

A Conceptual Model of Adolescent Literacy

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Explanations of the model components are on the following pages.

Perceptions

Climate is the learning environment established at the classroom, school, and district levels. Climate is impacted by relationships established within the organization, the goals of individuals as well as the group, and the systems that are developed for both maintenance and change.

Moos, R. H. (1979). *Evaluating educational environments: Procedures, measures, findings, and policy implications*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Trust is the reliance on others. It includes both teacher-student trust and student-student trust. Trust creates an expectation and belief in success. Trusting relationships, between students and between students and teachers, create environments for risk taking without fear of punishment, betrayal, or failure.

Investment is a commitment of time and support for learning. Both teachers and students make an investment in the learning process. The commitment or investment of time and support holds the expectation of return. The return on investment for learning can include growth as a learner, higher levels of achievement, or personal satisfaction.

Motivation is both intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsically motivated students are engaged for the sake of learning, and for the sense of enjoyment and accomplishment with the learning tasks. Extrinsically motivated students are engaged to either obtain some type of reward or avoid some form of punishment. These rewards and punishments may not be directly related to the learning.

Lepper, M.R. (1988). Motivational considerations in the study of instruction. *Cognition and Instruction* 5, 4: 289-309.

Engagement involves students' identification with and participation in both academic and nonacademic activities within an educational environment. Engaged students have a sense of belonging and develop positive relationships with teachers and other students.

Wilms, J. D. (2003). Student engagement at school: A sense of belonging and participation, results from PISA 2000. Paris, France: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Programs

Patterns for learning include grouping practices used in classrooms that are dynamic and flexible. Grouping may be whole, small, pairs, triads, cooperative, heterogeneous, homogenous, self-paced, individualized or interest-based. Decisions on grouping students depend on the purpose for learning and the needs of the learners.

Instructional management is the system established within a classroom to facilitate maximum learning. Components of a management system can include effective use of time, use instructional resources, and expectations for behavior. A well-managed classroom is not devoid of energy. However, the excitement and vigor, are focused on learning, and the classroom has a high level of efficiency.

Instructional techniques encompass the strategies and skills that are taught to all students for the purpose of improving achievement. A range of activities can be used to provide access to both strategies and skills. The delivery system for these techniques includes teacher modeling, guided practice, peer coaching, and independent practice.

Instructional materials include any materials that may be mandated by a school or district, as well as any supplemental materials that are used to enhance and expand learning. Instructional materials are not limited to text books. Trade books, magazines, newspapers, multi media, primary sources, and the internet are but some examples of appropriate instructional materials.

Evaluation is the continual examination of programs to determine their efficacy for all learners. The examination of programs uses a variety of data sources, including but not limited to student test scores, fidelity and integrity of instructional materials as they relate to student needs, and the knowledge level and preparedness of teachers who deliver the programs of instruction.

Achievement

Standards represent what students are expected to know, understand, and be able to do. Standards-led instruction brings what is to be learned into focus and holds learning as a constant while treating other traditional constants (e.g., time, location, instructional materials) as variables. With standards, the focus is always on student learning. Expectations for learning are the same for all students, even those who have traditionally performed at low levels.

Assessment provides teachers with information they need to improve student learning. There is a dynamic relationship between assessment, curriculum, and instruction. Assessment is diagnostic, formative, and summative. In some cases, assessment serves as a screening device. There also are multiple sources of data for assessment. Formal and informal observations, daily work, curriculum-based assessments and standardized test scores can all be used as data points for assessing student performance.

Relevance pertains to the logical connections between what is being taught and how students are learning. Relevant learning is connected to the real world and prepares students to be members of a global society. Instruction is timely, and students are able to apply what they are learning to their world.

Organization for learning applies to the system operating beyond the classroom level. How the day, week, and year is organized at the school level and the grade level to best meet the needs of all students has an impact on achievement. Block scheduling, departmentalization, and schedules for art, music, and physical education all play a part in the effective organization for learning.

Demographics

English language learners (ELL) are students whose first language is other than English. Their inability to speak, read, comprehend, or write fluently in English affects their performance and achievement. ELL students may be in self-contained classrooms, served by resource teachers on a pull out or push in basis, or placed in regular classrooms with or without arrangements for English as a second language (ESL) support.

Individualized education program (IEP) students are those who have been formally identified and placed in a special education program of instruction. Students with IEP's can have a range of disorders that impact and interfere with the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, comprehension, and writing skills. These students may be in self-contained classrooms for all or part of the day. They also may be in regular education classrooms and receive special education resource on a push in or pull out basis.

Socio-economic status (SES) of students relates to the income level, occupation, and/or education level of the child's family. There is a correlation, not causation, between low SES and lower reading abilities, limitations with vocabulary, and inability to attend to the demands of the school day.

Ethnicity and race refer to the common background and traits that are based on a specific cultural heritage. Ethnicity is more than just language; it includes the traditions, customs, values, and beliefs of a particular group. Within any given classroom, a range of ethnicities will be present.