the Response to Literature section of the CAPT.

Of the 22 schools, 15 responded, a 68% response rate. This study represents the characteristics of those schools that have been successful in reading achievement of grade 10 students.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The November 1996 issue of the *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* contained an article entitled, "Reading Coursework Requirements for Middle and High School Content Area Teachers: A U. S. Survey" (Romine, McKenna, and Robinson, pp. 194-198). The report put forth the notion of *content literacy* as a term that entailed expanding the roles of both reading and writing as students attempt to construct content knowledge. "The need to train secondary teachers in the application of effective content literacy techniques," the report states, "has both theoretical substantiation and practical implications" (p. 193). In Connecticut, knowing that certification requirements for secondary teachers did not require coursework in content literacy, CARR has been concerned not only for the struggling adolescent reader but for the typical student's required reading in academic subjects for which the student has little or no grasp of the strategies needed. Fortunately, Connecticut universities will be required by 2003 to meet new certification requirements for secondary academic teachers that will include the teaching of language arts (defined as reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing and visually representing) skills and concepts across the curriculum. However, as the aforementioned article states, this step is only the beginning if substantial progress is to be made in transforming practice. It is doubtful that a single course is sufficient to help teachers integrate the teaching of reading strategies and subject matter, warns the authors, who argue for the need for on-site monitoring by mentor teachers or university liaisons: actual classroom applications of content area techniques, observations of those techniques, and feedback on their effectiveness.

More and more, interest has been increasing in providing the secondary student with the skilled reading processes he or she must internalize to be successful in sifting through texts of difficult vocabulary and complex concepts. In 1999 the International Reading Association (IRA) began a series of Adolescent Literacy Forums to focus on the issues of literacy at the secondary level. Those forums are continuing in the year 2001. The IRA Conference in New Orleans in May 2001 featured an institute on adolescent literacy and continued the strand throughout the convention. In addition, the IRA Commission on Adolescent Literacy published a position statement (Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, and Rycjik, 1999, pp. 4-9) on seven rights of adolescents that support their literacy growth:

1. Adolescents deserve access to a wide variety of reading material that they can and want to read.
2. Adolescents deserve instruction that builds both the skill and desire to read increasingly complex materials.
3. Adolescents deserve assessment that shows them their strengths as well as their needs and that guides their teachers to design instruction that will best help them grow as readers.
4. Adolescents deserve expert teachers who model and provide explicit instruction in reading comprehension and study strategies across the curriculum.
5. Adolescents deserve reading specialists who assist individual students having difficulty learning how to read.

6. Adolescents deserve teachers who understand the complexities of individual adolescent readers, respect their differences, and respond to their characteristics.
7. Adolescents deserve homes, communities, and a nation that will support their efforts to achieve advanced levels of literacy and provide the support necessary for them to succeed.

The position statement further explains the need for continued development of readers and writers beyond the elementary years: "The need to guide adolescents to advanced stages of literacy is not the result of any teaching or learning failure in the preschool or primary years; it is a necessary part of normal reading development" (p. 4). The report goes on to say that "almost all students need to be supported as they learn unfamiliar vocabulary, manage new reading and writing styles, extend positive attitudes toward literacy, and independently apply complex learning strategies to print" (p. 4).

Where formerly there were few publications to help the secondary teacher with strategies for adolescent learners, we are now seeing a plethora of books with practical approaches. Little actual research has been done at the secondary level, however, to substantiate the most effective practices. The Strategic Literacy Initiative (SLI) is a collaborative research, development and service organization based in San Francisco at WestEd, a nonprofit education research, development, and service agency. *Reading for Understanding: A Guide to Improving Reading in Middle and High School Classrooms* (Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko, Hurwitz, 1999) is based on the work of SLI at WestEd. The publication is endorsed by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). The authors state that the idea that reading instruction in the early grades has failed to equip middle and high school students with adequate decoding skills is pervasive. Yet in their own work with middle and high school students, they have found decoding problems to be quite rare, even among the lowest-skilled readers. However, comprehension problems abound.

A publication of IRA, *Struggling Adolescent Readers: A Collection of Teaching Strategies* (Moore, Alvermann, Hinchman, Eds., 2000), contains case studies, research on peer and cross-age tutoring, as well as a chapter devoted to research on high school reading programs entitled, "High School Reading Programs Revisited" (Barry, p. 317-325). Among trends reported was a reduction in secondary reading services with subsequent declines in the reading proficiency of twelfth-grade students, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Over-reliance on test scores alone for placement decisions appeared to be decreasing along with a decrease in pull-out programs. While content area reading and modified curriculum approaches were a valued instructional approach, content area teachers resisted the notion of "every teacher a teacher of reading," saying they did not have the additional time, money, training, or support to do so. While some respondents said they had moved away from solitary skill instruction, Barry wondered if practices actually corresponded with the words. Remediation has sometimes meant primarily skill-based teaching with a consequent reduction in the quantity of reading instruction.

IRA has recently issued a brochure listing their "Resources to Help Adolescents Excel in Reading and Writing." Notable among these publications is a book on the effectiveness of read-alouds with secondary students, based on the author's experiences with 12th-graders as well as other secondary students: *Read It Aloud: Using Literature in the Secondary Content Classroom* (Richardson, 2000). Recommendations are included

for read-alouds in science, mathematics, geography, social studies, English and language arts, music, art, health/physical education, second language learners, and special populations. Another noteworthy publication referred to in the IRA brochure is *Re/mediating Adolescent Literacies* (Elkins, Luke, Eds., 2000), a collection of articles that have appeared in the *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*. While these articles are not research, they all carry the theme that these are "new times" that require new views of adolescents, their worlds, and literacies. The foreword gives us a glimpse of these attempts to push the field in broader directions:

Learning to live together in this century is going to require that we turn diversity and complexity into productive resources. And by definition there won't be a single right way to do it. (p. 3)

Classroom Strategies for Interactive Learning, Second Edition (Buehl, 2001) is a handbook to develop strategic readers and learners at many levels, but is a particularly good resource for middle and high school teachers. The strategies are based on an interactive view of reading and learning developed through research in the psychology of reading. The key concept in this new definition of comprehension is that a reader actively constructs meaning from a text rather than passively receiving it. The book provides practical applications of the constructivist view.

For actual reading research, of which there is little at the secondary level, the *Handbook of Reading Research, Volume III* (Kamil, Mosenthal, Pearson, Barr, Eds., 2000) is an important resource, with significant implications for classroom instruction. Strategies are no longer the focal point of research in content area classrooms; that instruction has already been validated. Attention is now centered on the social interaction patterns of teachers and students, states Thomas W. Bean, author of chapter 34, "Reading in the Content Areas: Social Constructivist Dimensions" (Bean, pp. 629-654). He notes there has been a considerable shift in research emphasis and methodology in content area reading studies. Bean emphasizes that the experimental and quasi-experimental studies described in Volume II in 1991 reflected a quest for teaching and learning strategy validation, whereas the new line of research focuses on qualitative studies in content area classrooms aimed at understanding sociocultural underpinnings in teaching and learning. Studies of teacher beliefs and practices indicate that when teachers' and students' views of learning conflict, important concepts may be "glossed over." Students' sense of themselves as agents of learning is diminished. Reader-response studies in content classes show the value of shared decision making. Bean affirms that personally meaningful interpretations of literature are more likely to be constructed by students in settings that encourage and respect multiple perspectives. He appears to agree with the notion of "new times" requiring a broadened view of how instruction of adolescents must change.

With the importance of adolescent literacy just beginning to be a target of research in ever widening aspects, CARR decided to find out what our successful high schools are doing to foster reading achievement in all content areas. What are the characteristics of these schools? There is more at stake than student achievement on the CAPT test. We can combat the violence and bigotry fostered by illiteracy if we provide an environment in school that makes students want to read, want to write, and want to become lifelong learners. Perhaps by studying successful high schools we can work toward achieving an ideal where all our students are not only successful learners but compassionate ones as well.

