



# Improving Literacy in At-Risk Populations

## Summary

Our program caters primarily to “at-risk” students. Many have struggled throughout their academic careers due to social and familial problems. Many also have the compound issue of learning disabilities. As a result they often have difficulties with school based literacy tasks. They cannot be expected to walk into a course and read information, identify key ideas, organize their thoughts logically, or express them without a great deal of support. It was with the aim of concretizing this support that our project was directed.

Our intentions were to provide, for teachers who work with similar demographics, an accessible package to facilitate their support of at-risk student populations. To this end we set forth to research strategies and resources intended to improve the literacy of at-risk students with the intent of compiling such diverse material into a more user-friendly format.

The product outcome reflects our intended goals. In an easily accessible on-line folder we have compiled classroom ready materials that will assist teachers in enabling at-risk learners to perform such literacy tasks as reading for content, or skimming a text. A practical guideline has also been provided for such curriculum based writing tasks as the essay, report and news articles. We have modeled how such material can be integrated into various courses. Moreover a compendium of teacher focused professional material has also been delivered so as to assist educators in their efforts to foster enhanced literacy in at-risk learners.

We trust that the materials will prove both interesting and efficacious, both enabling struggling students and assisting educators.

## Table of Contents

### 1. Advanced Video and Article Review:

- A guide to help students in a senior C / U course create a review of a video or an article.
- Includes rubric.

### 2. Basic Video and Article Review:

- A guide to help students in a junior or applied / workplace course create a review of a video or an article.
- Includes rubric and graphic organizer.

3. Critical Reading Chart:

- A chart for students to fill in while analyzing a text, in order to think about power structures and authorial point of view

4. Drop Everything and Read:

- Guidelines and rationale

5. Editing Tips:

- What to look for when peer- or self-editing.

6. Exploring a Textbook's Layout:

- A lesson to be used at the beginning of a course
- Includes rubric.

7. Feedback Sheet:

- Peer editing feed back sheet for creative writing.

8. General Video and Article Review:

- An overview of how to create a review of a video or an article.
- Includes rubric

9. Graphic Organizers Examples:

- Rationale for use, literacy level considerations and examples of a variety of organizers for use in different contexts.

10. Literacy Websites and Works Consulted

11. Pre-reading, Questioning and Re-reading.

- Questions to help a struggling reader choose and engage with a novel, in the format of 4 short lessons.

12. Searching for Key Ideas in a Text:

- Questions to consider while using a text.
- With rubric.

13. Writing Made Easy:

- Detailed guide for writing newspaper articles, essays and reports.