



# Adolescent Literacy

## Grades 4-12

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# Why Teach Literacy Skills To Older Students?



# Literacy for 21st Century

“Adolescents entering the adult world in the 21st century will read and write more than at any other time in human history. They will need advanced levels of literacy to perform their jobs, run their households, act as citizens, and conduct their personal lives. They will need literacy to cope with the flood of information they will find everywhere they turn. In a complex and sometimes even dangerous world, their ability to read will be crucial.” *(Moore, 1999 IRA)*



# Who Has Reading Difficulties?

## NAEP 2005

*(National Assessment of Educational Progress)*

- Percentage of students reading below a **Basic Level** of competence:
  - Grade 4 38%
  - Grade 8 29%
  - Grade 12 26% (2002)
- Percentage of students reading below a **Proficient Level** of competence:
  - Grade 4 71%
  - Grade 8 71%
  - Grade 12 64% (2002)



# Changing Literacy Demands

- Between 1996 and 2006 the average literacy required for all American occupations increased by 14 %.
- The 25 fastest growing professions have far greater than average literacy demands, while the 25 fastest declining professions have lower than average literacy demands

*(Barton, 2000; Reading Next, 2004)*



# Continuum For Literacy Instruction

*Literacy instruction is not just a special education concern:*



**Struggling**

**Weak**

**Grade Level**

**Above Grade**

Significant  
intervention  
on time,  
small-  
group  
instruction

Some  
support,  
smaller  
size  
classes,  
target  
weak  
areas

Grade-  
level  
reading &  
writing  
embedde  
d in  
content  
instructio  
n

Advanced,  
challengi  
ng  
reading &  
writing  
embedde  
d in  
content  
instructio  
n



# College Readiness

- Only 51% of ACT-tested high school grads were reading for college-level reading
- Students readiness for college-level reading is at its lowest point in more than a decade

