

"A must-read for transformative action in teacher-scholars of all academic disciplines,  
this book will change how you think about your content area—and how you teach it!"  
—Wendy Ostroff, PhD, Associate Professor of Cognitive and  
Developmental Science, Sonoma State University

# Disciplinary Literacy

*in Action*

HOW TO CREATE AND SUSTAIN A  
SCHOOL-WIDE CULTURE OF DEEP READING,  
WRITING, AND THINKING

RELEAH COSSETT LENT | MARSHA MCCRACKEN VOIGT



# Thank you

FOR YOUR  
INTEREST IN  
CORWIN

Please enjoy this complimentary excerpt from  
*Disciplinary Literacy in Action* by ReLeah Cossett  
Lent and Marsha McCracken Voigt.

[LEARN MORE](#) about this title, including Features,  
Table of Contents and Reviews.

**Figure 3.1**

## **Try This: Independent Disciplinary Reading**

<b>Instead of . . .</b>	<b>Try . . .</b>
Grading independent reading	Checking in with students as they are reading or read over the comments they have written in their reading logs as you walk around the room
Giving worksheets or pop quizzes related to independent reading	Allowing students to share what they are reading with their learning partner or in small groups
Using lexiles to rate books or guide students' reading	Providing a wide range of texts from various genres and helping students learn how to choose texts based on interest and ability
Mandating whole-class texts without consideration of individual abilities	Utilizing different texts for individual or small group reading as well as in book clubs or inquiry circles
Assigning questions or study guides that encourage superficial or fake reading	Providing opportunities for relevant discussions or written responses with authentic audiences.

### **CREATING A SCHOOLWIDE CULTURE OF INDEPENDENT READING**

While independent reading within classrooms has its place, many schools also create schoolwide reading initiatives that encourage students to increase their volume and range of content area reading. Following are some initiatives that we have seen successfully implemented in schools, elementary through high:

- Departments or grade levels are asked once a month to provide a digital or print-based text for all students (and often parents) to read and discuss.

- Schools sponsor a “One Community, One Read” book choice from various content areas to encourage community participation and expand disciplinary learning.
- Student book club members do book-talks on texts from different disciplines or create blogs highlighting various texts. In Franklin County High School, students in the book club are making posters of books from the Georgia Peach Teen Books to display around the school. The student body will vote on their favorite book at the end of the year.
- Students are required to create a Goodreads.com account and post to it on regular intervals.
- Teachers in various disciplines lead the school’s student book club one period a month to encourage reading of content texts (see a description of such a club on page 230).
- Library information teachers create author or “expert” events through Skype or in person.
- Teachers or leadership teams write grants to stock classroom libraries.

## For the Curious

### WHAT IS THE MIGHTY SMACKDOWN?

During one of our workshops when ReLeah was carrying on about books, Brad Smilanich, assistant principal at Bellerose Composite High School, told us about an amazing blog that features a tournament-style reading competition. We were intrigued, to say the least, and went to the website right away. What we discovered was one of the liveliest blogs about books for students that we had seen in a long time. The founder, English teacher Dia Macbeth, created a way to “read a few books, learn about many titles and have fun doing it.” In her introduction she explains that the tournament-style reading of the Mighty Smackdown means that in the first round each participant reads two books, discusses both in a blog post, and then selects one book that will move on to the next round. Teachers are asked to commit to one round but most, if not all, continue on. What happens then? “We will read to the end when we will have only one book left standing!” You simply must take a look at this: <http://mightysmackdown.blogspot.ca/>.

