

1 Reconnecting Reading and Writing: Introduction and Overview

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The co-editors of this book come to reading and writing from different directions.* One of us is a professional faculty librarian, while the other is a faculty member with a joint appointment in a writing program and a linguistics department. Our diverse perspectives find common ground in the view that reading and writing have been too much and too long separated in theory and in practice. This introduction begins with some key definitions and distinctions that provide the basis for the whole book, and includes a brief discussion of the ways reading has been separated from writing. The need to reconnect them emerges from this discussion, from a review of the impact of new technologies on all aspects of students' reading and writing, and even more clearly from an array of findings on the status of undergraduate reading abilities. Leading professional organizations in these disciplines also see the separation and need for reconnection, and their perspective appears in policy statements from various organizations working on literacy that are discussed here and referred to throughout this book.

In addition, we provide a brief overview of the chapters that look deeper at issues surrounding the need to reconnect reading and writing. The chapters in Part I review literature in this area and work done throughout the world on reconnecting reading. These chapters provide two different perspectives on the need to reconnect reading and writing: The former is an historical review of studies addressed this

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topic. The latter looks at how other countries and educational systems see the relationship of reading and writing. Part II focuses on classrooms and students, presenting “Monday morning” approaches to connecting reading and writing in first year writing and writing across the curriculum, and presents successful practices with basic writers and students who are non-native speakers of English. It also explores the impact of the new Common Core Standards in K–12 education that will shape the experiences of incoming college students in the foreseeable future. Part III explores contexts and resources for reconnecting reading and writing, such as textbooks, libraries, and digital environments. We are confident that reconnecting reading and writing helps us all improve students’ performance, success in college, and their personal and professional lives.

READING ABILITIES AT ENTRY AND GRADUATION

Studies at both the beginning and end of students’ work in college support the need for more attention to reading, not only in conjunction with writing but also across all disciplines. There have been various approaches to measuring students’ reading abilities, including standardized multiple choice timed tests, un-timed tests, open-ended instruments, surveys and other quantitative and qualitative strategies. The picture of college students’ reading performance using standardized measures at entry to higher education and at graduation is not encouraging.

Reading at Entry: The ACT Reading Test

The ACT Reading test is a direct timed test of reading of four passages of prose, followed by multiple choice questions, measuring RSVP elements of text (relationships, richness, structure, style, vocabulary, and purpose). A 2006 ACT study followed 563,000 students who took the exam over three years to measure their college success (defined as a 2.0 GPA and retention to the second year, in addition to other factors). Findings show that about 51% of this large cohort of students hit ACT’s benchmark score of 21 on the test and were successful in college by its minimal definition (American, 2006). While there are some reasons to be cautious in drawing conclusions about the research, the ACT findings suggest that many students beginning post-secondary

education do not have the reading skills needed to be successful in college or in their lives, in their work, or as citizens. Because first year writing is a common, shared experience, and because it is meant to help students develop key abilities they will need to succeed in other courses, it is surely a good place to work on reading in conjunction with writing. Writing teachers can help students become better writers and better readers through reconnecting reading and writing.

*Reading at Graduation: Pew National Survey
of America's College Students*

Most college faculty members like to think that college improves students' reading ability, so that when they graduate, they are all expert readers, or at least stronger readers than they were at admission. However, another 2006 study done by the Pew Charitable Trusts organization shows that many students do not achieve this desirable outcome. The Pew study entailed a direct test of "Prose and Document" literacy, using an approach like that of the Adult Literacy and Life Skills study (discussed later in this book). The Pew study sampled "1827 graduating students at 80 randomly selected 2-year and 4-year colleges and universities (68 public and 12 private) from across the United States" (Pew, 2006, p. 4). The survey was conducted by stratified random sample in two stages—first to choose institutions and the second to choose students (Pew, 2006, p. 66). The findings show that fewer than half of college students studied in this random sample attain scores at the "proficient" level on "Prose and Document" literacy (Pew, 2006, p. 19).

Taken together, the ACT and Pew studies give us a picture of student literacy skills and the impact of college on their literacy development in the United States. The levels of literacy measured are based on readings of brief passages of mostly non-fiction prose on paper, revealing nothing of deeper reading ability with extended passages, with fiction and other types of writing, or with digital texts and documents of various kinds. Common sense suggests that students performing poorly on these rather reductionist tests of reading ability are likely to do even worse on more in-depth assessments of their understanding of more complex reading. However, the consistency between these studies shows a pattern of surprisingly poor results. Moreover, the work of the Citation Project—an on-going, multi-university study of students' use of sources in research writing—provides just this kind of evidence,

showing that students have difficulty reading critically in order to use source materials appropriately, and will benefit from reconnecting reading and writing (Howard, Rodrigue, & Serviss, 2010).

