

Reading and Learning to Read, 10e (Vacca et al.)
Chapter 2 Approaches to Reading Instruction

2.1 True/False Questions

1) Comprehensive instruction in reading evolves from teachers' knowledge about the needs of students.

Answer: TRUE

2) Teachers who use the bottom-up approach think that students need to be assessed on the basis of their performance in meaningful contexts.

Answer: FALSE

3) A dynamic conception of curriculum reflects what teachers and students do as they engage in classroom activity.

Answer: TRUE

4) The First-Grade Studies indicated the bottom-up approach to be more effective for beginning reading and spelling achievement.

Answer: FALSE

5) Teachers who work within a top-down curriculum create a classroom community with students to engage in reading, writing, and other collaborative acts of meaning-making.

Answer: TRUE

2.2 Multiple Choice Questions

1) Which of the following characteristics is associated with a comprehensive reading program?

- A) Sampling of methods
- B) Grouping of disparate approaches
- C) Informed philosophical stance
- D) Two distinct, parallel approaches

Answer: C

2) How do teachers define who they are as teachers of reading?

- A) Questioning
- B) Self-examination
- C) Reflection
- D) All of the above

Answer: D

3) Which characteristic is based on the bottom-up belief system?

- A) Reading and writing connections
- B) Use of context clues
- C) Authentic writing
- D) Letter-sound relationship

Answer: D

4) Identify the characteristic that is NOT based on the top-down belief system.

- A) Using context clues
- B) Allowing a choice of reading materials
- C) Less emphasis on correcting word errors
- D) Engaging in vocabulary activities before reading

Answer: D

5) Which of the following is NOT based on the top-down principles?

- A) Students writing in journals
- B) Students reading with a buddy
- C) Students identifying beginning sounds on picture cards
- D) Students participating in activities associated with a unit of study

Answer: C

6) Which of the following is NOT associated with the top-down curricula philosophy?

- A) Immersion
- B) Scope and sequence
- C) Expectation
- D) Engagement

Answer: B

7) Which of the following was NOT mentioned as a characteristic of an effective teacher?

- A) Effective teachers provide explicit strategy instruction.
- B) Effective teachers adapt instruction based on assessment.
- C) Effective teachers recognize students need to read a wide variety of texts.
- D) Effective teachers know skills need to be mastered prior to reading instruction.

Answer: D

8) Which of the following approaches supports children working with their own language?

- A) Integrated language arts
- B) Basal reading
- C) The language-experience approach
- D) Literature-based instruction

Answer: C

9) Another term for the comprehensive approach to teaching reading is

- A) integrated approach.
- B) language-experience approach.
- C) holistic approach.
- D) multifaceted approach.

Answer: A

10) In the _____ approach, students regulate their own reading and select reading based on interests.

- A) basal reading
- B) language-experience approach
- C) literature-based instruction
- D) integrated language arts

Answer: C

11) Which of the following are used in technology-based instruction?

- A) E-mail
- B) Wikis
- C) Smart Boards
- D) All of the above

Answer: D

12) The characteristics of highly effective literacy teachers include the thorough integration of _____ to support the development of children's literacy skills and strategies.

- A) reading activities
- B) writing activities
- C) instructional scaffolding
- D) All of the above

Answer: D

13) Which of the following is NOT a characteristic of comprehensive reading instruction?

- A) Drill and practice of alphabetic principle
- B) Integration of reading and writing experiences
- C) Scaffolded instruction in the use of skills and strategies
- D) Meaningful and authentic reading and writing activities

Answer: A

14) Which approach has been useful for meeting the needs of English language learners because it embraces the natural language of children and provides opportunities for meaningful text for students from diverse backgrounds?

- A) Technology-based approach
- B) Bottom-up approach
- C) Basal reading approach
- D) Language-experience approach

Answer: D

15) Which of the following statements is true regarding approaches to reading instruction and struggling readers?

- A) If teachers try enough approaches, they will find the one that works for every child.
- B) Students who struggle can benefit from a program that is grounded in the teacher's understanding of research-based principles.
- C) Adopting a particular instructional approach and sticking to it is a way to solve the problems of struggling readers.
- D) Whole-language teaching is the best approach for students who struggle.

Answer: B

16) Which of the following is NOT a characteristic of a bottom-up philosophical stance?

- A) Students must decode letters and words before they are able to construct meaning from sentences, paragraphs, and larger text selections.
- B) Reading acquisition is mastering and integrating a series of word identification skills.
- C) Sentences, paragraphs, and text selections are the units of language emphasized instructionally.
- D) Students should read a passage over and over is an important instructional activity because they develop accurate word recognition.

Answer: C

17) The Common Core State Standards, which have been adopted by most states, call for the new standards to be taught within the context of a content-rich curriculum. Which of the following is NOT true about the CCSS and curriculum?

- A) The CCSS do not stipulate what content students need to learn.
- B) Responsibility for developing a curriculum falls to schools, districts, and states.
- C) In many states, model curriculum has been developed that is aligned with the new standards.
- D) The CCSS provide detailed instructions on what content students need to learn.

