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Reading Across the Curriculum: A Framework for Improving the Reading Abilities and Habits of College Students

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The purpose of this article is to present a model for establishing a Reading Across the Curriculum program at the university level to improve the reading abilities and habits of college students. Many college students read texts that require them to continuously comprehend, interpret, and evaluate the information they find. However, many college professors are challenged in teaching students who enter college as struggling readers. This article describes the university-wide Reading Across the Curriculum (RAC) project at Fayetteville State University, a small, regional university in Fayetteville, North Carolina. This project includes establishing literacy coaching, implementing effective strategies and assessment tools, conducting ongoing professional development, and increasing students' readership. These all serve as a framework for meeting the needs of academically underprepared college students.

The 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reports that 68% of eighth graders and 62% of twelfth graders performed below the proficient level in reading ability while 25% of eighth graders and 26% of twelfth graders were reading at or below basic levels (NAEP, 2009). Additionally, there are approximately 8.7 million fourth through twelfth graders in America who are unable to read at all and comprehend the materials in their textbooks (Kamil, 2003). Such statistics indicate that American students are becoming increasingly poor readers as they advance in school and are introduced to more advanced academic texts. The U.S. economy now demands a higher level of literacy skills than in the past. Thus, there will be fewer labor-intensive jobs, and the number of jobs that require more advanced academic training will increase in the future (Harvard Graduate School of Education, 2011). According to the 2009 ACT college readiness benchmarks report, only 53% of high school students were ready for the reading requirements of a typical first-year college course (ACT News, 2009). These disappointing percentages may be one of the reasons why only 63% of college freshmen in the U.S. graduate within six years (Lord, 2008). Many college students have trouble with reading comprehension, which denotes serious difficulty in the content areas (Lei, Rhinehart, Howard, & Cho, 2010; Underwood, 2004). Also, "aliteracy," defined as "the lack of a reading habit in capable readers," has been cited as a growing problem among college students (Goodwin, 1996, p. 2). Not reading often enough further diminishes students' reading comprehension skills, which, in turn, further discourages students from reading, creating a vicious cycle.

Kamil et al. (2008) emphasized that reading comprehension strategy instruction in the content areas is beneficial for students' academic skills, and reading comprehension strategies in classes should be relevant and applicable to their subjects (p. 37). For example, reading comprehension apropos to a

math course is quite different from that of a literature course. According to Falk-Ross (2002), more effective instructional approaches for students' reading comprehension skills are necessary for success in college (p. 286). Gipe (2006) discussed direct, explicit instructional strategies, which involve teacher-student interaction and suggested implementing reading strategies, such as finding the main idea, predicting, writing, retelling, and questioning to aid struggling readers. Consequently, Hadley, Eisenwine, and Sanders (2005) recommended that active engagement using interactive materials in the classroom provides the needed assistance for struggling learners (p. 72). Reading is essential for successfully completing all college-level courses. In other words, college students who are more proficient readers are most likely to experience more success in their courses.

The purpose of this article is to describe how the Reading Across the Curriculum (RAC) program at Fayetteville State University, a small, regional state university in Fayetteville, North Carolina, addressed its problem of poor reading comprehension skills and habits among its students through the design and implementation of four components: literacy coaching, effective strategies and assessment tools, ongoing professional development, and a plan for increasing students' readership in an effort to effectively improve academically underprepared college students.

Reading Across the Curriculum (RAC) at FSU

The Reading Across the Curriculum program at Fayetteville State University began in fall 2008 with the purpose of training faculty members in various disciplines to create courses that were more cen-

tered upon reading comprehension and to thereby improve the reading comprehension skills of its students. However, the creation of the program was also motivated by the following factors:

1. College students are not necessarily good readers. Even though college students often are required to read advanced academic texts, they are not necessarily equipped to evaluate and synthesize the information (Taraban, Rynearson, & Kerr, 2000). Yet, many college professors believe that students already have adequate proficiency in reading skills needed to succeed in college - level courses (Sherfield, Montgomery, & Moody, 2005).