DEFINITIONS

Before exploring the need to reconnect reading and writing, it is important to establish definitions of these abilities (and some others) to which they are often related in both theory and in practice. Reading, writing, “new” literacies, multiliteracies, and information literacy are sometimes used distinctly and sometimes interchangeably, so distinguishing among them with clear definitions is an essential first step.

Reading

Reading has been held under the magnifying glasses of many scholars. Some researchers have argued that reading is a solitary act; in fact, psychologist Philip Gough (1995) described reading as “one of the most unsocial things which people do,” going so far as to insist that calling reading a social act “distorts our ordinary language” (p. 81). Others oppose this stance, contending that reading is a socio-cognitive act that is inextricably linked to listening, speaking, and interacting with others, and that it cannot be separated from “using language to think about and act on the world” (Gee, 2001, p. 714). Still other scholars confirm these intellectual connections from a psycholinguistic standpoint. Snow, Burns, and Griffin (1998) report that “many basic cognitive processes are shared during reading and listening. Syntactic and inferential processes . . . play a role in both” (p. 64). Research on first year reading and writing practices demonstrates an overlap in the cognitive processes involved in reading and listening, but also in reading and writing (Jolliffe, 2007).

Many researchers maintain that reading—critical reading—involves an understanding and interpretation of texts, and cannot be divorced from societal input. Freire and Shor (1987) stress that it is not enough to simply repeat words on a page; for “true reading” to take place, the reader must try to place the meaning in “some form of social context” (as cited in Roberts, 2005, p. 35). In this volume, we explore reading conducted primarily in post-secondary academic

environments that particularly rely on *critical reading* skills, including writing and writing across the curriculum classes.

When considering the reading practices of all individuals, it is important to distinguish reading-to-write/learn from general reading, as the former mandates a more critical approach. Flower (1990) notes that the process of reading-to-write guides the way readers interact with a text, forcing them to “manipulate . . . and transform” the information for their own needs (p. 6). Kintsch (1998) elaborates, stating, “When reading to learn or to integrate, reader/writers construct elaborate models of the text structure and situation, enabling them to select information from the source text, evaluate it, and use it for writing purposes” (as cited in Delaney, 2008, p. 141).

There is an assumption in education that “if we just provide adequate basic skills, from that point forward kids with adequate background knowledge will be able to read anything successfully” (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008, p. 41). Therefore, for many students, reading instruction that focuses specifically on such issues as vocabulary development, recognizing main ideas and details, drawing inferences, and so on, ends in elementary school. However, a number of studies point to a decrease in reading competence among adolescents in the United States. For example, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (2009) shows that high school seniors perform lower in reading than seniors in 1998; similarly, anecdotal reports by professors tell a similar tale as direct measures of entering college students being unprepared to meet reading expectations. Study results and tales of faculty woe indicate clearly the need for continued reading instruction in high school, in the first year of college, and across the curriculum.

The foregoing discussion makes clear the fundamental reasons why many students lack the reading skills they need to be successful in school and in their personal and professional lives. Their reading difficulty arises in part from a lack of instruction and motivation. It also arises from the idea that reading is a fundamental skill taught early in school, usually in first grade, and that little or no instruction is needed once the basic idea is mastered. Their difficulty also arises from the view that there is less need for reading now that everything is on the computer. Their difficulty also arises because, while they increasingly engage with texts and visual displays (in games, blogs, IMs, and text messages on cell phones), they are less aware of the ways their attention and responses are shaped by the media. Their difficulty also arises

in part because the tacit goals of critical literacy—including the integration of ideas in a larger context and applying reading material to the writer’s own rhetorical purpose—are neither stated explicitly nor taught in a reading and writing context. It is this final manifestation of students’ reading problems that is most important, and may be the one area in which writing teachers can help the most.

For the purposes of this book, then, reading refers to getting meaning from print, whether the print is viewed on paper or on a screen. In college courses in writing and elsewhere, however, reading must go beyond just getting meaning: Readers must be able to analyze texts to see how parts fit together. They must also be able to synthesize different readings on the same topic or issue so they can see a range of perspectives and/or research on the topic or issue. In addition, students must be able to evaluate the materials they read. (Librarians have done a particularly good job of setting standards for resource evaluation in the context of information literacy.) Finally, critical reading entails students’ ability to make use of what they read for their own purposes. These aspects of reading are the ones that can be usefully reconnected to writing and writing instruction.

