

Reading, Writing, and Literacy 2.0: Teaching with Online Texts, Tools, and Resources, K-8, by Denise Johnson. New York: Teachers College Press, 2014. x + 180. ISBN: 978-0-8077-5529-7. (Reviewed by Crystal D. Howell).

Denise Johnson's *Reading, Writing, and Literacy 2.0: Teaching with Online Texts, Tools, and Resources, K-8*, just published in May 2014, is a valuable book for any elementary or middle grades practitioner, not only for the extensive resource links it includes but also for Johnson's empowering approach to technology integration. The author insists that new literacies (also known as literacies 2.0, 21st-century literacies, or digital literacies) are a vital part of students' lives and as such, must be integrated into classrooms by those who know classrooms best: teachers. Well-grounded in literacy and technology research, this text is academically sound without being too dense, making it accessible for practitioners, its target audience. Johnson, a professor of reading education and director of the Literacy Leadership program at the College of William and Mary, was an elementary school teacher, middle school reading specialist, and a Reading Recovery teacher before earning her EdD in Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Memphis, so her ability to situate her text in praxis—the meeting place of theory and practice—is unsurprising. Her recent publications also point toward her growing expertise in using technology to enrich literacy education (Johnson 2005, 2009, 2010a, & 2010b). Although the book's accompanying blog (<http://www.literacytwopointzero.blogspot.com>) enables her to add to and update the online resources she provides in the text, I anticipate that the practical chapters of the book will quickly become dated, an obstacle for any book so pointedly focused on specific technology strategies. Nevertheless, *Reading, Writing, and Literacy 2.0* is a good resource for practitioners across content areas who desire a better, pedagogically sound way to approach technology and digital literacies in their classrooms.

Johnson's text is divided into ten chapters, of which the first two focus primarily on defining literacy 2.0 and establishing the foundational frameworks that the author will build on throughout the remainder of the book. In chapters three and four, she introduces ways to use technology to support traditional classroom concerns, including building a classroom culture and connecting with families (chapter three) and building students' vocabulary and fluency (chapter four). In chapters five through eight, she specifically addresses new literacies and explores the technology tools available to support the acquisition of these new literacies, and in chapter nine, she describes literacy 2.0 assessment techniques and provides sample checklists, rubrics, and surveys for this purpose. In her concluding chapter, Johnson contemplates what literacy 3.0 might look like, envisioning it as professional literacy for teachers. She briefly discusses the ways that professional learning communities (PLCs) or professional learning networks (PLNs) can be enhanced and broadened via social networking communities and other online resources such as professional organization websites, webinars, podcasts, and blogs.

One of Johnson's key contributions is her thorough explanation of Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (typically abbreviated TPCK,

although Johnson confusingly uses TPACK in her text). This framework, developed by Koehler and Mishra (2008), flips the approach many school districts explicitly or implicitly encourage teachers to take regarding the integration of technology in their teaching. Rather than beginning with a specific technological tool or skill, the TPACK framework “asks teachers to begin with content or the curriculum goals,” the pedagogical strategies that best support those goals, and finally to ask “whether technology can support these goals and instructional strategies” (p. 15). TPACK requires practitioners to be mindful and “purposeful” (p. 15) in their technology integration, rather than simply using the newest tool available in their classrooms. However, the value of Johnson’s contribution is not the simple inclusion of TPACK, a relatively common concept in new discussions of pedagogy, but rather her explicit framing of it as an agentive force for practitioners. Teachers know best their content-related goals, and therefore they, rather than building or district administrators, are the most qualified to determine the technological tools they and their students should use to reach these goals.

For language and literacy teachers specifically, Johnson also relies on the National Council of Teachers of English’s (NCTE) *21st Century Literacies* (2008) framework. Rather than conceptualizing this framework as a set of standards or a checklist of what students and teachers ought to be doing, NCTE presents six basic elements (using technology tools, cross-cultural collaboration, information for global communities, synthesizing information from various sources, criticizing multimedia texts, and technological ethics), and then asks questions that teachers can apply to their practice. Like TPACK, NCTE’s *21st Century Literacies* underscores Johnson’s most foundational premise: technology should support language pedagogy, not shape it, and based on their intimate knowledge of their classroom and community resources, students, and learning goals, practitioners must determine how and when new technologies are most useful.

I suspect that chapters five through eight will be the meatiest chapters for teachers looking to integrate new literacies quickly and easily in their instruction. However, I also anticipate that these chapters will suffer most from the book’s biggest flaw: datedness. Each of these chapters addresses a particular new literacy topic (“Sites and Selection Criteria for Ebooks,” “Using E-tools to Scaffold Comprehension of E-literature,” “Writing Online,” and “Technology across the Curriculum,” respectively) and includes an upper grade and lower grade lesson based on Internet reciprocal teaching (IRT), an instructional method that “revolves around building the online reading comprehension strategies of questioning, locating, evaluating, synthesizing, and communicating” (Johnson, 2014, p. 25). Conceptually, the author uses these chapters to describe critical new literacy skills, such as fluency and comprehension when working with multimodal texts; self-regulation when reading online texts; issues of relevancy when creating multimodal, linked texts; and meaningful, critical inquiry online. But the sample lessons feature specific software tools, such as VoiceThread, EverNote, Survey Monkey, Diigo, and RubiStar. These specific tools are helpful, but in bounded ways. Johnson presupposes computer or tablet availability for every student, and reliable, fast Internet access, which simply is not the case in many American classrooms.

Moreover, she does not adequately anticipate that the software she recommends may also change in cost or features, or may simply go away. Johnson can attenuate this flaw somewhat via the book's companion blog; however, as of the time that I wrote this review, the blog had not been updated since June 2014, leading me to wonder how good a resource it will prove to be.

Chapter nine, on the other hand, is not grounded in specific online tools, but in examining and assessing the dispositions, skills, and knowledge associated with new literacies. Johnson includes tools to assess various steps in acquiring and practicing new literacies, including students' use of technology tools, online reading dispositions, collaboration skills, reading a webpage, and effective online inquiry strategies. Her analysis of what elements of new literacies ought to be assessed and sample rubrics, checklists, and surveys for doing so are clear, detailed, and comprehensive, making this chapter one of the strongest and most useful in the book.

I anticipate that Johnson's book will be a hit with elementary and middle school teachers, but I fear that it will be for the wrong reasons. In the short term, chapters five through eight will provide handy example lessons that teachers can easily adapt for their own classrooms. However, as technologies change, the usefulness of these chapters will become less immediately apparent. In the long term, the real value of *Reading, Writing, and Literacy 2.0* is in the foundational first and second chapters. In these chapters, Johnson demonstrates that teachers are the most important actors in the application of new technologies and the development of their students' new literacies. As more technologies are developed that weaken teachers' roles in education generally—for example, in online coursework designed to be completed without a teacher at all—practitioners should embrace Johnson's assertion that their expertise is vital.

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