

# SPARK: Students Promoting Academic Reading and Knowledge



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## Project Description

Reading is fundamental. It is an integral part of everything that we do in college and life. Reading faculty collaborated to create a dynamic project to SPARK the change in how reading is approached across the curriculum. We designed cross disciplinary lessons that focus on the theme of “Everyday Heroes” while addressing the various learning styles in the classroom.

## Objectives

- Students will develop and demonstrate proficiency in writing, basic literacy and verbal skills by using authentic creative expressions including creating a reader’s theatre script, dramatizing the script, creative movement, artistic expression or creating their own short story with 80% accuracy as assessed by a teacher made rubric.
- Increase student success through facilitating student engagement with other disciplines across Pathways, in order to create a literacy project.
- Will demonstrate student success through an increase in post assessment literacy scores, thereby increasing student retention and completion.

## Strategies

Our goal is to recruit faculty members across the curriculum and pathways to partner with our classes. Our students in the Reading, EAP and English classrooms will be given the opportunity to choose a focus area: Speech, Computer Science: Gaming, Music, Theatre or Dance. After reading the anthology, students will create a capstone project that shows their understanding. they will receive assistance from a student mentor in their chosen area. The project will count as 15% of their overall grade.

## Timeline

### January 8-21 (Session 2: Weeks 1-2)

- Present concept of SPARK to Arts and Communications students
- Select Arts and Communications students to serve as mentors
- Create schedule for student mentors to visit SPARK classrooms
- Introduce SPARK project to students in participating classes
- Assign students to SPARK mentor based on interest (art, music, speech, reading, etc.)
- Read/teach Everyday Heroes in class
- Create D2L SPARK Shell

### January 22-February 4 (Session 2: Weeks 3-4)

- Students meet with SPARK mentor to brainstorm/ create SPARK product
- Continue to read Everyday Heroes and work on product

### February 5-18 (Session 2: Weeks 5-6)

- Students meet with SPARK mentor to brainstorm/ create SPARK product
- Continue to read Everyday Heroes and work on product

### February 19-25 (Session 2: Week 7)

- SPARK presentations and evaluations in class
- Upload SPARK presentations/product to D2L shell

### February 26-March 4 (Session 2: Week 8)

- Administer final exam and survey to assess effectiveness of SPARK

### March – April

- Publish appropriate SPARK products
- Upload SPARK products to D2L shell
- Hold college-wide SPARK showcase
- Meet to discuss data to assess success of SPARK and make revisions for future
- SPARK implementation

## Research

The most current educational research by [National Assessment of Educational Progress](#) 2015 analysis found that only 37 percent of high schools seniors scored proficient or higher in reading. The number of students scoring below a basic level in reading increased from 25 percent in 2013 to 28 percent in 2015 (NAEP Reports, 2015). This supports a well-known fact among college instructors: a large proportion of students are entering college with deficient reading abilities, which significantly impacts their college success rates. In addition, the 2013 Florida Senate Bill [SB1720](#) resulted in major legislative changes to developmental education in our state colleges. Students who have recently graduated from Florida public or charter schools are no longer required to enroll in remedial reading courses, even if their test scores show a deficiency in literacy skills. Therefore, open access institutions, including Broward College, must incorporate innovative practices in order to address the ever-growing challenge.

## Conclusion

The SPARKS Literacy project integrates the cognitive, motivational, and social theories of reading, also referred to as the *Engagement Perspective* (Baker, 1996). The engagement perspective views readers as motivated, strategic, knowledgeable, and socially interactive” (Baker, xv). Engaged readers are able to utilize knowledge gained from their literacy experiences in order to generate new understandings and participate in meaningful social interactions. Many motivation theorists propose that individuals’ competence and efficacy beliefs, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and purposes for achievement all play a crucial role in educational success (Bandura, 1997).

## References

- National Assessment of Individual Progress: Nation’s Report Card. (2017, September 29). Retrieved from <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/>
- Baker, L., Afflerbach, P., & Reinking, D. (1996). Developing engaged readers in school and home communities: An overview. In L. Baker, P. Afflerbach & D. Reinking (Ed.), *Developing engaged readers in school and home communities* (pp. xiii–xxvii). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York: W. H. Freeman