

McGinley, W., & Tierney, R. J. (1989). Traversing the topical landscape: Reading and writing as ways of knowing. *Written Communication*, 6, 243-269. Copyright 1989 by Sage Publications, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Sage Publications Inc.

In light of recent theoretical and empirical developments in the areas of reading, writing, and learning, this article proposes a view of literacy learning in which various forms of reading and writing are conceptualized as unique ways of thinking about and exploring a topic of study en route to acquiring knowledge. Throughout this article, we take the theoretical position that a topic of study is analogous to a conceptual "landscape" about which

and reasoning ability of students in academic subjects. These reforms, often referred to as "writing across the curriculum," originate with the belief that the kind of writing students do in school has a direct

In their recent chapter on reading, writing, and thinking, O'Flahavan and Tierney (in press) explore the dependencies that exist between literacy, student thinking, and learning.

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support for a view of critical literacy in which various forms of reading and writing are understood as different ways of knowing or criss-crossing a conceptual landscape. After Wittgenstein (1953), we also take it

different types of learning (Langer & Applebee, 1987; Marshall, 1987; Newell, 1984; Tierney et al., in press).

... and ... of some important contemporary approaches

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to traverse an area of study. Her research is based upon the notions of Gadamer (1986), a hermeneutic philosopher who believes that to understand a text is to come to understand oneself in a kind of dialogue. For example, in an attempt to have students become aware

organizing, goal setting, translating, and reviewing) in comparison to notetaking and answering study-guide questions. Newell argues that the production of coherent rather than fragmentary text involved more extensive thought and consideration of passage content than

tions of both writing and discussion as a means of exploring a significant event in their lives. Using a thoughtfully developed sequence of

Copeland (in press) also investigated the influence of specific types of writing upon 120 sixth-grade students' ability to learn from informa-

tions that provided students with essentially two perspectives from

domain of study. In particular, this research pursued the question of

simulated combinations of reading and writing have upon thinking critically, we find ourselves at a theoretical crossroads with respect to future research efforts in this area. In particular, we must begin to address the questions and limitations that will accompany our decision to continue studying reading and writing as a static set of prescribed juxtapositions as opposed to exploring students' dynamic use of a fluid

forms of reading and writing contribute to thinking and learning in specific content domains.

STUDIES OF THE DYNAMIC USE OF
READING AND WRITING IN CLASS

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essay. During their reading and writing, students engaged in a think-aloud procedure that required them to verbalize their thoughts as they worked. After students had completed their essay, they responded to a series of written debriefing questions about the purposes served by different forms of reading and writing, their decisions to shift from one

begun her work with no formal opinions on the topic, used her reading and writing in order to *discover* what she actually believed. (p. 126)

McGinley argues that the reading and writing in which Pam, Kathy and Lisa engaged represent in varying degrees their efforts to "criss-

the theoretical work of Giroux (1988), Freire (1982), Katz (1982), O'Flahavan and Tierney (in press), and Smith (1988), we view learning

between certain motivational factors (i.e., academic self-concept, perception of mental capacity for success, and interest in subject

to inform themselves about topics of study, we must explore ways of helping them to begin directing their own reading and writing activities.

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