2. College professors are not adequately trained to help academically underprepared college students understand course material. College courses do not focus on reading comprehension skills, and college students need to be instructed with various reading strategies to enhance their reading ability (Lei, et al., 2010; White, 2004). Hadley et al. (2005) suggest an interactive approach to providing assistance for struggling readers. The interactive approach includes condensing context, vocabulary, modeling, summarizing, inference, elaboration, and prediction. Thus, many academically unprepared students receive much of their instruction from content-area teachers who have not had appropriate professional development to make content instruction comprehensible.

3. The primary purpose for implementing assessments is to provide not only the students' strengths and weaknesses in reading skills, but also to inform the effect of instruction and appropriate intervention (RAND, 2002).

4. Professional development for college professors is important to improve the reading skills of their students. The collegial collaboration with other professors provides for extended discussions on instructional strategies and effective reading strategies.

An increase in readership promotes better reading skills among students. Reading skills should be explicitly taught in content areas for underprepared students in the upper grade levels (Hirai, Borrego, Garza, & Kloock, 2010).

Demographic data for the academically underprepared incoming students at Fayetteville State University indicated poor academic performance, low motivation, apparent weak study habits, and lack of essential reading comprehension skills. As faculty, we noticed that such students were more likely to earn final grades of D or F or withdraw from the class. Therefore, highly structured, faculty development programs, such as Reading Across the Curriculum, were needed to have a profoundly positive impact on the academic success of students who would otherwise be at risk of attrition. Implementation of the following components allowed us to provide faculty training and resources for the purpose of addressing our students' reading comprehension deficiencies.

First Year 2008-2009 RAC Design

In this section, the components of the first-year RAC design are described.

Component 1: Literacy coaching. Because low reading comprehension skills is a national, even international, problem that can be circumvented only through shared governance, Sturtevant (2003) cited coaching as an effective method to assist students in reading instruction and says high-quality, ongoing professional development in reading

strategies can positively affect students' reading achievement. McCombs (2009) defined reading coaches as specially trained teachers who lead their colleagues through on-site and ongoing professional development activities in an effort to aid teachers in improving the reading comprehension skills of their students.

Minter (2008) suggested that a voluntary peer-coaching system in which faculty feel comfortable in sharing and assessing each other is effective in that the " 'buddy system' can be very beneficial to all faculty who participate" (p. 63). The RAC literacy team modeled this concept in that members were trained and had the responsibility of leading their colleagues in their respective disciplines. Thus, the proposed first step in forming RAC on campus was to create a literacy team (committee) composed of eight faculty members from various disciplines and departments (i.e., two members each from Math and/or Computer Science, Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences). The duties of the committee were to attend meetings, participate in an information session via Fayetteville Urban Ministries' Adult Literacy Program, a local organization that provided literacy training for RAC literacy coaches, and conduct reading in the disciplines workshops for both students and faculty in their respective fields.

In implementing the RAC framework, we suggest universities form a literacy team composed of faculty members from various departments. Because reading is key to all disciplines, such diversity is a must. Most cities offer adult literacy centers where team members might take part in adult literacy training seminars and workshops. Such training exposes faculty to the need for every adult learner, including college students, to acquire the basic reading comprehension skills

necessary to successfully compete in today's workforce. Most adult literacy specialists are available to conduct training sessions at universities.

Also, literacy team members may take the initiative in researching reading comprehension strategies most common to their disciplines and those that might be easily applied. The texts we adopted as part of our program were *Mosaic of Thought: The Power of Comprehension Strategy Instruction*, 2nd Edition by Ellin Oliver Keene and Susan Zimmermann (2007) and *Strategies that Work: Teaching Understanding and Engagement* by Stephanie Harvey and Anne Godvis (2007), which consist of a plethora of reading comprehension strategies. Further-more, team members may incorporate these strategies into their classes as a means of aiding students in better comprehending and analyzing texts. Also, team members may be willing to present their knowledge and experiences to other faculty members via workshops and presentations. For example, two biology professors who served on our university's literacy team often used concept mapping as a vehicle for helping students to grasp and remember key processes and terms. They presented this strategy to faculty members both within and outside their departments in hopes that all would find a way to successfully apply the strategies to their courses. We suggest faculty members at other institutions conduct a similar workshop for students.