*Reading Between the Lines, 2006, ACT*



# What Should We Teach Older Students?

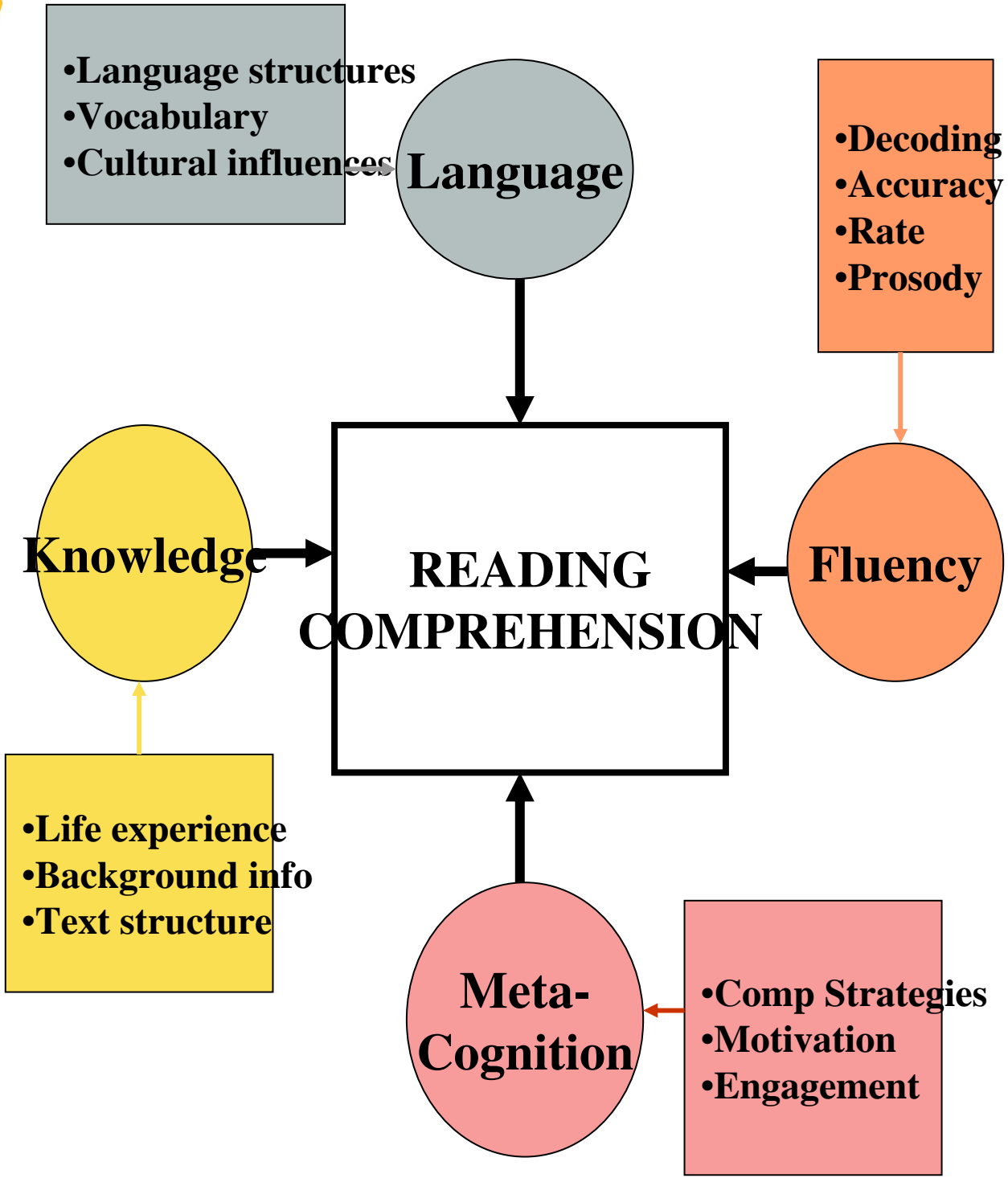


# Wide-Range of Reading Needs

From "Reading Next":

“Part of what makes it so difficult to meet the needs of struggling readers and writers in middle and high school is that these students experience a wide range of challenges that require an equally wide range of interventions. Some young people still have difficulty simply reading words accurately... Most older struggling readers can read words accurately, but they do not comprehend what they read for a variety of reasons. For some, the problem is that they do not yet read words with enough fluency to facilitate comprehension. Others can read accurately and quickly enough for comprehension to take place, but they lack the strategies to help them comprehend what they read.... In addition, problems faced by struggling readers are exacerbated when they are ESL or have learning disabilities.”

**And: don't forget vocabulary!**



*Adapted from J. Torgesen*



# 11 Elements of Effective Writing Instruction - Grades 4-12

## From Writing Next

1. Writing strategies
2. Summarizing
3. Collaborative writing
4. Specific product goals
5. Word processing
6. Sentence combining
7. Prewriting
8. Inquiry activities
9. Process writing approach
10. Study of models
11. Writing for content reading



# Who Should Teach Literacy?



# Literacy in the Content Classroom

“... content area literacy instruction must be the cornerstone of any movement to build the high-quality secondary schools that young people deserve and on which the nation’s social and economic health will depend.”