Writing

The value in reconnecting reading and writing is clear from similar definitions of key concepts. In a longitudinal study of college writers, Nancy Sommers and Laura Saltz (2004) tracked the progress of more than four hundred Harvard students from matriculation through graduation to chart their development as writers. After their freshman year, many participants reported relief that they had survived the press of writing assignments, but more importantly, they were proud of the input they had in the scholarly discourse of their classes. A number of student comments revealed, too, an understanding of the value of writing tasks: “If I hadn’t written, I would have felt as if I was just being fed a lot of information. My papers are my opportunity to think and say something for myself, a chance to disagree” (Sommers & Saltz, 2004, p. 129). The study points to the importance of defining writing as a form of self-exploration and reflection—practices that are vital as transitioning students develop into independent thinkers.

It is no secret that in addition to the great *amount* of writing they do, college students are confronted with a wide *variety* of writing tasks. Fishman, Lunsford, McGregor, and Otuteye (2005) examined early

college writing as part of the Stanford Study of Writing, considering both the in-class work (analytic essays, persuasive papers, lab reports, etc.) and non-academic writing (journal entries, email, blogs, etc.) of nearly two hundred students. In the study, researchers explored how considering one's audience positively influenced the focus and quality of his or her writing (both academic and extracurricular). The findings illustrate the same message as the Harvard study, that "writing is both a powerful mode of direct, often personal communication and a form of highly mediated expression" (p. 245), regardless of the writing product.

As with reading, our focus in this book is on writing in post-secondary academic contexts. Writing entails putting meaning into printed words, and like reading, it has a similar essential nature, whether the words appear on paper or on a screen. When students write, they are, as noted above, not only presenting the by-products of self-exploration and reflection and of research, inquiry and study, but also of their own experiences as writers. Writing in an academic context now includes traditional research reports and papers and a myriad of other kinds of work, both print and digital. It might be fair to say that a linchpin in the array of academic writing is the ability to call on and engage with source materials to enter on-going conversations on issues and topics. Because academic writing so often entails the use of what students have read, the need to reconnect reading and writing is clear.

New Literacies

Definitions of reading and writing show that they must go hand-in-hand; other studies and organizational policy statements (discussed below) validate the need to incorporate new technologies, seeing them as basic to reading and writing in all venues. University of Connecticut reading scholar Donald Leu and his colleagues propose a definition of these new literacies:

The new literacies of the Internet and other ICTs [information and communication technologies] include the skills, strategies, and dispositions necessary to successfully use and adapt to the rapidly changing information and communication technologies and contexts that continuously emerge in our world and influence all areas of our personal and professional lives. These new literacies allow us to use the Internet

and other ICTs to identify important questions, locate information, critically evaluate the usefulness of that information, synthesize information to answer those questions, and then communicate the answers to others. (Leu, Kinzer, Coiro, & Cammack, 2004, p. 1572)

Notice that this definition addresses both reading and writing in the context of printed displays and various digital forms.

Leu, O'Byrne, Zawilinski, McVerry, and Everett-Cacopardo (2009) further explain, "New literacies theory works on two levels: uppercase (New Literacies) and lowercase (new literacies). *New Literacies*, as the broader, more inclusive concept, benefits from the work taking place in the multiple lowercase dimensions of *new literacies*" (p. 265). As such, New Literacies theory is an ever-deepening area of research for scholars across disciplines.

Why "literacies" instead of "literacy"? Consider the rapidly maturing technologies available through desktop computers, laptop computers, and mobile devices: McKenna and Conradi (2010) explain that because of these advances, the Internet is so "well suited to more complex literacy activity that takes such a variety of forms that reference to it is now in the plural" (p. 46). Lowercase "new literacies," then, is an umbrella category for the buzzword "literacies" of the day, including: digital literacy, computer literacy, technological literacy, and more. While each of these knowledge sets contributes to an individual's overall aptitude, they all fall into a larger group of abilities that informs research done on New Literacies. What new literacies all have in common—and what is so vital to understand in today's technology-rich world—is that these skills do not supersede traditional literacy. Educators must emphasize this distinction, communicating to our students that new literacies "almost always build on foundational literacies rather than replace them" (Leu, Kinzer, Coiro, & Cammack, 2004, p. 1590). It should be clear that students need both "foundational literacies" (i.e., skills in getting meaning from and putting meaning into print) and skill in using these abilities in digital environments. Digital "new" literacies require us of reading and writing together, along with links, images, sound, and movement, to present ideas and get new information.

