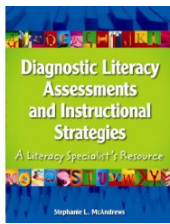


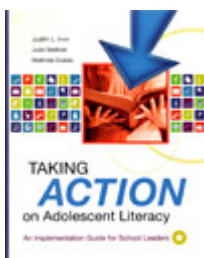
## Professional Texts Using Data to Inform Instruction



*Diagnostic Literacy Assessments and Instructional Strategies: A Literacy Specialist's Resource* by Stephanie L. McAndrews (International Reading Association, Newark, DE, 2008)

This comprehensive resource offers guidance to K-8 literacy specialists and classroom teachers for making informed assessment and instructional decisions. It begins with a broad but concise overview of literacy assessment and evaluation. Stephanie McAndrews then explains, in detail, nine important phases of decision making for literacy assessments and instruction. She emphasizes that the diagnostic literacy instruction she advocates is not separate from instruction but is integrated throughout instruction. Sample diagnostic assessments are offered for language, reading, and writing development. Directions for administering these assessments are presented along with suggestions for analyzing and using the resulting data to develop instructional objectives. Research-based strategies that can be used for instruction with a range of developmental levels are supplied for each literacy process assessed.

Assessments related to informational text reading and writing include: "Comprehension Retelling and Questioning Assessment for Expository Text," "Nonfiction Layout and Text Features Assessment," "Guided Reading Checklist," and the "Writing Composition Assessment Summary." A wide variety of strategies that would be especially beneficial for helping students read and write informational texts are shared in the following categories: vocabulary development; concept development; expository structure comprehension; reading and listening comprehension, and expository and persuasive writing.

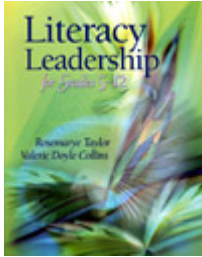


*Taking Action on Adolescent Literacy: An Implementation Guide for School Leaders*, by Judith L. Irvin, Julie Meltzer, and Melinda Dukes (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Alexandria, VA, 2007)

*Taking Action on Adolescent Literacy* is about turning the vision of a literacy-rich school into reality by creating a middle or high school that "successfully develops the academic literacy habits and skills of all students." Julie Meltzer and Melinda Dukes offer a Leadership Model for Improving Adolescent Literacy that includes five essential action steps. An entire chapter is devoted to the third action step, use data to make decisions. They show how school leaders can establish a culture of continuous improvement through the appropriate use of data. There are guidelines for selecting literacy data sources, disaggregating data, and using it to inform instruction across the content areas and to place students into suitable intervention programs. Additional suggestions for school leaders include ways to set up effective structures, policies, and systems for using

data. A vignette is supplied to describe how this action step was successfully implemented in one school.

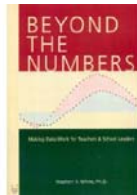
---



*Literacy Leadership for Grades 5–12* by Rosemarye Taylor and Valerie Doyle Collins (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Alexandria, VA, 2003)

Authors Rosemarye Taylor and Valerie Doyle Collins urge leaders to commit themselves to literacy leadership. They outline a system of “fail-safe literacy” designed to ensure that all students will become joyful, independent readers and writers. The book is filled with strategies for classroom approaches and applications, presenting detailed action plans for middle and high school principals, administrators, and teachers. The chapter entitled “Using Data to Design a System of Literacy” examines four important steps related to data: identifying the meaningful data and its sources, gathering and analyzing it, identifying and prioritizing students and groups of students for literacy outreach, and also targeting teachers and groups of teachers for literacy coaching. This discussion on using data is accompanied by models, templates, and a wealth of suggestions for conducting a thorough study of a school’s data to inform planning for literacy learning. To-the-point advice follows on how to use the data to align curriculum, instruction, learning tools, and assessment.

---



*Beyond the Numbers: Making Data Work for Teachers and School Leaders* by Stephen White (Lead + Learn Press, Englewood, CO, 2005.)

How can we best use data to inform instruction, design instruction, and respond to student needs? Beginning with an explanation of what he calls the debilitating effects of the “rearview-mirror effect” or planning the future on the basis of events past, Stephen White offers a comprehensive reference guide for teachers and school leaders who want to make effective data-driven decision making a reality. Numerous case studies from a variety of schools and districts are used to illustrate five key principles of data analysis. White’s emphasis on the important role of collaboration and suggestions for how to build it into every step of data management is particularly valuable. He recommends that every teacher serve on a data team that routinely examines and discusses student work along with the effect of any strategies and programs implemented. An entire chapter is devoted to showing how these data teams can act as “canaries in the coal mine,” taking collective responsibility for student achievement and making timely adjustments to address student needs. He challenges educators to get actively involved and shows them how to look at data in ways that will make it “come alive with insights and understandings that empower teachers and improve student achievement.” Multiple appendices provide a scoring matrix and various templates for analysis of data, answers to common questions about data analysis, a data plan road map, and a glossary of acronyms used in the text.

