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The other reasons students cannot follow complex text through to its meaning are because they do not know the meaning of too many words in the passage or they have not been exposed to the knowledge the author assumed readers would possess. The “cure” for both issues is providing students with more opportunities to read broadly on a range of conceptually coherent topics, ideally self-selected by the readers, at least in part. That kind of meaning-making is harder to measure, and it takes precious classroom time, as discussed earlier, but it is a *much* more satisfactory and effective way to approach text, to learn, and to teach.

## What Can We Do Now To Produce Strong Readers?

- Get the message out to instructional leaders and educational stakeholders about the necessity to have text occupy the center of standards-aligned classrooms.
- Support and challenge teachers and developers of instructional materials to organize classroom instruction around the practices grounded in research.
- Challenge assessment developers to create new approaches for assessing reading progress/literacy standards mastery that help teachers more effectively guide their instruction in alignment with the research (perhaps in ways yet to exist or be fully envisioned).
- Challenge the education reform community to develop the mindset, resources, and materials required to catalyze and support this significant shift in instructional practice.

Reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language standards are *designed* to be woven into one interconnected tapestry to demonstrate what a literate, capable user and consumer of English should be able to do at each grade level. On the other hand, students exposed exclusively to a diet year after year of dissected standards or isolated skills—in instruction or assessment—will risk becoming graduates who are not very literate, individuals who are not able to deploy and understand English in integrated, holistic, and flexible ways. Perhaps worst of all, they will likely never come to love reading or learning.

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