ONLINE SUPPLEMENT TO:

EdSpeak and Doubletalk

A GLOSSARY TO DECIPHER HYPOCRISY AND SAVE PUBLIC SCHOOLING

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Behavior, Discipline, and Socialization

adverse reflection: A term found in California’s “social content guidelines” to describe language critical of an individual or a group or that tends to ridicule, demean, or caricature an individual or a group. California will not endorse textbooks or other materials for use in its schools if they contain language that any group considers to contain adverse reflection. Sometimes historical fact creates an adverse reflection when it truthfully shows past behavior or cultural beliefs of groups that are contrary to contemporary standards. See also: social content guidelines (Ch. 21).

affective objective: An instructional objective related to students’ emotions, feelings, or values, indicated by such words as interest, appreciation, enthusiasm, motivation, and attitudes.

alternative instruction room: A room where school officials send students who have misbehaved in school, usually for a few hours or days. See also in this chapter: detention.

aversive behavioral therapy: Extreme forms of discipline, such as electroconvulsive therapy, bodily restraints, food deprivation, noxious tastes, and white noise through earphones, sometimes used in boarding schools that treat children who are emotionally or psychologically troubled. The purpose is to have students associate an undesirable behavior with a strong feeling of dislike or disgust, thus reducing or eliminating that behavior. Such therapy is very controversial and is often banned or regulated by state authorities.

behaviorism: A psychological theory based on the idea that learning occurs when repetition of a stimulus triggers a response. Behaviorists believe that learning consists of habit formation. Behaviorism supports the importance of incentives and sanctions, as well as drill and practice. Taken to its extreme, behaviorism can make school mechanical and rigid; however, a certain reliance on incentives (e.g., grades, awards, and diplomas) and sanctions (e.g., discipline policy) is necessary for the successful functioning of schools, like most other social institutions. Critics of behaviorist approaches contend that humans respond differently than laboratory rats and that the development of social behavior for a democratic society must rely more on internal discipline than on extrinsic rewards and punishments.

behavior modification: Actions or strategies devised to change the way a person customarily acts in certain situations. In the classroom, behavior modification may involve systematic use of rewards and punishments to shape students’ classroom deportment. Such systems usually involve explicit objectives, careful record-keeping, visible tracking of progress, and immediate feedback (i.e., rewards and penalties).
Used largely in special education classes for behaviorally disturbed students, behavior modification is controversial. Critics claim that behavior modification makes students dependent rather than independent and that its principles rely too much on animal studies. Advocates contend that it is scientifically based and effective.

**boot camp:** A term borrowed from the military that refers to a physically and emotionally demanding institutional setting in which students must comply with clear instructions without excuses or delay.

**character education:** Schooling that teaches children about basic human values, such as honesty, kindness, generosity, courage, freedom, equality, and respect. The goal of character education is to help students become morally responsible, self-disciplined citizens. Character education programs have been supported by federal, state, and local funding, as well as by foundations and civic organizations. Service learning is frequently part of a comprehensive character education program. See also: *service learning (Ch. 27)*.

**classroom management:** The way a teacher organizes and administers routines to make classroom life as productive and satisfying as possible. Classroom management includes but is much broader than discipline. For example, teachers with good classroom management skills explain classroom routines and may even begin the school year by having students practice expected procedures as a way of minimizing disruptions and maximizing the time for instruction.

**conflict resolution instruction:** Instruction that teaches students how to negotiate and resolve problems in a nonviolent way. Core concepts of such instruction include recognizing alternative solutions to problems, and learning skills to solve problems effectively. Conflict resolution is often provided through peer mediation, in which students assist other students in working through problems without resorting to violence. See also: *peer mediation (Ch. 27)*.

**cooperative discipline:** Classroom strategies to deal with disruptive students through the use of praise, encouragement, and kindness rather than punishment or sanctions. Such an approach aims to build students’ self-esteem and thereby get them to behave better and cooperate with others in the future.

**cooperative learning:** A teaching method in which students of differing abilities work together in groups on an assignment and receive a common grade. Each student has a specific responsibility within the group. Advocates believe that cooperative learning enables students to acquire both knowledge and social skills and that students try harder because they are members of a team. They also contend that students have more opportunities to ask questions and clarify confusions than they do in the whole-class setting. Critics complain that group work wastes time and that high-performing students end up doing most of the work.

**corporal punishment:** Discipline imposed by striking a student’s body with a paddle, one’s hand, or some other instrument, with the intention of inflicting pain and/or humiliation. Corporal punishment, once common in U.S. public schools, has been considered inappropriate, inhumane, and ineffective by most educators for many years. It is illegal in most states and school districts.
**detention:** Involuntary detainment of a student, generally during what would otherwise be the student’s free time, as a punishment for the student’s misbehavior. *See also in this chapter: alternative instruction room.*

**discipline:** (1) Punishment, as when a teacher finds it necessary to “discipline” a student for disruptive behavior in the classroom. (2) A field of study, such as the discipline of history or of physics. (3) Self-control, as when a person works to master his or her behavior and achieve a goal. (4) Training (by oneself, by teachers, or by an institution) that corrects or molds one’s mental faculties or moral character. (5) Institutional rules that govern conduct and produce an orderly atmosphere.

**discipline policy:** The rules for acceptable behavior promulgated by school districts. Most educators believe that such rules should be clear and uniform and should specify the consequences for violating the rules. School rules usually cover such matters as bringing weapons to school, possessing or selling drugs or alcohol at school, assaulting a member of the staff or other students, fighting, committing robbery or arson, destroying school property, committing sexual harassment, gambling, plagiarizing, cheating on tests, forging notes from home, possessing pornography, and disrupting the classroom. The penalties for such actions range from moderate to severe, depending on the nature of the violation. For the least dangerous infractions, schools generally notify students’ parents and ask them to meet with the teacher or the principal. Other penalties include detention (involuntary detainment during recess or lunch or after school); in-house suspension (assignment to special classes and isolation from one’s peers); suspension (restriction from attending school for a certain number of days); police notification, when illegal acts are committed; involuntary transfer (reassignment to a different school); and, in the most extreme situations, expulsion. Most infractions of behavioral norms are dealt with informally by teachers and principals.

**disruptive student:** A student who speaks out of turn or acts inappropriately with enough frequency or intensity that it is difficult or impossible for the teacher to teach and for other students to learn.

**expulsion:** The removal of a student from school because of unacceptable behavior that violates school rules. Students are usually entitled to a hearing and thus to due process before expulsion. Students who have been expelled are often permitted to return after a specified period of time. *See also in this chapter: discipline policy.*

**incentives for students:** Rewards for good academic performance or behavior in school. Grades are the most common incentives for students. In addition, some schools recognize outstanding student achievement at end-of-term events and graduation ceremonies. There are seldom incentives for good behavior, other than the approval of teachers; there are, however, considerable disincentives (punishments) for bad behavior. *See also in this chapter: discipline policy.*

**in-house suspension:** The isolation of a student in a special class to punish him or her for a minor offense against classroom, school, or district policies. *See also in this chapter: in-school suspension.*
in-school suspension (ISS): A school policy to provide a program for disruptive students within the school instead of sending them home, where they may be unsupervised and get into more trouble. In-school suspension aims to remove students from the classroom where they misbehaved and put them into a designated program where they can continue to receive instruction under the supervision of a trained teacher. See also in this chapter: in-house suspension.

interschool mobility: Transfer of students from one school to another. Such a transfer may be the voluntary decision of students and their families, or it may be arranged by a school system to remove disciplinary problems from a particular school or to exclude low-scoring students from the test population as a way to improve test scores at certain schools.

restorative justice: Is about empowering students to resolve conflicts on their own. It often refers to peer-mediated groups of students who work out problems and reduce school bullying and student discord. School districts that implement restorative justice programs claim to see a reduction in suspension and expulsion rates. Restorative justice programs also help bring students together despite their differences, and such a program helps students who have been in trouble reintegrate into the classroom.

self-discipline: The ability to control one’s emotions and to achieve one’s goals through persistence and hard work.

self-esteem: Confidence in or satisfaction with oneself. During the 1980s and 1990s, some educators made a fetish of self-esteem as the goal of schooling and life. Students engaged in group activities intended to reinforce their self-love by chanting slogans like “I am somebody, I love myself.” Social scientists who examined the concept pointed out that self-love is narcissism, that self-assertion is often no more than boasting, and that these traits and behaviors are not necessarily healthy for individuals or for society. Roy Baumeister of Case Western Reserve University drew together research showing that bullies were known for their high self-esteem, which was easily wounded because it was not built on anything solid. Better than self-esteem, research and common sense suggest, are self-discipline, self-respect, and self-reliance. These are traits that lead to the dogged pursuit of goals rather than to self-satisfaction.

suspension: The removal of a student from classes or from school because of unacceptable behavior. Suspension is temporary and may last from 1 day to several days, depending on school rules.

tough love: A regimen that simultaneously involves strict discipline and expressions of caring.

truant: A student who fails to show up for school without a valid reason. Many cities and school districts have policies to reduce truancy, such as requiring truants to perform community service, withdrawing their driving privileges, fining their parents, reducing their families’ welfare payments, and subjecting their parents to civil fines or even criminal prosecution.
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College and Career

adult education: Classes offered by school districts, community colleges, and other public and private organizations for people 18 years or older not enrolled in a traditional education institution. Such classes may or may not offer credit toward a degree. See also in this chapter: continuing education.

Alliance for College Ready Public Schools: Initiated in 2004, with a profitable mixing of real estate deals and corporate promotion of school privatization, the Alliance for College Ready Public Schools consists of 28 middle and high schools. It is the largest charter school network in Los Angeles and California. The long corporate donor list includes the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The Alliance has been accused of under-enrolling special education students and English language learners. A group of Alliance educators advocated unsuccessfully for union representation in 2016.

application: The practical use of school-learned knowledge and skills in the “real world.”

authentic task: A school assignment that is like a real-world problem, like one that might be encountered at home, while shopping, or in the workplace.

backward mapping: A process in which educators determine what students need to know and be able to do at a selected end point, such as high school graduation, and then build the curriculum in earlier grades to reach those desired end goals. The purpose is to make sure that students are prepared when they reach the desired end point. Backward mapping is a concept often used by curriculum designers and staff developers. See also: Understanding by Design (Ch. 21).

career education: Schooling that aims to prepare students for a job or vocation.

college admission requirements: The explicit expectations that a college describes for students who wish to be accepted, such as a high school diploma, successful completion of courses in certain subjects, and a minimum score on a college admissions test, such as the SAT or the ACT. Nearly 1,000 colleges and universities no longer require applicants to take the SAT or ACT. These institutions are known as test-optional.

college and career readiness: A corporate reform phrase implying that all students should graduate from high school prepared for college and career. Students are to master rigorous high school standards involving the Common Core or Next Generation English language arts, math, and STEM. They are directed to pursue a postsecondary education through Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, dual enrollment, career and technical education, work-based learning, and other employment opportunities. The phrase has been associated with the Common Core State
Standards and a one-size-fits-all curriculum for all students, who are expected to study the same curriculum, take the same tests, and progress at the same rates.

**College Board:** An organization that sponsors the SAT, the United States' most widely used college admissions test. The College Board was founded in 1900 as the College Entrance Examination Board. Its goal was to offer a common examination for college admission that all students could take on the same day in different parts of the country. Today, the College Board is an organization that sponsors—but does not manage—college admissions testing; the managing function was turned over to the Educational Testing Service in 1947. See also: Educational Testing Service (Ch. 18); SAT (Ch. 18).

**community college:** A 2-year college, once referred to as a “junior college,” that offers a wide variety of courses in occupational and vocational fields as well as regular programs in the liberal arts. Students in community colleges may earn an associate degree or take non-credit-bearing courses. They can and often do transfer to 4-year colleges to earn a regular bachelor’s degree.

**continuing education:** Educational programs offered by colleges, universities, and private-sector organizations to adults, usually not for credit toward a degree. See also in this chapter: adult education.

**co-op students:** Students who spend part of their school day working in paid employment.

**developmental education:** A euphemism on college campuses for remedial programs and courses, mainly in such basic skills as reading, writing, and mathematics.

**dropout:** A student who leaves school before graduating or receiving a diploma. Because it is difficult to keep track of adolescents who have left school, reported dropout rates are neither consistent nor accurate. For example, some students may reenter schools and drop out again more than once, and many students eventually get the equivalent of a diploma through the General Educational Development program. In addition, districts and states use a variety of methods to calculate their dropout rates, leaving the public confused as to whether a problem exists and, if so, how serious it is.

**dropout rate:** The proportion of students who do not complete high school. The dropout rate can be calculated in a variety of ways, and school districts and state education departments can minimize or maximize the apparent problem by choosing from among different measures. For example, they may calculate the *event rate*, which is the percentage of students who drop out in a single year without completing high school; the *status rate*, which is the percentage of students in a given age range who have not finished high school or are not enrolled in school at a given point in time; or the *cohort rate*, which is the percentage of a single group of students who drop out over time. Status rates are higher than event rates because they reflect the number of students in a given age range who have dropped out of school over a number of years, rather than providing a snapshot of 1 year. Many researchers and federal policymakers decided that the best measure of the dropout rate is the proportion of all students who entered 9th grade but did not graduate from high school at the end of 4 years. This measure does not acknowledge that some students get their diplomas in
August while others take 5 or 6 years to complete high school. This way of measuring the dropout rate, counting only those who completed high school in precisely 4 years, tends to overstate the rate.

**dual enrollment:** High school students take college coursework, along with general classes for credit. The goal is for them to experience college courses and to build their confidence, and collect college credit to help them get a start on college and reduce their tuition costs. However, many institutions are now charging tuition to accept these credits. In addition, these classes may interfere with Advanced Placement or other high school classes. Grades go on a student’s permanent record. For this program to be meaningful, students must be assured that the college credit will count at the college the student plans on attending.

**Early College High School:** (1) A program that enrolls at-risk and underserved students in an accelerated 4-year program of study, beginning in 9th grade. The program is designed so that all students earn an associate degree or 60 transferable college credits toward a bachelor’s degree. Unlike Middle College High Schools, the Early College High Schools are not necessarily located on a college campus. (2) A program for highly motivated students with very strong academic skills who start college-level classes while they are in secondary school. See also: Middle College High School (Ch. 7).

**early decision:** A policy by some selective colleges to accept high school seniors in December of their senior year rather than waiting until the spring, which is the customary time for sending out admission notices. Early decision is only for students who have a clear first-choice college, because it’s a contract between the student and the college: The student agrees that if he or she is accepted by the college, he or she will withdraw all other college applications and attend the early decision college. This policy lets students know sooner that they were accepted by the college of their choice while enabling the college to fill its freshman class with students of its choice. However, critics have long contended that early admission causes a loss of motivation among seniors who were accepted early and that it disadvantages minority students, students in rural areas, and other students who attend high schools with fewer resources. For these reasons, some selective colleges have abandoned this policy. Also called early admission.

