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Love of Literacy

As an editor and communications professional, I obsess about clarity of communication. Our ability to review and clearly express ideas, opinions, facts, and emotions is critical to our success and well-being both as individuals and as a society. In middle school, while our primary focus tends to be on developing skillsets in reading, writing, and speaking, it’s more than that. The ability to read then apply the information—do something with it—takes literacy a step further. Literacy is a critical part of the process of building knowledge and building community. In this issue of AMLE Magazine, we explore these and other facets of literacy in the middle school classroom.

Porosoff helps us see the benefit of getting students beyond the traditional approaches of writing that argues, informs, and narrates, to finding ways students can step out of their own thoughts and ideas and invite and celebrate multiple perspectives.

Randall and Marangell guide us in the philosophy of creating a vibrant literacy culture by eschewing the “strategy of the month” and tapping into the language and methods of subject areas.

Sharbel and Hayes work to identify struggling readers and offer intervention through learning clubs and literature circles. These interventions help students become more confident readers.

DeHart’s article on exploring web comics sheds light on the appeal, the variety, and the digital navigation involved in electronic format text. While they’re certainly different from traditional print, web comics and graphic novels are growing in popularity as choices for reading materials.

Literacy skills help students understand and appreciate our world, find out what interests them, learn to cope with life’s challenges and difficulties, and develop empathy for others. This boost to broaden their perspectives helps build community and develop the planners, creators, thinkers, and leaders of tomorrow. Literacy is that important. We hope you enjoy our exploration of literacy and the additional variety of content offered in this issue of AMLE Magazine.
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