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# Making Literacy Real: Theories and Practices for Learning and Teaching

*By Joanne Larson, Jackie Marsh*



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Offering an overview of the major fields in literacy studies, this book presents a detailed and accessible discussion of key theories and their relevance in the primary classroom.

Each chapter uses a real life case study to explore the application of theory in practice, followed by a detailed discussion of the case study material by a leading name in the field, including contributions from Barbara Comber, Michele Knobel, Colin Lankshear, Gunther Kress, Brian Street, Kevin Leander and Patricia Enciso.

The text also offers reflections on theoretical foundations for research, exploring literacy as a practice grounded in social, cultural, historical and political contexts and in relationships of power.

This second edition includes:

- New chapters covering digital literacy, space and play, and multimodality
- Examples and contributions from a range of international contexts, including US, UK, Canada, Australia and South Africa
- Further reading links.

Essential reading for students at undergraduate and post-graduate level on primary education courses and an invaluable guide for anyone wanting to understand literacy theory and successfully apply this to the classroom.



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### Editorial Review

#### Review

Larson and Marsh reassemble a polyphonic choir to interpret literacies as critical social practices - with new voices, adding powerful contrapuntal harmonies to contest the logic, theory, and practice of the National Curriculum and Race to the Top. Sing out!

(Patrick Shannon)

When it was first published, this groundbreaking book brought key contemporary theories of literacy together in a coherent and accessible form. *Making Literacy Real* quickly established itself as a key resource for educators, students and researchers working in a rapidly changing field. This updated edition incorporates the latest research around play, space and multimodality ensuring that it remains essential reading for those of us interested in literacy theory and literacy education.

(Victoria Carrington)

When it was first published this groundbreaking book quickly established itself as a key resource for educators, students and researchers working in a rapidly changing field. This updated edition incorporates the latest research around play, space and multimodality, ensuring that it remains essential reading for those of us interested in literacy theory and literacy education.

(Victoria Carrington)

This is one of very few books that considers the world of possibilities within literacy pedagogy and challenges the dominant techno-rational approach that reduces literacy to skills teaching. The book is grounded in robust theoretical models that challenge the reader to critically reflect on their practice. The vignettes are extremely helpful in contextualising what the authors say. A must read for all aspiring and current literacy teachers.

(Jan Gourd)

This new edition of Joanne Larson and Jackie Marsh's important book *Making Literacy Real* is theoretically illuminating and insightfully grounded in useful cases and effective practices. It is the foundation anyone interested in Literacy Studies needs to start with.

(James Paul Gee)

Engaging and invitational, this second edition of *Making Literacy Real* skilfully illuminates the inseparability of theory and practice. It makes accessible a comprehensive range of theoretical frameworks, including new sections on Space and Play, and Multimodalities and Artifactual Literacy and describes their application and realisation in the classroom through authentic examples. A 'must have' text for all

contemporary literacy professionals.  
(Professor Teresa Cremin)

In this wonderful new edition of *Making Literacy Real*, Larson and Marsh present vivid portrayals of literacy in a variety of classrooms. They invite readers to consider key theories, which inform literacy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and make their presence visible in transformative teaching and learning. *Making Literacy Real* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) will be an inspiration to teachers, teacher-researchers, and all who care about the transformative potential and power of education. (Mariana Souto-Manning, Teachers College, Columbia University)

Alongside learners and teachers, Larson and Marsh's wonderful new edition of *Making Literacy Real* considers what might be possible in today's classrooms and schools. In practical and theoretically sophisticated ways, *Making Literacy Real* invites teachers, teacher-researchers, and educators to rethink literacy and to witness compelling classroom practices in empowering and hopeful ways. In a time when literacy is being defined in reductionist terms, *Making Literacy Real* will be an inspiration to teachers, teacher-researchers, and all who care about the expansive, transformative potential and power of education. (Mariana Souto-Manning, Teachers College, Columbia University)

Starting with the understanding that literacy is social, cultural, historical, and political, Larson and Marsh explain literacy theories and vividly describe classroom contexts that bring those theories to life. In accessible, practical, empowering, and theoretically-sophisticated ways, *Making Literacy Real* makes visible various ways in which teachers may engage in theoretically-rich teaching in powerful and transformative ways, engaging learners of all ages. In a time when literacy is being defined in reductionist terms, *Making Literacy Real* will be an inspiration to teachers, teacher-researchers, and all who care about the transformative potential and power of education. (Mariana Souto-Manning, Teachers College, Columbia University)

*Making Literacy Real* is a theoretically powerful and practical resource for all who believe that literacy teaching and learning must take into account the social and cultural worlds of children and youth. Beyond sharing vivid examples from a variety of classrooms, Larson and Marsh shed light onto *how* teachers can engage in transformative literacy teaching. In a time when literacy is being reduced to skills, this is a very timely resource for all who want to teach in hopeful and transformative ways. (Mariana Souto-Manning, Teachers College, Columbia University)

