

Letters About Literature and the Iowa English Curriculum

The Iowa Center for the Book (ICB) encourages teachers to include the Letters About Literature program into the curriculum since the program incorporates reading and writing skills. The program supports the principles and standards of the Iowa Model Core Curriculum, the standards of the International Reading Association (IRA) and National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), and the standards and benchmarks of the Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL), which are used in many Iowa schools. Guiding principles that apply to the LAL program include the following principles. For your convenience, these have been included directly, paraphrased, or combined from the various sources:

Source	Standard/Principle
Reading and Literature	The student . . .
Iowa Model	independently selects and reads fiction or non-fiction.
IRA/NCTE, Iowa Model, McREL	applies a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts.
McREL	reflects on what has been learned after reading and formulates ideas, opinions, and personal responses to texts.
McREL	understands the influences on a reader's response to a text (e.g., personal experiences and values; perspective shaped by age, gender, class, or nationality).
McREL	makes a connection between characters, events, motives, and/or causes of conflict in a work with events in his or her own life.
Composition	
Iowa Model, IRA/NCTE, McREL	uses knowledge of purpose, audience, format and medium in developing written communication.
Iowa Model, McREL	uses an effective writing process, including prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.
IRA/NCTE, McREL	participates as knowledgeable, reflective, creative and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.
McREL	writes in response to literature (e.g., summarizes main ideas and significant details; relates own ideas to supporting details; advances judgments; supports judgments with references to the text, other works, other authors, nonprint media and personal knowledge.
McREL	uses the stylistic and rhetorical aspects of writing (paragraphing, descriptive language, variety of sentence structures, transitional devices, supporting detail, cohesion, and personal voice).
McREL	writes personal letters in friendly letter format.
Iowa Model, IRA/NCTE, McREL	adheres to conventions generally established in spelling, punctuation, grammar, usage, syntax and style.

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