



Literacy Connects

A Content Literacy Newsletter from Regional Professional Development Program-Issue VII



Let's get them writing—R.A.F.T.

RAFT is a 4-step process to help students make decisions about their writing. Students often need help determining and addressing audience when they write. This strategy guides students in considering questions about the author's role or voice, audience, format, and topic.

R = Role of the writer: what is my role as the writer? (a student, an expert, a reporter, a first hand observer of history)

A = Audience to whom the writing is directed: for whom am I writing? (peers, teacher, administrator, public, legislators)

F = Format in which the writing will be done: What form should I use for this writing? (journal, letter, essay, dialogue, poem, report, editorial)

T = Topic about which the writing will be done: What topic will I write about? (NOTE: if used for assessment, this part should be provided by the teacher depending on desired learning outcome.)

Procedures:

- The teacher presents RAFT and appropriate examples for the content area.
- Using brainstorming, the class practices generating and discussing responses to the four questions until everyone understands what must be taken into consideration with each one.
- Students, individually, in pairs, or small groups use RAFT as they plan their writing.

Example:

In a Biology I class, the students read a *Newsweek* article discussing both sides of the stem cell research issue. After a heated discussion, the class brainstormed the following RAFT chart. The students were then to choose an item from each of the columns and write an appropriate response. A variation is for the teacher to generate the items and/or the topic.

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
The Pope	Believers	Speech	Stem cell research
Scientists	Public	Editorial	
The public	Politicians	E-mail	
Politicians	Voters	Debate	
A sick person	President Bush	Letter	
A stem cell	Scientists	Journal	
Research teams	Public	Advertisement	