METHODOLOGY

Using the criteria listed below, CARR identified 22 high schools that met the criteria in ERGs A through H (in ERG I no school met the third condition, 50% of the students at standard).

1. Schools that are among the highest scoring with their Educational Reference Group (ERG) on the Response to Literature section of the 1999 CAPT test.
2. Schools that have shown at least a 10% gain in the Response to Literature section of the CAPT as significant improvement within the three-year period 1997 through 1999.
3. Schools that have at least 50% of their students achieving the standard set for the Response to Literature section on the 1999 administration of the CAPT.

The 1999 CAPT test, Response to Literature section, was used as our basis for growth, since at that time the 2000 CAPT test had not yet been administered. The Response to Literature section, although limited to fiction, was chosen for comparison because the rubric used is a reading rubric. While the Interdisciplinary section involves non-fiction reading, the rubric used is a writing rubric, and therefore the Interdisciplinary section was not chosen for the initial identification of schools with successful reading programs.

CARR compared results over the three-year period 1997 through 1999 on the Response to Literature section to substantiate a 10% gain in percentage points over that three-year period. Schools that had the highest percentages of students at standard within their ERG were chosen to be surveyed. CARR did not survey all of the high schools that met the criteria, but chose a sampling of schools in each ERG which scored the highest in Response to Literature.

The survey was first piloted with two high schools that were not chosen for the actual study, and the questionnaire was revised after the pilot. Upon revision, principals in the 22 high schools that had been selected for study were sent the questionnaire. Responses were received from 15 of those schools:

ERG A	3 High Schools
ERG B	1 High School
ERG C	2 High Schools
ERG D	2 High Schools
ERG E	1 High School
ERG F	3 High Schools
ERG G	2 High Schools
ERG H	1 High School

Upon reviewing the data from these schools, CARR decided qualitative information was needed to supplement the data gathered from the principals. The data from the principals' questionnaire and the information on the interviews are detailed in this report under the section labeled, "Findings." The results from the principals' questionnaire begin on page 9, and the interview data begins on page 12. Interviews were conducted in seven of the above high schools, some with principals, some with principals and English department chair, some with the English department chair alone, some with reading/language arts consultants in conjunction with the English department chairs. Interviews were randomly chosen and conducted in all of the above ERGs with the exception of ERG C and E.

In studying the data obtained from both sources, principals' questionnaire and interviews, CARR also used Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) data from eighth grade corresponding to the tenth grade population that took the CAPT test to determine if the percentages were similar or whether changes in competency had occurred between 8th and 10th grade with the same population of students. The 1996 8th grade data is summarized, along with the 1999 CAPT results, in the next section. While the population differs somewhat, due to pupils moving or going to other high schools such as a vocational one, the data was studied for commonalities across schools.

CAPT Index scores were not used since the Language Arts Index score on the CAPT is a combined score of the Response to Literature and Editing sections. For the purposes of this study, CARR needed the reading rubrics only. The percentage of students achieving standard seemed to be the most viable measure available.

The Interdisciplinary section of the CAPT was also studied and compared with the scores on the Response to Literature section in each of the years 1997 through 1999. Again, the percentage of students achieving standard was the measure used.

To supplement data gathering from the principals' questionnaire, CARR reviewed the Strategic School Profiles of all 22 high schools originally selected. However, the study finally used only the Profiles from the 15 respondents.

The findings are reported in the next section in this order: CAPT and CMT results, Strategic School Profiles, responses to the principals' questionnaire, and interviews. The CAPT and CMT results are listed first since schools were chosen to be surveyed on the basis of their performance on these tests.

FINDINGS

CAPT AND CMT TEST RESULTS

Response to Literature

On the 1999 administration of the CAPT test, the percentage of students achieving standard or above on the Response to Literature section for the 15 schools in this study ranged from 50% to 79%, with the average being 62.9% (compared to the state figure of 40%). Nine districts were above 60%. The average gain during the three-year period 1997-1999 was 19.9%, with a range of 11% to 38%, with 8 of the schools having a gain of 20% or more. While the Response to Literature section requires some writing, the rubrics are reading rubrics and the passages are short stories.

Interdisciplinary

The Interdisciplinary section involves reading expository text, but the rubrics are writing rubrics. CARR did not find a direct correlation between the Interdisciplinary section and the Response to Literature section in terms of the percentages of students achieving standard. For these 15 districts, the percentages of students achieving standard on the Interdisciplinary section in 1999 ranged from 32% to 75%, with an average of 56% (compared with the state's percentage of 42%), with 7 of the districts showing 60% or above (6 of these were also 60% or above on the Response to Literature section). Gains over the three-year period varied from 1% to 26%, with 2 districts showing losses of -6% and -7%. Taking the losses as well as gains into consideration, the average gain was 11.1%.

8th Grade CMT

These 1999 10th graders would have taken the CMT 8th grade test in 1996. While the 1999 population is not exactly the same as the 1996 population, a review of the 8th grade scores in the sending schools reveals the following information. The Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) scores proved to be high: the percentage of students at goal ranged from 61% to 87%, with the average at 73.6%. None of the 19 sending districts had less than 61% of their students at goal.

The Reading Comprehension section of the CMT, however, is closer to the kind of thinking required in the Response to Literature section of the CAPT. The Constructing Meaning subtest of the Reading Comprehension section of the CMT tests lower level comprehension, as does the DRP. The percentage of students at goal on this part of the test ranged from 60% to 91% for these 19 districts, with the average at 77.1%.

Two other subtests of the Reading Comprehension section of the CMT (Applying Strategies and Analyzing, Elaborating and Responding Critically) show lower percentages of students achieving goal than the Constructing Meaning subtest. The content of these subtests is more closely aligned with Response to Literature on the CAPT than either the DRP or the Constructing Meaning subtest. For these 19 districts that correspond to the 15 high schools in CARR's study, the percentage of students achieving goal on the Applying Strategies subtest ranged from 40% to 66%, with the average at 53.7%. On the Analyzing, Elaborating, and Responding Critically subtest, the percentage of students achieving goal ranged from 29% to 69%, with the average at 51.9%. This data suggests possible instructional changes between 8th and 10th grade to produce the improved CAPT results, which cannot be attributed solely to the students maturing.

STRATEGIC SCHOOL PROFILES

Demographic, Configuration, and Other Data

The information below was obtained from the 1998-1999 Strategic School Profiles, which were the only ones available at the time our study began early in the year 2000. Strategic School Profiles for the year 1999-2000 are now available on the Internet, but do not substantially change the data below.

Grades: Fourteen of the high schools were 9-12 schools, while one was an 8-12 school.

Enrollment: Enrollments ranged from 239 to 1265 students, with the average for the 15 high schools at 893. Six of the schools were over 1000 in enrollment.

Average Number of Students in the 10th Grade English Class: The average number of students in the 10th grade English class was 19.3, with the range for the 15 schools from 11.9 to 24.1. Nine of the schools reported less than 20 in a class, with 6 schools over 20 in their classes.

Percentage of Students on Free or Reduced-Price Meals: These percentages ranged widely from 1.0% to 23.6%, with the average at 6%. Nine of the schools were under 4%.

Dropout Rate: Dropout rates ranged from 0.0% to 5.2%, with the average at 2.0%. Twelve of the high schools were below 3%.

Percentage of Bilingual/ESL Students: The average was 0.7%, with a range of 0.0% to 2.3%. Four schools were over 1%.

Percentage of Students to Two- or Four-Year Colleges: The range was from 68.3% to 94.1%, with an average of 80.1%. Seven of the schools were over 80%.

Average Connecticut Experience of Staff: The 15 high schools in this study had an experienced staff ranging from 11.5 years to 18.8 years, with the average 16 years.

Percentage of Staff with a Master's Degree or Above: As might be expected with an experienced staff, the average of staff with a Master's Degree or above was 80.5%, with a range of 63% to 89.4%.

Percentage of Staff Trained as Mentors, Assessors, or Cooperating Teachers: The range was 10.6% to 41.0%, with an average of 22.2%.

