Chapter 9
Bye-Bye Basal:
Multimodal Texts in the Classroom

Jill Tussey
Buena Vista University, USA

Leslie Haas
Buena Vista University, USA

Brittany Garling
Buena Vista University, USA

ABSTRACT

Due to instructional limitations embedded within basal reading programs, the use of text sets offers teachers alternative instructional resources. Text sets can be utilized in all subject areas to increase exposure to a variety of digital and print literacy resources. Multimodal literacy as a form of blended learning, incorporates traditional texts with digital opportunities, allowing learners to connect, experience, and understand literacy through a plethora of engaging channels. Digital tools and digital literacy allow students to connect with current information in an engaging manner while increasing literacy skills. The end goal of incorporating digital components into text sets is to meet the academic needs of all students.

INTRODUCTION

Basal or core reading programs (CRP) typically consist of reading anthologies, assessments, and a variety of support materials which may include leveled readers, anchor charts, and workbooks (Dewitz & Jones, 2013). CRPs have continued to gain popularity in US elementary schools during the last two decades marketed as research-based literacy tools meeting compliance regulations mandated by state and federal legislation (Dewitz & Jones, 2013; Reutzel, Child, Jones, & Clark, 2014). While many districts may consider consistent resources, like CRPs, across campuses beneficial, teachers often find it necessary to supplement CPRs to meet a variety of student needs. Primarily developed based on education trends, market demands, and research findings, these types of resources can be expensive, stagnant, and

cumbersome while nullifying teachers' professional expertise and autonomy to provide support based on individual classroom student populations. However, the importance of providing students with a variety of engaging literacy materials cannot be dismissed.

Miller (2010) states "it is only through volumes and volumes of reading that many students internalize the comprehension skills and gain the reading experience they must acquire for academic success." With this quote as a catalyst for thinking about literacy opportunities, it becomes important to ensure students are provided with a variety of literacy experiences. According to the International Literacy Association (n.d.), multimodal texts are those designed to incorporate "various modes (language, images, sounds) and media to communicate or teach information. For example, a story found online about Mayan civilization might include text, photos, and videos taken while in space." Multimodal text sets are literacy resources developed with student learning levels, interests, engagement, and diversity in mind. Additionally, multimodal text sets provide opportunities to read widely and to experience literacy in a variety of forms. Reading widely has been a topic of many research studies and has shown student improvement in the areas of schema, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and writing (Krashen, 2004; Miller, 2010).

BLENDED LEARNING

Blended learning incorporates an instructional shift centered on classroom integration of traditional and online learning (International Literacy Association, n.d.; Maxwell, 2016; Tucker, 2013), and incorporates resources that are often associated with CRPs such as leveled books, and resources often associated with multimodal texts related to image, language, and sound. Technology access then becomes an opportunity for personalization across modalities, by allowing students to access a variety of online resources, rather than singular access to traditional instructional aids found imbedded in CRP teaching and learning resources (International Association for K-12 Online Learning, 2016; Maxwell, 2016; Tucker, 2013). These learning opportunities across content areas allow students to experience elements of control over the time, place, and path within integrated learning environments. Additionally, blended learning incorporates an array of literacy modes such as books, comics, games, music, newspapers, photos, podcasts, and videos providing teachers with further insight into culturally and linguistically responsive instruction. Viewed through the lens of individualized, differentiated, and personalized instruction, both digital and non-digital resources provide opportunities to meet the needs of all learners by allowing for a variety of choice, perspective and modality. While personalization begins with the learner and differentiation and individualization begin with the teacher, all three require educators to provide learning opportunities based on individual student needs and will be discussed in the following section.

INDIVIDUALIZATION, DIFFERENTIATION, AND PERSONALIZATION

According to a draft of the United States Department of Education's (USDE) Office of Educational Technology (OET), "Individualization refers to instruction that is paced to the learning needs of different learners. Learning goals are the same for all students, but students can progress through the material at different speeds according to their learning needs" (2010, p. 12). This approach supports students who may learn and process information at different rates, while continuing to hold them to the high academic goals and standards (Basye, 2018). Teacher selected tools and resources used to support individuals within

Related Content

Students' Perceptions of Perseverance in Online Learning Through the Flipped Classroom Model: A Case Study in a Physics Course

Thien Van Ngo (2022). *International Journal of Online Pedagogy and Course Design (pp. 1-17).*

www.irma-international.org/article/students-perceptions-of-perseverance-in-online-learning-through-the-flipped-classroom-model/311439

Transforming the Future of Learning: People, Positivity, and Pluralism (and Even the Planet)

Rosalyn H. Shute (2015). *Transforming the Future of Learning with Educational Research (pp. 314-324).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/transforming-the-future-of-learning/124389

A Pedagogical Review of Programming Education Research: What Have We Learned

Belle Selene Xia (2017). *International Journal of Online Pedagogy and Course Design (pp. 33-42).*

www.irma-international.org/article/a-pedagogical-review-of-programming-education-research/164972

Instructional Design, Development, and Context Expertise: A Model for "Cross Cultural" Collaboration

Cathy Gunnand Beth Cavallari (2007). *Instructional Design: Case Studies in Communities of Practice (pp. 127-151).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/instructional-design-development-context-expertise/23950

Learning Activities Model

Richard Caladine (2008). *Encyclopedia of Information Technology Curriculum Integration (pp. 503-510).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/learning-activities-model/16754