

## The Literacy Conference Every Educator Should Attend

Insight and Information about School-Wide Literacy Planning, Assessments, Interventions and Instructional Strategies for Educators in Grades 4-12  
 Sponsored by the University of Massachusetts, The Reading Institute and Keys to Literacy – a collaboration of literacy experts focused on improving adolescent literacy skills and student performance

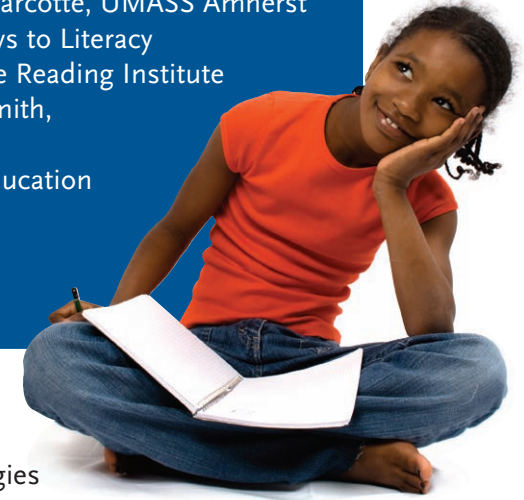
## The Essential Adolescent Literacy Conference



Educators who are ready to address the issues of adolescent literacy will benefit from understanding the critical components necessary to improve school-wide literacy strategies and student instruction. The conference sponsors have organized the day around these critical components of adolescent literacy so administrators, special educators, content teachers and specialists will gain the foundational knowledge required to build student skills and develop effective school-wide literacy plans.

### Sessions include:

- Literacy Planning as it relates to RTI – John Hintze, UMASS Amherst
- Assessment Planning to Guide Literacy Instruction – Amanda Marcotte, UMASS Amherst
- Components of School-Wide Literacy Planning – Joan Sedita, Keys to Literacy
- Interventions for Struggling Adolescent Readers – Jill Pompei, The Reading Institute
- Literacy in the Content Area: Vocabulary Strategies – Becky DeSmith, Keys to Literacy
- Literacy Instruction for ELL Students – Claire White, Strategic Education Research Partnership
- Literacy in the Content Area: Comprehension Strategies – Kathe Simons, Adolescent Literacy Consultant & Researcher



## Learning You Can Apply Now

The Adolescent Literacy Conference is focused on providing strategies and information that you can use immediately to shape school-wide literacy planning and enhance classroom instruction to support the literacy skills of all students. Each session is 2 hours and 15 minutes long to provide ample time for instruction, activities and interaction with the session presenter. In addition to a general morning keynote by John Hintze of UMASS Amherst, attendees can pick a morning and afternoon session to attend.

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### Conference Details

Date: September 24, 2009  
 Location: Southbridge Hotel and Conference Center, Southbridge MA  
 Registration Fee: \$175 (\$25 off each registration if two or more attend from the same district)

### Schedule

Registration, Complimentary Beverages and Pastry: 8:00AM – 8:30AM  
 Morning Keynote: 8:30AM – 9:30AM  
 Morning Sessions: 9:45AM – 12:00PM  
 Complimentary Catered Lunch: 12:00PM – 1:00PM  
 Afternoon Sessions – 1:15PM – 3:30PM

### To Register

Please go to [www.keystoliteracy.com](http://www.keystoliteracy.com) and look under Training & Events to download a registration form or call Alexandra Coakley at 978-750-4200 x203.

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## Morning Keynote: 8:30AM – 9:30AM

### School-Wide Literacy Planning: A First Step to Implementing RTI – John M. Hintze, Ph.D., Director of School Psychology, UMASS, Amherst

How can a Response to Intervention (RTI) model be applied beyond fourth grade, and how would it look for students and teachers in the upper grades? Addressing essential components for school-wide literacy planning sets the stage for implementing RTI at the intermediate, middle and high school grades. The keynote will explain RTI, how it is being rolled out nationally, and implications for its application to upper grades.

## Session Topics

### Morning: 9:45AM-12:00PM

#### A. School-Wide Literacy Planning: Essential Components – Joan Sedita, Keys to Literacy

Literacy planning for grades four and up presents unique challenges. Literacy planning should involve all stakeholders (administrators, classroom teachers, specialists) and be actively supported by committed leadership. This session will introduce a planning process that addresses these essential components:

- 1) assessment plans for guiding instruction
- 2) interventions for struggling learners
- 3) literacy instruction in all content classrooms
- 4) flexible grouping and scheduling
- 5) development of long-term professional development plans

#### B. Interventions for Struggling Learners – Jill Pompei, The Reading Institute

There are a variety of contributing factors and reasons why some students struggle with literacy skills. The outcome, difficulty comprehending grade-level reading, may be the same but the underlying cause(s) are unique to each student. That is why there is no single intervention program that addresses the needs of all struggling readers. This session will start with a review of possible factors: weaknesses in decoding and fluency skills, a lack of vocabulary knowledge or familiarity with complex language and text structure, not enough background knowledge, or a lack of comprehension strategies. Next, a review of various research-based intervention programs will be reviewed, including information about which of the five components of reading are addressed by each program.