Supplemental Services in Language Arts: Eleven of the 15 schools had some kind of supplemental services in Language Arts and 3 schools offered more than one kind of service. Five high schools reported having summer school, four offered other kinds of services, and two high schools each offered pull-out programs, in-class tutorials, and after school help. The "other" category was not explained on the Strategic School Profiles; however, additional information gave some indication of course options for students in need. In comparing the 1999-2000 Strategic School Profiles with the 1998-1999 Profiles, supplemental services and options change from year to year. As an example, summer school in Language Arts is not always offered.

RESPONSES TO THE PRINCIPALS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Below are composite characteristics of the 15 schools replying to the principals' questionnaire. Not all characteristics are found in each school.

Reading/Language Arts Program

Administrative support: More than half of these schools report full-time reading consultants (sometimes more than one in a school) who work with teachers, and reading teachers who work with students. Summer reading and writing programs are offered to students. Administrators support the curriculum view that reading, writing, and thinking across the curriculum are a common focus; reading skills are integrated into all content areas; performance-based learning and assessment tasks are aligned to reading standards; budget support is given to the reading curriculum including school literary magazine and newspaper; professional development is encouraged both within the district and with outside conferences.

Key instructional strategies for reading requirements of Response to Literature and Interdisciplinary sections of CAPT: Strategies for reading fiction and non-fiction are emphasized across the curriculum. Challenging texts of varied structures and other-than-textbook materials are used in content areas such as world history and social studies. In addition, English classes use a variety of reading materials besides novels and short stories. The curriculum and CAPT are aligned, with strategies begun in middle school; CAPT simulations are done as early as grade 7. Research papers in grade 10 mirror the Interdisciplinary task.

Special features contributing most to current success/improvement: Among the responses by principals and department heads are wide reading, common focus on the reading-writing connection, literature circles, response journals, attention to criteria for CAPT success in daily assignments, portfolios and performance-based assessment, interdisciplinary courses, consistent delivery of strategies and the making of connections, open-ended questioning, student-directed classroom strategies, required summer reading, rigorous core program in grades 8-10, remedial reading courses, and teachers who fully understand the components of a good CAPT response. Schools report that block scheduling has helped along with the willingness of English teachers in grades 6-12 to incorporate reader response and process writing into their daily lessons.

Required English courses: Most responding high schools had full-year required English courses for four years; some had one- and two-term electives in the senior year. Levels of courses ranged from two to four levels with weighting for the quality-point average (QPA) based on grade earned and level designation. Criteria for the various levels varied but in most schools teacher recommendation, past performance, CMT/SAT/CAPT scores, achievement tests, performance tasks, were considered along with PPT recommendations and student desire to stretch or challenge. In some cases, parent recommendations were also considered.

Advanced placement English courses: Most of these high schools had AP courses beginning in grade 11. Some had UCONN 105 and 109. Criteria for placement varied with the school: teacher recommendation, top 10% of class, scores on CAPT/SAT, grades in sophomore year, parental demands, honors students. In some schools there is open enrollment with self-selection.

Reading/study skills courses: Nine of the 15 high schools in our study had some form of reading or study skill courses which ranged from courses for remedial or special education students to reading techniques, speed reading, college success skills. Some schools have credit or half-credit elective reading or study skill courses.

Skills acquisition for informational reading: In almost all of these schools both the English teacher and the content area teachers were responsible for making sure students acquired the necessary skills for non-fiction reading. One school reported that they needed to be more consistent in applying these skills across the curriculum.

Identification of students with reading/language arts difficulties: Teacher recommendation was mentioned first in all schools in the study as a means of identifying students at risk. Other means included achievement tests, DRP scores, CMT and CAPT scores, Gates-MacGinitie test, PPT or Student Study Team process, meeting with 8th grade teams of sending schools.

Provision for students having difficulty with reading/language arts: The classroom English teacher was mentioned first by all schools with special help offered additionally from reading consultants through special supplemental classes, special education teachers if PPT required, and special elective study classes that are strongly encouraged. Exit criteria for the special help was meeting goals or, in a few cases, student/parent request.

Provision for ESL students: Eleven of the high schools in this study had ESL teachers. Some schools said they hired tutors or used a world language teacher certified in TESOL. Two schools reported having no ESL program.

Coordination between reading specialists and special education teachers: While a few high schools reported some coordination centered around classroom instruction, coordination appeared to be informal and as needed. Where there is a reading consultant at the high school, the special education teacher and reading consultant coordinate on an "as needs" basis with some overlapping of services.

Prioritization of current reading/language arts program improvement needs: The top three improvement needs listed as ranking first were: (1) staff development; (2) development of curriculum; (3) remedial reading/language arts services. Informational literacy and assessment came next, with one school each reporting the following needs as their main priority: rigor of curriculum, required reading of literature, teacher commitment to improve reading, a full-time reading teacher, and provision for a reading lab.

Professional Development

Systematic professional development in reading during past three years: Eight of the responding high schools reported professional development activities for reading; some were voluntary and some were required.

Professional development for content area teachers in reading: Five of the schools reported professional development in reading for content area teachers on a voluntary basis during the past three years. Districts that have reading/language arts consultants did more inservice with content area teachers than districts that did not have these reading professionals. Often these consultants work with content area teachers through modeling lessons within the classroom as well as offering workshops.

Diagnosis and Assessment

Measurements of success of the reading/language arts program: The CAPT test was mentioned first by all schools along with other instruments such as: standardized achievement tests; DRP; PSAT; SAT; district assessments; high AP involvement; end-of-year grades; senior portfolio graduation requirement; surveys of teachers and student performance; graduation rate and failure/dropout rate; student feedback from college students; student recognition in writing, drama, and special contests; award-winning publications such as school newspaper or literary magazine; required senior reading-writing exam to graduate.

Districtwide assessments/benchmarks in reading/language arts that parallel CAPT: Nine of the schools already had these assessments in place and one was moving toward performance-based assessment with rubrics similar to CAPT. Five of the schools had not yet moved in this direction.

Diagnosis and intervention prescription for students with reading difficulties: The responsibility for diagnosis and intervention was with the reading/language arts consultant in eight of the schools and with the English teacher in seven schools. In either case, the special education teacher might supplement.

Personnel

Reading/language arts consultant: Eight of the high schools reported having the services of a consultant.

Remedial reading/language arts teacher: Four of the high schools reported this position.

Districtwide coordinator for reading/language arts: Five of the high schools reported having this position. Some districts report writing or CAPT coordinators who do not have either 097 reading/language arts consultant certification or intermediate administrator certification.

Non-certified personnel assisting at-risk students: Twelve of the high schools reported students having difficulty with reading/language arts could be assisted by the following non-certified personnel: paraprofessionals, peer tutors, volunteers, Wesleyan tutors.

INTERVIEWS

To provide qualitative data, interviews were conducted in seven of the high schools involved in CARR's study. In each of the ERGs A, B, D, G, H, one interview was conducted. Two interviews were conducted in ERG F. Interviews were conducted with principals, language arts department heads and reading/language arts consultants.

Reading-writing strategies: Not all schools reported where these strategies were used - some were strictly used in English classes, some in content area classes only, and some in both. Schools reported reading strategies are written into the curriculum in all areas grades 9 through 12. The following strategies were used in almost all the schools interviewed:

Setting purposes	KWL
SQ3R	Anticipation guides
Response journals or dialectical notebooks	Summarizing
Text structures and graphic organizers	Predicting
Questioning	Clarifying
Think alouds mostly/some read alouds	Retelling
Sustained silent reading	Guided reading/discussion

Other strategies were listed, but by fewer schools:

QAR	Shared inquiry
Listen-read-discuss	List-group-label
Theme/main idea	Frames
DRTA	CRISS
Literary criticism	Building background
Quaker reading	Popcorn reading
RICE	

RICE is a strategy developed by the English department in a high school in ERG D. The acronym stands for Read, Interpret, Connect, Evaluate. The strategies of summarizing, predicting, questioning, clarifying, and retelling are embedded in RICE. Under each heading of RICE are questions (taken from the CAPT handbook) that guide teachers and students to think within this framework. RICE posters with related questions are displayed in every English classroom grades 6-12. Each year students receive a RICE packet, and by grade 10 students are used to responding to these types of questions.

