

Informal Literacy Discussions: theory and practice in the field of literacy and development

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Foreword

In this book, presenters of the British Association for Literacy in Development (BALID) Informal Literacy Discussions provide accounts of their work in different parts of the world concerned with issues of literacy and development. Those presenting are both literacy practitioners and academics engaged with a range of current 'hot topics' in the literacy field. The accounts are addressed to those new to the field of literacy as well as to those with academic and field experience. The aim of this publication is to share such experience and insights more widely.

In December 2011 BALID held the first Informal Literacy Discussion (ILD) and we have now held 22 discussions, led by people involved in literacy in various ways – NGO practitioners, academics and postgraduate students. These discussions are intended to reach a wide range of people, many of whom do not have access to university libraries and academic journals. The format is informal and inclusive. The discussion leader starts the discussion with a twenty-minute introduction to the topic; sometime this is supported through a PowerPoint presentation, and sometimes it is a short talk outlining the main issues. Normally a summary of the ILD is posted on the BALID website. Participants and discussion leaders have said how valuable they have found the discussions, since the participants come from a range of literacy backgrounds and raise a variety of different and diverse issues. The presenters have converted their discussions into the chapters in this book in order to make them available to a wider range of people and record the variety of approaches to (mainly) adult literacy that are currently being developed.

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