**experiential learning:** Education that emphasizes learning from first-hand, personal experiences rather than from lectures, books, and other secondhand sources. Experiential learning may take the form of internships, service learning, school-to-work programs, field studies, cross-cultural education, or training for leadership development.

**graduation requirements:** The courses and activities that a high school or a school district establishes as necessary for a student to complete to receive a high school diploma.

**lifelong learning:** The continuation of learning throughout one’s lifetime.

**postbaccalaureate:** A program of further education or career preparation for students who have received their undergraduate degrees.
**postsecondary:** A description of any program or activity that follows graduation from high school.

**school-to-work (STW) program:** A program intended to help high school students prepare for and make choices about their future jobs. Most school-to-work programs are subsidized by federal and state funding. Such programs direct students to post–high school jobs in service occupations; they do not provide preparation for the professions, which require a college degree.

**suitcase college:** A nonresidential institution of higher education; a commuter campus. This term also refers to a residential college that many students happen to leave for the weekend, generally because their homes are nearby.

**task-based instruction:** An instructional approach that relies on specific activities to teach students the skills and knowledge they need in the “real world.” The curriculum designer or teacher identifies specific needs—such as taking part in a job interview, applying for a credit card, ordering from a menu, or finding one’s way in an unfamiliar city—and builds the daily activities of the classroom around these tasks. See also: Taylorism (Ch. 23).

**task-oriented learning:** A learning approach in which students are expected to complete specific assigned jobs, or tasks, to gain mastery. Advocates of task-oriented instruction laud it because it is experiential and hands-on, as opposed to instruction that relies on books and lectures.

**tech prep:** A 4-year program (the last 2 years of high school plus 2 years of community college) that leads to an associate degree or a 2-year certificate in a specific career field. The carefully integrated and sequenced curriculum includes a common core of mathematics, science, communications, and technologies. Tech prep provides training for the average student who does not want to attend a 4-year college but wants to prepare for a career.

**transcript:** A student’s secondary school record, which identifies courses taken, grades, graduation status, and attendance. In addition, it often includes scores for such assessments as the Preliminary SAT, the SAT, the ACT, the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, and Advanced Placement tests.

**vocational education:** A program or course of study to prepare students for a specific job, such as repairing automobiles or performing secretarial duties.
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Curriculum

ability grouping: The practice of assigning students to classes on the basis of their past achievement or presumed ability to learn. In schools that use ability grouping, low-performing students will be in one class, high-performing students in another, and average-performing students in yet another. This grouping by ability is called homogeneous grouping, whereas the practice of mixing students of different abilities in the same class is called heterogeneous grouping. Some schools group students by ability in certain subjects, like mathematics, but not in others, like social studies or English. Researchers disagree on whether ability grouping is beneficial. Advocates say that a certain amount of grouping is not only inevitable but also better for students. Critics of ability grouping contend that those placed in lower tracks encounter low expectations and are not sufficiently challenged. They also say that in most subject areas, students with lower or higher skills have much to learn from one another. See also in this chapter: homogeneous grouping; tracking. Contrast in this chapter: detracking; heterogeneous grouping.

abstinence education: An educational program premised on the view that family life and sex education courses should teach students that sexual intercourse is inappropriate for young, unmarried people. Advocates say that adults must communicate an unambiguous message that sex outside marriage is dangerous because of the risks of unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, such as AIDS. Critics of abstinence-only programs say the programs ignore the reality of widespread sexual activity among teenagers and deprive teens of information they need to protect themselves physically and emotionally.

academic freedom: The freedom of educators to teach and to conduct research without fear of political reprisal, as well as the freedom of students to learn without fear of indoctrination or intimidation. Academic freedom for scholars involves both rights and responsibilities. Professors who assert their rights and freedoms have a responsibility to base their conclusions on competent scholarship and to present them in a dignified manner. Although they may express their own opinions, they are duty-bound to set forth the contrasting opinions of other scholars and to introduce their students to the best published sources on the topics at issue. In other words, professors may express their own views, but they must do so in a spirit of impartial scholarly inquiry, without imposing them on their students. Correlatively, students have the right to study under the guidance of qualified and unbiased faculty and to express their views without fear of any form of retribution.
**academic press:** The quality of the school environment—involving policies, practices, norms, and rewards—that produces high student motivation to learn. A school with the right amount of academic press will have high but reasonable expectations for students, encouraging them to study and apply themselves to their schoolwork. Too much academic press and students will complain about the pressure; too little, and students will ignore their studies.

**accelerated classes:** Advanced classes in which highly motivated students study subjects and topics beyond their grade level. The term is also used to refer to intensive remedial classes intended to bring overage, low-performing students up to their grade level. It is symptomatic of the education field’s tendency toward euphemism that the same term is used to describe classes for students at both extremes of ability.

**affective education:** Schooling that helps students understand their emotions and values. This term is used to distinguish such schooling from cognitive education, which refers to academic knowledge and studies. Some would argue that the two are intertwined and that affective education increases students’ readiness to learn.

**after-school programs:** Activities that take place after the official end of the school day, typically sponsored by the school, the school district, or community organizations. After-school programs include athletics, dramatic groups, technology education, art and music, and academic assistance activities. Due to the large increase in the number of working mothers in recent years, many children have no supervision between the hours of 3 and 6 p.m. Accordingly, many school districts and reformers have sought to increase the availability of after-school programs to make sure that children are in safe and stimulating environments during that time.

**A–G curriculum:** A 4-year sequence of high school courses in California designed to prepare all students for higher education or the modern workplace. The curriculum includes such core subjects as English, mathematics, history, laboratory science, and a foreign language.

**articulation:** The attempt to create a seamless transition from one part of the education system to the next—for example, from middle school to high school or from high school to university—especially regarding the curriculum.

**auxiliary services:** Most services provided by schools that are nonacademic in nature, such as operations, food services, maintenance, transportation, security, and facilities.

**average class size:** The number of students in a given school or district divided by the number of classes. Because some teachers, such as reading specialists and special education teachers, have assignments outside the regular classroom, the average class size is usually larger than the pupil-teacher ratio. *See also:* pupil-teacher ratio (Ch. 10).

**back to basics:** A slogan used by those who believe that schools should emphasize the fundamental skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Sometimes, proponents of back to basics are also advocates for liberal education, including science, history, civics, foreign languages, and other school subjects they believe deserve more attention.
**basic education:** (1) An education emphasizing basic skills, such as reading, writing, and arithmetic. (2) A solid liberal education, including history, literature, science, mathematics, the arts, and a foreign language.

**basic skills:** The fundamental skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic that are needed to succeed in school and in everyday life. In mathematics, the basic skills are addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division; in English, the basic skills are reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

**block scheduling:** A way of organizing the school day, usually in secondary schools, into blocks of time longer than typical class periods. Instead of the traditional day that contains six, seven, or eight periods of 40 to 50 minutes each, students take fewer courses that last for approximately 90 minutes (or longer) each. Students end up taking the same number of classes, but they are not conducted for the entire school year. One block schedule model known as $4 \times 4$ consists of four 90-minute classes a day with course changes every 45 days (four times a school year). Others include the *alternate-day plan*, in which classes meet every other day for longer periods of time, and the *trimester plan*, in which students take two or three courses every 60 days. In some current school reforms, such as the Coalition of Essential Schools, one teacher will teach two related subjects in a 90- to 120-minute block for the full year, so that students have fewer teachers and teachers have fewer students. The advantage of block scheduling is that students and teachers have fewer classes to prepare for and experience fewer interruptions in the school day; advocates claim that longer blocks of time allow for more complex learning activities. Critics argue that much of the extra time is wasted, that the schedule may reduce overall course time, that students’ attention spans waver over longer periods, and that the teaching of certain subjects suffers because of the absence of sequential courses taken over several years. Mathematics and foreign language, for example, are subjects that require sequential, cumulative development and continual reinforcement of prior learning; the ability to take such a course one semester and not the next leads to a discontinuity that may impair learning. See also in this chapter: flexible scheduling.

**chunking:** The act of grouping what students are learning into manageable segments, making the material easier to learn than it would be as many discrete facts.

**civic education:** Education for good citizenship. This goal has long been considered the central purpose of U.S. public education, and schools have long been expected to teach students about their rights and responsibilities as citizens; how to participate in government; how local, state, and federal governments function; and how they as citizens can contribute to improve society. Responsibility for civic education has traditionally been assigned to civics and history classes, where students learn about the meaning of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and the history of the United States’ efforts to protect its freedoms and democratic way of life. In addition, a general expectation holds that every teacher and every class should teach children and adolescents how to work successfully in a social setting, how to resolve conflicts amicably, and how to behave respectfully toward other people.
**cluster grouping:** A way of organizing classes so that students remain with an assigned group for every class. Each cluster of students has a team of teachers, one from each of the following departments: English, mathematics, science, social studies, and, for some students, special education or bilingual education. Students are usually assigned to a cluster at random and stay with the same group throughout the school year.

**coaching:** A term borrowed from athletics to refer to any situation in which an experienced person helps a novice to learn a skill. The term is also widely used to describe expert educators (usually experienced teachers or principals) helping other teachers and principals to improve their practice.

**co-curricular activities:** Studies or activities for students that take place outside the classroom but are supposed to bolster learning. Examples of co-curricular activities include outside lectures, seminars, workshops, debates, and community service programs.

**cohort:** A particular group of students educated together. A cohort might be a group of students who started 9th grade at the same time, for example. Researchers might want to track such a cohort’s progress through high school graduation to identify differences among students based on the courses they take or on other factors.

**concept-based curriculum:** A course of study organized around ideas rather than around a particular subject, era, set of facts, or set of procedures. The International Baccalaureate programs often refer to concept-based along with inquiry-based learning.

**core academics:** The required subjects in middle and high schools, usually English language arts (reading, writing, and literature); history; mathematics; and science. In some schools, foreign language and the arts are included among the core academic subjects.

**core curriculum:** The body of knowledge that all students are expected to learn. High schools often require a core curriculum that may include, for example, 4 years of English, 3 years each of science and mathematics, 2 or 3 years of history, 1 or 2 years of a foreign language, and 1 year of civics and government studies. Nonrequired courses are called electives.

**Core Knowledge (CK) program:** A curriculum reform movement initiated in 1987 by E.D. Hirsch Jr., based on his bestselling book *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know*. Founded on the idea that all students and citizens need to know a specific body of shared knowledge, the Core Knowledge program has developed a model curriculum from prekindergarten to 8th grade to show how to do it. In his books, Hirsch urges school districts to offer a sequential, uniform curriculum that prescribes—on grounds of social equity—a significant portion of what students should learn about science, history, mathematics, literature, and the arts in each grade. Hirsch believes that such an approach will both raise the knowledge of the American people and help disadvantaged students, who often do not have access to the same knowledge as advantaged students.

**credit hour:** A unit of measure representing the equivalent of an hour (usually 50 minutes) of instruction per week over a 15-week period in a semester or trimester system or a 10-week period in a quarter system. It is applied toward the total number of
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hours needed for completing the requirements for a degree, diploma, certificate, or other formal award.

**credits:** Points given to a student for successful completion of a course. Credits are usually based not only on passing examinations but also on completing a certain number of hours in class. High school students usually need a fixed number of credits to graduate.

**culture of the school:** The climate of a school, as defined by its traditions, celebrations, tone, values, ideals, expectations, sense of community, and usual ways of doing things. A school with a good culture has high expectations for student behavior, positive interactions between adults and students, a stable staff, positive school spirit, and good relations with parents and the local community.

**curriculum:** A description of what teachers are supposed to teach and students are supposed to learn in each course of study, often delineated for each grade. The curriculum describes what is taught but does not prescribe how that content is taught. So, for example, a curriculum for a 10th-grade U.S. History course would list the topics and ideas that must be covered but would not tell teachers how to teach those topics and ideas. Scholars have added the following distinctions to the term: intended curriculum (what is supposed to be taught); implemented curriculum (what is actually taught); and achieved curriculum (what is actually learned).

**curriculum of the home:** What is “taught,” more or less implicitly, by the home environment, which has a large influence on children’s education. The curriculum of the home includes interactions between parents and children, including daily conversation; discussions of books, movies, and television programs; trips to the library or other community institutions; introduction to new vocabulary; and expressions of love. The curriculum of the home also involves daily and weekly routines established by parents for their children, such as a regular time and place for study and homework, play, and reading; limits on television watching or computer time; and family time for meals, hobbies, and activities. In addition, the curriculum of the home includes clearly communicated parental expectations, such as that homework must be finished before watching television or playing games, that children must take responsibility for household chores, and that children must use correct and appropriate language. Parents also make it clear that they care about whom their children “hang out” with and about their children’s academic progress, manners, health, and dress. If the curriculum of the home is successful, then children are likely to arrive at school ready to learn.

**deschooling:** A term coined by author Ivan Illich in his 1971 book Deschooling Society, in which he called for the disestablishment of institutions called schools. He emphasized instead the role of the community as the educator of the young. Many homeschooling parents admire the Illich philosophy of deschooling (also called unschooling), believing that learning should be incidental, personal, and informal, detached entirely from any impersonal institutional structure.
detracking: The process of reducing or eliminating the practice of ability grouping, resulting in classes that contain students of all ability levels. In the past, tracking meant placing students in completely different programs, such as the academic track, the vocational track, or the general track, so that a student’s track determined his or her future career. The current version of tracking, in contrast, assigns students to specific courses with other students of comparable ability, with the best students in the top track and the weakest students in the bottom track. Grouping by ability for specific courses, such as mathematics, does not necessarily determine a student’s career path, as the old-style tracking did. Yet advocates of detracking, also called untracking, point to research indicating that ability-grouped students in lower tracks don’t get exposed to “high-status” knowledge. These advocates support detracking as part of a broader restructuring of schools aiming to group all classes heterogeneously and eliminate honors and advanced classes or make them optional for all students who want to take on the challenge and the work. See also in this chapter: heterogeneous grouping. Contrast in this chapter: ability grouping; homogeneous grouping; tracking.

developmentally appropriate practice: Curriculum and instruction suited to students’ physical and mental development. Developmentally appropriate education is viewed as especially important for young children because their physical and mental growth rates vary widely and differ from child to child. For example, some 4-year-old children are able to sit quietly through group story time, whereas others become fidgety. Critics believe that the term developmentally appropriate practice has been misused by some educators to shield young children from any instruction, because they wrongly assume the children are not “ready” to learn. Most teachers prefer to make decisions about children’s readiness to learn based on observational cues.

diverse providers model: A way of organizing a public school system so that some schools are managed by organizations that sign contracts with the school board. In most cases, the diverse providers model is a means of privatizing parts of the school system. Contractors may be private managers, for-profit corporations, or nonprofit entities. They may contract to manage individual schools or to manage a group of schools. Many large urban districts have tried this model, but it usually leads to increased segregation, not better education.

drive: To cause forward motion or change by imposing a new set of conditions or incentives. For example, curriculum is supposed to “drive” instruction or assessment by describing what is to be taught and learned. The most important “drive” is intrinsic student motivation, in combination with effort.

edspke: A language spoken by those inside the education profession. Edspeak is often not comprehensible to people outside the profession. The term is modeled on George Orwell’s “newspeak” from his novel 1984. Also known as educationese, eduspeak, and pedagogese.

education: The purposeful, conscious effort to transmit ideas, knowledge, skills, habits, values, opinions, expectations, and standards through instruction, study, example, and experience. Education may be carried out in formal institutions, such as schools
and universities, or in informal settings, such as families, churches, religious groups, labor unions, book clubs, summer camps, and so on.