Larson and Marsh masterfully make visible the links between theories informing literacy and classroom practice. They not only explain literacy theory, but vividly portray ways in which these theories have come to life in a variety of classrooms. This book beautifully shows how theory and practice are inseparable, moving away from ideas of applying or translating theory. Larson and Marsh show readers how classroom practices are theorized as practices are transformed over time. In a time when literacy is being reduced to skills and teachers are being told what and how to teach, this is a must-read; truly a timely resource for all who want to teach in hopeful and transformative ways. (Mariana Souto-Manning, Teachers College, Columbia University)

Moving away from deficit perspectives that have historically informed the field of literacy, Larson and Marsh make visible how, across a variety of classroom settings and in theoretically rich ways, teachers engage in action, reflect, and transform their teaching. While recognizing that many theories inform literacy, *Making Literacy Real* focuses on six theoretical traditions shaping literacy, offering insights onto the ways that teachers can plan, teach, and organize their classrooms so that their literacy practice will be theoretically sound and their curriculum will build on the strengths and expertise of their students. During a time when mandated and commercial curricula abound, *Making Literacy Real* will prove an invaluable resource. (Mariana Souto-Manning, Teachers College, Columbia University)

*Making Literacy Real* invites readers to move beyond traditional approaches to literacy education which emphasize one-size-fits-all, normalized learning trajectories. Larson and Marsh vividly portray classrooms that have rejected reductionist and constraining models of literacy teaching and, instead, embraced ways of teaching that recognize and build on the many strategies and resources students bring to classrooms. Moving beyond the false theory-practice dichotomy, this new edition, which includes 21<sup>st</sup> century literacies, is a gem. In a time when literacy is being defined in reductionist terms, *Making Literacy Real* will be an inspiration to teachers, teacher-researchers, and all who care about the transformative potential and power of education. (Mariana Souto-Manning, Teachers College, Columbia University)

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#### About the Author

**Joanne Larson** is Michael W. Scandling Professor of Education and Chair of the Teaching and Curriculum program at the University of Rochester's Warner Graduate School of Education and Human Development, USA. She received her PhD at the University of California, Los Angeles in 1995. Larson's ethnographic research examines how language and literacy practices mediate social and power relations in literacy events in schools and communities. She is currently collaborating with Rochester community residents on a participatory action research project examining changes associated with transforming a local corner store into a cornerstone of healthy living. Her book *Radical Equality in Education: Starting Over in US Schooling* (Routledge, 2014) makes the case for beginning with assumptions of equality instead of inequality in education. She is the editor of *Literacy as Snake Oil: Beyond the Quick Fix, Second Edition* (Lang, 2007) and co-editor with Jackie Marsh of *Handbook of Early Childhood Literacy* (Sage, 2013). Larson's journal publications include research articles in *Research in the Teaching of English*; *Written Communication*; *Linguistics and Education*; *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, and *Discourse and Society*.

**Jackie Marsh** is Professor of Education at the University of Sheffield, UK, where she conducts research on young children's play and digital literacy practices in homes, communities and early years settings and primary schools. Her most recent publications include *Changing Play: Play, Media and Commercial Culture from the 1950s to the Present Day* (with Bishop, 2014) and *Handbook of Early Childhood Literacy* (edited with Larson, 2013). Jackie is an editor of the *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Ann Gross:**

Reading a reserve tends to be new life style in this particular era globalization. With examining you can get a lot of information that can give you benefit in your life. Having book everyone in this world can certainly share their idea. Textbooks can also inspire a lot of people. A great deal of author can inspire their own reader with their story or even their experience. Not only situation that share in the textbooks. But also they write about the data about something that you need example. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your sons or daughters, there are many kinds of book which exist now. The authors on earth always try to improve their talent in writing, they also doing some investigation before they write to the book. One of them is this Making Literacy Real: Theories and Practices for Learning and Teaching.

#### **Jeffrey Brill:**

Many people spending their time by playing outside with friends, fun activity with family or just watching TV all day long. You can have new activity to enjoy your whole day by examining a book. Ugh, do you consider reading a book can actually hard because you have to take the book everywhere? It all right you can have the e-book, bringing everywhere you want in your Mobile phone. Like Making Literacy Real: Theories and Practices for Learning and Teaching which is keeping the e-book version. So , why not try out this book? Let's see.

#### **Henry Evans:**

This Making Literacy Real: Theories and Practices for Learning and Teaching is new way for you who has curiosity to look for some information because it relief your hunger details. Getting deeper you upon it getting knowledge more you know or you who still having small amount of digest in reading this Making Literacy Real: Theories and Practices for Learning and Teaching can be the light food to suit your needs because the information inside this specific book is easy to get by simply anyone. These books develop itself in the form that is certainly reachable by anyone, yeah I mean in the e-book type. People who think that in e-book form make them feel drowsy even dizzy this book is the answer. So there is absolutely no in reading a book especially this one. You can find actually looking for. It should be here for anyone. So , don't miss the item! Just read this e-book sort for your better life and knowledge.

#### **Thomas White:**

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