

1. What are the cultural influences of the Internet on literacy in the global village?

Those who use the Internet make up a culture with consistent requirements and expectations. Those who wish to use the Internet must meet or exceed these requirements and expectations. These requirements include standards regarding literacy. Students who use the Internet are expected to participate in activities that include communication. Participation in virtual communities and the access of databases require students to attain and demonstrate a standard level of literacy—including knowledge of grammar and global literacy conventions (McNabb).

2. What are the key characteristics of the Internet that particularly support young adolescents' literacy development?

“On the Internet, students can explore the world and their relationship to it through literacy events that support their developing autonomies, personal identities, and social selves. Personal expression and perspective sharing are attributes of literacy . . . (McNabb).” Activities online require that students write fluently and read critically. The immediate feedback from audiences strengthens the students resolve to make revisions and to output items that are grammatically correct and easy to understand.

3. How can research findings about effective learning environments inform thenetworked classroom practices?

Research informs instructors on how to manage control of their students use of the Internet. Pedagogical practices are imperative to the effectiveness of student use of the Internet. Thus, research informs instructors on what pedagogical techniques will best foster literacy education while making use of the Internet. Research also provides instructors with information on student learning that can dictate how instructors use the Internet in their classroom assignments and assessment procedures.

4. How do the literacy opportunities available in the Internet compare to those in nonnetworked classrooms?

In networked classrooms all students are allowed to participate and voice their opinions. Everyone is included and valued. This is not always true in nonnetworked classrooms where it is commonplace to hear the comments, ideas, and opinions of only a few—those called on by the instructor. The competency level of students in networked classrooms is increased when they begin to feel secure in the fact that everyone has the right to participate (McNabb). Also, online learning experiences are learner-centered, which is a valuable tool for effective instruction. The Internet provides assessment tools to be used by the instructor that are not available in nonnetworked classrooms. “Formative assessment enable student to self-organize and self-motivate their literacy learning progress based on constructive feedback (McNabb).” To the benefit of students, with online assessment tools feedback is immediate.