Multiliteracies

The electronic aspects of reading and writing can also be approached from the vantage point of semiotic theory that offers research on multiliteracies. The term “multiliteracies” was coined in the mid-1990s by an international group of educators who convened to explore and discuss literacy pedagogy of the day; called the New London Group, this group of ten scholars included notable voices in the field, such as Mary Kalantzis, Bill Cope, and James Gee (New London Group, 1996). In their 2010 book chapter on the subject of multiliteracies, Kalantzis and Cope, along with co-author Anne Cloonan, explain that communication in the twenty-first century has bled well beyond the printed page, and that in order to operate effectively in this multimodal environment, young people today must become “capable and competent users of both print and other forms of meaning enabled by new technologies” (pp. 61–62). It was with this mission in mind, in fact, that the New London Group developed its initial set of criteria to define an individual as being multiliterate. Not surprisingly, in the subsequent decade, the criteria have been modified to encompass the following multimodal proficiencies: written language, oral language, visual representation, audio representation, tactile representation, gestural representation, and spatial representation (p. 66).

Literacy is truly a marriage of many skills, applied to countless functions; as such, literacy is resistant to being pinned down simply. Indisputably, literacy is a prism through which one sees the world; however, when seeking to define the term, notes Ntiri (2009), we are prone to ask, “Which Literacy? What level? And for what purpose?” (p. 99). As Roberts (2005) noted in his article investigating definitions of literacy, “one can at best hope to specify ‘the’ definition of literacy for particular purposes” (p. 524). For our purposes, then, let us align our definition of literacy with that of Flower’s (1990) *critical literacy*, whereby students call on critical thinking skills to navigate, understand, transform, and apply information for their use. To do so, they must learn to rely on critical reading and writing, reconnected for the purposes of analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and application.

Information Literacy

If critical reading and writing, as defined above, are the targets we hope to hit with all students, faculty should also take into account

the defining characteristics of information literacy (IL) offered by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), a division of the American Library Association. ACRL's *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* (2000) explicitly specify particular kinds of reading abilities that students should have to complete research and writing tasks in college courses. (See especially the Appendix A for a condensed version of the Standards and an accompanying list of ways to assess student abilities, called Performance Indicators). The ACRL Standards include being able to formulate a search strategy and find materials efficiently; Beyond these abilities, the standards require—notably in Standard Three—that students be able to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate source materials for their own purposes and use them as needed to complete any research task. In this light, information literacy can be seen as a crossroads where reading (evaluation and analysis) and writing (synthesis and incorporation) converge. The need for these abilities is also pointed out by academic librarian Patricia Breivik and college president Gordon Gee (2006) in their report on the impact of the Internet on education.

It is vital to understand that information literacy is *not* synonymous with computer and/or technology literacy. Numerous studies show that students entering college spend a significant amount of time interacting with technology. Because of this constant use, young people have a great amount of confidence in their computer literacy. For example, the 2009 *ECAR Study of Undergraduate Students and Information Technology* found that a majority of respondents rated themselves as being between fairly skilled and very skilled with tools such as presentation software, course management systems, spreadsheets, and websites (Smith, Salaway, & Caruso, 2009, p. 54). Nonetheless, college students report significant difficulties when confronted with a project that calls upon IL competencies: The 2010 report from Project Information Literacy indicates that 84% of their respondents are “stymied” by getting started in the course-related research process, 66% find it difficult to define a topic, 62% have trouble narrowing down a topic, and that evaluating results for relevancy is an obstacle for 61% of respondents (Head & Eisenberg, 2010, p. 26).

Faculty librarians John Buschman and Dorothy Warner (2006) of Rider University, a mid-sized private liberal arts institution in New Jersey, note that, in fact, the concept of information literacy relies on and requires print literacy as its starting point. They claim that there is

a fundamental need within information literacy for the kind of “critical reflexivity” that derives from literacy in a print environment. They draw on the work of literacy scholars such as Brian Street, Jack Goody, and Ian Watt, as well as the ACRL Standards, to show that in order for students or library users to develop information literacy skills, they must also have essential literacy skills that develop through sustained reading of printed texts.

Another definition of information literacy was developed by Christine Bruce, Associate Professor of Information Technology at Queensland University of Technology in Australia, wherein an information literate person “has a sound knowledge of the world of information, approaches information critically, and has a personal information style that facilitates his or her interaction with the world of information” (as cited in Bawden & Robinson, 2009, p. 187). This description of IL is particularly apt the real-world environments of constant informational stimulus, such as what students confront each day on the Internet and on social networking platforms.