Quaker reading and popcorn reading are used in a high school in ERG F. In Quaker reading students choose a passage or line that they like best. In Popcorn reading one student begins to read and another student jumps up to continue, keeping students focused on the task and contributing to motivation. Think alouds are modeled by the teacher and practiced by the student. CRISS is a study skills program required of middle school, with teachers mandated to have 15 hours of training.

In a high school in ERG A, themes are stressed in courses so that students are aware of unit relationships. Response journals are used more frequently than the dialectical notebook and are stressed in 9th through 11th grade English classes. Student "ownership" is a focus. An ongoing question is asked at the end of an assignment or response journal, "What is your lingering question?" Student responsibility for learning is stressed throughout.

Response journals are required in all English classes in a high school in ERG B. In this school dialectical notebooks are used more in upper level English classes and are sometimes used in other subject areas. Time is set aside in classes for silent reading, and outside reading is encouraged. Guided reading and discussion are used in all English classes. Literary criticism is emphasized in all English classes 9-12. Retellings tend to be used mainly in lower level grade 9 classes, as is KWL.

Many of these high schools have particularly involved the social studies department in using the reading-writing strategies that apply to their discipline, in addition to using strategies in the English classes.

Teaching formats: The most common teaching formats mentioned were the following:

Modeling	Literature circles
Writing portfolios	Conferencing
Large and small group discussion	CAPT simulations

Mentioned less often were the following formats:

Reciprocal teaching	Jigsaw technique
Buddy system	Writer's workshop

Reading portfolios and reader's workshop were not mentioned. Teachers felt time was a factor with writer's workshop, and therefore they cannot do the workshop format as they would like. Block scheduling coupled with a trimester schedule was mentioned as being of help in providing more time for writer's workshop. More emphasis on short stories and the use of anthologies has been a benefit to students, as they read short stories on the CAPT. Schools use a core list for reading in addition to student choice. Silent reading may be assigned. CAPT simulations are done in these schools in grades 9 and 10 particularly - in grade 10 often in March prior to the actual May administration.

Most effective strategies: Opinions varied greatly as to which strategies were the most effective. Among the responses were the following:

1. A combination of conferencing, writing folders, ownership of reading assignments across the curriculum, social studies note-taking, and a strong English program.
2. Tightening requirements in freshman and sophomore years.
3. New trimester system coupled with block scheduling, creating longer periods for more reading and writing.
4. RICE begun in grade 6 and continued throughout until grade 12.
5. Direct instruction in all content area classes through modeling and think alouds.
6. Shared inquiry method, allowing students to expound upon their thinking.

7. Modeling, large and small group discussions, guided reading, conferencing, reciprocal teaching, literature circles, anticipation guides.

Motivation: Since motivation appears to be a major factor in student learning at the high school level, CARR interviewers inquired what specific measures did the schools take to motivate their students. Answers varied considerably, but responses included the following:

1. Evaluation of response journals on a regular basis; frequent quizzes, stressing the importance of class performance, constructive peer pressure.
2. Teacher support of the CAPT test, positive attitudes of students toward the CAPT test, principal and English coordinator go into every sophomore class to talk about what the test means, all students required to be in school all day when the CAPT is given, classes as usual for non-CAPT students.
3. Promoting a serious attitude toward the CAPT test on the part of the students and teachers through teacher training, evening parent workshops, department head visiting all grade 10 classrooms for a two-day lesson.
4. Eighty-minute classes in the high school allowing more time to complete and use strategies, Mastery Madness Week at the middle school level where students participate in other activities and win privileges such as a bus trip to Borders, sustained silent reading, and strategies that require active student participation.
5. Availability of a variety of texts with monetary support for their purchase from the school system; purchased connection materials that combine literature, writing, vocabulary development, and speech; more student-directed classes, open-ended discussions, performance-based assessment, and writing in varied forms.
6. Linking learning to their lives, providing class time for reading, parental involvement, happy notes, exam exemptions for seniors, positive reinforcement for student responses in class, clarification of expectations, honoring homework assignment completion even though mistakes are present.

Student self-evaluation: While all schools indicated their students did self-evaluations, the regularity and frequency of the self-evaluations varied. In all cases, the students are given the rubrics by which to judge their writing and reading. For example, students are shown how to use the Response to Literature rubric and score their own papers. Students do formally self-evaluate their writing portfolios and may select the best pieces to forward to next year's teacher. Frequently students may be asked to write their teacher on what they know, don't know, and what grade they think they should receive.

Vocabulary development: This did not appear to be a strong area of the curriculum. Some schools reported using commercially prepared publications. Direct instruction in vocabulary was sometimes related to texts, but in some schools seemed to be limited to commercial publications. One school commented that the focus on vocabulary was mostly in the freshman classes. Since no strategies in vocabulary instruction were mentioned, classroom observation would have given interviewers more information on how vocabulary was actually taught.

Study skills: These skills are embedded within the curriculum in all content areas, including science, social studies, English, health, etc. Where schools have a reading/language arts consultant on site, this person works both within content area classrooms and in special study skills courses, mandated in some schools, elective and encouraged in others. In some schools, college-bound juniors and seniors take a half-year class which includes speed reading among the skills taught, along with summarizing and organizational skills. Some schools have specific study skills texts which are required of all 9th grade students. Checklists are kept on the students. In some districts monthly meetings are held with all grade 7-12 teachers, who are given study skills packets. The high schools reinforce study skills taught in earlier grades, such as outlining, note taking, reviewing, and some organizational skills.

Assignments: Assignments are generally given whole class and differentiated as needed or through independent study. Differentiation in assignments appears to be limited to special education students or lower level classes. Where there are reading/language arts consultants on site, tutors are trained to work with two to four students at a time who might have difficulty completing assignments.

At-risk students not part of special education: These students work with a reading/language arts consultant if one is available on site, or may work with a student assistant team, or may be given extra help by the classroom teacher. Generally if students fail a course, they must repeat it. Sometimes summer school is an option. In a high school in ERG F, there is a program called "Choice" for average and above average students who lack motivation. The classes are small (14-16 students per class), and counseling is part of the program. They may be in regular classes for the rest of the curriculum but may receive English or science credit in the smaller classes. Teachers endeavor to do more one-on-one tutoring with at-risk students, and provide them with preferential seating in addition to assignment and study sheets. The at-risk students are given much positive reinforcement in the classroom.

Reading/language arts consultant: Where this position is available on site, the reading consultant team teaches, models lessons within the classroom, diagnoses and assesses at-risk students, works directly with remedial and at-risk students, provides workshops for teachers, and works closely with content area teachers as well as the English department. Inservice and collaboration are strong components of the job description.

Four of the schools interviewed did have a reading/language arts consultant on site. In the other schools, the English department head assumes some of the duties listed above but few branch out into other content areas. Teacher preparation in reading strategies is limited to whatever coursework the English teacher may have had in undergraduate or graduate school, which varies by university. Some English department heads have planned reading workshops for their teachers, which are conducted by reading professionals outside the district.

Professional development: Interviewers were asked how the school viewed its staff development needs for teaching students to read critically. Responses varied but the following were mentioned as being most helpful: training in shared inquiry, dialectical notebooks, literature circles, non-fiction strategies, techniques like SQ3R, strategies gleaned from the California Literacy Project, and the need for a reading professional on site. One respondent felt it was difficult to pinpoint the most helpful professional development, as something could be gleaned from all professional development.

Curriculum alignment with the CAPT: All respondents indicated some alignment with the CAPT and the state framework for language arts. Strategies for CAPT are embedded within daily lessons; this type of teaching is encouraged every day and is not considered teaching to the CAPT test but practices needed to teach reading processes appropriately.