**educrat:** A derogatory term, often found in tabloid headlines, to refer to a person who works in the education field, is fluent in edspeak, works in an education bureaucracy, and is not a classroom teacher.

**effort:** Hard work; conscious exertion to reach a goal.

**elementary school:** A unit of schooling for young children, usually beginning in kindergarten or 1st grade and continuing through 5th or 6th grade. Instruction in the early grades of elementary school emphasizes the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic while also teaching children such skills as how to cooperate in a group with others, how to work independently, and how to take care of themselves. These years are an ideal time to establish the foundation for later studies of science, history, the arts, and other subjects.

**extracurricular activities:** Any activities that take place outside the regular academic program of the school or outside the regular school schedule, such as clubs, sports teams, or volunteer work.

**extrinsic motivation:** External rewards for excellent or improved performance or behavior, such as high grades and test scores, praise, school trophies and awards, school paraphernalia, money, treats, or the promise of getting into a good college. *Contrast: intrinsic motivation (Ch. 27).*

**family life education:** School programs that teach the knowledge and attitudes that young people need to become responsible members of families, including knowledge about human sexuality and attitudes about appropriate behavior. Family life education programs are often controversial because one person’s idea of proper values may be unacceptable to another person.

**field trip:** An excursion of school classes, led by school personnel. Common destinations for field trips include museums, parks, zoos, science centers, manufacturing facilities, farms, and historic sites. Field trips encourage informal learning and are most effective when they provide experiences that support what students are learning in the classroom.

**flexible grouping:** Short-term grouping of students for various purposes, such as skill development. Teachers may group students by ability, interest, topic, or random assignment.

**flexible scheduling:** An approach to school scheduling in which classes are taught for different lengths of time on various days and may vary in size. For example, a lecture may be given to a large group for a relatively short time, whereas a seminar discussion would involve fewer students for a longer class period. Innovative secondary schools tried flexible scheduling in the late 1960s and 1970s, but few schools use it today. Also known as modular scheduling and flexible modular scheduling. *See also in this chapter: block scheduling.*
**gatekeeper:** Any course or practice that a student must master to move to the next level of education. It is often said, for example, that algebra is a gatekeeping course because it determines students’ access to higher education in mathematics.

**general track:** A curriculum track, often found in comprehensive high schools, that is neither strongly academic nor vocational. The general program consists of a bare minimum of essential academic courses in mathematics, English, social studies, and general science but is not a college-preparatory program; it may include a few vocationally oriented courses, but it does not lead to mastery of any vocational skills. It has generally been populated by students with no particular interest in higher education who are looking for the easiest way to get a high school diploma. By the 1970s, a plurality of high school students were enrolled in the general track, but this proportion declined after the 1983 report *A Nation at Risk* called on high schools to expect all students to complete a basic curriculum that included 4 years of English, 3 years of math and science, and 3 years of social studies. Students in this track who hope to attend college are often not informed by their advisors until it is too late that this track has not given them the prerequisites needed for college admission.

**global studies:** An academic program devoted to the study of the histories, cultures, geography, economies, and governments of the nations of the world.

**grade level:** (1) A student’s placement in school (e.g., 4th grade), not counting kindergarten or preschool. (2) The difficulty level of curriculum and test content designed for typical students in a given year of school. If a given book, software program, or instructional strategy, for example, is appropriate for the average student in a particular grade, it is said to be “on grade level.” When used in the context of testing, the term can be confusing. If the test is normed, then half of the students will always be above grade level and half will be below.

**grade-level expectation:** An objective that states a goal or benchmark that students are expected to meet at a particular grade level in a particular subject.

**grain size:** The specificity of information, such as whether data refer to a nation, a state, a city, a local district, a school, a group of students, a class, or a student.

**grammar of schooling:** The assumption that schools have certain invariable features, such as classrooms, teachers, subjects, textbooks, tests, report cards, rewards and sanctions, a certain architecture, and a certain layout of the classroom. Education historians David Tyack and William Tobin are credited with the phrase and the observation that the grammar of schooling is remarkably resistant to change.

**guidance counselor:** A school official who helps students deal with their personal and social problems and advises them in planning for their futures after high school graduation, whether they plan to attend college or join the workforce.

**heterogeneous grouping:** The practice of assigning students to a class without regard to their tested ability. See also in this chapter: detracking. Contrast in this chapter: ability grouping; homogeneous grouping; tracking.
hidden curriculum: What schools teach students by example and by their social organization, as opposed to the subject matter they officially teach. For example, a school’s hidden curriculum might teach that boys are strong and undisciplined and girls are smart and well-behaved, or that learning is something done to students rather than something they must do for themselves; or that being popular is more important than being smart; or that societies are organized according to rules, that some of these rules are arbitrary, and that breaking the rules carries consequences. Some of the hidden curriculum is good, and some of it is not. Some of what sociologists call the hidden curriculum is due not to socialization but to human nature. Like other large social organizations, schools need rules to function, and people need to learn what the rules are, when to follow them, and when to challenge them.

homeroom: A period in a secondary school, usually at the beginning of the day, when a teacher meets with a small group of students. See also: advisory (Ch. 27).

homogeneous grouping: The practice of assigning students to a class on the basis of their ability, usually ascertained through testing, with all students in the class performing at similar levels. For example, homogeneous grouping may separate students into regular, advanced, and remedial classes. See also in this chapter: ability grouping; tracking. Contrast in this chapter: detracking; heterogeneous grouping.

honors track: A program of studies in high school designed for high-achieving students who are qualified to take rigorous and advanced academic courses.

inside-out reforms: Reforms initiated within a school or school community, involving collaboration among parents, teachers, and students. Contrast in this chapter: outside-in reforms.

liberal education: Education that places a high value on learning for its own sake rather than for vocational or utilitarian ends. A liberal education usually includes the study of history, literature, the sciences, mathematics, the arts, and a foreign language. The study of these subjects provides insight into the most important realms of knowledge about human society as well as access to the tools, devised over many generations, for understanding the natural world. Knowledge of this kind opens the doors to higher education and is considered necessary to become an educated person and to think clearly, with a free, informed, and unbiased mind.

one size fits all: A phrase that acknowledges the difficulty of creating a curriculum or teaching methods or tests that are appropriate for all children.

outside-in reforms: Reforms—such as standards, tests, mandates, and regulations—imposed on the school by an outside government agency. Contrast in this chapter: inside-out reforms.

promotion: Advancement of a student from one grade to the net grade. See also in this chapter: social promotion. Contrast: retention (Ch. 18).

remedial education: Instruction or coaching intended to help students who have fallen behind in their studies to catch up or improve their skills.
**scope and sequence:** A chart that shows the content (scope) and the order of presentation (sequence) of a curriculum. This framework describes all or part of the curriculum from kindergarten through 12th grade.

**scripted program:** Any educational program that describes in close detail how to teach the material. Scripted programs may raise the level of teaching if they are akin to a good recipe; however, they are unlikely to succeed if they attempt to impose routines and methods that teachers find patronizing and disrespectful.

**sex education:** Instruction on human sexual anatomy, intercourse, and reproduction, as well as on how to avoid pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

**shared decisionmaking (SDM):** A process that involves at least teachers and administrators—but sometimes also support staff, students, parents, and members of the local community—in making decisions that affect teaching and learning in their school. As part of this process, a site leadership team compiles a needs assessment and then develops an action plan for school improvement. This action plan is then referred to the larger school community and is discussed, approved, modified, or rejected. The process of improvement through shared decisionmaking is a continuous cycle. *See also: school-based decisionmaking (Ch. 10); site-based decisionmaking (Ch. 10).*

**single-sex education:** Classes or schools that enroll only girls or only boys. Advocates of single-sex schooling claim that it helps adolescent students concentrate on their studies, free of distracting socialization with or of potential intimidation by the opposite sex. Critics claim that single-sex education is comparable to racially segregated schooling.

**social content guidelines:** The directions for textbook publishers developed by various states, especially California. These directions tell publishers what information their textbooks must include and exclude with regard to groups identified by race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, economic status, and other criteria. California not only requires proportional representation of listed groups but also prohibits adverse reflection on them—meaning that any “descriptions, depictions, labels, or rejoinders that tend to demean, stereotype, or patronize” any listed group are prohibited. The guidelines also require proportional representation of entrepreneurs, managers, and labor groups and ban adverse reflection on any particular occupation. In response to California’s social content guidelines, publishers are careful to avoid adverse reflection on any group in history textbooks and to eliminate potentially controversial literary selections. With the advent of online content, these guidelines have less power to shape the content of textbooks. *See also: adverse reflection (Ch. 19); bias and sensitivity review (Ch. 18).*

**social promotion:** The policy of promoting students from one grade to the next with their age group even though they have not mastered the skills and knowledge considered appropriate for the next grade level. *See also in this chapter: promotion. Contrast: retention (Ch. 18).*

**social studies:** A broad conglomeration of school studies that includes history, economics, geography, government, civics, and sociology, as well as consumer education,
Chapter 21: Curriculum

personal decisionmaking, current events, global studies, environmental studies, ethnic studies, gender studies, and other nondisciplinary studies related to contemporary issues and the social sciences.

**state education agency (SEA):** The agency primarily responsible for supervising a state’s public schools.

**state textbook adoption process:** The process conducted by nearly half of all U.S. states to review and select the textbooks that school districts are permitted to buy with state funds. In these states, textbook publishers present their books to special committees empowered by the state education department or the state board of education to recommend adoption or rejection. These committees hold public hearings at which any individual or organization can speak out for or against a particular textbook. These hearings, and the adoption process as a whole, are frequently the target of organized protests by small groups that object to some portion of a textbook and demand that the state either compel the publisher to revise the textbook or, if the publisher refuses, reject the book. State officials often require publishers to remove “offensive” or “insensitive” words or descriptions, even if the language in the book is factually accurate. For example, a religious or cultural group may not like certain references to its ancestors’ practices, or a feminist group may complain that more than half of the names in a textbook refer to men. Textbook adoption decisions made by large states, especially California and Texas, have an especially large financial effect on publishers, which cannot accept the financial risk of refusing to remove controversial material. Critics have suggested that the state textbook adoption process be eliminated because it gives too much power to small vocal pressure groups to impose changes without regard to accuracy or scholarship. The widespread use of technology to deliver instruction and content has largely neutralized the negative effects of textbook adoptions because the Internet has no “social content” guidelines. See also in this chapter: social content guidelines. See also: bias and sensitivity review (Ch. 18).

**strand:** A group of related themes or concepts within an overall curricular area. For example, a social studies curriculum might be divided into such strands as citizenship, history, economics, geography, legal systems, political systems, and so on.

**strategy:** A plan or tactic to solve a problem or carry out a decision. In education, a strategy can refer to a great many of the things that a teacher or a student does in a classroom—asking a question, reading a story, figuring out the meaning of a word, planning the next day’s lesson, and so on.

**tracking:** A common instructional practice that assigns students to courses or curriculum programs with others who have similar academic goals or skills. Tracking often occurs as a result of student self-selection into programs or courses of varying levels of difficulty. In the past, tracking referred to the two separate paths that students chose to follow: college or a vocation. Currently, however, the term tracking is used almost interchangeably with the term ability grouping and applies to all grade levels. As currently used, tracking refers to a decision by the school to place students in different classes according to their ability levels, the rationale being that it enables teachers to
provide the same level of instruction to each group. This practice is criticized, however, by those who fear that students in low-level ability groups (or tracks) never gain access to challenging instruction. *See also in this chapter:* **ability grouping; homogeneous grouping.** Contrast in this chapter: **detracking; heterogeneous grouping.**

**transfer of training:** The belief that what is learned in one subject or course of study will “transfer,” or be applicable in another subject, or even in daily life. For example, habits learned in school, such as concentration, neatness, and prompt completion of assignments, might be transferred to the workplace. Defenders of such subjects as Latin and algebra claimed that they taught clear thinking, which carried over into other studies and became a foundation for life. Studies have demonstrated that certain habits and skills learned in school do indeed transfer across studies and into real-world activities.

**Understanding by Design:** A form of curriculum planning that begins with a decision about what students need to learn as the end result. Then the teacher engages in *backward design,* choosing activities that bring students to the preselected goal. Although the belief that classroom activities should be based on a set curriculum or on set learning goals is not new, this widely used program is attributed to Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe. *See also:* **backward mapping (Ch. 20).**
Early Childhood Education

**abecedarian:** A student who is first learning the alphabet, usually a young child. This term was commonly used in the 17th century to refer to the youngest learners. It has also been adopted by a preschool program for low-income children in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, called the Abecedarian Early Childhood Intervention Project.

**Acelero Learning:** A for-profit organization replacing Head Start programs since 2001. Head Start, begun in 1965 under President Johnson’s War on Poverty, has served young, low-income children. Acelero is connected to Jumpstart, an organization that pairs college students with preschoolers to teach literacy skills. Acelero Learning is supported by the Kellogg Foundation and the New Schools Venture Fund and others who push privatization. They emphasize data-driven decisionmaking, school readiness goals, assessment templates, and alignment charts. The goal is learning outcome gains. They work with Shine Early Learning and rely on donations and millions of dollars in federal grants. In 2013 they took over Head Start in Milwaukee with a $5.6 million federal grant. Critics worry about the commercialization of early childhood education.

**early childhood education:** The education of young children, usually prekindergarten children.

**educare:** A term most often used generically to refer to developmentally appropriate preschool programs. The term has been widely adopted by commercial and private organizations to describe their early education programs. *See also: developmentally appropriate practice (Ch. 21).*

**Even Start:** A federal program that provides grants to support family literacy projects, focused on low-income families. Even Start grants are supposed to incorporate early childhood education, adult literacy, parenting education, and interactive literacy activities between parents and children. Grants are usually awarded to government agencies, colleges and universities, public schools, Head Start programs, and public or private community groups.