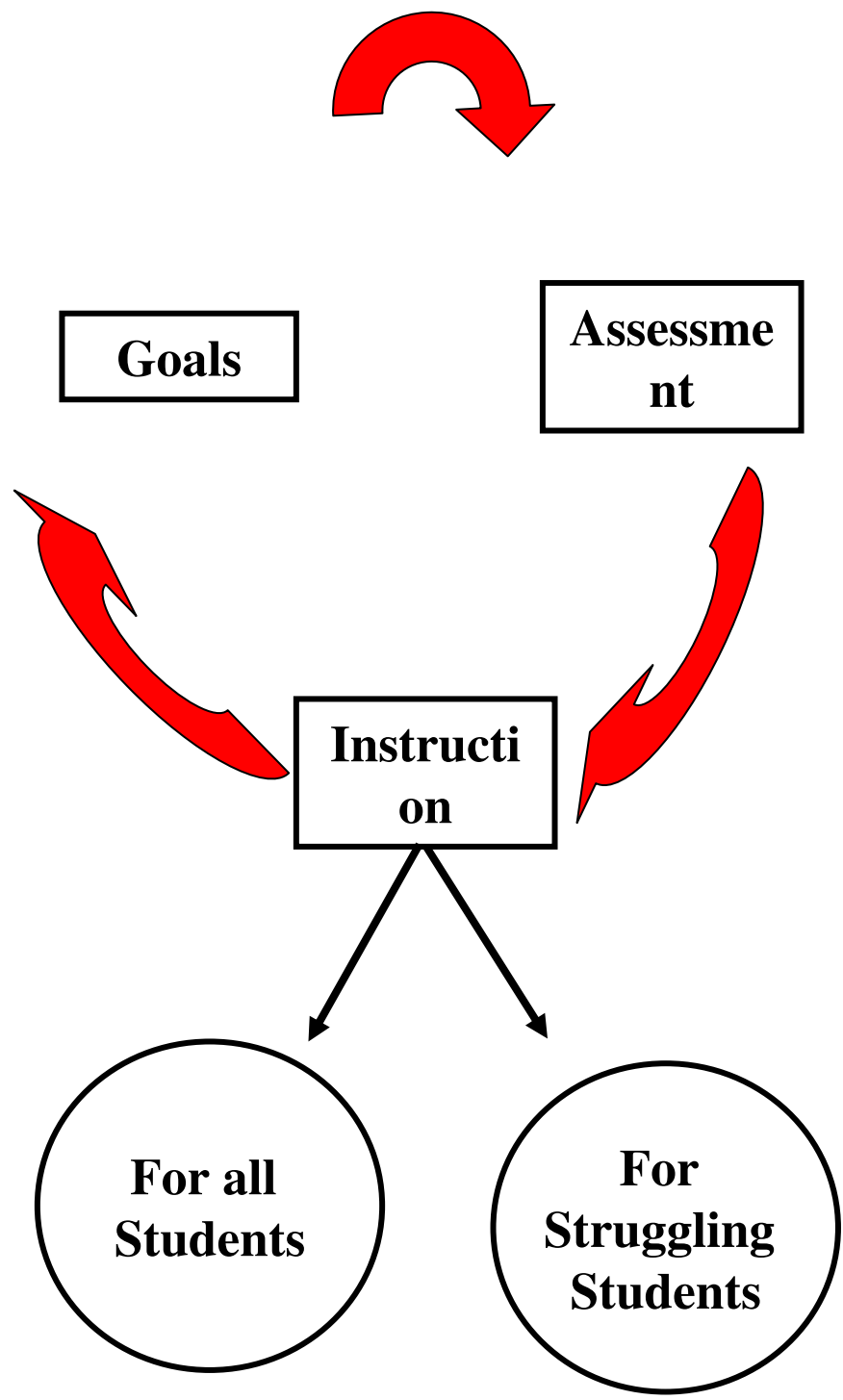
- **Heller & Greenleaf, 2007, Literacy Instruction in the Content Areas**