Grade 8 and high school curriculum alignment: Most schools have developed a well-articulated program that aligns the middle school with high school. Some schools are presently undergoing curriculum revision K-12 in language arts. Eighth grade students are given simulated CAPT tests, and one school reported grades 6-12 are doing similar strategies. Interdisciplinary work has begun among teachers, and CAPT prototypes at the high school level are given in social studies as well as English. Some schools report that when CAPT is given to 10th grade students, 9th grade students take a simulated test at the same time. In general, more coordination between high school and middle school was reported as a recent focus.

CONCLUSIONS

CARR began this study with the question, "What are the characteristics of successful reading programs at the secondary level?" Through our questionnaire to principals of high schools that have had success with their students on the Response to Literature section of the CAPT - coupled with interviews with principals, English department heads, and reading/language arts consultants in addition to a review of the literature on adolescent literacy - we are confident that the characteristics of reading programs listed below lead to competent readers at the secondary level:

1. There is strong administrative support for reading across the curriculum, and strong staff support for reading strategies integrated into all content areas.
2. Wide reading of challenging texts and varied other-than-textbook reading materials are incorporated in the curriculum focus of all content disciplines.
3. Study skills are integrated into content areas and also offered as separate courses for both college-bound and struggling readers.
4. The English curriculum is rigorous, and provision is made for advanced students. Students are required to take four years of English, with elective options in the senior year; advanced placement English is offered beginning in the eleventh grade.
5. Reading strategies across the curriculum are a focus of professional development (both within the school and through outside conferences) for all content teachers.
6. Schools with on-site reading/language arts consultants do more professional development in reading in the content areas, often through modeling lessons and providing workshops, than schools which do not have this position.
7. Extended time periods, such as block scheduling and a trimester system might allow, add additional time for reader response activities and process writing.
8. A variety of strategies are used in English classrooms as well as content area classes to build student competency in reading complex materials, and vocabulary instruction is explicit.
9. Provision is made for assisting struggling readers, more so in schools with reading/language arts consultants but also in other schools, through summer programs, after-school and in-school tutoring, supplemental classes, and elective study.
10. The curriculum is aligned with CAPT, as are assessments. Benchmarks and performance-based assessments inform instruction.

11. Students are active participants in their own learning, with student-directed lessons and self-evaluation incorporated in all classes.
12. Open-ended questioning and discussion are an integral part of the curriculum, with students encouraged to collaborate and stretch their thinking.
13. Teachers fully understand the components of good CAPT responses in addition to understanding how to motivate adolescent readers and create positive attitudes.
14. A special effort is made to coordinate the high school curriculum demands with middle school strategy instruction, so that the reading program is well articulated.
15. While CAPT simulations are given from grade 7 through grade 10, the strategies are embedded across the curriculum and integrated into daily lessons.

All of the schools surveyed had a strong commitment to their students becoming strategic readers and lifelong learners. Since schools were successful in each of the Educational Reference Groups A through H, the belief that all students can learn and learn well is strengthened. High schools in Connecticut could look to these common characteristics, and to the recommendations in the next section of this report, to focus on improving the reading competency of their own students in areas where they may be lacking.

LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Since our statistics were gathered using 1999 data, information has been released on the CAPT 2000 administration. While eight of these schools still met the criteria, seven did not. The seesawing of scores on the CAPT is troublesome not only to CARR in doing this study but to the respective schools as well. While each year's 10th grade class is a different population and therefore not comparable to a subsequent year, going back to when the 10th graders were 8th graders does not seem to offer an explanation of the seesawing of scores on the 10th grade test. Possible explanations have been offered: new teachers were part of the staff and not as familiar with the test, test conditions vary from year to year, some classes seem less motivated than others, the particular reading passages had less appeal than in other years. It seems unlikely that the latter is an explanation since all of the passages are piloted before actual administration. None of these explanations really accounts for the phenomenon of seesawing scores, and districts are as puzzled as CARR in trying to define the cause. Nevertheless, the CARR study does shed light on desirable reading practices at the secondary level, and the findings should be viewed from that perspective. Not all of the practices are going on in every school, but the composite picture gives insight into what is working with secondary students.

While the sample of schools in this study is small, we are confident that the conclusions are valid practices that lead to improved student performance. The congruence of the principals' questionnaire, the interviews, and the review of the literature on adolescent literacy validate the conclusions on good practices. The recommendations which follow further define good practices as revealed in our research.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In an earlier section of this report, "Background of the Study," we referred to "new times." New times demand that we look at literacy with an expanded view, and that we look at the multiple contexts in which learning occurs, including the social interaction patterns of teachers and students. Previous research related to secondary reading (Alvermann and Moore, 1991) concluded that the following characteristics were typical of high school classroom instruction:

1. Single text use predominated in content classrooms.
2. Learning facts was a dominant goal.
3. Little preteaching of concepts and vocabulary occurred.
4. Teacher control and order were of paramount interest.
5. Accountability testing and time constraints limited teachers' efforts to implement content area reading strategies.

CARR's study of high schools shows that the most successful have shifted away from practices described by Alvermann and Moore and have moved to a more enlightened approach to secondary learning. Connecticut's successful high schools have moved toward the vision described in recent research of "classrooms where small-group discussion is the norm, where use of multiple texts is common, where students download informational text from the Internet and communicate with other classrooms and communities via electronic mail and video conferencing" (Bean, p. 639). Multiple texts are more common, and small and large group discussions take place in our high school classrooms. Active participation by the students, collaborative learning, student-directed lessons, self-evaluation, and linking learning to their own lives have become part of the daily activities in the high schools in this report. Along with academic competence, we want to ensure that our students behave responsibly and respectfully toward others (Connecticut State Board of Education, *Greater Expectations*, 2001). By teaching our students to be critical thinkers and readers, aware of bias and stereotypes, we hope to ensure that our adolescents become adults who honor diversity. If we are to achieve our goal of competent and lifelong readers, equipped for the 21st century, CARR recommends:

1. A broadened view of literacy and the notion of text learning.

The schools in CARR's study are encouraging students to link learning to their own lives. We must broaden our view of what literacy is for today's adolescent, and for the world of the future in which the student will live as an adult. Recent research (Wade and Moje, 2000) urges secondary schools to expand the notion of text. Wade and Moje contend that we must examine the role of text in the classroom and learn from multiple perspectives, redefining what texts are, what learning is, and how texts can be used to learn. The studies described in their article broaden the definitions of "classroom" to include students' uses of and learning from multiple texts in multiple settings. Texts are defined as "organized networks that people generate or use to make meaning either for themselves or others" (p. 610). Wade and Moje contrast traditional transmission approaches of learning with participatory approaches. If we value only print texts, Wade and Moje contend that we risk disenfranchising large groups of students for whom print texts are not paramount because these students hold different social or cultural values. Participatory approaches use a wide range of texts, including published print materials (textbooks, reference books, novels, journals, magazines, comic books); student-generated

writings, presentations, and notes; oral discourse constructed in discussions and conversations; electronic texts generated and read on the Internet and with hypermedia; television, radio and film media; and visual and performance art. Linking "personal texts" to published texts is the challenge; texts are drawn from experiences outside school and brought into play with texts traditionally valued in school. According to the authors, operating from a single perspective privileges the learning of some and devalues the practices of others. Wade and Moje argue for multiple approaches to text and learning to help more students expand their textual, social, and cultural worlds.

2. Reading strategy instruction in all content areas.

The most successful schools in this CARR study have incorporated reading instruction within academic subject areas. While each discipline is different, CARR recommends the use of multiple texts and multiple-strategy instruction in all content areas. Seven types of instruction, identified with a solid scientific basis (National Reading Panel, 2000), have proved effective in improving students' comprehension in the context of specific academic areas: (1) comprehension monitoring; (2) cooperative learning; (3) use of graphic and semantic organizers; (4) question answering; (5) question generation; (6) story structure; and (7) summarization. CARR would broaden "story structure" to "text structure," which is so important in understanding science, social studies, and math content. The report of the National Reading Panel further discusses the effectiveness of multiple-strategy teaching in which the reader uses several of the procedures in interaction with the teacher and the text. The authors caution that multiple-strategy teaching is effective when the procedures are used flexibly and appropriately by the reader or the teacher in naturalistic contexts.