**Head Start:** A federal program of preschool education for children from low-income families, established in 1965 as part of the government’s War on Poverty. Head Start began as an 8-week summer program and eventually became a full-year program offering a wide range of services, including medical, social, psychological, and nutritional components. The program initially enjoyed broad popular support, but conservatives have always tried to cut Head Start funding. The Bush administration created strict standards with a push for literacy skills. The Obama administration called for additional benchmarks under Race to the Top. The Trump administration called for a 9% cut to
nondefense programs that included Head Start. Fewer students are currently served by Head Start than in past years, and the program has received no budget increase. Many school districts are privatizing Head Start. See also in this chapter: prekindergarten.

**Jumpstart:** A program to promote the social development and literacy of preschool children by pairing them with trained college students in one-to-one relationships. Jumpstart was founded at Yale University in 1993 to improve early childhood services and to offer college students an opportunity for public service.

**kindergarten:** Literally “children’s garden” in German—a class where young children, around age 5, learn to play with other children and develop social skills. The first kindergarten was founded in 1840 in Germany by Friedrich Froebel. The first public kindergarten in the United States was established in 1873 by education reformer Susan Blow in St. Louis, Missouri. In kindergarten, children are supposed to learn basic social skills through play, exercise, crafts, and the arts. But in response to the testing demands of No Child Left Behind, kindergarten has focused more on reading instruction and more advanced skills. Play has been replaced by high-stakes testing. Researchers at the University of Virginia have questioned whether kindergarten is the new 1st grade. See also: Froebel, Friedrich (Ch. 25).

**Perry Preschool Project:** A longitudinal study that examined the lives of 123 African American children born in poverty and at high risk of school failure. From 1962 to 1967, at ages 3 and 4, the subjects were randomly divided into a program group that received a high-quality preschool program and a comparison group that received no preschool program. Those who participated in the high-quality preschool program were later found to have higher earnings, to be more likely to be employed, to be less likely to have committed crimes, and to be more likely to have graduated from high school than were adults from the comparison group who received no preschool education.

**prekindergarten:** A program for children too young to enter kindergarten (usually 3 or 4 years old), designed to teach them social skills through activities and play; also called preschool. Just as kindergarten prepares children for 1st grade, prekindergarten prepares children for kindergarten. Because of the United States’ great increase in the proportion of working mothers, public preschool programs for very young children have become increasingly popular with parents, especially those for whom private child care is too expensive. Head Start is a preschool program funded by the federal government for children from low-income families. In recent years, as research continues to suggest the value of such programs, a number of jurisdictions have begun planning or implementing universal preschool for all 4-year-old children, and in some cases, for younger children as well. See also in this chapter: Head Start.

**theory theory:** The idea that very young children actively construct and test theories about how the world works. According to this concept, a child holds an established theory until he or she encounters an anomaly that forces a paradigm shift and the adoption of a new theory. Theory theory is an application of ideas first expressed by Thomas Kuhn in 1962 in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. 
CHAPTER 23

Educational Research

**experiment:** A controlled test of a hypothesis in which an independent variable is manipulated for the purpose of observing its effects on one or more dependent variables. To conduct an experiment, the researcher or scientist needs to hold constant certain controlled variables to isolate the effects of the independent variable. The difficulty of controlling for relevant (i.e., causative) variables is the primary reason that so much education research is unreliable. For example, an experiment in education might randomly assign students or teachers to various educational conditions, methods, or policies and then measure the outcome effects; in such an experiment, it is often difficult or impossible to know whether all of the relevant variables have been held constant. Sometimes such experiments are spoiled by teacher turnover or student mobility. Many education research experiments consist of trying something new and then observing the results of something different than usual. But without a control group and without randomized assignments to different treatments, an experiment has no scientific validity.

**research-based:** A descriptor of a program or policy that relies on credible, long-term studies of its effectiveness in practice. The best research uses randomized field trials, in which one group is randomly selected to receive the experimental treatment and a matched group does not receive it.

**“research shows”:** A phrase often used to evoke authority and end discussions even when research is equivocal. Parents and other noneducators must be wary of accepting the claim that “research shows” a given outcome unless they receive a clear, impartial summary of the evidence.

**scientifically based research:** Research that involves the application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to educational activities and programs. See also: reliability (Ch. 18); validity (Ch. 18).

**secondary source:** A book, article, or other document that contains information summarizing or referring to one or more original, or primary, sources.

**Taylorism:** Attitudes or practices based on the time-and-motion studies by Frederick Taylor, a social engineer of the early 20th century who sought to make factory workers more efficient and productive by studying their ways of working. The implication of the term is that management cares only for efficiency and not for the quality of the work produced by teachers or students or for the educational values imparted. To a large extent, standards-based reform is based on Taylorism and the pursuit of efficiency, given its assumption that one set of goals and strategies will produce equal outcomes for all students. See also: task-based instruction (Ch. 20).
**CHAPTER 24**

**Instructional Terms and Methods**

**action research:** The systematic investigation by teachers of some aspect of their work to help them improve their effectiveness. Action research requires that participants identify a question or problem and then collect and analyze relevant data. It differs from conventional research in that participants study an aspect of their own work in the classroom and intend to use the results themselves. For example, a teacher might decide to give students different assignments according to their assessed learning styles. If the teacher maintained records comparing student work before and after the change, the teacher would be doing action research. If several educators worked together on such a project, this would be considered collaborative action research. Because of the personal interest of those who carry out action research, the results do not necessarily have credibility and are seldom generalized to other classrooms and schools.

**collaborative culture:** An atmosphere of shared responsibility among teachers and administrators; also called a democratic school community.

**collegial:** An attitude of cooperation among professional associates.

**comparison/contrast chart:** A graphic that shows the similarities and differences between two things or sets of things. Such a graphic could be as simple as a box divided into two parts—one labeled “similarities” and the other “differences”—or two columns or rows with these labels.

**constructivism:** A philosophy of teaching based on the belief that students learn by constructing their own knowledge. Constructivist methods center on exploration, hands-on experience, inquiry, self-paced learning, peer teaching, and discussion. Constructivism is a direct lineal descendant of progressive education as espoused by John Dewey and his disciples, especially William Heard Kilpatrick. Constructivists suggest that only constructed knowledge—knowledge that one constructs for oneself—is truly integrated and understood. Proponents of constructivism maintain that one learns best through a process of discovery in which dissonance between old facts and ideas and new ones motivate students to explore new understandings. Critics of constructivism claim this approach relies too much on student-initiated inquiry, that it unfairly disparages the value of instruction, and that constructivist methods place a heavy burden on teachers. Constructivism is identified with inquiry learning, discovery learning, student-centered instruction, and other forms of learning in which the teacher avoids or minimizes direct instruction.
constructivist classroom: A classroom in which the teacher uses pedagogical methods based on the constructivist theory of learning. The constructivist theory holds that the student is the center of learning, and the teacher should act as a facilitator of the student’s construction of learning. The constructivist classroom takes many forms, but at heart it is based on the belief that the student is the one who does the learning and therefore must take responsibility for his or her own learning.

content knowledge: Knowledge of ideas and facts in a particular field of study, such as history, science, literature, or mathematics.

coverage: The amount of time and attention devoted to specific topics in a textbook or a classroom. When too much coverage is attempted, teaching and learning tend to be shallow and superficial. The familiar complaint that teaching is “a mile wide and an inch deep” refers to the attempt by textbooks and state curricula to cram too many topics into a single semester or school year. For example, a 1-year course in world history that “covers” everything from Plato to NATO is bound to be superficial and will provide inadequate time for thoughtful examination of important ideas. When coverage is too broad, students are not likely to absorb what they were taught. When coverage is limited to a reasonable number of topics, teachers have time to explain, to encourage class discussions, and to assign additional reading, writing, and projects.

critical friend: A term used in professional development activities to describe someone who helps others by asking questions, reviewing their work, and enabling them to make difficult changes by providing regular, friendly criticism.

critical pedagogy: An effort by certain education professors to view schooling through a political lens, usually from a radical perspective, with the hope of transforming education toward personal liberation or unleashing a social and political revolution.

critical thinking: The trained ability to think clearly and dispassionately. Critical thinking is logical thinking based on sound evidence, involving the ability to gather and analyze information and solve problems; it is the opposite of biased, sloppy thinking. A critical thinker can accurately and fairly explain a point of view that he or she does not agree with. Critical thinking requires close attention to facts, evidence, knowledge, and how knowledge is used, particularly in situations in which facts are in conflict or evidence permits more than one interpretation. This kind of reasoning is especially relevant for democratic life.

developmental lesson: A method of classroom instruction that begins with a motivational prompt (e.g., cartoon, newspaper headline, brief reading, engaging story) intended to whet students’ appetite for the information to be explored. The motivation leads directly to an instructional aim, which is the purpose of the lesson. The lesson progresses with a series of questions that elicit student responses to the teacher and, more important, to one another. This instructional strategy requires the teacher to be prepared with a series of questions to engage and elicit student involvement.

differentiated staffing: The school practice of having various instructional roles rather than a single role designated by the term teacher. In a school with differentiated staffing, various individuals play a part in the teaching process, but their responsibilities
and pay may be greater or less than those of regular teachers. Typical roles include teacher aides, paraprofessionals (or assistant teachers), team leaders, lead teachers, and mentor teachers.

**Direct Instruction (DI):** Instruction in which the teacher explains the purpose of what will be taught and presents the content in a clear, orderly way, with students responding mainly to the teacher’s questions. Developed by Siegfried Engelmann, Direct Instruction presents a strong contrast to inquiry, discovery, and constructivist methods, in which students are expected to develop their own ideas through investigation and discussion. Advocates of Direct Instruction say it is more effective than constructivist methods. Critics contend that it is dull and dampens students’ interest in learning. *See also in this chapter: systematic instruction.*

**discovery learning:** An approach to learning based on the principle of “learning by doing,” in which new ideas develop. Discovery learning activities are designed so that students discover facts and principles themselves, through personal experience, rather than having them authoritatively explained by a textbook or a teacher. Discovery learning is prized by progressive and constructivist educators. Some of the principles of discovery learning have long been part of the repertoire of traditional teachers as well, especially in science classes, where, for example, students can directly observe the results of experiments. Critics claim that discovery learning is extremely time-consuming, difficult to manage, and inefficient because so much time is wasted waiting for students to “discover” what is already known by their teachers. *See also: inquiry learning (Ch. 7).*

**drill and kill:** A derogatory term denoting activities in the classroom that involve repetitive practice, the implication being that under certain circumstances such practice will “kill” student interest. Those who look down on repetitive practice tend to prefer inquiry learning, experiential learning, and other hands-on discovery activities. Moderation and balance are usually the wise path of action, in this as in many other realms. Of course, in any activity, a certain amount of practice is necessary to achieve proficiency in a skill; one rarely hears complaints about “drill and kill” from athletes, musicians, or dancers, for example. For educators, the questions are always how much of this practice they should engage in and at what point in the learning process, as well as which skills are best developed in this manner. Also called *skill and drill.*

**empty-bucket approach:** A derogatory way of describing teacher-led instruction, suggesting that children are empty vessels into which adults pour knowledge.

**explicit instruction:** Intentional, verbalized instruction in a particular concept or skill by the teacher, who stands or sits before the class, explains what he or she intends to teach, and then teaches it. Explicit instruction by the teacher is often accompanied by student practice of what was taught, either in the classroom or at home, and by evaluation of student work.

**facilitation:** The process of creating the circumstances in which learning can take place, rather than taking direct action to make the thing occur.

**goal-oriented:** A description of organizations or individuals with a clear focus and mission.
**goal-setting:** The process of setting specific, measurable objectives to work toward, with a defined end point.

**grade:** (1) A judgment on student performance or conduct, rendered usually either as a letter from A to F (with A representing excellence and F representing failure) or as a number, generally from 0 to 100, with 100 representing a perfect performance. Teachers may award grades for test performance, classroom participation, homework, or other student work. (2) A level of education attainment, ranging from grade 1 to grade 12.

**grade inflation:** The practice by teachers and professors of awarding grades higher than the students’ work deserves. The reasons for grade inflation are many: a wish to protect students from the consequences of low grades (e.g., not being promoted, not getting a diploma, decreased self-esteem) or the desire of teachers to be popular with students or to get a good rating on students’ evaluations, or increased performance pay.

**graphic organizer:** Any chart, graph, table, drawing, or other graphic device used for brainstorming, organizing ideas, or planning. Examples of graphic organizers include story maps, word webs or cluster charts, Venn diagrams, tree diagrams, flowcharts, matrices, comparison/contrast charts, cause-and-effect charts, problem/solution charts, histograms, pie charts, and line graphs.

**hands-on activities:** Activities, often “real-world” tasks, that engage students’ physical skills to make things and to solve problems.

**heuristic:** A rule of thumb or procedure that works to provide a satisfactory if not optimal solution to a problem; a technique of discovery, invention, and problem solving through experimental or trial-and-error techniques. Some examples of heuristics include throwing out parts of a problem and solving the simplified version; breaking a problem into parts and solving each one separately; and means-ends analysis—defining the current situation, describing the end state, and then taking steps to reduce the differences between them.

**higher-order thinking skills (HOTS):** Sophisticated cognitive abilities, including the ability to understand complex concepts, to compare and contrast different opinions, or to apply conflicting information to the solution of a problem that has more than one answer. Although such skills are highly praised today—and indeed, often prized above content knowledge—they cannot be attained without also gaining mastery of a significant amount of knowledge to think critically about.

**holistic education:** Education that focuses on the whole child, not just on the child’s growth in cognitive skills and knowledge. From a holistic perspective, teachers must draw from both the cognitive and the affective domains and attend to students’ physical health, emotional well-being, and social interactions with others. In some schools devoted to holistic education, these concerns are given higher priority than cognitive skills and knowledge. See also: meeting the needs of the whole child (Ch. 7).
**holistic thinking:** Thinking that occurs when students perform complex tasks connected to real-world situations requiring problem solving, decisionmaking, collaboration, and the use of tools and technology. Efforts to foster holistic thinking are usually contrasted with instruction that teaches discrete skills or emphasizes the acquisition of knowledge. The pursuit of holistic thinking often leads to interdisciplinary courses and the presentation of real-world problems without disciplinary boundaries. However, no research shows that holistic thinking emerges from holistic problems. Although the world may be a seamless whole with all its parts interrelated, the ability to think clearly about those interrelationships requires a solid foundation of skills and knowledge in known disciplines of thinking. Many of the world’s eminent holistic thinkers, such as John Dewey, did not receive a holistic education.

**instantiation:** An instance of something; a concrete example of an abstract principle or idea.

**interdisciplinary method:** A teaching approach in which teachers of core academic subjects collaborate to plan instruction on a particular subject or theme. For example, students learning about a particular era in history class may study a novel set in that historic period in English class.