# Adopt a School-wide Reading Improvement Model

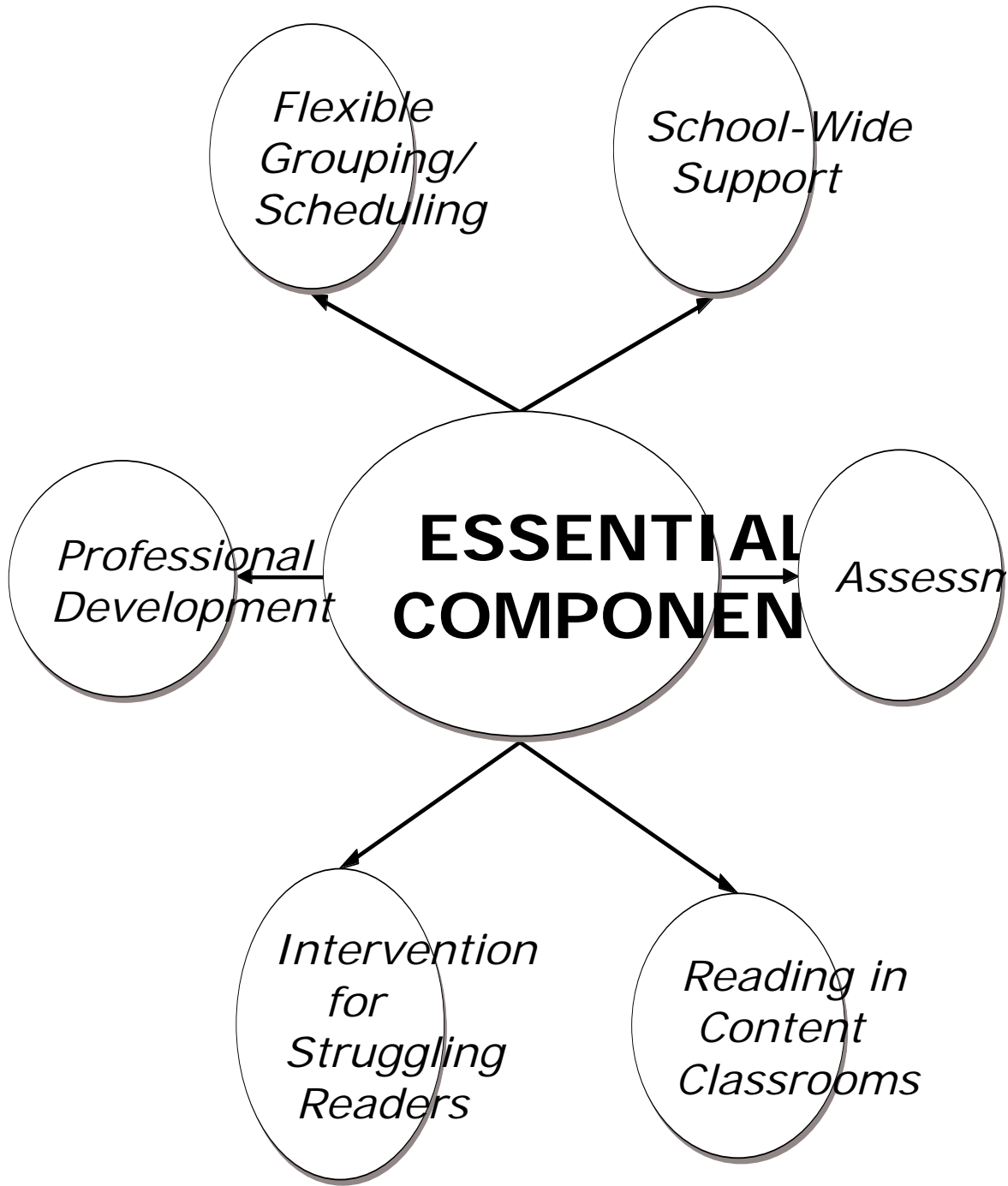
**LEADERSHIP**

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**





# Essential Components





Parting thoughts from  
this year's Superbowl:

*What is your team's  
motivating word?*

- Patriots: **Teamwork**
- Giants: **Resiliency**



# Resources

- Alliance for Excellent Education [www.all4ed.org](http://www.all4ed.org)
  - “Reading Next”
  - “Writing Next”
  - “Literacy in the Content Areas”
- New adolescent literacy website: [www.adlit.org](http://www.adlit.org)
- “When Older Kids Can’t Read” L. Moats  
[www.scoe.org/reading/docs/older\\_091103.pdf](http://www.scoe.org/reading/docs/older_091103.pdf)
- Keys to Literacy - Resources Page:  
[www.keystoliteracy.com](http://www.keystoliteracy.com)
- Torgesen, etc. “Academic Literacy Instruction for Adolescents” [www.centeroninstruction.org](http://www.centeroninstruction.org)