Through faculty workshops, the RAC program at Fayetteville State University provided participants with needed instruction for redesigning their courses to serve the needs of students for successful completion of their coursework. Student workshops offered students a variety of reading comprehension strategies for this same purpose. Upon completing

workshops, faculty responded to the following questions:

1. What did you learn today . . . about reading, reading strategies, the importance of reading, teaching reading, yourself as a reader, your students as readers, etc. . . ? How might you incorporate this information into your teaching?
2. How effective was the training session in preparing you to implement the reading strategies in your own classroom?
3. What lingering questions, problems, or concerns do you have about the information you received today?
4. What other types of workshops, discussions, or activities might Reading Across the Curriculum conduct to help improve your teaching in relation to reading/reading strategies and your students' reading, reading comprehension, and literacy skills?

All workshops received positive responses from both faculty and students, particularly in relation to their practicality and possible effectiveness in the classroom. For example, one faculty participant wrote, "We need to redesign our Freshmen Seminar and Speech courses to incorporate more reading and critical thinking." Another wrote, "We need to incorporate more reading and reading comprehension strategies into our courses—basic first year courses." Such comments relayed awareness by faculty of the need to revise courses, perhaps even entire curriculums, to meet the reading and reading comprehension needs of our students. Another set of faculty comments focused on reading as it relates to specific disciplines, such as math and science. One participant suggested, "Concept maps would be effective in my Biotechnology course." Another cited that concept maps would be an

excellent way to aid students in preparing for the MCAT.

Student responses to the workshops varied, but many expressed intent to use these reading strategies for improving their study skills, connecting new and prior knowledge, understanding difficult concepts, retaining information, and building vocabulary. Sample responses included "I learned how to make connections between personal experiences and the text being read," "I learned that review of information is important. I can incorporate this [concept maps] to help me better comprehend," and "Now, I see reading and analyzing a passage in a different way."

Through workshops and roundtable discussions, faculty, like students, learned to view reading as an active, multi-step process. Also, they learned best practices apropos to teaching reading in the disciplines and providing students with more opportunities to practice reading in class, engage more critically with texts, and incorporate textual evidence into their written and verbal responses to texts. Also, faculty learned to create practical, brief in-class and out-of-class assignments that aid in improving students' reading comprehension skills, such as summarizing, reviewing, synthesizing, and outlining passages. Ideally, faculty and students must work in tandem; faculty must be prepared to "provide the best possible learning environment" for students, and students must be willing to replicate what they learn in all courses (Minter, 2008, p.59).

Second Year 2009-2010 RAC Design

The 2009-2010 Reading Across the Curriculum program evolved with three additions: the Faculty Course Revision Project, the Faculty Blackboard site, and Student Health 101, all of which were instrumental

in achieving the aforementioned goals of the program. Additionally, the program sought to address the first of our Chancellor's Strategic Priorities (Anderson, 2009): "FSU will be a university of choice in North Carolina and the nation and will garner a reputation for innovation and excellence in teaching, learning, research and technology." The expansion of the RAC program encapsulated the following three components, all of which have proven helpful and of interest to faculty and students.

Component 2: Effective strategies and assessment tools. The RAC Faculty Course Revision Project was developed to train faculty members from various disciplines to create more reading comprehension-centered courses. The first group of participants was selected during summer 2009 for revision of one of their fall 2009 courses. Participants selected during fall 2009 revised one of their spring 2010 courses. All participants received a stipend once their duties were completed and their related data was submitted.
The specific requirements of the project included the following:

1. **Pre-workshops**: Faculty participants were required to attend three workshops during the first month of the semester. These workshops outlined program requirements and demonstrated various reading comprehension strategies that, with a bit of creativity, may suit every discipline and be implemented in the classroom. At the first workshop, participants received an RAC Faculty Course Revision Project handbook, which consisted of a sample pretest and posttest along with rubrics and data sheets (Appendix A) and sample reading strategy assignment sheets (Appendix B). Also, faculty par-

ticipants received the program's adopted texts, *Mosaic of Thought: The Power of Comprehension Strategy Instruction* by Ellin Oliver Keene and Susan Zimmerman (2007) and *Strategies that Work: Teaching Comprehension for Understanding and Engagement* by Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis (2007).

