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This is a position statement of the Wisconsin State Reading Association

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Middle Level Literacy



The Wisconsin State Reading Association believes that each student in the middle grades has a right to receive high-quality literacy instruction that has been designed specifically to meet the unique needs and interests of middle level learners. Literacy is a tool that spans disciplines, is integrated into all content areas, and addresses diversity. High-quality middle level literacy instruction is engaging, relevant, offers opportunities for choice, collaboration, inquiry and discourse, and incorporates the five strands of literacy which include reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing.

Literate adolescents:

- Read a wide variety of genres and text structures to construct meaning, using print and non-print material in traditional genres and multi-modal virtual environments.
- Develop habits of mind that support self-motivation, self-regulation, and goal setting.
- Recognize that literacy is more than just decoding and constructing text, but also includes analysis, synthesis, and taking action. Perceptions are formed based on each student's unique combination of prior knowledge and experiences.
- Notice their own metacognitive processes and recognize how their thoughts influence their interactions with and response to a text.
- Respond to text both orally and in written form in a variety of communities, in various settings (ie. social media, book clubs, class discussions, citing text evidence, etc.).
- Interact with text in discipline-specific ways across all subject areas.
- Communicate thoughts and ideas effectively in written, visual, and oral formats.
- Listen entirely and engage constructively when using academic discourse.

Effective teachers, schools, and districts:

- Develop a culture of literacy and inquiry that supports wide reading.
- Create a multi-level system of support to literacy across all grade and content levels.
- Generate student-centered activities which accommodate the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional needs of the young adolescent.
- Deliver disciplinary literacy instruction which builds meaning and encourages students to engage in civic and social action.
- Offer instruction and learning experiences with multi-modal texts.
- Engage students in authentic written, oral, and visual communication opportunities.
- Evaluate students using balanced assessments that highlight both strengths and needs.
- Use assessments to develop differentiated lessons and individual instruction.
- Instruct students in the use of research skills to access information from a variety of sources to assess and select quality resource information.
- Utilize culturally relevant materials and instructional methods.
- Furnish an abundance of resources and materials to support all students, which includes, but is not limited to, support staff, professional development, texts, and technology.