Despite their constant use of computers and mobile devices of various kinds, students are not as adept at finding, reading, and using information as they could be and should be. Two measures of information literacy reveal students’ weaknesses. As noted by Shanahan and Shanahan (2008) call for a set of skills that are “widely adaptable and applicable to all kinds of reading situations” (p. 40). That basic reading skills are translatable across reading situations grows ever more important as platforms for text delivery continue to increase and evolve. Data on information literacy comes from two different studies, both measuring students’ ICT (information and communication technology) skills. The first comes from an early version of the Educational Testing Service direct test of ICT skills, called the iSkills test. Irwin Katz (2007a, 2007b), one of the lead researchers, reports in two papers the results of studies done in 2006 on the information literacy skills of college students: defining, accessing, managing, evaluating, integrating, creating, and communicating information. The test was designed to measure the skills articulated by ACRL, as described in their standards (see Appendix A). The data is not representative of any particular group, but the findings show that only 50% of students who participated have the skills that ACRL deems essential for appropriate use of ICT tools.

Further data on technologically-based reading comes from a different instrument, one designed collaboratively by librarians and faculty at Kent State University in Ohio, where they developed the SAILS (Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills) test. This instrument measures students' abilities to develop a search strategy, and to find, evaluate, and document their sources. Because it specifically examines students' use of sources in writing projects, SAILS is particularly pertinent as a measure of online reading connected specifically to writing. The SAILS results also show that only half of the students have the skills described by the ACRL Standards. The results from both iSkills and SAILS clearly indicate that many students need help with reading and other critical thinking skills online and on paper, and that they could benefit from work combining reading and writing.

Undoubtedly, information literacy skills must be cultivated for students to become effective consumers of information, be that information for academic, professional, or personal use. These areas are increasingly coming together, as the National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association point out in a policy statement discussed in more detail below. They write:

For example, living with cell phones leads to texting, which changes how people view writing and how they write, and frequenting Web 2.0 sites, such as the video-sharing service YouTube, privileges a visual mode and shapes both attention to and facility with other modes of meaning making. (National Council of Teachers of English [NCTE], 2009)

To help students develop these skills electronically and on paper, academic libraries traditionally collaborate with faculty in first year writing programs to integrate information literacy into the writing classroom. In addition, many academic libraries expand their information literacy programs to support writing across the curriculum initiatives, team-teaching research methods courses with classroom faculty, and credit-bearing information literacy courses that wholly integrate reading and writing into the research process. Melissa Bowles-Terry and her colleagues (2010) describe how librarians and writing instructors at Utah State University collaborated on a problem-based instructional approach for basic writing classes, aligning student learning outcomes in IL and in writing. In an assessment of the project, students reported that they appreciated the real-world approach to research, but they

nevertheless “struggled with integrating and synthesizing the information they found and wanted to see a stronger relationship between reading, research, and writing” (p. 227). The librarians and compositionists involved in the course learned that in addition to a unified instructional approach, it is vital to provide students with ample time for reflection, discussion of their research, and writing; it is through these practices that students begin to understand the processes of summary and synthesis. This study shows that research and writing can and should be successfully connected through the application of strong critical reading and thinking skills to writing in a context of information literacy. Aspects of digital and information literacy are discussed later in the book.

MORE REASONS TO RECONNECT READING AND WRITING

National Commission on Writing; DEEP Study of College Success

Some recent measures make clear students’ difficulties with reading when writing; these reports provide additional evidence reconnecting reading and writing in both print and in digital environments. For example, in 2002, the College Board launched the National Commission on Writing to examine writing in American schools and colleges, with an eye toward adding a writing component to the SAT and toward a fuller understanding of the teaching and learning of writing around the country (College Board, 2003, p. 7). The Commission issued three reports: the first in 2003, called *The Neglected “R”: The Need for a Writing Revolution*; a second report called *Writing: A Ticket to Work . . . or a Ticket Out*, issued in 2004; and, a third report in 2005 called *Writing: A Powerful Message from State Government*. These reports examine the status of the teaching and learning of writing and the need for writing skills among workers in both public and private sectors. Based on survey data and consultations with an advisory panel of leaders in education and the teaching of writing at the secondary and higher education levels, the reports note the need for skills in analysis, synthesis, and the proper documentation of sources read and used in various kinds of reports (College Board, 2005, p. 4). The Commission’s initial findings point out that “Analyzing arguments and synthesizing information are also beyond the scope of most first-year [college] students” (College Board, 2003, p. 14). These studies provide yet another

perspective on the need for reading-writing connections as students develop literacy skills for success in college and in the workplace.