2. **RAC Faculty Course Revision Project Questionnaire** (Appendix C): During the first week of the semester, faculty participants cited the specific course to be redesigned; the course learning objectives; their perception of students' reading and reading comprehension levels; the manner, if any, in which they have addressed their students' difficulties with reading comprehension in the past; and what they hoped to gain from participating in the project.

3. **RAC syllabus with RAC Reading Clause**: During the first week of the semester, faculty participants were required to submit a course syllabus consisting of the RAC reading clause and the three reading comprehension strategy assignments they planned to implement in the course. The RAC reading clause was as follows: "In conjunction with Fayetteville State University's Reading Across the Curriculum program, this course is a reading-centered course geared toward improving students' reading comprehension skills and will thereby incorporate various proven reading strategies in helping to accomplish these learning goals."

4. **Discipline-specific Pretest with Rubric and Data**: All faculty participants were required to create a brief, discipline-specific pretest to be administered to students during the first three

weeks of the semester. The pretest was to be accompanied by a scoring rubric, and all data was to be reported to the RAC Activity Director. Toward the end of the semester, faculty administered a posttest, which was also accompanied by a scoring rubric and data.

5. **Three Reading Comprehension Assignments:** Faculty participants created at least three assignments that implemented proven reading comprehension strategies during the course of the semester. The reading comprehension assignment sheets were to be accompanied by a scoring rubric, and all data was to be reported to the RAC Activity Director. Examples of reading comprehension strategies were within the program's adopted texts, the RAC Faculty Course Revision Project handbook, as well as on the RAC Faculty Blackboard site to which all FSU faculty members were registered. The site was created as a resource to facilitate meaningful reading strategies and as a communication tool among faculty.

6. **Faculty Feedback**: Faculty participants were asked to provide feedback concerning their participation in the project.

Steps for Implementation of RAC at Other Institutions

With initiative and a moderate supply of resources, a similar faculty course revision project may be instituted on any college or university campus. We suggest that other institutions first identify faculty members from various departments who recognize their students' difficulty with reading comprehension and are willing to overhaul a course in an effort to address this problem. Then, participants should complete a questionnaire designating the course

they wish to revise and commenting on their assessment of students' reading comprehension skills and reading habits. Also, if possible, institutions should secure a stipend for each participant through the office of Academic Affairs, the Office of Faculty Development, or the equivalent; this stipend can serve as motivation for both starting and completing the program requirements.

Next, each participant should design a brief (approximately 5-10 questions) discipline-specific pretest and posttest. The test should be accompanied by reading material (a chapter or excerpt from a book, journal article, newspaper article, etc.) related to the course content, be administered in class, and involve students consulting the reading material in order to accurately respond to the questions. In other words, students must read to find the right or best answers. Participants should record students' pretest and posttest scores and submit data to the designated literacy team leader. Third, participants should be provided with texts consisting of reading comprehension strategies and advised in the creation of at least three reading comprehension strategy assignments. Participants should be encouraged to mostly design assignments that can be completed by students during class time and to not view doing so as a waste of class lecture or discussion time. Instead, participants should be incited to view reading strategy assignments as effective steps between introduction of reading material and assessment.

Again, participants must record students' scores and submit the related rubric and data. Lastly, faculty should complete a survey describing the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of participation in the program.

Component 3: Ongoing Professional Development

Minter (2008) asserted that most college professors are not trained in pedagogy. The emphasis, instead, is on researching and writing theses and dissertations, particularly within graduate programs (p. 57). Likewise, demands for an assessment of student outcomes, more rigorous assignments and a focus on student learning as opposed to teaching should be heavily scrutinized (Briggs, 2007). In order to improve college classroom instruction, faculty development, including in-service training, and coaching is necessary (Minter, 2008, p. 57).

