Academic Reading Instruction
Leveraging Authentic Open Materials

Katie Mitchell, Matthew Burrows, Kendra Staley
IEP
- 150+ students
- 8-level program
- 8-week sessions
- Required reading class

CU Boulder
- Expects IEP bridge (conditionally admitted) students to be prepared for university reading demands
It’s for everyone’s university success!
$75

Cost of their Reading Textbook
(for an 8-week class)
70% of college students have been unable to purchase textbooks because of their cost (Redden, 2011)
Other Drawbacks of Traditional ESL Textbooks

- Short inauthentic readings
- Similar topics
- Lacking activities
- Static resources
SOLUTION!
What is an open educational resource?

Free

Public Domain

Remix?
Received Grant
from the Colorado Department of Education

- Passage Adaption
- Activity Creation
- Pilot
- Book Revision
Real University Readings for Real Success
Passage Selection and Adaption

- Used open educational resources from freshman-level course
  - OpenStax
  - Open Textbook Library
  - OER Commons
- Selected chapters based on the most popular majors:
  - business, health/biology, social sciences/history, psychology, and engineering (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018)
Adapting Texts

Maintain the length and general “authenticity” while addressing...
The Gap

• College textbooks are much more difficult than what students experience in IEPs or high school.

• Passages adapted to be around the 1200 Lexile level, shortening some sentences and changing some vocabulary.

• Passages made more culturally responsive.
Divided Adapted Chapters into 4-6 Readings
Familiar Chapter Organization
Skills Covered (2-3 per Chapter)

- Tackling Longer Texts
- Distinguishing Between Facts, Theories, Hypotheses and Opinions
- Synthesizing Readings
- Reading Fast
- Noticing Definitions
- Noticing Text Organization

- Making Inferences
- Reading Graphs
- Speculating
- Annotating a Text
Comprehension Activities

• Have standard questions (multiple-choice, matching, and T/F)

• Have open-ended questions to encourage critical thinking
  • Short-answer questions are common on exams at university exams (Melzer, 2014).
Each reading teaches 10 academic vocabulary words, either AWL or content vocabulary.
“Vocabulary is a good predictor of reading, if not the best.”

(Laufer & Ravenhorst-Kalovski, 2010, p. 16)
Ample Discussion Activities

at the start of the chapter, before each reading, after each reading
CHAPTER REVIEW ACTIVITIES

Reading Synthesis Discussions
Application Activities
Writing Prompts
How is this similar or different to other end of unit activities you’ve used?

How might this encourage university-readiness?
## Classroom Reflections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Reading 1: Exploring Business Careers p.3</td>
<td>Reading Quickly p. 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p. 2</td>
<td>Reading 2: Global Trade in the U.S. p. 8</td>
<td>Noticing Definitions p. 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading 3: Why Nations Trade p. 17</td>
<td>Synthesizing p. 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading 4: Threats and Opportunities p. 25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading 5: Expanding Around the Globe p. 34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading 6: Trends in Global Competition p. 40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter Review p. 49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>Reading 1: Introduction to Socialization p. 51</td>
<td>Speculating p. 71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p. 50</td>
<td>Reading 2: Theories of Self-Development p. 56</td>
<td>Annotating Texts p. 82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading 3: Why Socialization Matters p. 65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading 4: Agents of Socialization p. 71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading 5: Socialization Across Life p. 82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter Review p. 92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Future

• We need people to provide feedback.
• We need people to pilot and adopt the book.
• We want people to make learning more accessible.
  In May, the book will be revised and published for anyone to use.
What does it mean to pilot?

- Use in January & February
- Use at least two chapters of the book
- Provide feedback
- Help create the teacher’s manual
- Receive $250
Complete the Survey to Stay Informed or Sign up

- Go to tinyurl.com/cotesoloER
- Email matthew.burrows@Colorado.edu
Complete the Survey to Stay Informed or Sign up

- Go to tinyurl.com/cotesoI0ER
REFERENCES


Lexile Levels

• Used to measure text difficulty and reader ability
• Calculated by analyzing word frequency and sentence length (200-1700L)
• Can correlate with other readability scores (Wright & Stone, 2004)
• Possibly best measure of students' perception of text difficulty (Holster, Lake, & Pellowe, 2017)
Determining Lexile Level

- Use “Lexile Analyzer” Tool
- Remove titles, references, and other things that could throw off the algorithm

Results

- Lexile® Measure: 1210L
- Mean Sentence Length: 18.55
- Mean Log Word Frequency: 3.44
- Word Count: 408

https://accounts.lexile.com/login/
Lexile Level

Studies have begun to correlate Lexile level and the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) levels (Smith & Turner, 2016).

- B1 = 705L to 1210L
- B2 = 1000L to 1370L
- C1 = 1290L to 1400L

University readings are usually between 1200-1400L (Williamson, 2008)