

## **Innovations in Reading Instruction**

### ***New Publisher-Developed Reading Curricula for Texas***

Over the past three years, Texas educators and policy makers have worked with national experts and publishers to create Proclamation 2010, a long-awaited reading curriculum for Texas students. This curriculum – which is now awaiting final funding approval from the state legislature – will arrive in Texas public schools in the fall of 2010.

Proclamation 2010 will replace reading curriculum that is 10 years old and based upon the previous generation of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The curriculum, which will be fully aligned with updated TEKS, will bring new instructional strategies and materials to the classroom. Reading curriculum has changed significantly in this decade due to recent research, federal mandates for scientifically based reading instruction, and innovations in the school publishing industry. New curricula are required to include the latest research findings in reading instruction and meet the needs of a changing population in Texas schools.

***Reading is not merely an important subject in today's schools. It is the most important subject and the foundation for all future learning in science, math, and social studies. According to the National Institute for Literacy, students who are not reading by the end of third grade risk failure in school.***

#### ***What Works in Reading Instruction?***

In 2000, researchers at the National Reading Panel (NRP) presented their findings and concluded that the systematic, focused teaching of five main elements – phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension – is essential for an effective reading program. An effective program should combine systematic instruction in specific word and sound skills with frequent practice of reading skills. Research has also identified the instructional techniques that lead to observable, replicable, positive results as children work to become fluent readers. The last generation of reading programs was lacking in phonemic awareness and explicit fluency instruction, which according to NRP directly affects student comprehension. In addition, the previous generation of reading programs focused on only one level of student ability and was lacking in support for teachers working with students of many ability levels. Today's programs provide support for multiple resources for students at various ability levels as well as a growing English learner population.

#### ***Publisher-Developed Reading Programs for Texas***

As part of Proclamation 2010, publishers have designed innovative curricula to help all Texas children become successful readers. These programs have the following components and materials:

- A strong base of independent scientific research
- Explicit phonics instruction with direct application in connected text
- Direct reading instruction
- Reading strategies that support literary and informational texts
- Strategies designed to build phonemic awareness
- Fluency practice
- Vocabulary instruction

- Explicit comprehension instruction
- Differentiated instruction for a variety of learners
- Systematic intervention strategies
- Language arts components
- Assessment tools and progress monitoring to drive instruction

### ***Use of New Technologies & Learning Materials***

Technology and digital content play increasingly important roles in publisher-developed reading programs. Programs often include many of the following components:

- Pupil and teacher editions online
- Dedicated websites to support the student textbook through practice exercises, games, and other learning activities
- Electronic lessons plans correlated to state standards
- Links to digital support materials
- Online formative assessment with instructional support
- Standalone DVDs, CDs, audio files
- Online tutoring and test bank
- Teacher presentation
- Professional development support and videos

### ***Professional Development***

Publisher-developed programs include extensive resources to support the work of teachers and to enhance the knowledge of reading instruction. The programs include resources that help the teacher deliver the program to a wide variety of learners. The resources include:

- Resources that support teachers' efforts at differentiating the curricula so that every student can be successful
- Lessons on how to apply the latest research in exemplary reading instruction
- Professional development built directly into the teacher edition
- Online training opportunities to allow teachers to view other teachers in action
- Interactive websites for teachers to communicate and learn about improvements and successful teaching strategies

### ***Additional Support for Teachers***

- Teacher's editions, lesson plans, subject-area background material with embedded professional development, planning tools, and pacing charts
- Teacher productivity tools such as workbooks for practice and differentiation, study guides, hands-on activities, test bank, primary source readings, preview materials with practice quizzes and tests, and lab manuals (depending on the course)