The RAC program at Fayetteville State University offered training, coaching, and ongoing faculty development not only through its formation of a literacy team, workshops, presentations, and faculty course revision project, but also through its creation of a RAC Faculty Blackboard site in summer 2009. As stated earlier, all university faculty were registered to the site and received periodic emails inviting them to explore its contents, which included numerous reading comprehension strategies, sample reading strategies assignment sheets, reading comprehension rubrics, facts and statistics about college students' reading habits, a list of resources related to the teaching of reading and reading comprehension within the college classroom, and a discussion forum.

The Blackboard site served as a means of promoting collegial dialogue, "the process of effectively and frequently discussing research-based instructional strategies and expected student outcomes," and its purpose was to allow participants to share ideas geared toward promoting success (Whitfield & Moore, 2007, p. 272). Specifically, the discussion forum allowed faculty to respond to open-ended prompts concerning their students' reading comprehension skills and habits and share related

ideas. They responded to the following prompt: What is your assessment of our students' reading comprehension skills and what might be done to improve these skills?

Most responses were pedagogical in nature. For example, one faculty member suggested developing assessments that require students to use their textbook throughout. She wrote, "Last year, I gave an open-book mid-term exam, which required students to read a short story, respond to questions, use a dictionary to define key words in the story, and write a response to the story. . . it was great to see so many students reading through their texts within a two-hour period." Another faculty member devoted the entire first day of class to discussing strategies for reading the course texts. Yet another relied on technology to improve students' reading abilities. He wrote, "To further engage my students in their text, I have adopted a CD . . . that has animations, film clips, practice questions, etc. that can be used as study aides." In summary, one faculty member expressed a presumably common desire among faculty: "My goal is to make sure that my students can become independent learners. . . . At the end of the semester, I want my students to become more involved in the learning process than they were at the beginning of the semester." The Reading Across the Curriculum Faculty Blackboard site was instrumental in both promoting faculty dialogue and providing resources concerning student success.

Through Blackboard or a similar online learning management system, any college or university may develop a site devoted to reading and reading comprehension resources apropos to college-level teaching and learning. Many helpful resources are online and can be uploaded to the site. Additionally, information related to the faculty course revision project, if implemented, may be included. Most importantly, we suggest creating a discussion forum that allows faculty to share their ideas, concerns, and successes relative to the topic and send periodic emails or announcements reminding faculty of the site's existence and inviting them to post responses. The site should be updated consistently as the literacy team leader becomes abreast of developing research in the area through participation in various reading and literacy conferences, such as the annual International Reading Association convention and the annual College Reading and Learning Association conference.

Component 4: Increase in Students' Readership

Recent statistics indicate that the reading habits of college students have declined over the years and that technology has had a negative influence on both reading and critical thinking (Mokhtari, Reichard, & Gardner, 2009). The newly added component of the Reading Across the Curriculum program was Student Health 101, a monthly online magazine geared toward college students and college life. We subscribed to the magazine in an effort to increase students' reading habits by providing materials that directly relate to students' lifestyles and interests. Furthermore, all Fayetteville State University students received the magazine via campus email, which allowed us to collect university-wide data relaying total number of pages read, average pages read, total reading time, the most popular articles from each month, and students' comments. Topics ranged from how to talk to professors and maintain a balanced diet to the importance of sleep and the dangers of alcohol consumption. The purpose of the magazine was to encourage students to read more and incorporate readings into their communications.

The Student Health 101 digital program has been an effective pilot in providing information regarding our students' reading habits. Many of today's college students welcome the use of technology in both the classroom and their everyday lives. Because Student Health 101 is accessible to all students at Fayetteville State University, the program can potentially impact the entire student body. Each quarter, the university receives a usage report. Our 2009-10 report indicates a total readership time of 146 hours: 13 minutes: 06 seconds. From September 2009 to April 2010, the total number of pages accessed by our students was 22,904.