---

The next three professional texts, featured in booklists for previous webcasts in this series, also contain ideas and tools for using various kinds of assessment data to plan for targeted instruction and increase student learning. In the descriptions below, specific references to the topic of assessment and data are boldfaced.



*Better Answers: Written Performance That Looks Good and Sounds Smart*, by Ardith Davis Cole, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Portland, ME: Stenhouse, 2009)

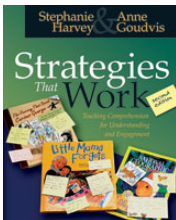
In *Better Answers*, Ardith Davis Cole presents a five-step protocol for producing effective written-response answers that can be used across the curriculum. Through vignettes and suggested activities, Cole shows how to use a scaffolded instructional framework to help students "look good and sound smart." Topics include recognizing thick questions, which call for an in-depth response, and thin questions, which elicit a brief response. Cole also suggests that students make an "answer sandwich"—a graphic tool that helps students remember to restate the question, provide a gist answer, give evidence for the answer, and refer to the question again for a concluding statement. Extensive appendices offer additional lesson plans, sample responses, **assessment tools**, and resources for high-interest stories, essays, and articles.

**A chapter on constructive assessment recommends "data driven conferring" with students. It also explains how to use the rubrics and spreadsheets provided to monitor individual and group assessment data to inform data-driven decision making.**

The new edition has been reorganized making it even easier to use. Lessons have been added specifically addressing self-based and text-based responses. A CD is also included featuring everything needed to teach the Better Answers protocol: lesson plans, charts, visuals, classroom PowerPoint slides and more. Released in mid-January, the second edition is currently available online at: <http://www.stenhouse.com/0748.asp?r=n154>

---

*Strategies That Work: Comprehension for Understanding and Engagement* by Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers, 2007)



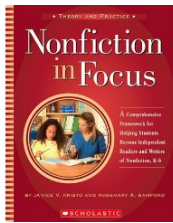
In this substantially revised edition of their popular resource, Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis offer several new chapters plus twenty comprehension lessons drawn from actual classrooms. A handy, expanded table of contents highlights these additions. The importance of engagement and activating background knowledge are stressed throughout all the strategies described. **Each of the chapters on specific strategy lessons concludes with a section**

entitled "Teaching with the End in Mind: Assessing What We've Taught." The guidelines for assessing use of the strategies are followed by suggestions for differentiation.

The link between the strategy of determining importance and the genre of nonfiction is explored in depth. Explicit techniques for helping students distill the essence of a text by discriminating between key topics and supporting details are shared through numerous examples.

An entire section is devoted to "Comprehension Across the Curriculum." This section features a chapter entitled "The Genre of Test Reading" that is filled with tips for building good readers and test takers all year long, including ways to increase reading stamina and a discussion of the benefits of flooding the room with nonfiction. Using a sample informational passage and its accompanying test questions, the authors provide a detailed example of how they would conduct a test reading mini-lesson. Detailed sidebars and annotations show how they would think through and approach the test themselves.

Appendices provide extensive ideas for nonfiction and fiction reading with annotated lists of great books for teaching content across the curriculum along with suggestions.



*Nonfiction in Focus: A Comprehensive Framework for Helping Students Become Independent Readers and Writers of Nonfiction, K—6* by Janice Kristo and Rosemary Bamford (New York: Scholastic, 2004)

Janice Kristo and Rosemary Bamford offer a comprehensive framework for the teaching of nonfiction reading and writing.

Organized by levels of scaffolding, detailed examples show how each instructional method in the framework can be used at various grade levels. Particularly useful are the extended transcripts of model lessons using teacher think alouds with instructional read alouds. Starting with the first chapter entitled "What's All the Fuss About Nonfiction?" the entire text is brimming with clear guides for understanding how non-fiction works. There is a thorough discussion of the genre and how to create text sets and mentor sets. Helpful charts explain features for determining accuracy, organizational structures, style of writing, access features, and visual information. A wide array of before, during, and after reading and writing strategies are presented.

The guidelines for an inquiry project which requires students to conduct research and create their own nonfiction book includes a sample **rubric that incorporates both student and teacher assessment**.

The appendices contain a variety of tools, including the "**Student Assessment Checklist: Types and Features of Nonfiction.**" Curriculum planners will find the "**Checklist for Designing a K-6 Curriculum Based on Types and Features of Nonfiction**" helpful in examining and developing curriculum for informational text reading and writing.