

# Beyond a Good Start:

How to improve reading achievement for older readers



Cynthia Shanahan

Professor of Literacy, Language, and Culture,  
Executive Director, Council of Teacher Education,  
UIC

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# Are students really unprepared?



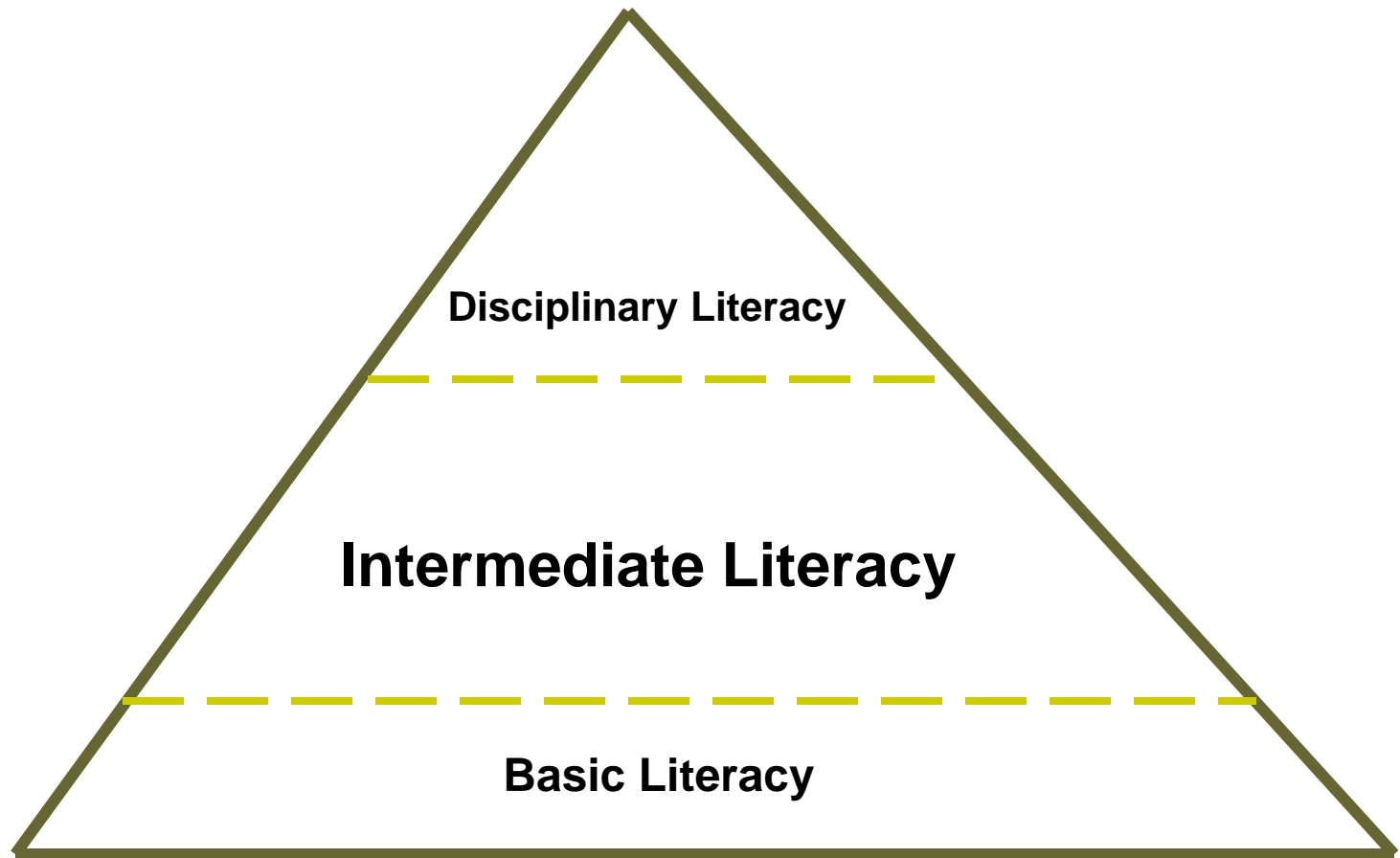
- Reading achievement has risen for 4<sup>th</sup> graders since 1992, while 8<sup>th</sup> grade achievement has been stagnant.
- U.S. 4<sup>th</sup> graders are first or second in the world in all academic areas, while 8<sup>th</sup> graders are much lower.
- More American 8<sup>th</sup> graders are on track for college than is true of either 10<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> graders.

# So what is going on?

- Poverty?
- Low parent education?
- We don't know how to teach reading?



Reading instruction changes as students goes through school, but in middle and high school, reading instruction may include *THESE THREE LEVELS*





# So how do we do it?

- 10 keys to success



# Key 1: Create learning standards

- Few states (or local districts) even have learning standards in reading for older students
- Those with reading standards have general standards that are rarely connected to either content area or grade level
- Hard to have real accountability without clear and specific goals



## Key 2: Require reading

- Amount of reading of challenging texts (complex, subtle text) is best predictor of later academic and work success
- Reading needs to be required and expected
- Teachers have to stop being rational



## Key 3: Increase instructional time

- Upper grade teachers aren't even certain if they are supposed to teach reading
- No excuse for not teaching reading at all grade levels (and all students)
- Need to establish substantial time standards that specify both total amounts of reading instruction as well as amounts for the major components





## Key 4: Provide more time for low readers

- Special classes for those who are two or more years below level
- After school and/or summer programs as well
- This has to be quality time (curriculum, materials, teachers)



## Key 5: Teach vocabulary

- Vocabulary instruction raises reading comprehension
- Tier 2 words and Tier 3 words
- Needs to be substantial and intensive (daily, lots of review)—learning, not teaching, is the point



# Key 6: Teach Oral reading fluency

- Oral reading fluency improves silent reading comprehension
- More effective than silent reading instruction
- Repetition is needed
- This has to be included in the various disciplines because of the differences in textual demands

# Key 7: Reading comprehension



- Comprehension strategy instruction can improve reading achievement
- Need to match the level of intensity evident in the research studies
- Summarization, question asking, prior knowledge, monitoring, graphic organizers, visualization
- Disciplinary strategies, too

# Key 8: Writing



- Writing activity can have a positive impact on reading achievement
- Writing engages a more thorough processing of information
- Writing extended responses to text reading is more effective than short answers



# Key 9: Professional development

- Knowledgeable teachers are more effective
- Professional development is severely lacking in upper grade reading
- Need to provide this professional development on a disciplinary, rather than a school, basis

# Key 10: Motivation

- Need students working towards you rather than daring you to teach
- Curiosity
- Competence
- Challenge
- Collaboration





## Three foci

- Teach high-level discipline based reading skills
- Teach students reading skills and strategies they can use in *every* course
- Work extra with students who are reading far below grade level





If we want older students to read well...

- Establish standards
- Require reading
- Increase amount of teaching
- Increase it even more for striving readers
- Teach vocabulary, oral reading fluency, comprehension, and writing
- Provide professional development
- Motivate kids



# Cynthia Shanahan

University of Illinois at Chicago

[chynd@uic.edu](mailto:chynd@uic.edu)

312-996-4862 (work)

[www.shanahanonliteracy.com](http://www.shanahanonliteracy.com)