A number of colleges and universities already subscribe to Student Health 101. If not, a subscription is easy to obtain. We suggest universities simply contact the Student Health 101 organization and speak with a representative. A yearly subscription to the magazine is priced reasonably, and the usage report is quite comprehensive in that it includes students' responses to various articles they have read. Also, instructors may utilize the magazine in class by creating reader response assignments, quizzes, brief writing assignments, and discussions related to the topics.

Next Steps

In regard to the Reading Across the Curriculum program, faculty feedback was generally positive. A faculty development survey administered by university administrators indicated 35 % of respondents reported attending Reading Across the Curriculum faculty development activities within the past year and 86% of respondents reported that the workshop/program was beneficial. However, there were limitations. First, we were not able to recruit

math and science faculty for participation in the Faculty Course Revision Project. With continual funding, we hope to recruit participants from these disciplines in the future. Second, we plan to use Student Health 101 more specifically in class activities and will encourage instructors to require students to read each issue and assign grade accountability through Student Health 101 online quizzes and brief writing assignments. Third, we plan to increase stipends for faculty participating in the course revision project to maintain interest and increase involvement.

Conclusion

Poor academic performance is directly linked to ineffective reading comprehension skills among students. The RAC program at Fayetteville State University seeks to address these problems through the implementation of four key components. First, literacy coaching trains faculty to make necessary pedagogical adjustments. Second, effective strategies and assessment tools provide RAC Faculty Course Revision Project participants with an opportunity to create more reading comprehension-centered courses by implementing a pretest, posttest, and proven reading comprehension strategies in their courses. Third, ongoing professional development is available to all Fayetteville State University faculty through both Reading Across the Curriculum workshops and the corresponding Blackboard site. Lastly, the program seeks to increase students' readership and thereby decrease "aliteracy" among students through Student Health 101.

Upon review by an external Title III program evaluator, the overall consensus of the summative evaluation was positive. The Reading Across the Curriculum Faculty Course Revision Project was deemed one that will "help teachers assign more reading centered assignments" and grant students an opportunity to "ultimately improve their reading skills." Also, the project was reported to have the potential to impact almost 1500 students based on its past number of participants and was particularly heralded for accomplishing such a goal with less than $30,000 per year. The evaluator asserts, "This is a tremendous return on Title III dollars."

By no means is the RAC program at Fayetteville State University a longitudinal study, but merely a first step in corporately addressing our students' diminished reading comprehension skills. These skills have diminished for many college students, arguably because of the mass and multi-media environment in which they were bred and continue to operate. The Reading Across the Curriculum program at Fayetteville State University has received positive reception from both faculty and students thus far, and has even been adopted as part of our university's Quality Enhancement Plan in preparation for Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accreditation. Furthermore, faculty who participated in the RAC Course Revision Project expressed enthusiasm about the success they have seen in their students' performance, and students realized how important reading and reading comprehension are to their overall performance in college and beyond.

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APPENDIX A

**Reading Across the Curriculum Discipline-Specific Pretest/Posttest
Rubric /Data Template**

The discipline-specific pretest should be administered during the first week of classes and, for the sake of uniformity, must consist of **either five or ten questions**. For assessments consisting of **five questions**, each question accounts for **20 points**; for those consisting of **ten questions**, each question accounts for **10 points**. The purpose of the test is to assess students' reading comprehension at the beginning of the course. The exact same test or one similar in format (the posttest) should be administered during either the final week of class or the final exam period.

Also, please note that a reading sample of some type (excerpt from book, book chapter, article, etc.) that correlates to the course must accompany the test, and students SHOULD NOT be able to answer questions without consulting the reading.

- This completed rubric / data template must accompany a copy of your actual assessment and reading sample; all materials must be submitted.

Simple Pretest / Posttest Rubric
90-100 (A) --- exceeds expectations
89-70 (B/C) --- meets expectations
Below 70 --- does not meet expectations

Student's initials   **Student's score**
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

Data

_____**% of students exceeded expectations**

_____**% of students met expectations**

_____**% of students did not meet expectations**

Reading Across the Curriculum Reading Comprehension Strategy Assignment
Rubric /Data Template

Colleagues, during the course of the semester, you must assign at least three proven reading comprehension strategy assignments to your students. Sample strategies are within your RAC Handbook, the RAC Faculty Blackboard site, and the texts, *Mosaic of Thought* and *Strategies that Work*. Choose strategies that best suit your discipline and method of teaching.

