

Preface

Gayle Gregory and Lin Kuzmich have teamed together again to write a book to help teachers of literacy skills face the realities of inclusive classrooms in an atmosphere of high accountability.

High-stakes testing in literacy and other areas, and initiatives to close the achievement gap for diverse learners, impact every aspect of teaching and learning today. Teachers have so many things coming at them at once. We wanted to create a book that sorted through the research to identify the tools, curricula, and strategies that had the best chance of accelerating literacy learning for elementary students.

We hope this book helps teachers focus on the following:

- What to teach in literacy
- Which strategies help us to accelerate literacy acquisition
- How to meet the needs of diverse learners
- How to plan strategically
- How to deepen thinking
- How to think about and select strategies diagnostically

We are enthralled by the possibilities of the twenty-first century and daunted by the enormity of its challenges at the same time. How can we prepare literate students to be successful in a world about which we can only speculate and imagine? “Educators today feel both the excitement of this emerging world and the challenge of preparing young people to live productively with it” (Bruce, 2003, p. 6).

We believe that it takes more than a basic ability to read, write, speak, and listen to be successful in this century. Competency in literacy includes using the tools of the twenty-first century and learning about new ones as they are invented. Such competency also includes solving problems, thinking about the information and knowledge we encounter, and using it in a purposeful way.

The future belongs to those of our students who attain the empowering level of literacy to reinvent themselves over a lifetime. We hope this book will be a helpful guide for new and veteran teachers planning

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instruction in elementary grades, for principals and instructional leaders who supervise and plan for the growth of all learners, for support personnel who assist unique learners, and for all others who care about the literacy levels and future success of all students in our complex world.