Our own CARR study herein confirms that our most successful high schools in reading performance are, in fact, using multiple strategies and have branched out to using them in the content areas. The references at the end of this report provide resources for practical applications of the research on secondary reading. Notable among these references are: *Classroom Strategies for Interactive Learning* (Buehl, 2001); *Content Area Reading* (Vacca and Vacca, 1999); *I Read It but I Don't Get It* (Tovani, 2000); *Read It Aloud: Using Literature in the Secondary Content Classroom* (Richardson, 2000); *Reading for Understanding: A Guide to Improving Reading in Middle and High School Classrooms* (Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko, and Hurwitz, 1999); *Re/mediating Adolescent Literacies* (Elkins and Luke, Eds., 2000); *Struggling Adolescent Readers: A Collection of Teaching Strategies* (Moore, Alvermann, and Hinchman, Eds., 2000); *Teaching With Picture Books in the Middle School* (Tiedt, 2000); *Words, Words, Words: Teaching Vocabulary in Grades 4-12* (Allen, 1999); *Yellow Brick Roads: Shared and Guided Paths to Independent Reading 4-12* (Allen, 2000). In addition, the Connecticut State Department of Education's Handbook on CAPT Second Generation (*Reading and Writing Across the Disciplines*, 2001) provides information on strategies that are most effective for improved performance on the CAPT test.

As a strategy, teachers need to ask more questions that do not have one right answer, and students need to be taught to question not only what they read but what they hear. Particularly important is "critical literacy." Commonly the term refers to the use of higher order thinking - mental operations that involve inferring, reasoning, and problem solving (Moje, Young, Readance, Moore, 2000). The authors add a second meaning to the first, stemming from the work of Paulo Freire: literacy empowers people when it encourages them to actively question the social world and work toward social justice and equality. If we are to make our adolescents critical consumers and producers of text that challenge dominant meanings, the authors contend we must make students aware of how

texts manipulate them, and that there is more than one way to read texts and the world. The authors recommend using popular texts to capitalize on what is meaningful to students but caution that it is important not to romanticize them. On the contrary, the texts can be used to engage students and to raise questions about our society, about stereotypes, and about negative practices. The same view is echoed by other researchers (Alvermann and Hagood, 2000) as they discuss "fandom" and critical media literacy.

Marginalized readers can also become connected to literacy through interdisciplinary projects. However, adolescents need to be supported specifically in the reading and writing tasks inherent in project work, as they learn about unfamiliar content and concepts through multiple texts and everyday discussions (Moje, Young, Readance, Moore, 2000).

3. Direct instruction of vocabulary in all content areas as essential to comprehension development.

In this study, CARR did not find vocabulary instruction a strong area, even in the high schools that were otherwise quite successful in their reading programs. While explicit vocabulary instruction was conducted in both English and content area classrooms, the methods were often traditional. The National Reading Panel Report, however, devotes an entire section to research on vocabulary instruction. Their findings have implications for vocabulary instruction in the teaching of reading:

1. Vocabulary should be taught both directly and indirectly but pre-instruction of vocabulary in reading lessons can have significant effects on learning outcomes.
2. Repetition and multiple exposures to vocabulary items are important.
3. Learning in rich contexts, incidental learning, and use of computer technology all enhance vocabulary acquisition.
4. Direct instruction should actively engage the reader and should include task restructuring; i.e., making certain the learner is fully aware of the task and how to complete it.
5. Dependence on a single vocabulary instruction method will not result in optimal learning.

Vocabulary instruction has been researched for a general theory and the impact of theory on the classroom (Blachowicz and Fisher, 2000). Blachowicz and Fisher's findings corroborate the above five principles suggested by the National Reading Panel Report to guide vocabulary instruction. In a closer look at content vocabulary learning, Blachowicz and Fisher affirm that content vocabulary learning typically requires the learning of specific meanings and new concepts in the context of specific units of study. Therefore, the student needs to have both receptive and expressive control of the key terms, requiring instruction to a level of retention. Three main strategic process are involved:

1. Students need to develop independent selection strategies for identifying words to be learned.
2. Students need to come to understand the words in the domain of the study both receptively and expressively.

3. Students need to retain the vocabulary and use it to scaffold later learning.

Teacher modeling of conceptual categorization, use of textual cuing, and meta-cognitive aspects of self-selection and study may all be part of necessary instruction. Structured overviews and advance organizers provide formats for helping students organize vocabulary related to the conceptual organization of a particular discipline. Critical for retention and usage is student manipulation of words in many contexts. Blachowicz and Fisher conclude that "the form of instruction that may be most necessary involves teacher scaffolding and support in the selection process, in ensuring that students are engaged in active processing, and in giving instruction and feedback on using textual and outside aids to word learning" (p. 513). The research indicates that for incidental word learning to occur a student needs to have a critical mass of knowledge, including word knowledge; thus it is unlikely that ESL students will acquire needed vocabulary through indirect learning. Further, Blachowicz and Fisher cite research indicating poor readers do not learn vocabulary effectively through incidental means but also require explicit instruction. For poor readers, direct instruction using semantic-based techniques was more effective than using definitions or definitions and context.

4. Literacy assessments that inform instruction, with self-evaluation as an integral part of the learning process of adolescents.

While the CAPT test can give guidance to schools and to individual students in evaluating their performance, no single assessment should be used to measure how well or how poorly an adolescent reads and writes, nor should a single assessment be used punitively. Decisions about graduation, retention, or promotion should not be based on the CAPT test or any other single measure. On the contrary, assessments should map a path toward continued literacy growth as described in the International Reading Association position statement on adolescent literacy (1999). The view of this commission is that adolescents deserve classroom assessments that: (1) are regular extensions of instruction; (2) provide usable feedback based on clear, attainable, and worthwhile standards; (3) exemplify quality performances illustrating the standards; and (4) position students as partners with teachers evaluating progress and setting goals.

The writing portfolio is one way that high schools in this study are assessing students and teaching them to self-evaluate. It is less clear whether the portfolio is expanded to include reading. Happily, high schools in this study are not only informing students of the rubrics by which they will be judged on the CAPT test but are clearly explaining the criteria and standards by which their performance is judged daily. It was not clear in our study how often students self-evaluated; frequency seemed to vary greatly school to school. Assessments need to bridge the gap between standards and what adolescents know and are able to do; moreover, students need to be clear about how their performance is judged and buy into it.

5. Classrooms that create an environment that not only honors diverse backgrounds and experiences but stretches adolescent thinking and motivates literacy.

There are some studies that give us insight into how to create a more student-centered environment at the secondary level that will reach even the most marginalized of students so they may grow in literacy. Since motivation is the key to competent and lifelong readers who invest in their own learning, we need to make academic learning relevant to today's adolescent. In our interview questions, we asked about motivation.

Some of the answers were specific to the CAPT test. In fact, the Connecticut State Department of Education has researched some of the practices that schools are doing to motivate CAPT participation. These practices include the following: display of CAPT scholar pictures, diplomas of distinction for students meeting all four goal levels, monetary awards, wearing identifying symbols at graduation such as a red tassel or medallion, parade recognition, luncheons and breakfasts that honor CAPT scholars who meet the goal in all four areas.

While extrinsic motivations such as the above will prod some adolescents to achieve, what about the student who is not motivated or who feels on the outside of the academic world? Some of the high school interviews provided valuable insight into how teachers endeavor to bring these students into literacy. We have already mentioned the need to use multiple texts that have relevance to the adolescent world. Teachers show respect for student responses by giving positive reinforcement, linking learning to the lives of their students, providing time in class for reading, involving parents in their children's learning, and by providing preferential seating for students in need. While individual teachers are doing everything they can to motivate their students, all teachers need to buy into a schoolwide effort to bring marginalized students into literacy. In reviewing the research, some promising practices appear to give guidance.