**learning how to learn:** One of the most important goals of schooling—teaching students how to become lifelong learners. Some people believe that knowledge becomes obsolete so quickly that “mere” facts are unimportant in comparison with learning how to learn. It is unwise to set up a false dichotomy between knowledge and learning how to learn, however, because the two are integrally connected. Youngsters need to know how to learn, and they need a fund of background knowledge. If they lack either the tools for self-education or the knowledge that is the foundation of learning, they cannot become lifelong learners.

**learning progressions:** Detailed descriptions of the order in which students should learn about various topics, from grade to grade, based on what they understand when they begin school and what they are supposed to know at different points in their education. The term also refers to a logical, coherent sequence of lessons, each building on the previous one, with the goal of developing student comprehension of important concepts in different content areas.

**learning style:** The mode of learning that is most effective for a given student. Advocates of learning-style theory claim that people learn through various channels—visual, tactile, auditory, written, or kinesthetic, for example—and that one or more of these will be the dominant learning style for a particular student. Learning-style theory calls for teachers both to figure out the distinct learning style of each student and to tailor their instruction accordingly—a task that critics claim is nearly impossible. At best, it’s a heavy burden: according to learning-style theory, a student’s low achievement could be attributed not to a lack of effort on the student’s part but to the teacher’s failure to identify and address the student’s unique learning style. See also: modality (Ch. 2).
**learning trajectory:** The “arc” or aggregate of a student’s learning, resulting from careful curricular design that identifies the kind of instruction, activities, technological tools, and other resources necessary to foster learning.

**lecture:** Instruction given by a teacher to impart information directly to a class. For many years, lecture was considered an efficient means of summarizing information and presenting issues to students, and it continues to be a dominant mode of instruction in colleges and universities. It’s a different story in the K–12 world, however: Although some teachers, especially at the high school level, still deliver lectures, this method is now infrequently encountered in elementary and middle schools. In their pedagogical training, U.S. educators are taught to avoid the lecture style of instruction in favor of individualized instruction, cooperative learning, small-group activities, project-based learning, and other indirect methods of teaching.

**looping:** The practice of having one teacher educate the same group of students for more than one school year, rather than assigning students to different teachers and classes every year. According to advocates, looping increases instructional time for students; builds strong bonds between teachers and students and among students themselves; and increases teachers’ sense of responsibility for their students. Critics say that students may suffer if they have a weak teacher for multiple years and that they lose the opportunity to encounter a wide range of friends and teachers.

**materials-based instruction:** A teaching technique that relies on printed materials handed out by the teacher to the students in the class. This is a technical term for a common practice.

**memorization:** The act of committing information—such as words, facts, numbers, or literary selections—to memory, with the result of being able to recall the information at will. Although memorization has long been derided as a mechanical, rote way of learning, it has its uses. For example, memorizing the multiplication tables enables students to quickly and automatically recall the product of two simple numbers without having to consider the problem or use a calculator. It is also deeply satisfying to memorize beautiful poems and know them by heart, so that they may be recited aloud to a group or recalled in the quiet of the night simply for one’s own pleasure. Moreover, children generally do not dislike the task of memorization and in fact often take great pride in memorizing baseball statistics, the names of dinosaurs, the lyrics of songs, and various obscure marginalia.

**mentee:** One who receives guidance or coaching from a more experienced person.

**mentor:** A trusted counselor or guide who tutors or coaches a newcomer or novice.

**metacognition:** An awareness of one’s own thinking processes; the process of regulating one’s own learning by reviewing one’s knowledge and methods of problem solving.

**metacognitive objectives:** Instructional objectives intended to demonstrate that students are aware of how they learn, that they reflect on how they know what they know, and that they could think about their own processes of thinking.
minilesson: A short period of instruction (e.g., 10–15 minutes long) that is an integral part of the constructivist workshop model in a balanced literacy program. The steps of a minilesson include (1) connection, during which the teacher connects the lesson’s content to what has come before, including students’ own experience, and names the strategy being taught (the teaching point); (2) teaching, during which the teacher states explicitly and then models what students are supposed to learn; (3) active involvement, during which students engage with the content or try out the strategy; and (4) link, during which the teacher restates the teaching point and tells students to add it to their repertoire. Following a minilesson is an independent work period during which the teacher walks around and comments on the work of individual students. After about 30 minutes comes the share stage, when the teacher draws attention to the good work of a student and again highlights the minilesson’s teaching point. These steps are part of the architecture of minilessons developed by Lucy Calkins of Teachers College, Columbia University, as the workshop model. See also: workshop model (Ch. 26).

module: A unit that covers a single topic in a course of study.

objectives: Stated desirable outcomes of instruction.

pedagogy: The study of education and education practice. Also, a philosophy about the best way to teach. Pedagogy is not the same as curriculum: Whereas curriculum details what to teach, pedagogy details how to teach. Most states mandate what will be taught in the public schools but leave judgments of how to teach to teachers, knowing that no one way is best in every situation. In addition to how to teach, the study of pedagogy should address the deeper moral and philosophical question of why to teach.

peer culture: The norms and values of a group that influence the behavior and attitudes of the group’s members, as well as those who want to be part of the group or to be admired by the group. In secondary school, peer culture has a large effect on how students behave, what they aspire to, and what they care about. A peer culture that values athletics, good looks, and popularity often devalues academic success. Schools must be aware of students’ peer culture and make concerted efforts to establish a climate in which students value learning, respect themselves and others, practice kindness, and aspire to pursue higher education and to be good citizens. See also: peer pressure (Ch. 27).

protocol: A procedure for doing something, such as conducting a test, organizing a meeting, or analyzing student work. Also, a self-report of what one is thinking, doing, or feeling at each step in the process of completing some activity.

syllabus: A summary outline of a program of study that explains in detail what teachers will teach, what students are expected to learn, and what the examination for the course will cover.

systematic instruction: A teaching approach that identifies specific steps needed to teach a given lesson. Systematic instruction includes clear objectives describing the content to be learned, detailed strategies to teach that content, and diagnostic assessments.
to determine whether students have mastered the content. Critics call this scripted learning and regard it as unprofessional. *See also in this chapter: Direct Instruction.*

**teaching for understanding:** A pedagogical method that focuses on teaching students to understand new concepts rather than memorize discrete facts. Although this term has been used to refer specifically to deep, meaningful learning, it’s really the goal of all instruction: All teachers want their students to understand, not just recall and recite, whatever was taught.
Key Historical Leaders

**Adler, Mortimer J. (1902–2001):** A philosopher and author who dedicated himself to popularizing the great books and great ideas of Western civilization. A high school dropout, Adler took night classes at Columbia University, where he fell in love with philosophy. He failed to receive a bachelor’s degree because he did not complete his physical education requirement, but he eventually earned a doctorate in philosophy, thus becoming possibly the first person to receive a doctorate without having first obtained either a high school diploma or a bachelor’s degree. In 1930, he joined the faculty at the University of Chicago, where he teamed up with its president, Robert Maynard Hutchins, to promote the “Great Books” of the Western canon. In response, large numbers of people formed clubs to read and discuss the books designated by Hutchins and Adler as the touchstones of Western thought. Because of his devotion to perennial truths, Adler crossed swords with progressive educators in the 1930s. Over the course of his long life, he wrote dozens of books. For many years, he served as chair of the editorial board of *Encyclopædia Britannica*. In the early 1980s, hoping to promote serious reading and discussion in schools, Adler developed the Paideia Program, which emphasized coaching, seminars, and didactic instruction. *See also in this chapter: Hutchins, Robert Maynard. See also: Great Books program (Ch. 7); Paideia Program (Ch. 7).*

**Bagley, William Chandler (1874–1946):** A prominent educational psychologist, philosopher, and teacher educator who spent most of his career at Teachers College, Columbia University. Bagley achieved renown in his profession for his advocacy of liberal education in the 1910s, when others preferred vocational education; for his criticism of IQ tests in the 1920s, when most educational psychologists embraced them; and for his criticism of child-centered progressivism, which disparaged curriculum planning. He was a leader of the Essentialist movement, which emphasized the importance of a well-educated teacher and a well-planned curriculum. *See also: Essentialism (Ch. 7).*

**Bestor, Arthur (1908–1994):** A prize-winning historian who wrote scathing critiques of American education in the 1950s: *Educational Wastelands* and *The Restoration of Learning*. His books protested anti-intellectualism and the dumbing-down of schools. He was a founder of the Council for Basic Education, which advocated a liberal education for all students.

**Chall, Jeanne (1921–1999):** A major figure in the scientific study of reading. Chall wrote the definitive study of reading instruction, *Learning to Read: The Great Debate* (1967),
in which she described the history of research about reading and concluded that most beginning readers need to learn to decode the language to read well. For most of her career, Chall was a professor of psychology at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

**Coleman, James S. (1926–1995):** A major figure in U.S. sociology and the study of U.S. education. For most of his career, he was on the faculty of the University of Chicago. Coleman was the lead author of the landmark report *Equality of Educational Opportunity* (1966), which influenced public policy about race and education for many years. For years, Coleman and others used this study to promote the busing of Black and White students, but Coleman later revised his views on the value of busing and concluded that it contributed to White flight from urban schools, thus making desegregation more difficult to achieve. In his later studies, Coleman became an advocate of policies that were likely to increase families’ social capital, including Catholic schools and vouchers. *See also:* busing (Ch. 4); Coleman Report (Ch. 4).

**Counts, George S. (1889–1974):** A sociologist who was a leading authority on Soviet education and a prominent figure among left-leaning progressives at Teachers College, Columbia University, in the 1930s. In 1932, Counts startled the world of progressive education when he gave a much-noted speech asking, “Dare the School Build a New Social Order?” He became a leader of those who thought that the school should build a new social order (they called themselves “social reconstructionists” and “frontier thinkers”), even if it involved indoctrination. He was elected president of the American Federation of Teachers in 1939, where he opposed Communist efforts to infiltrate the union. His writings after World War II affirmed his strong support for American liberalism and democratic government.

**Dewey, John (1859–1962):** The leading philosopher of U.S. education and the founding father of progressive education. Dewey was known to educators through his many writings and his emphasis on children’s experiences as a source of learning. In his writings, he focused on the relationship between how children learned and how they would later function as citizens of a democracy. Although Dewey supported teaching subject matter—indeed, the famous Dewey School at the University of Chicago featured a rich liberal arts curriculum in history, literature, and science—some of his followers interpreted his teachings to mean that all schooling should be informal and unstructured. Among Dewey’s best-known books were *Democracy and Education, The Child and the Curriculum, The School and Society,* and *Experience and Education*. In the last-named book, Dewey chided the more extreme of his followers in the progressive education movement for thinking that subject matter could be jettisoned in favor of personal experience. *See also:* progressive education (Ch. 7).

**Froebel, Friedrich (1782–1852):** A pioneer educator and the founder of kindergarten. In 1837, Froebel opened a school for young children that he called the Child Nurture and Activity Institute; in 1840, he renamed it *kindergarten,* literally “a children’s garden,” where they could interact with nature and grow naturally, developing patterns of socialization and cooperation. Kindergarten had three parts: play (which he called
“occupations”); games, singing, and dancing for healthy activity; and observations of nature. See also in this chapter: Pestalozzi, Johann Heinrich. See also: kindergarten (Ch. 22).

**Harris, William Torrey (1835–1909):** A major figure in the history of U.S. education and a champion of liberal education for all children. As superintendent of schools in St. Louis, Missouri, Harris established the United States’ first permanent kindergarten. In 1889, President Benjamin Harrison appointed him U.S. Commissioner of Education, in which capacity he served for 18 years. Harris was a tireless reformer who advocated on behalf of universal public education, a modern curriculum, and schools that teach every youngster “versatile intelligence,” self-control, and “the art of intellectual self-help.”

**Herbart, Johann Friedrich (1776–1841):** A founder of modern scientific pedagogy who taught psychology and philosophy in German universities and whose writings influenced the theory and practice of education in Europe and the United States. In opposition to the then-popular belief that the mind consisted of a series of muscles that need to be trained and exercised, Herbart held that student interest develops as new ideas are linked sequentially to preexisting knowledge. Teacher training institutions on both sides of the Atlantic adopted methods based on Herbartian ideas. In its most common form, the Herbartian approach involved five steps: preparing pupils for a new lesson, presenting the lesson, associating the new lesson with ideas previously studied, generalizing the lesson’s major points, and applying the lesson (or, in some versions, assessing to see whether students had learned the lesson).

**Hutchins, Robert Maynard (1899–1977):** The boy wonder of the academic world, who became dean of Yale Law School at age 28 and president of the University of Chicago when he was only 30. At the University of Chicago, he reorganized the curriculum to emphasize undergraduate education. With the help of his friend Mortimer Adler, Hutchins became a national advocate for study of the Great Books, a reading list that included the classic works of Western civilization and spanned the centuries from Homer to Freud. In the mid-1930s, Hutchins began to speak out against progressive education, especially its emphasis on social adjustment, and in favor of a deep, rich liberal education that trained the mind. He was highly controversial among progressives but commanded a wide and popular following. He also gained renown for his courageous defense of academic freedom and opposition to McCarthyism. See also in this chapter: Adler, Mortimer J. See also: Great Books program (Ch. 7).

**Kilpatrick, William Heard (1871–1965):** One of the most influential figures in the progressive education movement and a disciple of John Dewey, at Teachers College, Columbia University, he taught tens of thousands of future teachers and administrators. Kilpatrick was a champion of child-centered education and opposed a set curriculum. In 1918, he devised the project method, an approach aiming to make learning more relevant and meaningful by encouraging students to create their own projects according to their interests instead of studying subject matter. See also: project-based learning (Ch. 27).
Mann, Horace (1796–1859): One of the founders of U.S. public education. Mann was a lawyer and state legislator who became state secretary of education in Massachusetts in 1837. In this role, he agitated on behalf of free, universal public education, well-educated teachers, well-furnished schoolhouses, higher pay for teachers, non-sectarian instruction, and a sound curriculum. Mann argued persuasively for the economic benefits of public education. His prolific writings, especially his annual reports to the state board, were widely read (and continue to be) not only in Massachusetts but throughout the United States; they generated support for education reform (as “reform” was originally understood before being co-opted in the 21st century by profit-driven enterprises).

Parker, Francis W. (1837–1902): A pioneer of the progressive education movement. A native of New Hampshire, Parker served in the U.S. Civil War, where he rose to the rank of colonel and was known ever after as Colonel Parker. After the war he traveled extensively in Europe, where he learned about new pedagogical ideas of such theorists as Rousseau, Froebel, Pestalozzi, and Herbart. In 1875, he became superintendent of schools in Quincy, Massachusetts, where he put his ideas into practice. In place of traditional harsh discipline and rote memorization, he emphasized informal methods of instruction. Quincy’s students excelled on state tests. He subsequently led the public schools in Boston and headed the Cook County Normal School in Chicago. Although less well known than John Dewey, Parker was referred to by Dewey himself as the “father of progressive education.”

