Guest editorial: Introduction to special issue on disciplinary literacy in English teaching and teacher education

Our call for papers in this special issue invited literacy researchers and practitioners to address questions about disciplinary literacy in English language arts, including how approaches to disciplinary literacy may be conceptualized in the domain of English, productively brought to K-12 teaching and teacher education and used to advance justice or anti-racism. The papers in this special issue represent a range of perspectives on these questions. Collectively, they reveal new directions for literacy education theory, research, practice and policy.

In this issue, authors:

- Argue that disciplinary literacy can support teaching and learning for social justice and anti-racism. Storm, Jones and Beck show how youth in one classroom co-constructed a hybrid discourse community toward justice. Alston and Bausell raise the potential of critical rhetorical analysis for pursuing disciplinary and anti-racist goals with informational texts in the middle grades classroom.

- Consider youth’s experiences with and perspectives of disciplinary literacy. Hall and Goldman analyze the extent to which students’ experiences of their literacy learning aligned with their teacher’s disciplinary goals and perspectives.

- Explore and expand definitions of disciplinary literacy in English. Reynolds, Rush, Holschuh and Lampi trace how literary scholars and first-year undergraduate students read literary texts. Vaughan and Lesus examine how youth’s out-of-school poetry writing represents authentic disciplinary literacy practice that often goes unrecognized in school contexts.

- Examine efforts to support teachers’ disciplinary literacy teaching approaches and offer ideas for curriculum design and pedagogy. Kwok uncovers differences in the perspectives of subject area teachers engaged in a teacher-led writing professional development effort. Kane, Keene and Reynolds document how preservice teachers’ participation in collaborative literary reasoning supported their conceptualization of English as a discipline and their pedagogy. Reynolds analyzes models of text set construction and encourages teachers to consider the role of text sets in disciplinary literacy teaching and learning.

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