

Achieve 3000 is a web-based literacy program at **Holyoke High School** for grade 9 students who have not yet reached proficiency in reading.

It is based on a Five-Step Literacy Routine that improves comprehension, vocabulary, and reading fluency, as well as writing skills. During this sequence, students receive nonfiction reading materials and follow-up activities that are precisely matched to their learning abilities. Each of these five steps is based on best practices that have evolved out of decades of reading research.

Five Steps to Literacy Achievement

- 1. Set a schema.** Students read and reply to a daily e-mail that sets the stage for what they are about to read. Students start the reading and writing process in an informal environment that encourages them to make text-to-self and text-to-world connections. These are known foundations for increasing a student's ability to comprehend material.
- 2. Read for information.** The e-mail directs the students to an appropriately leveled nonfiction article at the *Achieve 3000* website. Taken from current events, the article engages and involves students via real-world topics. Students can summarize or generate questions as they read, transforming this step from one of passive reading to one of active knowledge acquisition.
- 3. Demonstrate mastery.** After reading the article, students answer questions that monitor comprehension and vocabulary mastery. The questions also serve to assess higher-order thinking skills.
- 4. Construct meaning.** Students further build critical cognitive skills by writing responses to open-ended questions.
- 5. Form an opinion.** Students also participate in a poll about the article, so they can evaluate information and form an opinion – the real manifestations of true reading comprehension – and share their opinions with other students.