



The Deep Read: Reading For Understanding SFIG Newsletter

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Northern Essex Community College

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The Mission of *The Deep Read* is to disseminate the research, findings and passion of the Reading for Understanding SFIG, and to help improve student reading campus-wide.

SFIG Committee Members:

- **Trish Schade, Dev. Reading , SFIG Chair**
- **Donna Marquis, Dental Assisting**
- **Clare Thompson-Ostrander, Dev. Writing**
- **Linda Giampa, Reading Center Coordinator**
- **Paul Cavan, Criminal Justice**
- **Jillian Knowles, Math Department**
- **Laurie Sorota, Reading Center**
- **Marilyn McCarthy, Dev. Reading**
- **Margaret Pothier, Writing Center**
- **Ann Grandmaison, Electronic Services Librarian**
- **Elle Yarborough, English Department**
- **Bill Zannini, Business**
- **Judy Ulman, Dev. Reading**
- **Charlie Lagasse, NECC student**
- **Jareth Harkins, NECC student**



Supported by the Office of Faculty & Staff Development

NECC Faculty Attend Reading Apprenticeship Seminar

What is Reading Apprenticeship?

Reading Apprenticeship is a partnership of expertise between the teacher and students, drawing on what content area teachers know and do as skilled discipline-based readers and on learners' unique and often underestimated strengths. A Reading Apprenticeship classroom can be in any subject and has a focus on comprehension and meta-cognitive conversation, a climate of collaboration, and an emphasis on student independence. In June 2010, our team of NECC faculty members attended the Reading Apprenticeship Seminar in Oakland, CA. We interviewed our team to learn more about their experience.

"A student has commented to me that she appreciates the opportunity to express her thoughts or comments to me while reading the material..."

—Donna Marquis

Our NECC faculty Reading Apprenticeship Team:

- Paul Cavan, *Criminal Justice*
- Donna Marquis, *Dental Assisting*
- Marilyn McCarthy, *Dev. Reading*
- Bill Zannini, *Business*

The team members had varied goals for attending the RA Seminar:

BZ: I want to improve the writing of my business students and I believe that part of their problem is that they don't read; so, by teaching them how to be better readers should lead to better writing.

DM: In the health profession discipline that I teach, the amount of reading is extensive and science based. I was intrigued with the premise that RA strategies could support adult learners with increased engagement with the text and comprehension.

PC: Since writing and reading are such crucial skills in the criminal justice field, I thought trying out new academic strategies that have the potential to develop more effective readers would benefit our students and eventually, their



employers.

They all learned useful strategies for teaching their students to read more effectively:

BZ: Talk-to-text and think-aloud look like great tools to get students to carefully read something and visualize what they are reading, as well as connecting themselves to the text.

DM: A key strategy is to build confidence in student readers by fostering a student's ability to connect to new material via schema or knowledge they already possess.

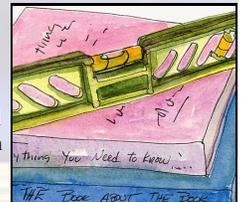
PC: Talk-to-text seemed to offer the best application for the Introduction to Criminal Justice course.

Now that they've learned the RA strategies, they have implemented them in their classrooms:

BZ: I am using these tools in my classroom as in-class activities and as homework assignments. The students are responding and they feel they are learning more about the topics being covered in class.

DM: I am pleased with the results so far. The reading log has given me quick insight into individual student's comprehension of the key points in the chapter, which allows me the opportunity to communicate with that student by responding to their thoughts and feelings on an on-going basis. It is like having a mini office hour!

PC: I have implemented Talk-to-text exercises on a weekly basis and used this strategy to prepare students for a written assignment. Comments by students and assessments of essay responses indicates that by slowing down a student's reading process, better comprehension and improved learning occurs.



Watercolor illustrations by Jana Bouc

What I Want Teachers to Know by NECC student, Jareth Harkins

What should teachers know about how I read and how I learn while I read? I learn visually. I also learn by hearing and following along while I listen. These are just a couple of things I want the teachers to know about the way I read.

One of the ways I learn is through visually seeing the words. As I read I like to follow along with my finger. This allows me to think about what I see so I can better understand the material. I can also make connections with the material. I also say and predict what is to come in what I am reading. A book with smaller chapters also helps me learn.

Another way that I learn while I read is to listen to books on audio or listen while someone reads the book out loud. This way I can comprehend more of the book and I am able to write about the material I heard. Books that have easier text in them also help me to comprehend a lot better than if I tried to read them on my own. One thing that teachers could help with is to read the text book in the class; then, have us finish reading while we are home. The one thing that could help me a lot is to have the publishing companies for our school text books have the text books available on audio CD's or tapes.

Margaret says:



Margaret Pothier,
Writing Center coordinator

What is something that stands out to you about your favorite book, in either a good or negative way? One of my favorite books is *Bel Canto*, by Ann Patchett. It is an exciting story with many elements in it, such as music, a setting in a foreign country, a diverse group of characters, and of course, villains and heroes, but they actually end up communicating with one another and the story takes unexpected turns. I admired the way the author wrote the story, using wonderful language to describe conversations and thoughts of the characters.

Where do you typically read? I read in a quiet spot when I have time to relax. The first thing I will do is grab a magazine or a catalogue and look through it, and then I am ready to read. I make time for reading by the pool in the summer or planning to read at the end of the day.

Did you always read often? Reading is one of my favorite things to do as an activity. I read books on my own as a child and then in high school and college, I read books that were assigned in classes. I looked forward to having the time to read books of my own choice when I was not a student.

Is there an assigned book that has made an impact on you? I belong to a book club that was organized in my neighborhood in Durham, NH. Once a month a group of us get together and we discuss the same book that we read the past month. Then we decide on a new book for the next month. I would never choose some of the books that I've read if someone did not recommend something new and different from what I typically read. I have had the opportunity to read many genres because of participating in a reading group.

What type of reading strategy is something you have learned at Northern Essex and used in other classes? I learned about talk-to-text and use this activity in Basic Writing classes. Writing and reading can't stand alone. You can't do one without the other, and need to understand pieces of reading and understanding in order to put thoughts down on paper.

Is there anything else you can share with us about reading? Reading doesn't have to be a chore if you enjoy the topic. Reading informs you and opens up a new world and perspective when you read even a little bit.



Donna Marquis says...

Reading Side-by-Side:

Charlie says:



Charlie Lagasse,
NECC Liberal Arts student

What is something that stands out to you about your favorite book, in either a good or negative way? There are many things that stand out for me in the book, *The Blind Side*, but one major thing is how a family brings this kid that they know nothing about into their family. The family teaches him about values as a person and as a student. I read the book for enjoyment. After I saw the movie, I wanted to read the book.

Where do you typically read? I typically read anywhere. I don't have a preference.

Did you always read often? I definitely read more because I'm in college. I have to read all the time for my classes and I feel like I'm reading more at home now, too.

Is there an assigned book that has made an impact on you? I read by choice and by assigned work. I like to read and I feel like it is important to read for school also. In my College Reading class, we had to read the book, *The Glass Castle*, by Jeannette Walls. It is a story about how the author grew up with an alcoholic father and a mother with mental health issues. This story impacted me by showing me the power of hope and the thought of never giving up.

What type of reading strategy is something you have learned at Northern Essex and used in other classes? In my College Reading class, I learned about talk-to-text. This process is about thinking about what you read as you read it. It is asking yourself questions about what you are reading while you are reading it.