#### C. Literacy in the Content Areas: Comprehension Strategies – Kathe Simons, Adolescent Literacy Consultant & Researcher

Research strongly supports direct and explicit instruction in comprehension strategies that is taught, modeled, and practiced in content area classrooms. This session will review content classroom strategies identified as most effective: finding the main idea and summarizing, asking and generating questions, using graphic organizers, and activities that help students monitor their comprehension. Specific classroom activities will be introduced.

### Afternoon: 1:15PM-3:30PM

#### D. Assessment Planning to Guide Instruction – Amanda Marcotte, UMASS, Amherst

A systematic, efficient assessment plan is essential for designing literacy instruction in grades 4-12. Although there are similarities to K-3 assessment planning, there are unique circumstances in the upper grades that warrant a closer look. This session will examine the essential skills necessary for reading achievement in the upper grades and present an assessment model to examine those skills. Throughout this session, you will be presented an assessment plan that includes formative, diagnostic, summative, and progress monitoring assessments to inform instructional planning for struggling adolescent readers.

#### E. Literacy Instruction for ELL Students in Grades 4-12 – Claire White, Harvard University

Many ELL students in grades 4-12 have been challenged by English proficiency at some point. In addition, there is a shift that occurs starting in the fourth grade from learning to read to reading to learn. This results in ELL students having to learn both content through reading and listening at the same time that they acquire language and learn to read and write. Furthermore, literacy instruction in these grades is more complex. These combined factors present unique challenges for grades 4-12 content teachers. This session will review the research to date on effective literacy instruction for ELL students in these grades.

#### F. Literacy in the Content Areas: Vocabulary – Becky DeSmith, Keys to Literacy

Research strongly supports explicit vocabulary instruction as part of reading and language arts, and as part of content area classes such as science and social studies. There is no single best way to teach vocabulary; effective instruction includes both direct and indirect approaches. This session reviews five steps of an effective vocabulary instruction routine: previewing, teaching new words in relationship to background knowledge and related words, selecting specific words to teach, vocabulary strategies (using the context, word parts), and word consciousness. Specific classroom activities for several of these components will be provided.

## You'll Get Answers to Important Questions

As educators we know that adolescent literacy is a priority but we are not always equipped to implement the solutions that will help build student literacy skills. At this conference, you'll get answers to the following questions:

- What are the essential components of a school-wide literacy plan?
- How will my literacy plan support and fit my RTI efforts?
- What are the most effective interventions for struggling adolescent learners?
- What research-based content classroom instructional strategies build student comprehension, vocabulary and writing skills?
- What is an effective model for formative, diagnostic, summative, and progress monitoring assessments?
- What are effective instructional strategies for ELL students?
- How can professional development support a school-wide literacy plan and what kind of professional development should I be seeking?

## About the Speakers

**Becky DeSmith** – Becky is an accomplished teacher, administrator and instructor. She has worked in the field of literacy across a 30 year career in education and has direct experience in many aspects of adolescent literacy. Becky received her M.Ed. in Reading from Nazareth College and an M.A. in Educational Administration from SUNY Brockport and her B.S. in Secondary Education from SUNY Potsdam.

**John Hintze** – John is the Director of School Psychology training programs at UMASS, Amherst. He has served as a senior consultant for the U.S. DOE's National Center on Response to Intervention and the National Center on Student Progress Monitoring. In that role, Dr. Hintze has trained in over 20 states and is a technical consultant in the evaluating of RTI assessment instruments. His research has focused on assessment approaches for formative and progress monitoring assessment and data-based decision making within an RTI framework. Dr. Hintze is on the editorial board of numerous journals of school psychology and special education and is a consultant to LEA on issues related to RTI.

**Amanda Marcotte** – Amanda is an Assistant Professor with the University of Massachusetts' School Psychology Program where she teaches courses in assessment and interventions for academic deficits and in systems for the prevention of school-based problems. Prior to joining the faculty, Dr. Marcotte worked as an educational consultant providing professional development and technical support to school personnel to support response-to-instruction, data-based decision-making and preventative instructional practices.

**Jill Pompei** – Jill is an accomplished teacher trainer and college instructor. She worked as a classroom teacher for 12 years and as literacy coordinator/reading specialist for 7 years. She earned her B.S. in Elementary Education from North Adams State College, her M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction from MCLA, her reading specialist certification from MCLA, and her Ed.S. degree in Language and Literacy from Simmons College.

**Joan Sedita** – Joan is a founding partner of Keys to Literacy. She is an experienced educator, nationally recognized speaker and teacher trainer. Joan specializes in developing curriculum, teaching materials, and professional development programs that address grade 4 through 12 literacy. She received her Masters in Reading Education from Harvard University and her B.A. from Boston College.

**Kathe Simons** – Kathe is an experienced classroom teacher, K-12 teacher educator, and educational researcher. She has worked for 35 years in the field of literacy education. Kathe received her Ph.D. in Reading and Writing Instruction at University of NH, and M.Ed. and B.S. degrees in Special Education from Southern Connecticut State College.

**Claire White** – Claire works at the Strategic Education Research Partnership, a literacy program developed in cooperation with the Boston Public Schools and Harvard University. At the Harvard Graduate School of Education, she teaches courses on the language and literacy development of English language learners. Dr. White worked as an education specialist at the Massachusetts DOE providing training in ELL literacy issues. She writes and presents extensively on academic language and vocabulary development for struggling readers.

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