An additional angle on the reading-writing connection derives from work on student success. By examining college success through drawing on careful study of graduation rates and student engagement at twenty colleges and universities around the country, George Kuh et al. (2005) reports on the Documenting Effective Educational Practice (DEEP) project. DEEP draws on data collected by the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), a study taken by several million students at colleges and universities across the country (Kuh et al., 2005). In particular, Kuh and his colleagues report that an emphasis on reading and writing, particularly for beginning students, is a common characteristic of institutions that achieve high levels of graduation and engagement. Reading involves a range of different kinds of activities, including summer reading programs, common book approaches, extensive reading across disciplines, and including challenging material in first year seminar programs (Kuh et al., 2005, p. 187–188). Primary source materials, novels, and scholarly articles, as well as online materials, are among the kinds of reading assigned to students (p. 194). At some schools, students are asked to read a common book and related materials, write in response to that reading, share their writing with others, and read and respond to faculty writing about the book and related matters (p. 180). All of these activities are features of “effective educational practice,” according to this very thorough study. This broadly based research supports the usefulness of reconnecting reading and writing.

Qualitative Research Supporting Reconnection: George Mason University and University of Arkansas Students' Reading and Writing

A different method of studying the need for reconnection appears in two qualitative studies that reveal the importance of a reading-writing connection. In *Engaged Writers and Dynamic Disciplines*, Chris Thaiss and Terry Zawacki (2006) report on their study of academic writing completed at George Mason University, a Carnegie High Research University public institution with about twenty thousand undergraduates in Fairfax, Virginia. In their study, Thaiss and Zawacki conducted interviews with a small group of faculty across fourteen disciplines, surveyed 183 students in upper level writing courses, and discussed writing with thirty-six students in focus groups. They also

collected assessment data from departmental or college faculty assessments of student writing and examined samples of a timed writing exercise completed by forty students seeking exemption from the required, upper-level writing course.

In their results, Thaiss and Zawacki report on students' perceptions of the role of reading in their development as writers. George Mason students in this study pointed often to the importance of reading in their understanding of writing in their disciplines: "Reading widely and deeply, many students said, helped them understand not only the subject matter of the discipline but also the ways in which it can be/should be presented" (Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006, p. 128). In addition to reading experience and the use of models for the kind of writing they were expected to do, though, GMU students also "infer style from reading professional writing" (p. 128). Moreover, not only did reading within their disciplines help these writers, but reading from other areas was also useful. Thaiss and Zawacki say that

Reading outside of their disciplines has also helped many of the students . . . appreciate the rhetorical differences that distinguish one discipline from another as well as the comfort level they've achieved as readers and writers in their chosen field. (p. 128)

One chief piece of advice more advanced students said they would give to new students in their major seeking success as writers and in college overall is to read (p. 129). It's clear from this study, drawing on careful self-report data, that at least some students see a useful connection between reading and writing.

A recent study by University of Arkansas literacy scholar David Jolliffe and doctoral student Allison Harl (2008) draws on a different kind of self-report data to show that student readers do in fact complete a lot of reading, but not of the kind investigated here; i.e., not the kind they must master to be successful in college coursework. Jolliffe and Harl paid a small group of students at the University of Arkansas, a Carnegie Very High Research University public school of about fourteen thousand students in Fayetteville, Arkansas, to complete a background questionnaire, keep a reading journal for two weeks logging their reading activities, and write a detailed exploration of one item they read each day, responding to a prescribed series of questions (Jolliffe & Harl, 2008, pp. 602–03).

From careful analysis of the data, Jolliffe and Harl conclude that their students do not read critically, and to help them do so, faculty need to work in three different areas. First, students should develop “text-to-world and text-to-text connections” (p. 613). In addition, students need to have opportunities to make broader connections between reading, coursework, and other kinds of educational opportunities. Finally, because of students’ interest in, use of, and comfort with technology, faculty should encourage students to develop their “literacies in electronic contexts that instructors overlook or ignore” in ways that lead to deeper engagement with reading materials (p. 614). That deeper engagement helps students in writing tasks and in overall success in college. Further discussion of this study, in Harl’s literature review, is included in the next chapter of this volume.

Quantitative and qualitative evidence, then, shows that students do not read as well as they could and should to be successful in writing classes and elsewhere in college. Critical reading to analyze, synthesize, evaluate, and apply ideas and information, and writing to make use of what students learn from reading in various print and digital forms, can be productively reconnected.

