



## Poverty and Literacy

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There is a mutual dependence between poverty and academic achievement, creative pedagogies for low-income pupils, school models that 'beat the odds', and the resiliency of low-income families dedicated to the academic success of their children. This book examines the connection between poverty and literacy, looking at the potential roles and responsibilities of teachers, school administrators, researchers, and policymakers in closing the achievement gap and in reducing the effects of poverty on the literacy skill development of low-income children. There are numerous suggestions about how to improve schools so that they respond to the needs of low-income children; some argue for school reform, while others advocate social reform, and yet others suggest combining both educational reform and social reform.

Without a strong foundation in literacy, children are all too often denied access to a rich and diverse curriculum. Reading and writing are passports to achievement in many other curricular areas, and literacy education plays an important role in moving people out of poverty toward greater self-sufficiency post-graduation. Schools and home environments share responsibility for literacy skill development; in school, literacy equals the acquisition of reading and writing skills, but it is also a social practice key to social mobility. The achievement gap between low-income, middle-class, and upper middle-class students illustrates the power of socioeconomic factors outside school.

This book was originally published as two special issues of *Reading & Writing Quarterly: Overcoming Learning Difficulties*.

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