- This completed rubric / data template must accompany a copy of your reading comprehension strategy assignment sheet (See example in RAC Handbook); all materials must be submitted.

Reading Comprehension Strategy Assignment Rubric

90-100 (A) --- Exceeds Expectations
1. Links background knowledge and examples from the text to enhance comprehension or interpretation.
2. Asks and answers different kinds of questions and finds evidence in the text to support questions and answers.
3. Independently makes predictions, interpretations, and/or draws conclusions; clearly explains connections using evidence from the text and personal knowledge, ideas, or beliefs.

89-70 (B/C) --- Meets Expectations
1. Relates background knowledge/experience to text.
2. Can ask and answer questions and begin to provide evidence from the text.
3. Makes predictions, interpretations, and/or draws conclusions and justifies response with information from the text; however, some prompting may be necessary.

Below 70 --- Does Not Meet Expectations
1. Does not make connections to the text.
2. Unable to ask or answer questions; gives inappropriate or off-topic responses.
3. Does not make predictions, interpretations, or draw conclusions

Student's initials   **Student's score**
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

Data

_____**% of students exceeded expectations**

_____**% of students met expectations**

_____**% of students did not meet expectations**

APPENDIX B

Reading Strategy Assignment Sheets

Reading Assignment: "Ethnicity and Domestic Abuse" by Fiona Cross-Sudworth
In-class Reading Strategy: Inquiry-Based Learning

    Students often become adept at answering questions in relation to your reading. However, additional learning takes place when **they create** questions related to what they read. Using the "Levels of Questioning" handout, form **three questions** for each of the **three levels** of questioning as it relates to Cross-Sudworth's article. Thus, you should create a total of **nine questions**.

    Please work in groups of **two or three** and write your questions in the space provided below. This assignment is due at the end of today's class period, and I will compile a list of questions for your responses at a later date.

Name: Date:

Three Questions of Fact:
Three Questions of Interpretation:
Three Questions of Evaluation:

Levels of Questioning

Questions of Fact: Convergent questions designed to promote comprehension and recall.
    Who   What   When   Where How much
    List   Name   Describe Draw   How many

Questions of Interpretation: Divergent questions that encourage students to interpret text and support multiple answers and meanings.
    For Application and Analysis
    Which   Compare   Explain   Analyze
    Why   Contrast   Estimate   Give an Example
    What   Classify   Tell in your own words
    For Synthesis:
    Predict   Imagine   How can?   Suggest   Plan
    Design   Pretend   How could?   Put together   Think of a way
    Develop   What if…   How would?   If this…then what?

Questions of Evaluation: Questions that ask students to consider the implications of a text on a larger map and explain their answers.
    For Synthesis:
    Predict   Imagine   How can?   Suggest   Plan
    Design   Pretend   How could?   Put together   Think of a way
    Develop   What if…   How would?   If this…then what?
    For Evaluation:
    Justify   Choose   Which do you prefer?   Which is better?
    Prove   Defend   What do you think of…?   Do you agree?
    Give your opinion   Would it be better if…?

Sources: *The Teacher's Guide to Success* (2008) by Ellen L. Kronowitz
              Checking for Understanding (2007) by Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey
              The Great Books Foundation (1990)

APPENDIX C

RAC Course Revision Project Questionnaire

Faculty's name:

Semester:
Which course have you decided to revise, making it more reading-centered?
List the specific course objectives for this class?

By the end of the course, students should be able to
What do you perceive as students' difficulties in reading/reading comprehension as it relates to this class?
In what specific ways, if any, have you tried to rectify your students' difficulties with reading/reading comprehension as it relates to this class? In other words, what specific strategies have you employed?
What do you hope to gain from participating in the RAC summer course revision project?