

School-wide literacy programs—questions for discussion

Questions for All Teachers

- What are our literacy goals for the students at specific grade levels? For this school? To what extent are we accomplishing these goals? Where are we experiencing difficulties? (Each grade level can address this question.)
- Are we meeting the needs of all students, especially those identified as ELs, special education students, Title I, gifted, and so on? If not, any thoughts as to why?
- To what extent are students able to read, write, and communicate in discipline-specific and age-appropriate ways, across all grade levels, in preparation for the demands of college and the workplace?
- Are the materials we use adequate for helping us accomplish our goals? If not, what materials are needed? In what ways are we preparing students to use technology as a resource for learning?
- What assessment tools are used to inform instruction? Are they useful in planning lessons?
- In what ways do we involve families and the community in our literacy efforts? What improvements are needed?
- How can the school better support each of us as learners? What additional professional learning experiences would be useful?

Additional Questions for Content-Area Teachers Across Grade Levels

- To what extent are students in our classes able to address the literacy tasks (reading, writing, speaking, listening, representing) expected of them (e.g., lab-report writing in science classes, analyzing primary sources in social studies, translating a word problem into a figure and then into an algebraic expression in math class)?
- To what extent are we familiar with the literacy strengths and weaknesses of the students in our content-area classes?
- What assessment tools do we use to determine the literacy needs and strengths of the students in our content-area classes? To assess content knowledge and understanding?
- To what extent are we familiar with literacy strategies specific to each of our disciplines (e.g., sourcing and corroboration in a social studies class; analyzing word parts for Greek or Latin prefixes, roots, and suffixes in a biology class; analyzing multiple representations in a math class)?
- Are adequate professional learning experiences provided for us as teachers, experiences that assist us in integrating literacy in our content-area teaching? If not, what might be useful?

Figure 9.1: School-wide literacy programs—questions for discussion.