Answer: D

18) The First-Grade Studies were launched nationally in an effort to identify the best approaches to the teaching of reading. The major finding of The First-Grade Studies was that

- A) classroom instructional materials were the most important factor in first grade classrooms.
- B) no instructional approach was superior to the others for students at either high or low levels of readiness.
- C) children in first grade benefitted most from an interactive approach to reading instruction.
- D) as long as the classroom teacher is competent, any instructional material was acceptable.

Answer: B

19) In Ben Thompson's classroom, children are immersed in a community of learners. Ben uses only authentic texts for children to read, discuss, listen to, or write about, and he says his main goal is to, "Support children in the skillful use of language." How would you best describe Ben's approach to teaching literacy?

- A) Ben is a whole-language teacher.
- B) Ben believes in a top-down approach to teaching reading.
- C) Ben has a balanced literacy program in his classroom.
- D) Ben believes in a bottom-up approach to teaching reading.

Answer: A

20) Albert's district has recently adopted a new basal reading program. He says with so many different things to think about such as response to intervention, Common Core State Standards, and how to meet the needs of English Language Learners, following the basal closely is the best approach for him. What would lead Albert to think this way?

A) A basal reading program gives him the opportunity to work with students who need his individual time.

B) A basal reading program is an all-inclusive set of commercially produced materials for providing classroom reading instruction.

C) Basal reading programs are widely adopted so they are acceptable nationally.

D) Basal reading programs require the teacher to think less and simply follow the manuals.

Answer: B

21) In Ms. Tempo's first grade class the children are using software to create stories following a field trip to the botanical garden. Ms. Tempo is likely using what approach to teach reading and writing?

A) Language Experience

B) Reading Writing Connection

C) Basal Reader

D) Individualized Instruction

Answer: A

22) Which of the following approaches to teaching reading best compliments the Common Core State Standards because reading, writing, listening, and speaking apply across content areas and are intended to help students read and write well in all disciplines?

A) Literature-Based

B) Language Experience

C) Integrated

D) Technology-Based

Answer: C

23) An important way to motivate students in a literature-based program is to

A) hold conferences with individual students about what they are reading.

B) provide a leveled reading library.

C) allow them to use the literature as a springboard for writing.

D) allow students to self-select literature for independent reading.

Answer: D

24) In a fourth grade classroom a teacher notices some of her students don't understand how to apply a strategy to their reading. She models the strategy again and demonstrates how readers use it with text. She also shares her thinking aloud with the group of students and provides opportunities for practice. This teacher knows that

- A) effective teachers need to allow time for practice.
- B) effective teachers provide explicit strategy instruction when needed.
- C) effective teachers patiently wait until everyone masters a concept before moving on.
- D) effective teachers reteach to the entire classroom when a small group doesn't grasp the concept.

Answer: B

25) Ms. Goldstein knows extensive reading is critical to the development of reading proficiency and practice provides the opportunity for students to combine the skills and strategies that teachers work to develop. With this in mind she knows children should be reading

- A) 2/3 of the time set aside for reading.
- B) 1/3 of the time set aside for reading.
- C) half of the time set aside for reading.
- D) all of the time set aside for reading.

Answer: A

2.3 Essay Questions

1) What do you believe about reading and learning to read? Explain your answer and include information from the text to support your answer.

Answer: Answers will vary but should show an analysis of beliefs based on material presented in the book. May include results from the "Beliefs About Reading Interview" assessment.

2) You are a beginning teacher participating in an interview for a teaching position. The superintendent asks you about your curriculum decision as it relates to literacy teaching. Discuss decisions you have made as they relate to instructional objectives, materials, learning environment, instructional strategies, and assessment.

Answer: Answers will vary but should be based on the information in the "Curriculum Perspectives" section of the book.

3) Compare and contrast the bottom-up curriculum and the top-down curriculum approaches. Discuss the instructional objectives, materials, learning environment, instructional strategies, and assessment for each approach. Are they similar in any way?

Answer: The bottom-up curriculum explanation should include a discussion of the materials, strategies, and environment in which students are asked to decode letters and words before they can construct meaning. In the bottom-up approach there would be an instructional emphasis on letter and word identification as well as an assessment of discrete skills. A top-down teacher's approach to curriculum would focus on keeping language whole as opposed to severing it into discrete pieces. In a top-down approach, classrooms are often learning communities where children learn to make sense of both oral and written language.

4) Suppose the school system in which you teach has mandated that all first-grade teachers should use a language-experience approach. Your principal is responsible for supervising these teachers, but doesn't really understand the approach. Prepare a checklist of "recommended practices" and one of "practices to avoid" to guide the principal in evaluating whether the teaching strategies that she or he observes are consistent with the approach.

Answer: Recommended practices could include language that is recorded for children to read, use of word banks, creative writing exercises, oral reading exercises, etc. Practices to avoid would include strategies that do not value or come from the child's language, such as the repetitive reading of a vocabulary-controlled book.

5) In what ways are teachers using technology as an approach to teaching reading? What other ways can you think of to use today's technology in the reading classroom?

Answer: Answers presented in the text included podcasts, the Internet, CDs, and blogs. Students should think creatively and provide some other uses.