Organizational Policy Statements

All major professional organizations concerned with literacy have issued statements of various kinds reflecting a widespread view of the need to integrate reading and writing. The rationale for reconnecting reading and writing comes, in part, from an assortment of documents presented by professional organizations concerned with the teaching and learning of reading, writing, and literacy on paper and on screens. Every major organization has attempted to address issues focused on here, particularly those in conjunction with or in relation to changes in literacy activities in increasingly technological environments. The impact of new technologies informs our discussion at all points. Organizations that have offered major policy statements include: the National Council of Teachers of English, the International Reading Association, the Association of College and Research Libraries, the Conference on College Composition and Communication, and the Council of Writing Program Administrators. All these groups have reading and writing as their central focus, and are in a position to offer authoritative statements pertinent to reconnecting reading and writing.

NCTE and IRA: Redefining the Reading/Writing Connection?

In 2009, the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and the International Reading Association (IRA) created a joint task force on assessing reading and writing, a collaboration itself that speaks to the need to reconnect reading and writing. This professional group drew up a set of standards for assessment based on their collective view of literacy and of changes within it, addressing the interwoven nature of reading and writing on pages and screens. Acknowledging ongoing changes in literacy practices, these organizations reflect the need for reading and writing to be linked in theory, in practice, in instruction, and in assessment. These two leading professional organizations see the essential connection between reading and writing, and believe it is important to appropriately assess these skills for such a connection. However, it is important to keep in mind that digital literacies build on foundational print literacies—those students must have to be successful in traditional and electronic venues.

Earlier, NCTE (2007) issued a research policy brief on twenty-first century literacies that addressed reading-writing connections. This policy brief provides the following “research-based recommendations for teachers”:

Research shows that effective instruction in 21st-century literacies takes an integrated approach, helping students understand how to access, evaluate, synthesize, and contribute to information. Furthermore, as Web 2.0 demonstrates, participation is key, and effective teachers will find ways to encourage interaction with and among students. (p. 5)

(The recommendations in the policy brief are quoted more fully in Appendix B of this book.) Underlying all new technology is essential skill in reading and writing for analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and application.

College English: CCCC and CWPA

Like NCTE (in collaboration with IRA) and ACRL, the Conference on College Composition and Communication (a sub-group of NCTE) has also issued a position statement on reading/writing relationships, instructional practices, and goals. In 2004, the CCCC adopted a position statement on Teaching, Learning, and Assessing Writing in

Digital Environments (NCTE, 2004). In assumptions preliminary to this position statement—those similar to the NCTE’s 21st Century Literacies policy brief issued more recently—the CCCC makes clear the need to “engage students in the critical evaluation of information” (NCTE, 2004), consistent with the ACRL information literacy standards. Thus, like NCTE and ACRL, the CCCC has also addressed the essential skill of evaluation in reading and writing. (See Appendix C for excerpted text.)

The reading-writing connection is of particular interest and concern to the Council of Writing Program Administrators, the national organization for those who direct college and university writing programs. The CWPA has put out a widely-respected core document called the *WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition* (Council of Writing Program Administrators [CWPA], 2000). This statement consists of a series of planks—what sections of the Outcomes Statement are called—in various areas of writing, that describe the competencies students should have when they complete first year composition courses. (See Appendix D of this book for the full text of the *Outcomes Statement*.) The statement is intended to be a broad outline, and individual programs have adopted and modified to it describe their local courses and goals. The statement supports the role of reading in the teaching of writing as a key outcome of first year writing instruction, specifically mentioning analysis, synthesis, and evaluating materials students use in their writing.

From the findings of various studies mentioned here, from the perspective of major professional organizations in the teaching of reading and writing, and from the key terms in this volume used as the basis of our discussion, the importance of reconnecting reading and writing is clear. While some argue that new technologies make critical reading and writing less important because students can access and use online materials, research suggests that the foundational skills of reading and writing are, in fact, more important now than ever in the face of constantly changing technologies and literacies. Therefore, our goal in this book is to explore the various ways in which reading can be reconnected with writing, from a broad array of perspectives. The following overview of the book reveals the myriad directions we explore through which reading and writing can be connected to help students build skills for use on paper and screens, and for personal and professional purposes.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK

Part I: Overview

Chapter 1. Introduction.