In this study, CARR noted on the Strategic School Profiles that one of the high schools in ERG A had done an attitude survey of students. The survey proved useful to this school in determining the interactions between teachers and students that promote or hinder student learning. Recent research (Bean, 2000) has shown teacher beliefs and practices have a direct bearing on student achievement. Bean particularly explored social constructivist dimensions of reading in the content areas. He points to the growing body of research that chronicles the affective area of how students view literacy and voluntary reading at the secondary level. The research demonstrates the decline in student attitudes toward recreational reading as students advance into middle and secondary grades, says Bean; furthermore, there is a powerful relationship between attitude and reading frequency and its impact on reading comprehension. Bean reports that students are more likely to socially construct personally meaningful interpretations of literature in content classes when settings encourage shared decision making and multiple perspectives. Moving away from the teacher as a central source of knowledge has potential to liberate knowledge construction, says Bean, even though peer status rankings may interfere with "whose voice gets heard and who is silenced" (p. 638).

Other research (Hidi and Harackiewicz, 2000) offers insight into ways of combatting and even reversing the trend of adolescent decline in interest and attitude toward school. Hidi and Harackiewicz contend maintaining an interest lies in finding ways to empower students by helping them find meaning or personal relevance. The authors contrast individual interest, or personal interest, with situational interest that can be generated by certain conditions or stimuli in the environment that focus attention. Situational interest produces a more immediate affective reaction which may or may not last; however, situational interest can make a significant contribution to the motivation of academically unmotivated children and can even lead to development of individual interest. Reading for a particular purpose, as an example, can enhance text-based interest. Moreover, teachers have some control over social contexts in the classroom, and research confirms students can become more productive and involved when they work with peers on learning tasks. The jigsaw technique, where students are required to become experts on a portion of a topic under study and share their knowledge with classmates, has proven to give students a way of motivating the unmotivated. There is even a chance that intrinsic motivation will

emerge when extrinsic rewards are coupled with situationally interesting activities. The authors' view is that once an activity becomes interesting, it no longer requires further internalization through conscious, deliberate decisions, but is spontaneously and effortlessly integrated. Evidence is accumulating to indicate performance goals, as well as mastery goals, can have positive effects in secondary schools in promoting adaptive achievement behavior, but these goal effects depend on personality and contextual factors. Further research is needed to determine the optimal combinations of mastery and performance goals, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and individual and situational interest. Consideration of these factors may be critical to motivating students who are uninterested in academics. The first step, however, is to get adolescents engaged in activities and to expose them to a variety of subject materials and ways of learning.

In a recent study of middle and high schools (Langer, 2000), the researcher notes that group work does not always involve working through ideas together to intellectually challenge each other's thinking. Langer reports that higher performing teachers treat students as "members of dynamic learning communities that rely on social and cognitive interactions to support learning" whereas more typical teachers treat each learner as "an individual, with the assumption that interaction will either diminish the thinking or disrupt the discipline" (p. 44). In effect, collaboration can stretch the thinking of adolescents where cooperative learning may not.

6. Access to a reading/language arts consultant on site for every teacher and student to guide reading instruction in all content areas.

The International Reading Association (*Position Statement on Adolescent Literacy*, 2000, and *Making a Difference Means Making it Different*, 2000) lists a reading specialist as a necessary staff member if reading achievement is to improve and considers access to a reading specialist as one of the ten basic rights of students. The role is no longer confined to remediating students at risk but, as has been demonstrated by the high schools in this study, the reading specialist of today follows a collaborative model and works closely with teachers in all disciplines to ensure literacy growth. In acting as a resource to both teachers and students, a high school reading specialist (Henwood, 1999-2000) can foster collaboration schoolwide. Henwood's collaborative support of teachers took many forms according to teachers' expressed needs: individualizing help, dealing with large class sizes, handling students' comprehension and decoding problems, demonstrating techniques for special learners, modeling strategy instruction, developing students' notetaking skills, and promoting interactive teaching skills.

The reading/language arts consultant plays an important role in ongoing staff development. The Connecticut Reading Association has issued a brochure (*Why You Need a Reading/Language Arts Consultant in Your School*, 2000) which further enlarges upon what this reading professional is trained to do in the three main areas of instruction, diagnosis and assessment, and leadership for the reading program. The need for a reading specialist at the middle and high school levels in no way reflects on the elementary school. The literacy demands of the adolescent are more complex, and students continue to need support as they develop strategies for steering their way through difficult texts, a heavy vocabulary load, and new and complicated concepts. Secondary level teachers in all disciplines, as well as students, benefit greatly from the expertise of a highly trained reading professional in the building.

7. Better coordination of special education teachers with reading/language arts consultants and classroom teachers.

Given the new directive to test 80% of special education students on the CAPT test, better coordination is essential among special education teachers, reading/language arts consultants where available, and classroom teachers. Even in the higher performing schools in this study coordination was not always present.

8. Professional development for classroom teachers in how to use extended time periods advantageously for literacy development of students.

In interviews with classroom teachers, department heads, and principals, while block scheduling and a trimester system have enabled some schools to use the time for more reading strategy activities and process writing, other schools report the time has been used as an extra study period for students and/or as time to do their homework. The extra time should be used for instruction that the 40-50 minute period does not allow.

9. Use of technology in secondary reading instruction where appropriate.

Although neither the questionnaire nor the interviews in this study specifically asked about technology in reading instruction, the use of multiple texts was highlighted by the respondents. The National Reading Panel Report (2000) has an extensive section on "Computer Technology and Reading Instruction." The panel concluded that computers do have a motivational use in reading instruction, and hypertext in particular may have potential in assisting the reader who is having difficulty with a passage. The report states that there are many unanswered questions about the efficacy of multimedia instruction to a conventional curriculum. Therefore, the report advocates exploiting multimedia software when it is available and appropriate to do so. Word processing is a useful addition to reading instruction, particularly as it closely matches process writing approaches, a strong component of quality reading programs. However, the panel concluded that word processing alone is unlikely to make a difference; it must be embedded in other instruction. In all cases, the report warns, these implications for reading instruction are tentative and need to be verified by continued research.

Other research (Leu, 2000) points out that the financing of new technologies presents major new hurdles for our society; continually changing technologies of information and communication require regular capital investments by schools if they wish to help their students keep up with the changing nature of literacy. Leu suggests a deictic perspective, as the challenge is how to plan for education when literacy will be changing regularly, as new information and communication technologies continually appear, and as teachers and students exploit these resources. Teachers, students, and researchers are forced to adapt continuously to new definitions of literacy. While we cannot define the nature of literacy in the future, Leu offers general principles at work in these areas: the nature of literacy, literacy research, classroom learning contexts, teacher education, and public policy. Leu concludes, "These principles may be useful to help frame the exploration of issues in our literacy futures" (p. 764).

Media literacy goes beyond the technologies of computers, television, and newspapers; teacher preparation should include the visual and performing arts in responses to literary text as well (Mulcahy-Ernt, 2000). National and state standards have expanded the notion of literacy to a broader definition of text, with implications for reading and language arts pedagogy. In her graduate course for preservice secondary-level English teachers,

Mulcahy-Ernt has promoted the use of multiple media responses to literature, allowing for a deeper analysis of text, divergent thinking, and personal connections.

10. Content reading instruction for all secondary academic teachers, both preservice and inservice.

Most secondary academic teachers currently do not have a course in the teaching of reading in their content area. Ongoing staff development in reading is being provided for content area teachers in the high schools in this study where reading/language arts consultants are on site to collaboratively work with the teachers of academic subjects. In schools where a reading/language arts consultant was not available, the teaching of reading did not necessarily extend to non-fiction. All content area teachers should have pre-service instruction in content area reading, and inservice reading instruction for secondary academic teachers should be ongoing and systematic. In 2003, certification requirements for secondary subject area teachers will include reading instruction competencies.

SUMMARY

In conclusion, CARR's findings and recommendations are in alignment with the latest research. Very recently the National Research Center on English Learning and Achievement at the State University of New York (CELA) released a document defining the six features of effective reading and writing instruction for middle and high school students (Langer, Close, Angelis, Preller, 2000). These six features support CARR's study:

1. Students learn skills and knowledge in multiple lesson types.
2. Teachers integrate text preparation into instruction.
3. Teachers make connections across instruction, curriculum, and life.
4. Students learn strategies for doing the work.
5. Students are expected to be generative thinkers.
6. Classrooms foster cognitive collaboration.

