

New Literacies, Old Standards for Excellence

1. Discuss the evolution of technology as it moves from an emphasis on tools to a focus on processes. How might this shift in perspectives shape the technology policies of your classroom, school, and district?
2. What do you believe should be the role of teaching about new literacy genres such as podcasting, blogs, and so on? Is this critical to background knowledge? Why or why not?
3. Research is the backbone of formal background building, and searching for such information is more complex in a digital world. What correlation do you see between traditional research instruction and digital research instruction? What methods should be retained, and what needs to be added or revised?
4. What tips do you teach your students about how to discern between spurious information and facts that come from reliable sources? What are the inherent difficulties of doing so in your content area? What common errors do your students make?
5. What is the relationship between critical literacy and new literacies? How could you teach both together?
6. Background knowledge isn't just used through a receptive process; students use it expressively when they speak and write. How could you apply an instructional routine like Internet reciprocal teaching, as described by Don Leu and his colleagues (2006), to promote expressive uses of background knowledge?