



Building a Teacher's Toolbox  
Volume 2, Issue 17

Prepared by:  
Robin C. Letendre, M.Ed

Adult Education  
State of New Hampshire  
Learning Disabilities Consultant  
Mentor Teacher  
Reading Specialist

Once again, the Fall conference was a success! The Fall Conference was held on October 30, 2010 at the Rundlett Middle School in Concord.

I had the privilege of facilitating a morning workshop session on adolescent reading, and in the afternoon, I co-facilitated a workshop on the newest curriculum guide for GED for the state of New Hampshire, with Susan Bubp. These curriculum guides will soon be available for all the centers, but those people with whom you work who may have attended the Fall Conference and attended that workshop have that new curriculum guide already.

After preparing for the conference, I decided to share with all of you my notes on adolescent reading since so many of us, regardless of the program that we teach in, do have interactions with adolescents, whether it be in pre-GED, GED, ESOL, Diploma, GED options classes or in day time high school setting.

I also wanted to take the time to share with all of you the notes that were taken in the workshop on adolescent reading. I hope you find the resources that were gathered to be helpful in what you teach.

You will find the notes from the adolescent workshop on pages 2-5

The first question that was posed to the group attending the adolescent reading workshop was: what are some book recommendations that you would suggest for either the teacher as a trade book, the student to become an engaged reader, or for pleasure reading?

### Trade book

**Write Beside Them** by Penny Kittle

**Bean's of Egypt Maine**

**Getting to "got it"**

**They Walk Among Us**

**Essential 55** by Ron Clark

**The Fat Pig** by Neil LaBute, a play

### Student book

**Bone**-graphic novel

**Holes**

**Hate List**

**The Boy in the Striped Pajamas**

**The Fat Pig** by Neil LaBute, a play

### Pleasure reading

***Middlesex*** by Eugenides

Jodi Piquolt books

The second question that was posed to the group was: list 1 strategy that you use in class to help struggling readers.

The group included these ideas into the discussion:

- ✚ Pre-teach vocabulary
- ✚ Stopping periodically to assess comprehension
- ✚ “One question, one comment” in which the student generates the question and then the comment follow
- ✚ Prior knowledge
- ✚ Read with the students often
- ✚ Stop at certain vocabulary words to discuss meaning and use the context of the sentence or passage to figure out the meaning of the word
- ✚ Reading poetry and plays aloud together.

This was the third activity done in the workshop. The following question was posed to the group, and their answers and discussion follows.

***Adolescents entering the adult world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will read and write more than at any other time in human history. They will need advanced levels of literacy to perform their jobs, run their households, act as citizens, and conduct their personal lives. They will need literacy to cope with the flood of information they will find everywhere they turn. They will need literacy to feed their imagination so they can create the world of the future.***

### **Activity**

In small table groups, discuss what this means to you as an educator of young adults. What are the advanced levels of literacy that your students need? What types of information are they "flooded" with? Do you feel that what you teach them in your class aligns with this statement, or not? Discuss for 7 minutes your reaction to that statement. Be prepared to report out to the group.

Group sharing and discussion based on the question posed to the group pertaining to the levels of literacy needed:

Access to books

Functional literacy as compared to academic literacy demands

Vocabulary

Context issues

Skim and scan to determine what is useful, but that it takes struggling readers a long time to do this.

Decoding

Decreased pronunciation of words

Lack of rules of phonics

Lack of rules regarding syllabication

Replace words with other words when reading, trying to guess the correct word

Teaching missing concepts

Filling in background knowledge

Lack of common knowledge

"Get it done" mentality

Only to do the work necessary to pass the test

"Is this on the test?"

Group sharing based on the second part of the question about types of literacy demands:

- ✚ Real life reading
- ✚ **18 Years and Beyond** a recommended text that allows students to read legal documents. This is downloaded and offered through the NH Lawyer Association.
- ✚ **Young Adult Resource Guide**, which is offered through the State of NH.
- ✚ The issue of discerning reality on the internet. Is it a fact? Is it legit? Is it true?
- ✚ Truth of emails
- ✚ Use of “snopes” to verify information
- ✚ Do not know how to use the library
- ✚ Access reference librarians
- ✚ No knowledge of resumes