REREADING ASSESSMENT IN A DIGITAL AGE

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There are cases where a reader who performs well offline appears to perform poorly online, and vice versa. In other words, we can no longer expect that a standardized test of a student's offline reading comprehension ability (ORCA) will accurately measure the important abilities that affect their performance in online reading.

Include curriculum-based tests of students' proficiency with online reading in your classroom evaluation procedures. These tests, also known as online reading comprehension exams, consist of more than just a collection of static reading passages and multiple-choice questions that have been uploaded to the Internet. An ORCA that is based on a curriculum is intended to record "real-time" online reading techniques.

Individual students are often involved in a sequence of three to four connected information requests provided in an online quiz interface during an online reading comprehension assessment. Students alternate between taking the online quiz and using the public Internet to find, assess, and synthesize the required knowledge or to discuss ideas using technologies like blogs, wikis, or email.

Create brief tasks for students to complete within the online quiz interface that instruct them to find, assess, summarize, and share material online (for instance, "Use the Internet to find the Iditarod dog sled race record time and who established it. Report your response, state where you found it, and detail how you can verify the accuracy of the data.

Students must use a search engine to find pertinent information, confirm it with at least one other source, effectively communicate electronic Web addresses so that the recipient can quickly navigate to the correct location, and critically assess the information's accuracy before they can finish this task.

At least five key aspects set the Internet apart from conventional reading comprehension.

1. Students require new abilities.
2. Internet attitudes have an impact on online reading skills.
3. Students frequently consult the Internet in groups to look for solutions.
4. Reading instruction should be based on reading processes.
5. Digital technology is changing the nature of reading comprehension.

Students require new abilities.

A typical book-based reading assignment involves having students read a shared text, react to questions about the key concepts, and then either write about, create art about, or discuss the ideas in class. In contrast, a typical Internet-based reading assignment necessitates that students come up with appropriate search requests, comb through various sources to find their own texts, synthesize the most trustworthy and pertinent information within those texts, and then respond using online communication tools like an email or blog post. Finding the best sources from a sea of data becomes an essential part of the reading activity.

Students require additional abilities beyond those typically assessed by standardized exams of offline reading comprehension in order to successfully complete online reading assignments (Coiro, 2007). Skilled online readers may effectively use search engines, traverse multiple Web sites, and monitor the appropriateness of their pathway across a complex network of connected text in addition to employing a conventional understanding of language and informational text structures (Coiro & Dobler, 2007).

Furthermore, there is a slight correlation between high scores on specific online reading assignments and high scores on a test of conventional reading comprehension (see Leu et al., 2008). There are cases where a reader who performs well offline appears to perform poorly online, and vice versa. To put it another way, we can no longer expect that a standardized examination of a student's offline reading comprehension skills would accurately measure crucial skills that affect online reading performance.

Internet attitudes have an impact on online reading skills.

Learning in the digital age requires positive attitudes toward online reading. When reading difficult online materials, an effective method is positively correlated with a number of attitudes, self-judgments, and beliefs. For instance, as they traverse quickly evolving Internet texts, better online readers exhibit tenacity, flexibility, a healthy sense of skepticism, and confidence. Lower-performing online readers give up more readily, are less receptive to alternate approaches, are less likely to challenge the material they come across, and are less assured of their independence when using the Internet (Coiro, 2008; Tsai & Tsai, 2003).

Online readers must be personally productive, socially responsible, and capable of working with a variety of team members both in person and virtually in order to meet the demands of Web 2.0 technologies (such as open-source and social networking sites) and evolving learning standards. Successful Internet readers should not only learn new information from their reading but should also

generate and confidently share knowledge with other people in a worldwide networked community.

Consider asking students to take a quick survey on their online reading preferences throughout the year to better understand their instructional needs in this area. Students may be asked to rate the Internet's usefulness for research or how likely it is, compared to printed material sources, to peak their interest in reading-related tasks.

Students frequently consult the Internet in groups to look for solutions.

Anyone who observes a group of students conducting online research will discover that they frequently collaborate or ask for assistance from others. Teenagers, for example, might ask for or share a website link over instant messaging, or they might post a query on a blog to get feedback from readers before drafting an answer.

Unfortunately, traditional tests that evaluate reading performance singly and without online aid rarely reflect students' abilities in collaborative online research. New assessments are required for teachers to measure 21st-century competencies like effective interpersonal communication, knowledge of the team dynamics that lead to high-quality outcomes, understanding of cultural differences in work practices, and the capacity to respond appropriately to peer feedback (Afflerbach, 2007; Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2007).

Reading instruction should be based on reading processes.

For experienced online readers, the result of a reading session typically includes a summary of pertinent and trustworthy information gleaned from two or three websites as well as a list of website addresses (URLs) that accurately identify the sources of the information—in other words, a trail of efficient procedures. However, pupils who have trouble reading online tend to leave behind process trails that are more vague than informative, such as "I couldn't locate anything about that."

Playing back specific students' online video recordings is a helpful alternate technique to get real-time information about what they were doing when their online reading comprehension started to falter, such as creating keywords or traveling between websites. Watch some online reading video samples.

For instance, a short study of these internet recordings reveals that many teenagers do not actually use search engines or enter terms to initiate an online quest. Instead, they employ a ".com technique" in which they enter the entirety of a question or phrase in the URL bar at the top of a web browser, add a ".com" at the end, then hope for the best. Likewise, process data shows three alarming trends:

1) Many students only click on the first link on the search engine results page;

2) Despite the fact that students occasionally try to acquire information about a Web site's authors in order to gauge their level of authority, they frequently give up when they can not quickly uncover such information;

3) Some students retype lengthy URLs letter by letter, which frequently results in mistakes because they appear to be unaware of simple copy/paste procedures for moving Web site addresses from one place to another.

Digital technology is changing the nature of reading comprehension.

The fact that online texts, tools, and reading environments will continue to change quickly as new technologies are developed presents the biggest obstacle in evaluating online reading comprehension. Until recently, reading comprehension definitions were based on at least 20 years of theory and research, which helped educators think through the best ways to assess reading comprehension.

Although there have undoubtedly been novel comprehension theories and techniques over the years, few have drastically changed the nature of literacy as swiftly as the Internet and other digital communication technologies. We must constantly reexamine and broaden what it means to be an adept online reader if we are to support students in realizing their potential as citizens in the digital age. Online reading comprehension tests will need to be revised and reconfigured in the future to really stay up.

It will undoubtedly be challenging to determine the validity of scores across different online reading contexts or the reliability of scores over time due to changes in online texts and the reading comprehension practices that go along with them. However, as technology develops quickly, it will become simpler for teachers to gather, score, and interpret data in useful ways that guide instruction in the classroom. For instance, a computer-based assessment software may soon be able to process electronic ORCA scores to produce graphical maps that indicate how a student's performance changes during the year across each facet of online reading comprehension.

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