Langer emphasized the fact that all six features were present in the schools in her study that beat the odds. The features are interrelated and supportive of one another, and in Langer's view, "it would be erroneous to assume that the adoption of any one feature, however well orchestrated, without the others could make the broad-based impact needed to effect major change in student learning" (p. 46).

New times require us to look at adolescent learning through broader contexts than ever before. The definition of literacy takes on multiple connotations in a highly technological and information age. We cannot fully imagine the adult world in which these adolescents will live. However, we do know that the literacy demands in our society today are even heavier and more complex than heretofore. We do not need to abandon all forms of transmission pedagogy that has previously dominated the secondary classroom, but we do need to use participatory activities that engage the students and help them invest in their own learning. The more that secondary teachers create a classroom environment where students are active participants in their own learning, and the activities and learning have personal relevance, the greater will be literacy growth. Standards and goals must be meaningful to the students; connections to the real world must be drawn by students with guidance from the teacher. The best questions have no one right answer. And, as was said in the beginning of this study, there is no one right way to deal with the diversity and challenges in today's classroom. These are new times that demand we pay attention to the social contexts in which optimum learning can occur. We must be ready to meet the challenge of equipping our students to be successful in the 21st century not only academically but as responsible, caring citizens.

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APPENDIX A

CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION FOR READING RESEARCH
In cooperation with Connecticut Reading Association and State Department of Education
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS
"What are the characteristics of successful reading programs at the secondary level?"

NAME OF SCHOOL _____

Demographic and configuration data will be obtained from the Strategic School Profile; however, please attach course descriptions or any other information which will help determine quality secondary reading programs.

READING/LANGUAGE ARTS PROGRAM

1. How does administration support secondary reading? Please give specific examples:

2. What do you consider key instructional strategies that help prepare students for the reading requirements of the Response to Literature and Interdisciplinary sections of Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT)? _____

3. What special features of your reading/language arts program do you feel contribute most to your current success and/or improvement on the CAPT? Please explain:

4a. Are there specific required English courses for all students? (Circle) Yes No
Please list and explain whether full year or half-year courses: _____

4b. Please explain how many levels of these courses you have and how they are weighted: _____

4c. What criteria are used to place students in the various levels? Please explain:

5. What advanced placement English courses do you have? Please list and explain the criteria for placement: _____

6. Do you have separate reading or study skill courses? (Circle) Yes No
Please list and indicate whether credit or non-credit and whether required or elective:

7. How do all students acquire the special skills needed for informational reading?
____ English teacher
____ Content area teachers
____ Other Please explain: _____

8. What means of identification do you use to identify students with reading/language arts difficulties? (Check all that apply.)
____ Teacher recommendation
____ Achievement test Name of test _____
____ CMT
____ CAPT
____ Other Explain: _____
9. What provision is made for students who have difficulty with reading/language arts?
____ Classroom English teacher is responsible
____ Supplemental classes with a reading/language arts specialist
____ Special education teacher
____ Special study classes (Circle: assigned elective)

Explain exit criteria: _____
10. What provision is made for ESL students?
____ ESL teacher
____ Reading/language arts specialist
____ Other Explain: _____
11. How do special education and remedial reading specialists coordinate their programs?

12. Prioritize (rank 1-4 only) the following in terms of your current reading/language arts program needs for further improvement:

☐ Staff development (classroom demonstrations and workshops for all staff including content area teachers)
☐ Development of curriculum
☐ Remedial reading/language arts services
☐ Informational literacy
☐ Assessment
☐ Rigor of curriculum
☐ Literature (required reading)
☐ Teacher commitment to improve reading
☐ Other Explain: _____

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

13. List your school's systematic professional development in reading during the past three years and indicate whether voluntary or required: _____

14. Has there been professional development specifically for content area teachers in the teaching of reading within the past three years? (Circle) Yes No
If so, please list and indicate whether voluntary or required: _____

DIAGNOSIS AND ASSESSMENT

15. What instruments do you use to measure the success of your reading/language arts program?

☐ CAPT
☐ Standardized Achievement Test Name: _____
☐ Other Explain: _____

16. Have you developed districtwide assessments/benchmarks in reading/language arts which parallel the CAPT? (Circle) Yes No
If so, please describe: _____

17. Who diagnoses and prescribes programs of intervention for students with reading difficulties?

☐ Reading/language arts consultant (097 certification)
☐ Remedial reading/language arts teacher (102 certification)
☐ Classroom English teacher
☐ Other Explain: _____

PERSONNEL

18. Is a certified Reading/Language Arts Consultant (097 endorsement) part of your school staff? (Circle) Yes No
Please attach job description if available, or describe primary responsibility: _____
19. Do you have a remedial reading/language arts teacher (102 endorsement) on your staff? (Circle) Yes No
Attach job description if available.
20. Does your district have a K-12 Reading/Language Arts Consultant (097 endorsement and Intermediate Administrator endorsement) who coordinates the districtwide reading/language arts program? (Circle) Yes No
21. Do you use any of the following persons to assist with instruction of students who have difficulty with reading/language arts? (Circle) Yes No
____ Paraprofessionals
____ Peer tutors
____ Volunteers
____ Other Explain: _____

Name and title of person completing this survey:

_____	_____
Name	Title

Please add any comments that will assist us in identifying quality reading programs at the secondary level.

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM BY APRIL 28, 2000 TO THE UNDERSIGNED

Jean B. Klein, Research Chair
Connecticut Association for Reading Research
3 Budd Drive, Newtown, Connecticut 06470
Telephone/FAX: (203) 426-9200

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
FOLLOW-UP TO HIGH SCHOOL QUESTIONNAIRE TO PRINCIPALS

1. Which of these reading/writing strategies are you currently using to assist students in building competency with both fiction and non-fiction texts? Where are they used; i.e., in English classes or content area classes or both?

Setting Purposes	Sustained Silent Reading
KWL	Guided Reading/Discussion
SQ3R	Read Alouds
Anticipation Guide	Shared Inquiry
Dialectical Notebook/Response Journals	Listen-Read-Discuss
Graphic Organizers and Text Structures	List-Group-Label
QAR	Theme/Main Idea
Summarizing	Frames
Predicting	D.R.T.A.
Questioning	CRISS
Clarifying	Other
Retelling	
2. Which of these teaching formats/strategies do you use? Where are they used; i.e., in English classes or content area classes or both?

Jigsaw Technique
Modeling
Literature Circles
Junior Great Books
Large Group Discussion
Small Group Discussion
Buddy System
Writer's Workshop
Reader's Workshop
Conferencing (Teacher, Writer's Chair, Peer)
Reading/Writing Portfolios
Reciprocal Teaching
Other
3. Which of the above teaching/learning strategies do you feel are most effective with your students?
4. Since motivation is such a large part of student achievement, what specific measures do you take to motivate students?
5. How often do students self-evaluate and what specific provision is made for students to accomplish their own evaluation on a regular basis?
6. How is vocabulary development accomplished?
7. How and where are study skills taught?
8. How are assignments given - whole class, differentiated, independent study?

9. What provision is made for at-risk students (not part of Special Education population) in the classroom? Outside the classroom? What accommodations do you make for students who have failed a core subject, such as English, Math, Science, Social Studies?
10. If there is a reading/language arts consultant in the building, how is that person used?
Diagnosis/assessment only
Works with remedial or at-risk students only
Team teaches
Collaboration model
Other
11. (This question is for schools that do not have a reading/language arts consultant on site or within the district.) What professional training does the English teacher have in reading and how does the English department work with content area teachers in the reading requirements of the various disciplines?
12. What professional development would you consider most helpful at this time to help your students read critically?
13. How has your curriculum at the high school level been aligned with CAPT?
14. How has the grade 8 curriculum been aligned with CAPT and your high school curriculum to provide for a well articulated program?

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