Pestalozzi, Johann Heinrich (1746–1827): A Swiss education reformer whose theories deeply influenced the development of elementary education in Europe and the United States. The schools established by Pestalozzi in Switzerland attracted wide attention. Opposed to the customary reliance on strict discipline and rote memorization, he favored an approach based on kindness and understanding of the child’s world. He believed that education should be based on concrete experiences, so he introduced the use of tactile objects to teach natural science to children. He emphasized both the moral and the intellectual aspects of education, as well as the importance of well-educated teachers. A lifelong social reformer, Pestalozzi believed that good education could change society for the better.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques (1712–1778): A major figure in Western philosophy, born in Geneva, Switzerland. Rousseau claimed that man was good by nature but corrupted by society. Rousseau’s educational philosophy of naturalism, romanticism, and rebellion against social constraints deeply influenced the child-centered wing of the U.S. progressive education movement.

Terman, Lewis (1877–1956): A psychologist at Stanford University and pioneer in the development and popularization of intelligence tests. Holding that intelligence was innate, fixed, and inherited, Terman strongly believed that intelligence tests could quickly determine, as early as age 6, not only how smart a student was but also his or her likely educational attainment and career prospects. We now know from brain research that intelligence is not fixed, and IQ tests have been criticized for culturally
weighted questions. Terman was an important figure in drawing attention to educa-
tion for the gifted. See also: intelligence quotient (Ch. 18).

Thorndike, Edward Lee (1874–1949): A founder of the field of educational psychology. Thorndike, who began his work with studies of animal behavior, spent most of his career at Teachers College, Columbia University, where he sought to make the study of education more scientific. He was a leading figure in the progressive education movement. As a behaviorist, he promulgated various “laws of learning” based on connections between stimulus and response studies. He opposed such allegedly useless studies as Latin and Greek and any other subjects that supposedly “trained the mind” in favor of studies that were relevant to students’ interests and needs. Thorndike was a pioneer in the development of standardized tests and intelligence tests and, like most other educational psychologists of his time, believed that intelligence was measurable, hereditary, and immutable.
CHAPTER 26

Reading and Writing

**active reading**: A set of pedagogical strategies intended to get students involved in thinking about what they are reading. Active reading may involve any of a wide range of activities, such as underlining, outlining, predicting, summarizing, paraphrasing, connecting the reading to one’s own experiences, visualizing, or asking questions about the content of the reading material.

**alphabet**: The 26 letters that make up the English language, beginning with $A$ and ending with $Z$; also known as the ABCs. These letters are the building blocks of written words. In the 1840s, Horace Mann, known as the father of American public education, opposed the alphabet method of teaching reading, which required students to memorize the letters and combine them into words. He described the letters of the alphabet as “skeleton-shaped, bloodless, ghostly apparitions” that terrified children. In the 1960s, however, the Harvard reading researcher Jeanne Chall concluded after exhaustive research that knowledge of letters and their sounds is an essential first step in learning to read. See also in this chapter: phoneme; phonics; whole language.

**authentic literature**: Trade books, newspapers, magazines, and student-written stories, as opposed to textbooks; literature presented in its entirety, without selection or bowdlerization. Some plays by Shakespeare included in high school anthologies are edited to remove sexual references, such as those found in *Romeo and Juliet*. The American Library Association and the National Council of Teachers of English have inveighed against censorship of texts, but without much success. Preparing to take standardized tests is often anathema to teaching authentic literature, since standardized tests by necessity customarily use excerpts from novels, books, or essays, taken out of context.

**balanced literacy**: An approach to reading instruction that emphasizes the primacy of constructing meaning from authentic texts while also including instruction in skills. Balanced literacy classes incorporate elements of whole-language instruction, such as the use of complete and authentic (as opposed to decodable or vocabulary-controlled) texts and the teaching of common sight words, as well as providing some instruction in phonics. Such classes employ diverse strategies, including read-aloud sessions, word walls, guided reading, and reading circles. Advocates laud the method because it relies primarily on teacher judgment and initiative. See also in this chapter: whole language.
basal readers: Textbooks with a controlled vocabulary used to teach beginning reading. Basal readers contain fiction and nonfiction and are written in language appropriate for specific grade levels.

benchmark books or leveled books: Books designed for specific reading levels, enabling students to select books they are able to read and teachers to determine which books are appropriate for which students.

big books: Oversize books used to teach reading in the early grades. The idea of using big books was imported to the United States from New Zealand in the early 1970s. It is assumed that these books are attractive to children because of their large type and colorful illustrations; many teachers use them for shared reading activities, when the teacher or a classroom aide reads with more than one child at the same time. Big books are often found in whole-language and balanced literacy classrooms.

celebrations of approximations: A term used by adherents of whole-language instruction meaning that teachers should encourage students when their efforts are nearly, but not completely, correct.

close reading: Involves analyzing the text and focusing on story details in order to comprehend the meaning of a book or passage without regard to context or background information. Most high school and college English classes require close reading. Controversy arose when close reading became a requirement for the Common Core State Standards in early childhood classrooms. Many teachers and parents wondered whether young children would be distracted from the joy of learning to read if they are asked questions about meaning or purpose when they barely know how to read.

cloze reading: A test or exercise of reading comprehension in which students must supply words that have been purposely removed from a sample piece of writing.

collaborative writing: A teaching technique in which students work together to plan, draft, revise, and edit their written work.

community of readers: Students who read stories and books together in class. This phrase encompasses such activities as collaborative read-alouds, communal book reviewing, and other opportunities to discuss books with one’s peers. See also in this chapter: balanced literacy.

comprehension: Understanding what one reads, hears, or sees, a process usually involving the integration of new information with prior knowledge.

comprehension strategies: Any of a wide variety of techniques purported to help students understand what they read, hear, or otherwise observe. Examples of comprehension strategies include figuring out the meaning of words from context clues and generalizing based on specific facts.

construction of meaning: The act of thinking about ideas, events, and texts and ascribing significance to them. Those who use this phrase typically assert that texts are cultural products that do not have meaning in and of themselves; rather, the reader constructs their meaning, depending on prior experiences and knowledge, emotional state at the time of the reading, and the political and social climate in which the
reader lives. Put another way, the text has no necessary relationship to what its au-
author intended. This popular literary theory encourages readers to avoid seeking the
author’s purpose, since the author’s purpose is allegedly irrelevant; it also encourages
readers to believe that a text says whatever a reader thinks it does, which is a highly
narcissistic, solipsistic notion. Teachers who teach this belief encourage students to
believe that what they feel about a text is more important than the text itself.

conventions of language: The generally agreed-on rules of grammar, syntax, spelling,
and usage of a particular language.

diagramming sentences: A means of picturing the structure of a sentence by placing the
words on a horizontal line divided in two. The subject goes on the left side of the line,
and the verb goes on the right side. Adjectives, adverbs, and other parts of speech are
placed on separate lines under the subject or verb in such a way that illustrates how
they modify those words. Many students find that diagramming sentences is like a
game and that it helps them understand how sentences are constructed, how the
different parts of speech function, and why it is important to be thoughtful in placing
adjectives and adverbs in a sentence.

Dick and Jane readers: A textbook series whose formal name was the Elson-Gray Read-
ers, prepared by William S. Gray of the University of Chicago and introduced in 1930.
The purpose of the books was to give beginning readers a simple vocabulary of easy
words that they could recognize on sight. The readers were designed in keeping with
the whole-word method of teaching reading, which was intended to replace phonics.
The Dick and Jane readers were used by millions of U.S. schoolchildren and inject-
ated into popular culture such phrases as “Run, Spot, run.” In the 1950s, a bestselling
book titled Why Johnny Can’t Read by Rudolf Flesch harshly criticized the banality of
the books as well as their reliance on the whole-word method. In the 1960s, other
critics charged that the Dick and Jane readers lacked any references to real life and
were biased toward a world of White, middle-class, suburban, intact families. De-
spite the publisher’s efforts to introduce non-White families into the books, the series
eventually disappeared from the marketplace. See also in this chapter: basal readers.

Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library: Launched in 1995, the Dolly Parton Imagination
Library has provided as of this writing about 100 million books to children. Dolly’s
vision was to foster a love of reading to preschool children and provide them with a
special book each month. Parents, regardless of income, sign up for the program, and
children are sent books in the mail. Dolly Parton wanted children to feel the magic
and excitement about books and to feel the joy books can create.

Drop Everything and Read (DEAR): A program that involves setting aside a regular time
in the class schedule for independent reading. Students select their own books and
are not expected to write about or otherwise report on what they have read. The pro-
gram aims to get students to experience the joy of reading without feeling academic
pressure.

dyslexia: A neurological learning disability characterized by difficulties with accurate or
fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding skills. These difficulties
typically result from a deficit in the student’s phonological component of language. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and impeded growth of vocabulary and background knowledge. Dyslexia is the most common cause of reading, writing, and spelling difficulties and affects males and females nearly equally. The causes of dyslexia are neurobiological and genetic. With proper diagnosis, hard work, and support, students with dyslexia can excel in school.

**embedded questions:** These are guided reading questions placed within reading passages so students can learn to ask themselves questions as they are reading. Such questions are supposed to model “active reading” and to teach students to think as they read. However, students may find it annoying and distracting to have their reading constantly interrupted by pedagogical activities.

**emergent-level students:** Students who are learning how to read but have not yet mastered the skills involved.

**English language arts (ELA):** The academic subject previously known as English but now including such communication skills as reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. The redefinition from English to English language arts shifted the subject’s emphasis from the study of literature to the acquisition of skills.

**explicit grammar instruction:** Instruction in the descriptive terminology and prescriptive rules of a given language, including syntax and the function of different parts of speech.

**fishbone graph:** A flowchart or diagram similar to the framework for diagramming sentences in English grammar.

**fishbowl:** A demonstration in class that uses students as examples. In teaching writing to a group of elementary school students, for example, a teacher may “fishbowl” a group of students conversing together about their lesson so the rest of the class can see how their partnership works.

**five Ws:** The questions that must be answered when writing journalistic prose: *who, what, when, where,* and *why.* Together, the questions act as a formula for getting the basic story on an issue or a topic.

**fluency:** The ability to do a task automatically, without halting or pausing to think about it. For example, fluent musicians performing in concert know immediately which note or chord is appropriate at which time and do not need to stop to think about it; if they did, their performance would come to a halt. In reading, fluency is the ability to read rapidly with some specified level of decoding ability and comprehension. Fluency is the result of intensive practice.

**fluent manner:** Ease in carrying out an activity such as reading or speaking, with minimal halting.

**fluent stage:** The stage in the development of reading ability at which a student can read easily and well, without halting or pausing to figure out the phonetic code or to find out the meaning of a word. Decoding fluency is essential: Without it, the student will not be able to read easily or well. Fluency in vocabulary and syntax is also important.
Most important, however, is a wealth of basic background knowledge that enables students to understand what they are reading without stumbling over its meaning.

**focus lesson:** A lesson that a teacher in a balanced literacy classroom decides to teach on the spot on the basis of student discussion. In a focus lesson, the teacher typically discusses, explains, and demonstrates a strategy or procedure for learning, such as how to choose a book to read or how to listen to the group discussion. This kind of spontaneous action on the part of the teacher is widely considered an essential aspect of the balanced literacy approach. See also in this chapter: balanced literacy.

**functional illiteracy:** The inability to read or write well enough to perform many necessary tasks in life, such as reading a train schedule, filling out a job application, reading a classified advertisement, or understanding a newspaper headline.

**genre study:** In reading and literature classes, the study of a particular type or form of writing, such as biography, short story, novel, oration, essay, lyric poetry, epic poetry, tragedy, comedy, or farce.

**grammar:** The set of rules governing the use of a language, including knowledge of the parts of speech and of correct syntax. Knowledge of grammar enables one to communicate effectively—to say and write what one means with clarity, accuracy, and coherence. Placing an adverb like *only* in the wrong place in a sentence can change its meaning. Linguists often distinguish between this kind of rules-based grammar and grammar as it occurs in the usage shared by a community of speakers. It is useful to know both kinds, so that one may participate in the public sphere, where formal rules matter, and in one’s private sphere, where personal communications may depend more on idioms and nonverbal exchanges than on formal accuracy of expression.

**graphic novels:** Long-form works in comic book form, often with complex storylines. Some educators prefer using graphic novels rather than traditional novels to promote literacy because they are easier to read and show the action in drawings. Advocates say that anything that gets students to read is worthy, but critics say that graphic novels contribute to the dumbing-down of the curriculum and are no replacement for real literature.

**graphophonic cues:** Hints based on sound-symbol correspondences that help readers decode and comprehend a text.

**guided reading groups:** Groups of students, often organized by ability level, that an instructor or facilitator leads in guided reading instruction.

**guided reading instruction:** A method of reading instruction in which the instructor walks one or more students (often students in a small group, or *literacy circle*) through a text, reading it aloud and pausing from time to time to engage the student or students in thinking about aspects of the text. Guided reading often involves instruction in specific reciprocal learning strategies, including summarizing, predicting, questioning, and clarifying. Many textbooks now include guided reading questions in their study apparatus. Proponents of guided reading say that students need direction to concentrate on what is important, but critics contend that emphasis on skills rather
than content defers students’ acquisition of background knowledge, which is essential for comprehension.

**guided writing:** A teaching technique in which the teacher encourages students to write, revise, and consider how to improve their writing by walking them step by step through the requirements of the writing process. Critics of guided writing say it is too routinized and technical and that it dampens spontaneity and creativity.

**handwriting:** Penmanship—the skill of writing legibly using a pen or pencil. Handwriting was once taught intensively in U.S. elementary schools, where students practiced their handwriting by the hour, trying to demonstrate that they could write their words, sentences, paragraphs, and essays in a clean, clear style. Today, with the widespread availability of computers, it is generally assumed that handwriting has become obsolete. However, handwriting continues to be important in many matters, such as writing medical prescriptions, copying phone numbers, addressing letters and packages, and filing tax returns. Errors in any of these instances can be extremely costly to individuals and to society, yet can be easily avoided by ensuring that every high school graduate can write legibly.

**independent reading:** Reading that students do on their own, not assigned or chosen by the teacher.

**integrated language arts:** The teaching of grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and writing in the context of literature.

**interactive writing:** A writing technique in which the student writer works with another party—a teacher or facilitator, one or more classmates, or a computer program—to produce a piece of writing. The writing process generally proceeds according to some predetermined sequence of actions in which parts of the writing are provided by the prompter and other parts are provided, in response, by the student. So, for example, the teacher might generate the first line of a couplet, prompting the student to generate the next one. Proponents of interactive writing say it can be used to teach students about standard elements of narrative writing, poetry, drama, and nonfiction. Critics say that interactive writing disregards the idea that writing is usually a solitary process.

