



Content Area Reading: Literacy and Learning Across the Curriculum (9th Edition)

Richard T. Vacca, Jo Anne L. Vacca

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Content Area Reading remains the market-leading text in content literacy and maintains the authors' original objective—to offer an ambitious, coherent, and workable exploration of content literacy. The Ninth Edition comes at a perfect time when there is an increased focus on adolescent literacy. With the point of view that students learn *with* texts, not necessarily *from* them, respected authors Rich and Jo Anne Vacca have written this book to be an active learning tool, complete with real-world examples and research-based practices. Thoroughly updated and revised to incorporate topics that touch on contemporary issues such as content standards, assessment, diversity, struggling readers, the No Child Left Behind Legislation, Reading First, and Reading Next, the book continues to provide a framework that focuses on the ability to use reading, writing, speaking, and listening processes to learn subject matter across the curriculum. Accessible and comprehensible, this text takes students through the entire reading process using simple, jargon-free terminology. The methodology presented develops a foundation that can be applied across disciplines, meeting the needs of all students.

A Letter to Readers from the Authors

To Our Readers:

We published the first edition of **Content Area Reading** in 1981. Some of you may be wondering -- with good reason-- why did we have to revise the same book nine times? Has education in general and content literacy in particular changed that much in nearly thirty years to warrant nine editions of the same book? While we have remained true to the original intent of the book throughout these years, our answer to these questions is an enthusiastic “Yes!”

We have witnessed dramatic changes over the past three decades in the way we think about literacy, what it means to be literate, and the ways we put literacy to use to learn, enjoy, imagine, explore the world, and interact with others. Some of the revisions that we have made from the eighth to ninth edition alone reflect the rapidly changing landscape of content literacy specifically and education generally:

- The renewed and hotly political debate over the role of *content knowledge* (the “what” of teaching) and *pedagogical knowledge* (the “how” of teaching);
- the development of highly qualified teachers;
- teaching, learning, and assessment in a standards-based curriculum;
- the role and responsibility of literacy coaches in today’s schools;
- the crisis in adolescent literacy across ability levels;
- the meaning and importance of culturally responsive instruction and literacy strategies for learners whose first language is other than English;
- the impact of assessment on instructional practices;
- the role of confidence, motivation, and engaged learning in literacy-related instructional practices;
- the ability to “work smart” in independent learning contexts;
- the meaning and application of “new literacies” in today’s classrooms.

Today, one of the hottest topics in education is *adolescent literacy*. Our book mainly emphasizes how adolescents use literacy to learn across the curriculum; how adolescents will approach reading with enthusiasm and confidence in their ability to make sense out of academic texts. While the focus of our book

has always been on instructional strategies, we underscore in this edition the ways that content area teachers can actively engage older students in learning with all kinds of texts, whether printed or digital in nature. Perhaps somewhere in the heavens there is a Greek god of reading who breathes into human beings an intense interest in the act of reading. Perhaps not. The reality of reading school-related texts for many adolescents is simply this: Many of today's older students, regardless of ability level, would rather have root canal surgery than engage enthusiastically in academic reading tasks. Yet we believe that teachers are in a strategic position to make a difference in the way their students approach reading and learn with texts. The passion to use reading to learn requires more than supernatural or divine inspiration. Enthusiastic readers in today's classrooms are made, not born with a fervor for reading and learning. And this is where the content area teacher will make a decided difference in the literate lives of adolescents.

We wish you the very best,
Richard and Jo Anne Vacca

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