## Literacy Best Practices Assignment

Purpose & Overview

This assignment sought to provide prospective secondary teachers (PSTs) with an understanding of literacy best practices as per the Content Literacy Practices Assessment (CLPA). PSTs used the CLPA to: (1) observe a teacher and document his/her use of literacy best practices, (2) interview the teacher regarding his/her frequency and proficiency with each literacy best practice, and (3) evaluate the teacher's strengths and weaknesses with regard to literacy best practices.
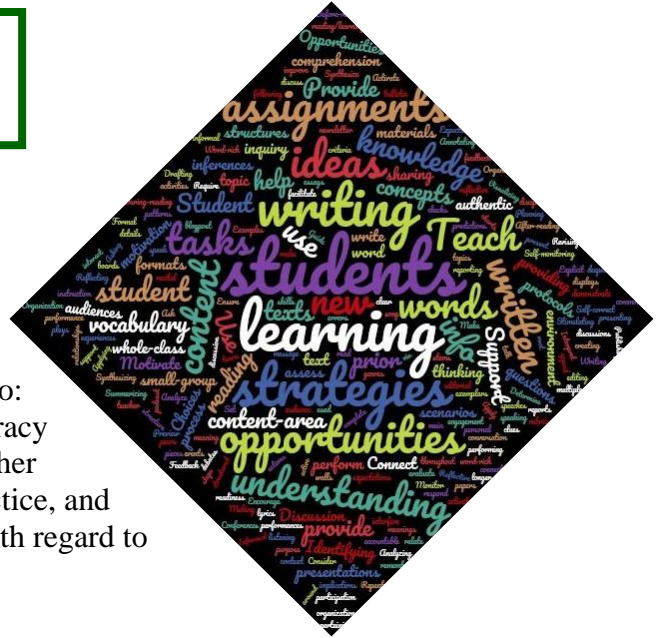
CLPA Overview

The CLPA includes 18 best practices which are organized into five categories.

Categories	Best Practices
Reading Comprehension	provision of impactful instruction before, during, and after reading
Vocabulary	word-rich environment, explicit instruction, repeated use of words
Writing	formal and informal writing, process writing, and motivational techniques
Speaking, Listening, & Presenting	structured discussions and presentations
Thinking & Metacognition	reflection, inquiry, and self-monitoring

CLPA Examples

1. Before-reading/learning strategies: Teach and provide opportunities for students to use strategies before reading/learning to support their readiness to read and learn:

- Activating prior knowledge
- Setting a purpose
- Previewing or discussing text structure and/or organization

2. Informal writing tasks: Support the learning of content with informal writing tasks:

- Before learning to assess or activate prior knowledge.
- During learning to deepen students' understanding of text or concepts.
- After learning to assess students' learning/understanding.

Excerpts from CLPA Self-Evaluation

1. Before-reading/learning strategies:

- **Evidence**. On the first day, I asked students to list what they already knew about European exploration and I reviewed the vocabulary and background necessary for understanding the expository text. On the second day, I asked students to use prior knowledge to predict ideas to be encountered in the expository text. (i.e. Based on what we know about the historical context, what images would we expect to find in their artwork?). Then, I helped students set a purpose for reading (e.g., identify types of images, identify examples of each type), and discussed the organization of the text.
- **Comments**. I consistently use before-reading/learning strategies regardless of the type of text to be read/viewed (e.g., print, digital, audio-visual). I believe these strategies, which many teachers skip, are vital to learning because they help students clarify expectations and connect new info to what they already know.

2. Informal writing tasks:

- **Evidence**. Students did informal writing tasks before, during, and after reading/learning on both days. On the first day, they (before) listed what they knew about exploration, (during) used the Cornell strategy to take notes, and (after) summarized key points and created a graphic organizer. On the second day, students: (before) listed the types of images they expected to find, (during) filled out charts while reading, and (after) created a framework with image types and examples.
- **Comments**. Writing has long been a part of my teaching. My favorite WTL strategies are graphic organizers, inquiry charts, and learning logs. I love using writing to support learning and engagement with texts. Reading/learning without writing is like peanut butter without jelly. It just doesn't work!