

Online Resources for Extensive Reading

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The following five resources provide input for teachers on ways to implement many of the ideas suggested by the authors of the four articles in this special issue. As you review the information about each resource, think about ways that you can use it to develop or strengthen the Extensive Reading program in your English program.

Resource #1: The Extensive Reading Foundation: Promoting Extensive Reading in English as a Foreign Language

URL: <http://erfoundation.org/wordpress/>

This site provides valuable resources for those who are well-versed in the realm of Extensive Reading as well as for those without any background information at all. For those with experience, an extensive archive is organized, featuring works that back to 1919. The myriad of information can be easily navigated through a chronological display or a subject index. Instructors at any level can remain connected with the latest research and practice related to extensive reading. For those who are new or discovering Extensive Reading, a toolkit is provided. Within the vast store of ideas and assistance, the toolkit features a guidebook, video tutorials, Power-Point slides from experts in the field, and simple explanations of the basic aspects of Extensive Reading. Yearly, the Extensive Reading Foundation highlights the best new books published that year through the Language Learner Literature Award. Instructors and administrators have access to the latest publications in hopes to provide schools and students with the best reading texts available.

This site is geared toward teachers and administrators. Much of the content informs instructors through research and highlighting the most recent publications for students to read. Administrators can connect with

the foundation in hopes of receiving grants and receiving support in implementing an Extensive Reading programming.

This site is a great instrument to educate teachers and administrators. It can help those with experience as well as novices in the realm of extensive reading. The information is extensive and extremely relevant. Most importantly, it provides access to a network of other professionals and scholars.

Resource #2: Top Ten Principles for Teaching Extensive Reading

URL: <http://nflrc.hawaii.edu/rfl/october2002/day/day.html>

The top ten principles for teaching extensive reading is an article published online by *Reading in a Foreign Language*, which is sponsored by the National Foreign Language Resource Center and the University of Hawaii. The two authors of this article are Richard Day of the University of Hawaii at Manoa and Julian Bamford of Bunkyo University. Very simply, this article shows ten strategies which could make extensive reading instruction more fruitful, according to the authors. Accompanying the list is a brief and clear description of each point with a more in-depth explanation. This article is based off work done by various renowned and respected scholars.

The article is very easy to understand and the principles contained it are easily applied by all instructors, regardless of experience or accreditation. Individual classes and entire programs can benefit from the implementation of the 10 points. It serves to keep teachers on the right path, and to avoid falling into ineffective habits. It could be employed in teacher training and basic instruction.

If you are looking for basic points to either get you started in an Extensive Reading program or if you would like tips to refine your teaching, this article is for you. You will have access to a compilation of the most relevant sources. Your teaching will be more effective, and you will have the confidence that you are running your class correctly.

Resource #3: Extensive Reading: The Fun Way to Read

URL: <http://mreader.org/>

Mreader.org is a website designed to help students and teachers ascertain appropriate texts. Within the site a database with varying levels of difficulty and a corresponding 10-question quiz that students can take to check for completion and reading comprehension. As a result of the difficulty rating assigned to texts, students can make informed reading selections. Furthermore, it can help teachers guide students to appropriate texts. Upon successful completion of a text, students receive an image of the book's cover to keep in an online album. Teachers are given access to student progress in order to guide and counsel them. The only requirement to access this site is a username and password.

Students and teachers can benefit greatly from this site. Students have the opportunity to take quizzes and record their progress. As a result of their recorded progress, students become more motivated to read. Additionally, it gives students autonomy in book selection and quiz completion, which fosters independent and motivate learning. Teachers can monitor and permit re-taking of the quizzes as a way for students to improve.

This website is great for allowing students to have freedom and allowing teachers to facilitate the extensive reading process. Students are given an array of books to choose from according to their level. The quizzes serve as a means to check comprehension and to hold students accountable for their reading.

Resource #4: Extensive Reading Central

URL: <http://www.er-central.com/>

Extensive Reading Central is one of the most user-friendly and tech-savvy sites on the web. The site is divided into four main sections—reading, listening, vocabulary, and help. In the reading section students are given access to a library of online texts which are rated on a 1-20 scale, according to level of difficulty. Along with providing texts, a timer records the amount of time a student take to read the story. This is used to help

students develop awareness of reading pace and it is employed in speed-reading exercises on the site. The listening section is very similar to the reading section in that there is a library with rated books. The only difference is students can both read and listen simultaneously to receive a more comprehensive experience. The vocabulary section employs a variety of games to foster lexicon growth. Moreover, there are tutorials and instructional videos that help teachers implement an extensive reading program in the class.

Both teachers and students benefit from this site because it is students-centered. Depending on the students' motivation and desire, this website can be an effective tool in Extensive Reading instruction. For instance, students are exposed to a wide array of texts with varying difficulty and given a way to chart their progress. The vocabulary section also allows flexibility in creating customized vocabulary lists based on learner needs. Teachers can monitor progress and utilize the vocabulary feature in classroom instruction.

If your class has access to computers, then this site will assist you greatly with Extensive Reading. Students are given freedom and they are exposed to many texts and differing levels. It has so many reading materials that students are bound to find something that interests them. Furthermore, the quizzes are a great way of tracking progress. This site can foster autonomy and empowers learners to efficiently read on their own.

Resource #5: British Council

URL: <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/extensive-reading>

This webpage provides a basic outline and explanation of Extensive Reading. The page is divided into six parts, each focusing on a different aspect of extensive reading. The categories contained include (1) Extensive reading—an alternative approach, (2) Aims of extensive reading, (3) The characteristics of an extensive reading approach, (4) Motivation, (5) The teacher's role, and (6) Conclusion. The most in-depth part is the section focuses on the characteristics of an effective program, which features nine sub-points—an explanation of the material, student choice, reading for pleasure and information, reading out of class, silent in-class reading,

level, dictionary use, record keeping, and the teacher's role in the whole process. The article concludes with links to other readings on the subject.

Although it is simple, this site is clear and direct. It is catered for teachers who have little to no experience with Extensive Reading. The principles taught are short enough for any teacher to understand and implement them. If a teacher wanted more insight on extensive reading, they would have to consult other resources for more in-depth guidance and instruction.

This site is a great resource to get basic understanding and ideas to establish an Extensive Reading program. The BBC is a very trusted source and the information given is accurate and relevant. This site is great for newer teachers or those willing to experiment with the idea of Extensive Reading. If adhered to, the principles taught on this website can improve or help to establish a solid program.

About the Reviewer

Ethan Lynn is a graduate student in the TESOL MA program at Brigham Young University. His research focuses on the role of motivation in second language reading. Ethan currently teaches level 1 adult ESOL classes at Centro Hispano in Provo, Utah. Also, he serves as the co-chair of the Adult Education Interest Section of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.