

Profile of Strategies for Literacy Independence across the Curriculum (SLIC)

Publisher: The *Strategies for Literacy Independence across the Curriculum* is developed by Trevor McDonald and Christina Thornley, of Education Associates, in New Zealand.

Program Website: None

Striving Readers Projects Using this Program: San Diego Unified School District, CA

Overview

Key features: The *SLIC* program includes (a) a school-level intervention in grades 7-10, in which teachers in content area classes are intended to teach students to use specific strategies for reading and writing in their disciplines, and (b) a targeted intervention for struggling readers who are reading two or more years below grade level, in which students receive more intensive direct instruction in using *SLIC* literacy strategies with a focus on how different disciplines require different approaches to reading and writing. It is not a prescribed curriculum, but is rather a set of literacy strategies that are intended to enhance students' skills in reading and writing. It is based on the assumption that in order to make meaning, students must understand the ways authors use different text forms to present particular types of information and how the surface features of a text convey information about the content of the text. The *SLIC* program is also based on the assumption that the best path to increased adolescent literacy achievement is through building the knowledge base of teachers in the ways texts work and their pedagogical knowledge of teaching about texts and analyzing student work to plan instruction.

Grades: Middle and high school students

Target students: Targeted *SLIC* intervention is for students who are reading two or more years below grade level.

Duration: Multiple years

Class size: Student to teacher ratio no greater than 25:1

Content

Fluency: Not described in publicly available documents.

Comprehension: The *SLIC* program begins with instruction in how to use text features and the structure of texts to support meaning-making and moves to instruction on strategic reading behaviors to help students achieve deeper understanding across a range of challenging texts and tasks. In the targeted *SLIC* classes, teachers provide explicit instruction on recognizing and using text features such as titles, subtitles, captions, font style, and graphics intended to help students gain a rapid understanding of whether the content, purpose, structure, and organization identifies text as expository, persuasive, or narrative. In addition to training on previewing text prior to reading, *SLIC* is designed to provide explicit instruction on other strategic reading behaviors such as cross-checking among text features and between text features and running text to verify understanding; using contextual clues to comprehend unfamiliar vocabulary; note-making and other forms of writing to organize textual information derived from readings; and breaking writing prompts into component questions. The *SLIC* model assumes that over time, students will actively learn about text features, forms, and structures and will gradually build

independence in using these through scaffolded instruction and independent reading and writing practice.

Vocabulary: *SLIC* provides students with vocabulary-solving approaches including using context (e.g., focusing on the content of the text and asking, “What would make sense?”), reading around target words, using glossaries, and using morphological clues in text (e.g., looking at prefix, suffix, root words and asking, “Are there any parts of the word you know from other words?”). Teachers are expected to model the approach initially and then ask students to reflect on the approach.

Decoding/Phonics: Not described in publicly available documents.

Writing: *SLIC* focuses on writing by helping students develop note-making templates and develop skills in writing summaries from notes. *SLIC* is designed to help students complete increasingly complex grade level written tasks over time.

Organization

The *SLIC* program includes daily explicit instruction in strategic reading behaviors, moving from overview of content using text features to reading and meaning-making in running text, cross-checking for accuracy and higher level skills of inference, synthesis and critique to building vocabulary knowledge. *SLIC* is expected to provide students with opportunities for daily reading with increasingly complex texts and opportunities to complete increasingly complex grade level written tasks.

Use of Technology

None indicated in publicly available documents.

Student Motivation

SLIC is designed to build student literacy independence and capacity for self-monitoring and reflection. Three approaches intended to support student independence include: wall charts of literacy information; availability of classroom reading and writing textbooks; and creation of student journals and notebooks of literacy learning.

Formative Assessment

Teacher feedback (oral and written) on student literacy learning is to be regularly provided. The curriculum calls for periodic administrations (every 2-3 months) of the *SLIC* assessment.¹

Text Materials

The targeted intervention class uses a variety of persuasive, expository, and narrative texts, including textbooks used in core content areas (social science, science, mathematics, and language arts) in the secondary school, magazine and newspaper articles, short stories, and novels.

¹ Assessment system developed jointly by the *SLIC* developers, the SDUSD project leadership, and researchers at the University of California- Berkeley (UCB)/Berkeley Evaluation and Assessment Research Center (BEAR).