**intertextual comparison:** The interpretive comparison of two or more pieces of writing, such as poems or stories. Students may be asked to make such a comparison during regular instruction or on a reading test.

**intervention:** A program that does something different from what was done before in an attempt to improve a situation. For example, one intervention may aim to remediate reading failure with a new approach, and another may be designed to help students with special needs. The term is flexible and can apply to a number of situations and programs.

**intervention strategies:** Programs that provide extra support and resources to help improve student or school performance.
invented spelling: A unique spelling of a word created by a child who has not yet learned the correct spelling. Proponents of invented spelling believe that it encourages students to express their ideas in writing before they have learned to spell. Critics worry that it introduces poor habits early in the learning process. Invented spelling is also referred to as temporary spelling, on the assumption that at some point students will learn to spell the words accurately.

jot charting: A pedagogical strategy for teaching reading comprehension. A jot chart is an outline that students develop to help them identify ideas and facts as they read. Readers already fluent may find this technique distracting.

language arts: See also in this chapter: English language arts.

leveled library: A collection of books or other reading materials in balanced literacy classrooms and schools that are organized by their levels of difficulty, beginning with easy books for beginners and ranging to relatively complex books for advanced readers. For each grade, there might be three or four (or more) different levels of books. As students advance to increasingly more difficult books, the teacher continually assesses their progress. Leveled libraries are generally placed in a central area, such as the school library, or in individual classrooms.

leveled readers: Books designed or selected according to how well they match students’ reading ability, usually found in balanced literacy schools.

library: A space in the school that contains books of all kinds, both fiction and non-fiction; magazines; maps; computer terminals; videos; and other media intended to communicate ideas and knowledge. A library is not to be confused with a shared book room: It contains many more books, and they are not leveled by grade. In addition, students are free to read library books above or below their presumed reading level. Traditionally, the school library has a trained librarian who assists students in locating the resources they need.

literacy block: A period of time set aside in the elementary school day for reading and language activities, usually as part of a balanced literacy program. A typical literacy block would include small-group and individual activities, such as minilessons, read-alouds, shared reading, guided reading, independent reading, guided writing, modeled writing, independent writing, shared writing, interactive writing, and student conferences. Part of the literacy block is set aside for word work, during which students learn about phonics, vocabulary, and phonemic awareness.

literacy center: A place in the classroom where students gather in small groups to read on their own.

literacy circle: A group of students reading or learning to read who are encouraged by the teacher to discuss what they are reading or learning.

literacy stages: The developmental stages of learning to read. Students begin as non-readers and progress through stages to become proficient readers. Literacy educators do not agree on the names of these stages or on how many stages there are, although
a common progression includes the preprint stage, the emergent literacy stage, the early literacy stage, and the independent literacy stage.

**literate:** In education, a descriptor of students who can read and write at the level expected for their age and grade. In general, a literate person is educated, able to read and write, possesses an extensive vocabulary, and has a rich fund of knowledge about important aspects of society and the world.

**literature circle:** A small, temporary discussion group of students who have chosen to read the same work of literature. Literature circles are intended to engage students by putting them in charge of their own learning: Students, not the teacher, decide which book the circle will read, and each student in the circle has a role during discussion sessions. For example, one student may be in charge of writing down questions to discuss, another of identifying important passages in the work, another of finding connections between the work discussed and something else that the group knows about, and another of discussing unusual words in the text. Literature circles meet regularly during class time, and discussion roles change at each meeting. When the circle completes a book, its members discuss their literary work with the rest of the class. Literature circles introduce two new elements to English class: First, teachers relinquish their role as the ones responsible for selecting important literature that students should read; and second, the circles replace the traditional practice of having an entire English class read and discuss the same work of literature under the guidance of the teacher.

**masking card:** A card that teachers use during literacy instruction to hide certain words, parts of words, or phrases to focus students’ attention on the text that remains uncovered.

**Matthew effect:** A term referring to a line in the New Testament that reads, “For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath” (Matthew 25:29). This is usually taken to mean that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. In education, the phrase was popularized by psychologist Keith Stanovich, who maintained that students who are early readers continue over time to accumulate advantage over those who have difficulty learning to read, because the former group reads more, accrues a larger vocabulary, and thus ends up learning more.

**McGuffey readers:** A celebrated series of six reading textbooks created by Rev. William Holmes McGuffey that were used by millions of students in the United States in the latter half of the 19th century and the early 20th century. The books were designed to increase in difficulty, from beginning to advanced reading levels, as students progressed through the series. They were moralistic in tone, intending to provide models of good behavior and civic virtue. The fifth and sixth books contained excellent literature, including excerpts from leading English and American authors such as Shakespeare and Hawthorne. Because so many children used the same textbooks, the McGuffey readers created a common lexicon of literary allusions for several generations of Americans.
**meaning from print:** Understanding what the text says, relying on context and prior knowledge.

**miscue:** A term originally used in billiards to describe an error that occurs when the cue stick mis-strikes the ball. In education, reading researcher Kenneth Goodman coined the term to describe any departure from the text during oral reading. Educators—mostly whole-language adherents—use the word *miscue* instead of *error* to suggest that mistakes are not random but occur because the reader is using specific but inappropriate strategies to make sense of text. From this standpoint, not all errors (or miscues) are equal; some represent more highly developed reading skills than others. In addition, *miscue analysis* is used to diagnose the reader’s understanding of the text, determining which strategies the reader is using or lacking and what kinds of additional instruction might be helpful. In Goodman’s model, reading is an active process in which readers use their language and experience to seek meaning.

**multiple literacies:** A term denoting the belief that the traditional definition of literacy as the ability to read and write is inadequate or even obsolete in today’s world. According to some, *multiple literacies* refers to the ability to understand and navigate multiple representations of ideas and content, including film as well as visual and electronic media encountered on computers, handheld organizers, cell phones, and the Internet. Others hold that the term refers to the ability to construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct popular culture. In addition, the principle of multiple literacies has political connotations, with advocates of critical theory maintaining that the traditional European American view of literacy must expand to acknowledge the voices of people in other cultures who up to now have been marginalized and ignored by postcolonial airs of superiority.

**National Reading Panel (NRP):** A commission assembled by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, at the request of the U.S. Congress in 1997, to assess the effectiveness of different approaches to reading instruction. Its 2000 report, called *Teaching Children to Read,* was influential in encouraging textbook publishers to include phonics as an important part of early reading instruction and in influencing the creation of the Reading First program in the No Child Left Behind legislation. Joanne Yatvin, an elementary school principal and original panel member, wrote a minority report criticizing the lack of balance on the panel and its findings. She claimed that the NRP failed to include early-learning teachers on the panel, reviewed only a small number of studies, and omitted studies pertaining to whole language. Reading First was supposed to fund only “scientifically proven” programs, at a cost of $1 billion per year for 6 years, but the program became mired in controversy. The Department of Education’s Office of Inspector General determined that hired consultants for the program steered contracts to their favored reading programs, creating a conflict of interest. Reading First was never reauthorized because of the scandal associated with it.

**oral reading:** Reading out loud. In the public schools of the 19th century and the early decades of the 20th century, oral reading was an important class exercise. In the
1920s, however, researchers decided that oral reading was undesirable after comparing the eye movements of students who were reading out loud with those of students who were reading silently. Because students who read silently were reading faster than those who read out loud, the experts decided that reading aloud was inefficient and accordingly advised teachers to encourage silent reading and to discourage oral reading. Reading aloud increased students’ awareness of the importance of the sounds made by different letters and combinations of letters, but when they read silently, the sounds were unimportant. None of this research would be recognized today as credible, but the negative attitudes among educators against phonetics and oral reading persisted for many years. Contrast in this chapter: silent reading.

phoneme: Any minimal unit of sound used to distinguish between words in a language—that is, the vowels and consonants (and other elements, such as glottal stops, clicks, or tones) that serve to distinguish words from one another in a language. Thus, the /p/ and /b/ in pat and bat are phonemes of English because the distinction between them is sufficient to distinguish the one word from the other.

phonemic awareness: The ability to recognize that words and syllables are composed of bits of sound (phonemes), which is important in learning to read.

phonemic sequencing error: A type of mistake that occurs when a student is unable to put sounds together in the right order to understand the meaning of a word or phrase.

phonics: Any of a number of approaches to teaching students the alphabetic code of a language—that is, how the sounds of the language are encoded into writing and then decoded during reading. Instruction in phonics teaches beginning readers the relationships between letters and sounds and shows them how to decode words by sounding them out. See also in this chapter: alphabet.

phonological awareness: Awareness of the sounds of language and of various aspects of language sounds, such as stress and intonation.

phonological delay: A lag in a student’s ability to understand and produce sounds, causing him or her problems in reading, spelling, and speaking.

prewriting: A process of initiating or organizing ideas for a composition before starting the writing process.

print-rich environment: A classroom, home, or other location in which ample displays of written language, such as books, charts, magazines, signs, and student papers, are accessible. Also known as a literacy-rich environment.

process approach to reading and writing: A method of teaching reading and writing that stresses the process of learning these skills. Reading teachers may concern themselves less with the accuracy of students’ reading than with students’ processes of responding, reacting, asking questions, comparing text with self, and applying other comprehension strategies. Similarly, writing teachers may disregard the grammatical accuracy of student essays but pay a great deal of attention to the care with which students plan their essays, draft them, revise them, respond to teacher feedback, edit
them again, and share or publish them. The process writing approach combines a number of instructional activities to teach writing, including extended writing opportunities, writing for real audiences, one-to-one instruction, and cycles of writing.

**read-aloud:** A classroom activity in which students are read to by a teacher, a classroom aide, or other students. The students may listen as a whole class or in small groups. Read-alouds are intended to teach students skills in reading comprehension, listening, and critical thinking, as well as to improve their attitudes toward reading.

**reader-response theory:** A theory of reading propounded in 1938 by educator and researcher Louise Rosenblatt asserting that the meaning of a text is not static, but an active construction that depends on the reader’s reaction to the text and his or her personal attitudes, feelings, and experiences. Reader-response theorists assert that readers construct texts in the act of reading and that a given text has no meaning in and of itself but rather has as many meanings as there are readers and readings. Critics complain that the theory implies that a student’s feelings about a work of literature are more important than the author’s purposes.

**reading in the content areas:** A phrase referring to the belief that reading instruction is the responsibility of all teachers, including those in the various academic subject areas, such as history, science, and mathematics. Proponents believe that it is vital for content-area teachers to teach reading as well as their subjects because so many secondary students have poor reading skills. Critics worry that high school students will be cheated out of instructional time in the academic subjects while their teachers are trying to teach reading. Also called *reading across the curriculum*.

**Reading Recovery:** An individualized reading skills intervention program for students having difficulty learning to read. Reading Recovery teachers are trained in a year-long course that integrates reading, writing, and listening techniques.

**relevant:** An adjective usually attached to an activity or reading assignment to show that it has some relationship to students’ own lives. Relevance has become very important in modern education, on the assumption that students want to learn mostly about ideas, events, and processes they can connect to their personal experiences. The belief that whatever is studied must relate directly to students’ own lives ignores the idea that students need extensive background knowledge on which to build new understandings. If students learn only what is directly connected to their own lives, their universe of learning will be severely limited and dependent on their family and community resources.

**running record:** Observation notes made by the teacher about a student’s oral reading ability. The teacher identifies the student’s errors (or miscues) and documents the student’s progress or problems. By looking at the running record, the teacher can analyze the type of reading and instruction that is best suited for the student.

**sentence combining:** A strategy that teaches students to write more complex sentences.
**shared reading:** A pedagogical technique that divides students into pairs to read together, taking turns listening and reading. This activity is an aspect of the constructivist method of teaching reading and is usually found in balanced literacy classrooms.

**shared writing:** A pedagogical technique that divides students into pairs to read and discuss each other’s writing projects. This activity is usually found in balanced literacy classrooms using the writing process or the writers’ workshop model.

**sight words:** A limited number of commonly used words that young children are encouraged to memorize as a whole, without decoding them. Advocates of whole-word instruction believe that being able to recognize many sight words will give students a fast start in learning to read. Advocates of phonics, however, believe that students should focus on learning to decode new words. Most teachers do both.

**silent reading:** Time devoted in class to reading quietly and individually, without speaking out loud. See also in this chapter: **sustained silent reading (SSR).** Contrast in this chapter: **oral reading.**

**story map:** A graphic used to illustrate the various elements of a short story. Typically, these elements include setting (time and place); conflict; protagonist; antagonist; minor characters; and elements of the plot (exposition, inciting incident, rising action, climax, crisis, falling action, resolution, and denouement).

**story seeds:** Ideas around which a student might build a story. Every story, for example, involves a conflict, so a teacher could provide a student with a conflict as a story seed and have the student create the setting, the characters, the incident that starts the conflict, and so on.

**stretch it out:** A replacement for the customary expression “sound it out,” referring to a technique for analyzing an unfamiliar word. When a student who has had little exposure to phonetic methods of analyzing letters and words confronts a new word, the literacy coach may tell the student to “stretch it out like a rubber band” in hopes of finding the meaning of the word or perhaps familiar associations.

**striving reader:** A student whose reading skills are below grade level.

**Success for All (SFA):** A program that combines cooperative group learning and individualized instruction to teach reading, writing, and mathematics to students in elementary and middle schools. Developed by Robert Slavin at Johns Hopkins University, SFA has shown particular efficacy with students who come from disadvantaged and poor communities. Although SFA is deemed effective in independent studies, critics dislike it because it is scripted and thus limits teacher creativity.

**summarization:** The process of determining important information in a text and explaining it briefly in one’s own words.

**sustained silent reading (SSR):** A time set aside in the school day for uninterrupted, independent reading. Homework and conversation are not allowed during SSR periods. Variations on SSR include free voluntary reading (FVR); uninterrupted sustained silent reading (USSR); positive outcomes while enjoying reading (POWER); daily individual reading time (DIRT); sustained quiet uninterrupted reading time (SQUIRT);
and drop everything and read (DEAR). See also in this chapter: silent reading. Contrast in this chapter: oral reading.

**systematic phonics:** Direct reading instruction that explicitly teaches the relationships between letters and sounds in a sequence of interconnected lessons.

**text-based reading:** Reading from something that is in print, such as a book.

**textbook:** The basic instructional tool for most subjects taught in U.S. schools. In the absence of a state or national curriculum, the textbook is the primary vehicle to convey the content of each course. Textbooks are often heavy because they are loaded with graphics and other visual elements. Paragraphs are often written in short, choppy sentences on the assumption that they make the book easier to read. Publishers produce textbooks with these characteristics because they are trying to please textbook-adoption committees in states that have huge buying power (mainly California and Texas). These committees are apparently impressed by lively graphics, regardless of how effective some of these books are as teaching tools.

