



# Integrating Multiple Literacies in K-8 Classrooms: Cases, Commentaries, and Practical Applications

*Michael C. McKenna*

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## **Integrating Multiple Literacies in K-8 Classrooms: Cases, Commentaries, and Practical Applications**

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This text gives prospective and practicing teachers a comprehensive understanding of how to teach multiple literacies in elementary and middle school classrooms. All of the literacies--dance, music, visual arts, popular culture, media, and computer technologies--are integrated with reading and writing. Balanced treatment is given to theoretical perspectives and practical applications. The text features authentic cases written by preservice teachers, and commentaries on the cases from practitioners and university professors. The cases are designed to prepare future teachers for the PRAXIS teacher certifying exam and others offered in many states.

Three theoretical chapters support the practical applications:

\*Chapter 1 addresses the benefits of writing and analyzing cases and the specific attributes of exemplary teaching cases, and offers guidelines for teachers to author their own case narratives and questions for analyzing and discussing case issues with peers.

\*Chapter 2 discusses the role of electronic symbol making and multiple sign systems in children's literacy and how children use symbols to receive and express meaning.

\*Chapter 3 offers a theoretical framework that helps define and enable teachers to use the new literacies of Internet technology, and provides a strong rationale for expanding traditional definitions of literacy.

The practical applications chapters (chaps. 4-12) gradually lead readers toward a deeper understanding of how to conceptualize and structure more complex, integrated lessons. In each of these chapters:

\*An "Overview" provides up-to-date information about the particular form of literacy discussed in the chapter.

\*A helpful "What Do You Need to Know and How Do You Begin" section offers ideas and tasks for teachers who wish to nurture their artistic and technological aptitudes, expand their understanding of popular culture media, and increase their knowledge about integrating diverse communication forms into cohesive themed units or instruction.

\*Exemplary cases--the heart of these chapters--present preservice teachers' candid descriptions of their reflections, confusions, and concerns as they support K-8 students writing and writing development through multiple literacy approaches.

\*Case-specific questions encourage readers to take an active part in analyzing, documenting, and discussing the particular issues raised.

\*"Commentaries" by skilled practitioners and university professors provide sound teaching suggestions, scholarly perspectives, and sometimes contrasting solutions to the dilemmas described in the cases.

\*"Reflections and Explorations" activities help teachers become more actively involved in thinking and learning about multiple literacies.

\*"Practical Applications" questions engage teachers in considering their own teaching environments and goals as they integrate multiple literacy lessons into their curriculum.

\*"Suggested Readings" support teachers in constructing more in-depth knowledge about the chapter topics.

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