



Achieving Next Generation Literacy: Using the Tests (You Think) You Hate to Help the Students You Love

Maureen Connolly, Vicky Giouroukakis

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As a teacher, what you want most is for your students to learn—to immerse themselves in rich and challenging content and leave your classroom better prepared for school and life. In English language arts and humanities, this includes developing the multifaceted reading, writing, thinking, and communication skills that constitute next generation literacy, including the ability to

- * Read complex text independently
- * Develop strong content knowledge through reading, writing, listening, and speaking
- * Tailor communication in response to different audiences, tasks, purposes, and disciplines
- * Comprehend text as well as critique it
- * Value evidence in arguments they read, hear, or develop
- * Use technology strategically and capably
- * Understand perspectives and cultures that differ from their own

But as a teacher, you also know how much is riding on THOSE TESTS—achievement tests from the national assessment consortia, the SAT and ACT, and independent state assessments. Is it possible to help students succeed on mandated tests without sacrificing your values, your creativity, and their education?

Yes, it is possible. This book shows you how.

This not a test-prep book. It is not about “drill and kill” practices that narrow learning so that students will pass an exam. Instead, authors Maureen Connolly and Vicky Giouroukakis present a lesson planning approach for the secondary classroom that generates test success as a byproduct of comprehensive literacy learning. After a comparative analysis of how current ELA assessments measure literacy, they model a backward design-based process for using these test items as a tool to create engaging and effective instruction. With 6 sample lessons, 42 instructional techniques, and tips for differentiation, this practical resource will empower you to help the students you love become capable, literate individuals who are also

well-prepared to ace high-stakes tests.

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