**text-to-self connection:** A learning strategy applied by elementary students while reading a text. Prompted by the teacher, students ask themselves whether the text they are reading reminds them of something that has happened in their lives. Advocates claim that making these connections helps students think about and understand what they are learning. Critics contend that the approach is artificial, makes reading a technical process, and does not help students appreciate literature that does not relate to their own lives.

**text-to-text connection:** The act of comparing one reading passage to another.

**think-aloud strategy:** The process of talking explicitly about what one is reading. The think-aloud process, which involves questioning, accessing prior knowledge, and making predictions, helps students recognize the strategies they are using to understand a text.

**Total Physical Response (TPR):** A language-teaching method based on the belief that students will learn better when full bodily motion is involved in the process. Developed by educator and researcher James J. Asher, TPR is supposed to replace the traditional learning strategy of sitting at a desk and reading a book. Verbal commands are replaced by physical ones. For example, teachers may teach the alphabet by having students lie on the floor to form letter shapes or have students learn punctuation by mimicking the shape of a period, a comma, or an exclamation mark. TPR has some historical precedence: In the early 19th century, some pedagogues believed that students would learn the alphabet if they ate biscuits baked in the shape of letters.

**touchstone text:** A book or an article that serves as a model for writing assignments.

**transitional reader:** A student who has moved beyond the beginning stages of learning to read but needs additional support to become a fully independent reader.

**turn-and-talk strategy:** In a balanced literacy classroom, the practice of getting students to discuss with one another what they have read in their read-aloud group.
**vocabulary:** Words that students have learned or need to learn to increase their general literacy and store of knowledge. In general, the greater the students’ vocabulary, the greater their capacity to learn new information and new ideas.

**whole language:** A philosophy and teaching method that focuses on reading for meaning in context. In its purest form, as described by one of its major founders, Kenneth Goodman of the University of Arizona, whole language avoids linguistic analysis of any kind, such as phonics instruction, and instead stresses the importance of the wholeness of words and text. In the 1980s, whole language was widely adopted by schools and state education departments across the United States. Whole-language methods fell out of favor, however, in the mid-1990s because of negative results, especially in California. Its advocates then embraced a similar approach that included attention to phonics instruction, called *balanced literacy.* See also in this chapter: **alphabet; balanced literacy.**

**whole-word method:** A method for teaching reading that instructs students to look at the whole word and try to recognize it by its shape, familiarity, and context clues, rather than sounding it out phonetically.

**word attack skills:** A set of strategies used to recognize and pronounce unfamiliar printed words.

**word wall:** A list of words posted in the classroom on a poster or wall chart. The list consists of words relevant to the lesson being taught and is intended to help students recognize common words, see how they should be spelled, and build vocabulary.

**word web:** A graphic organizer used to show loosely associated relations among ideas. To create a word web, follow this procedure: Write a word or phrase in the middle of a piece of paper and circle it. Around the circle, write other words or phrases that come to mind when you think about the first word or phrase. Circle these and draw lines to connect them to the inner circle. Repeat this process with each of the outer circled words and phrases. Continue in this manner until your paper is full.

**word work:** A term used in balanced literacy classrooms to describe a block of time devoted to teaching phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

**workshop model:** A technique for reading and writing instruction developed by Lucy Calkins of Teachers College, Columbia University. As a rule, the workshop model is constructivist in that there is no curriculum content; yet at the same time, it is prescriptive in describing what teachers and students should do during the time allocated for teaching reading or writing. See also in this chapter: **writing process.**

**writing across the curriculum:** An expression referring to the belief that writing should be taught as part of every subject in the curriculum. So, for example, history teachers, science teachers, and even math teachers are encouraged to assign work that helps students become better at expressing themselves in writing.

**writing process:** A sequence of writing activities, including prewriting, drafting, revising, proofreading, and publishing. The writing process was developed as an elementary-level classroom activity intended to put the student’s own writing and reflection
at the heart of the classroom (as opposed to content that comes from the teacher or from books) but is now found in classes at all levels of education, including universities. See also in this chapter: workshop model.

**writing strategies:** Techniques that help students plan, write, edit, and revise their compositions.

**writing-through-inquiry activities:** Activities that involve students in analyzing immediate data so they develop ideas and content for a writing task.
CHAPTER 27

Student Instructional Terms and Methods

**active learning:** Any situation in which students learn by doing rather than by sitting at their desks reading, filling out worksheets, or listening to a teacher. Active learning is based on the premise that if students are active, they will be highly motivated and will thus learn more. Some educators believe that the term refers to activities outside school, such as voluntary community service, or such in-school activities as role-playing or conducting a mock trial. Others say that acting out a Shakespeare play in the classroom is active learning, and still others insist that reading a book or solving a mathematics problem is also active learning that requires the student’s close attention.

**advisory:** Organized daily meetings of one adult and a small group of students in middle school or high school. The adult, usually a teacher, gets to know all the students, gives them advice, and acts as their advocate in the school. The advisory is designed to help students make wise choices in their academic and social lives and is expected to improve communication between home and school. Held during the school day, the advisory has taken on the function once assigned to the homeroom. See also: homeroom (Ch. 21).

**authentic engagement:** Enthusiastic involvement of students in their schoolwork, as opposed to involvement motivated solely by fear of failure or by the desire to win extrinsic rewards, such as good grades.

**authentic learning:** Schooling related to real-life situations, as opposed to learning only from books, especially textbooks. Advocates of authentic learning emphasize the value of real-life problems and experiences, contending that what is taught in school has little relationship to anything people do in the world outside school or to the interests of students themselves; efforts to make learning more authentic are intended to overcome that problem. Authentic learning activities tend to involve students in solving the kinds of problems faced by adult citizens, consumers, or professionals and usually require teamwork, decisionmaking, and problem solving.

**character education:** Character education is often treated as a program or course in which to teach ethics or values. Such programs often generate controversy because people don’t always agree about whose ethics or which values to teach. But most, if not all, people agree that schools should teach honesty, respect for oneself and others, responsibility, and good citizenship. These are the essentials of character that schools have always taught. Education would be unthinkable without teaching them daily, not as a course or special program but as an integral part of schooling.
disadvantaged: A reference to students who lack favorable conditions for personal, social, and intellectual development, typically because of family poverty. Students from such backgrounds often have limited vocabularies and little access to academic knowledge in their home environment, and so begin school with disadvantages compared with students whose parents have a college education and a secure income.

dress code: A well-defined set of rules about the clothing and hairstyles that school officials consider appropriate or inappropriate on school grounds. Some schools adopted dress codes or school uniforms because students were coming to school in clothing that was a distraction in an academic atmosphere; others were concerned that a certain style of clothing denoted gang membership. Girls were wearing skimpy clothing designed to display the maximum amount of flesh, and boys were wearing low-slung, baggy pants that fell below their underwear. The rationale for dress codes is to establish a school atmosphere in which clothing is neither a status symbol nor a sexual provocation, and the focus is on learning rather than student dress. Dress codes are often controversial.

educationally disadvantaged youth (EDY): Students whose families have a low income, as gauged by a federal standard; whose standardized test scores are below a certain point; or whose families live in a neighborhood with a low student graduation rate.

experiential background: A student’s life experience.

gender bias: The unfair treatment of students of a given gender, intentionally or unintentionally, by school practices and expectations. The term may refer to expectations by school personnel that boys will have difficulty conforming to classroom routines or learning to read and write, or it may refer to subtle messages that lead to lower average achievement by girls in science, mathematics, and technology. The charge of bias is usually raised when test results consistently show that one gender is more successful than the other, as when girls persistently earn higher scores on reading tests or when boys persistently score higher on mathematics tests.

generative thinking: Cogitation that goes beyond whatever the student has memorized or been taught. For example, original writing requires generative thinking.

homework: School assignments that must be completed outside class, usually at home. Homework teaches students to complete assignments independently, without the immediate supervision of a teacher. It also extends the amount of time available for learning. Although numerous books and articles have denounced homework, the reality is that this is often the only way students have time to read a book, write an essay, conduct research for a project, or practice problem-solving activities.

independent study: An assignment or program of study carried out by an individual student outside any regular course and usually supervised by a teacher.

intellectual capital: The knowledge and skills a person has acquired through study and practice. Intellectual capital is like money in the bank; the more one has, the more one can accrue in the future because knowledge builds on knowledge.
**intrinsic motivation**: The desire to achieve one’s goals, regardless of external rewards, such as grades, honors, or money. *Contrast: extrinsic motivation* (Ch. 21).

**learner outcomes**: Specific expectations of what students are supposed to know or be able to do because of a specific course or learning activity.

**motivation**: The will to accomplish a task or reach a goal. Educators are perennially in search of a technique or philosophy that will motivate students to study and learn. If found, this strategy would constitute the Holy Grail of education, or the royal road to learning. Until the middle of the 20th century, students were motivated to learn by their desire to win the praise of adults, to earn a diploma, or to gain admission to college. Almost every reform proposed in the last century—from small schools to vocational education to project-based learning to graduation tests—has been intended to improve student learning by stimulating their motivation.

**pass/fail**: A grading system in which the student either passes or fails, with no other grade possible.

**passive compliance**: Action on the part of a student to do what is expected but with no enthusiasm and a minimum of effort.

**peer-based program**: A program in which students teach other students of the same age.

**peer mediation**: A program that trains students to resolve conflicts between other students or between groups of students. *See also: conflict resolution instruction* (Ch. 19).

**peer pressure**: The subtle but strong influence that a group has on the behavior of individuals who want to be accepted or admired by the group. If “everyone is doing it,” then students may feel compelled to go along with whatever it is to be accepted by others of their age. When everyone is doing something that is harmful to themselves or others—like indulging in drugs or alcohol or harassing others—peer pressure can have a deeply negative effect on adolescent development. It takes maturity and a strong sense of individualism to resist peer pressure. *See also: peer culture* (Ch. 24).

**peer resource programs**: Programs that train students to provide their peers with counseling, education, and support on such issues as prejudice, drugs, violence, child abuse, dropping out, AIDS, and peer pressure. Students are also trained to provide tutoring and conflict mediation.

**peer tutoring**: A program in which one student helps another student in the same grade learn material in which the first is more proficient.

**Pell Grants**: Federal grants that provide tuition assistance for low-income college students, named for the late Senator Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island, who championed the program.

**plagiarism**: A form of academic theft, plagiarism is stealing someone else’s words and trying to pass them off as one’s own. For example, copying a portion of a book or an essay from the Internet and submitting it to the teacher as one’s own work is plagiarism. When students copy someone else’s language and include it in their own work,
they must put the copied language into quotation marks and insert a footnote identifying the original source of the material. (If the source is identified in the student’s work, quotation marks and a footnote may not be necessary.)

**pod:** A group of students. In some programs, a pod means students who have been identified on the basis of their ability and good behavior; in others, a pod refers to students randomly selected to engage in inquiry activities.

**prior knowledge:** The totality of an individual’s experiences and knowledge at any given time—that is, what a student brings as background information to a new learning experience. The more prior knowledge a person has, the more prepared he or she will be to learn new ideas. Almost everything that people learn or can learn depends on the extent of their prior knowledge. One of the major missions of school is to build students’ fund of background knowledge so they have a foundation for future learning.

**project-based learning (PBL):** A teaching technique in which students learn by doing, engaging in activities that lead to the creation of products based on their own interests and experiences and connected to the curricular standards. More recently, PBL has become a trend connected to Next Generation Learning, a Gates Foundation–backed program like the Common Core State Standards. With PBL, students work mostly on self-directed projects and do less academic subject-matter work in the traditional classroom. Critics fear that project-based learning waters down academic studies, but rigorous projects require research and writing in any academic subject. High Tech High charter schools are PBL schools. They were started with a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

**reciprocal learning:** A pedagogical strategy in which students help one another to master skills or concepts presented by the teacher. Generally, students work in pairs and take turns acting as coach.

**reconstitution:** A drastic corrective action for a school where students have performed poorly for several years with no sign of improvement. Typically, a reconstitution involves the replacement of most or all of the school’s staff and faculty and the hiring of a new principal. This highly punitive and ultimately ineffective approach to “reform” was initiated by federal law (No Child Left Behind) and the federal program Race to the Top.

**reflection:** The process of thinking about what one is doing or what one has just finished doing. For example, students may be encouraged to reflect on their writing, and teachers to reflect on their practice. Reflection on one’s behavior and efforts should involve self-critique, self-analysis, and self-evaluation.

**seed idea:** The main idea or theme in a piece of written work produced by a student. This pedagogical concept is part of the writing process and of the writing workshop model. “Nurturing the seed idea” means writing more about the main theme, adding details and possibly dialogue. Part of this process involves “zooming in” on the main idea and perhaps “changing the lens” to make the idea clearer. See also: workshop model (Ch. 26); writing process (Ch. 26).
**self-directed learning:** Learning that an individual chooses to undertake and direct on his or her own.

**self-monitoring:** The act of paying attention to one’s own work to make sure it is clear and makes sense. During reading, self-monitoring students attend to meaning and use such fix-up strategies as rereading and reading ahead to clarify meaning; during writing, they reflect on the clarity of the message and on the features of text (words, grammar, and conventions) necessary to communicate effectively with an audience. Knowing the audience one is writing for is crucial to effective communication. During shared and guided reading, students self-monitor by thinking aloud to share their understanding of a text with the teacher or with other students. See also: **meta-cognition (Ch. 24).**

**self-regulated learning (SRL):** In SRL, students are to reflect and monitor their own learning and goal-setting, controlling their actions, and paying attention until their objectives are met. They are to evaluate their own progress based on set standards. While some self-regulated learning should be a goal, emphasis on it has increased in recent years so that students are able to work on their own on computers.

**service learning:** Community service by students in a nonschool setting. Service learning aims to deepen students’ learning and promote problem solving by having them engage in socially useful activities in the local community. Service learning is sometimes voluntary and sometimes required for high school graduation. Service learning is not without concerns. Do high school students have time? Is it simply a feel-good exercise to add on a college application? Are high school students too young for service learning? Do community organizations really need the students in order to provide a service? Good school and community organization and planning is key to good service learning.

**social-emotional learning (SEL):** SEL is the group of personal and interpersonal social and emotional skills that children learn at home, in social situations, and in classrooms. Such skills are taught most effectively when integrated into socialization and academic learning. The Collaborative of Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) is one framework that looks at self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decisionmaking. Critics are concerned that CASEL and other outside companies will measure children’s behavior and collect personal information that will be stored online and be vulnerable to hacking or commercialization. However, SEL is also used to describe many kinds of useful school programs that can help children learn how to express and manage their emotions. SEL’s importance in the classroom is reflected in books like Bobbie Hansen’s *The Heart and Science of Teaching.* SEL in the classroom is best when incorporated into practice by teachers and shared only with parents and students.

**student-centered education:** Education that focuses on the needs and capacities of individual children rather than external goals set by the district or state. See also: **child-centered education (Ch. 7).**