Chapter 2. History/Theory—Allison Harl’s historical review of literature on reading-writing connections provides an overview of the findings, theories, programs, and practices that have emerged in the field. The important publications that presented these developments are explored with a detailed focus on how theory, research, practice, and programs informed each other. The section starts in the 1800s and moves through key theoretical approaches to the reading-writing connection. More recent research and practical applications arising from this connection are also presented in Harl’s chapter, giving a strong sense of the work of scholars on the need to connect reading to writing.

Chapter 3. International Perspectives—In this chapter, Jennifer Coon looks at the ways in which other countries connect reading and writing. This section examines how international, college level instruction understand the juncture between reading and creating texts. Historical perspectives and innovations are investigated. The insights of colleagues in the Far East, Latin America, and Europe comprise the focus of this chapter.

Part II: Classrooms and Students

Chapter 4. Best Practices in the Writing Classroom—Horning’s chapter on “Writing and Reading Across the Curriculum: Best Practices and Practical Guidelines” looks at “Monday morning” approaches in writing classes and in courses across the disciplines. The chapter argues that there are specific strategies teachers can use to build more and better direct instruction in reading into their courses, leading to a happy outcome in students’ writing and overall success.

Chapter 5. Basic Writers—A related thread supporting the reconnection of reading and writing comes from work with basic writers, reviewed by Kathy Skomski, in “First Year Writers: Forward Movement, Backward Progress.” Basic writers have a special set of needs with respect to the reading-writing connection, as they are often very weak readers needing as much help with reading as they do with writing. This chapter examines the ways basic writers need to learn critical

thinking skills and build upon those skills in both reading and writing. Additionally, the chapter considers students' personal beliefs about writing, evaluation, re-evaluation, writing/reading environments, as they are related to the reading-writing connection.

Chapter 6. L2—An additional illustration of the need to reconnect reading and writing comes from work with L2 writers—especially English for Academic Purposes (EAP) writers in pre-university and university contexts—who must learn to work with multiple text sources and carry out the same read-to-write tasks expected of any university student. Some of distinctive challenges facing these students include: issues of cross-cultural academic expectations, use of multiple (and sometimes conflicting) source texts, more limited experiences with read-to-write tasks and associated curricular genres, limited experiences with summary and synthesis writing, and limitations on language resources (i.e., vocabulary, grammar, and discourse structure knowledge) that L2 students encounter. Grabe and Zhang take up these issues in “Second Language Reading-Writing Relations.”

Chapter 7. Common Core—David Jolliffe's chapter on the Common Core State Standards Initiative of the National Governors Association and the council of Chief State School Officers shows how K–12 and educators are beginning to use the reconnection of reading and writing to improve students' critical literacy skills. The implications of the coming changes for college and university teachers are explored in this chapter.

Part III: Contexts and Resources

Chapter 8. Textbooks—The fabric of reading and writing instruction can be tested by examining college textbooks that attempt, with varying degrees of success, to make use of the whole cloth. In the chapter, “Reading and Writing Connections in College Composition Textbooks,” Jimmy Fleming examines ways that the most popular rhetoric texts that include readings and instructional apparatuses deal with reading/writing connections. While some books help students read effectively through vocabulary, comprehension questions, and strategies for rhetorical analysis, most do not help students see the reading-writing connection. The chapter highlights texts that offer the strongest connections.

Chapter 9. Libraries—Cynthia Haller’s chapter, “Reuniting Reading and Writing: Revisiting the Role of the Library,” traces conceptual connections among information literacy, reading, research, and writing, and reviews best practices in teaching research-based writing. Haller argues that the library serves as an important intersection of reading and writing in academic settings. By collaborating on information literacy instruction, librarians and disciplinary faculty can engage students to evaluate their research methods and their information sources in each phase of their writing. This chapter offers recommendations for how the academic library contributes to the development of reading and writing skills throughout a student’s academic career, and suggests that compositionists pay closer attention to information literacy instruction.

Chapter 10. Digital—In this chapter, Drake considers how the digital delivery of traditional publications, such as journal articles, and new media resources has moved a significant portion of reading for research to digital environments. This trend has changed multiple aspects of the undergraduate research experience—from habits of annotating while reading to habits of selecting passages for referencing in assignments. Digital access to resources makes them immediate and easily available for consumption, exposing students to a wide variety of publications for any research project they confront. These efficiencies bring reading and writing ever closer temporally, while also posing urgent pressure for the critical judgment and assimilation of new ideas. Information literacy skills are paramount in such environments due to high demands for evaluating materials and incorporating them coherently and ethically in one’s work. This chapter analyzes the research process in a digital context, discusses the importance of information literacy skills in it, and highlights the role of libraries in supporting and developing those skills.