Some definitions of literacy:

* Signature, reading (Bible), writing (dates back to limited societal accessibility)
* A cultural and psychological tool for thinking and taking action in the world
* A technology for communication
  + In an Indian school, literacy is the ability to use the computer and utilize that technology for effective communication with others throughout the world
* The ability to read the world, as well as to read the word
  + Palo Frere: “The ability to read the world, as well as to read the word”
    - Comprehension
    - Attitude of creation and re-creation, a self-transformation
* A facility with multiple symbol systems and forms of representation, including printed texts, but including as well speech, images, and video
  + **Will the complexity of literacy and qualifications for achieving literacy continue to expand and evolve as new technologies are developed??**
  + **Will literacy ever evolve to the point where it is no longer exclusive (ie: will it evolve to the point at which everyone will have access to it regardless of their race, gender, religion, nationality, socioeconomic background, etc.)??**
  + **If literacy becomes focused on computer literacy, will the art of writing be lost? (future repercussions in global/societal knowledge, economy, industry?)**
* Literacy encompasses more than reading and writing
* Literacy is not neutral; it’s deeply context-driven and political (who gets access?)
* Literacy is multimodal
* Literacy is not an absolute; it’s a relative concept and varies historically, culturally, institutionally, and developmentally
* Socio-cultural axes of differentiation: country of origin, ethnicity, language, religion, migration channels, immigration statuses

Scribner:

* Important Issues for Scribner:
  + Why do we need to be careful about how we define literacy?
  + How is literacy a social achievement?
  + How is literacy multiple?
  + What is “ideal” literacy in our society, during out times?
* Scribner: Literacy is not an absolute; it’s a relative concept and varies historically, culturally, institutionally, and developmentally
* Metaphors:
  + Literacy as adaptive or functional
    - Signature, pronounce words, recite religious passage by heart, read at 4th grade level, read with “comprehension”, write a college-level essay
  + Literacy as socially and politically empowering
    - Ability to participate in the creation and change of the structures that define the people’s socio-economic status
  + Literacy as self-enhancing
    - Moral empowerment through bible knowledge

Rose:

* “he gave me a way to feel special by using my mind” (34)
* Identity and schooling: “I just wanna be average” (28) (what is normal/average?)
* Seeing with the eyes of a child, looking from a child’s point of view: “I started taping pennies to the bottom of a shelf in the kitchen” (12)
* Understanding the history and logic behind poor school performance: “I couldn’t keep up and started daydreaming to avoid my inadequacy. This was a strategy I would rely on as I grew older” (31)
* Power of teachers: “Students will float to the mark you set” (26) (set expectations that are challenge but are attainable. Motivate)
* Community and home contexts as enlivening and contrasting: “I developed a picture of human existence that rendered it…aimless or long and quiet with rewards like afternoon naps” (17)
* Literacy as a re-definitional tool: “He gave me a way to feel special by using my mind. And he provided a role model that wasn’t shaped on physical prowess alone” (34)
* Deficit Model of Thinking: Taking preconceived notions and using those to shape low expectations before that student has the chance to make an impression or disprove your preconceived notions of that student’s incapabilities/deficiencies
* Narratives of the self: consider how you can help children and youth re-imagine themselves

Gee:

* “Discourse” as an identity kit that serves to promote an individual to become a member of a community
* Discourse is a social construct that is not dissimilar from culture
* Acquisition vs. Learning
* Can a secondary discourse ever become a primary discourse?
* Terms for illiteracy often express hopelessness or an incapacity to learn
* Range of definitions of illiteracy and literacy or lack thereof
* Big emphasis on measurement, range of tests
* Disparities across ethnicities and socio-economic status
* Literacy crises are often associated with economic crisis
* Nationally oriented but increasingly global comparisons
* Elision of poor literacy with dropping out, crime, incarceration, poor health, ect.
* Literacy doesn’t flourish for many children in school
* Funds of Knowledge: “historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being”- Luis Moll and colleagues
  + Bridging between school and house-hold cultures
* Purposeful subversion of language expresses not only literacy (where it may be perceived as an illiteracy) but also the ability to manipulate it
* Main themes of hip hop literacy:
  + Semantic Inversion (ill to ill)
  + Counter –Language (critique dominant discourses)
  + Textuality vs. Orality (tensions of form)
  + Negotiating fluid, unstable youth realities
  + Assigning acronyms (codes, intertextuality)
    - Literacy should be intimate, lived, and liberatory
    - Without being within the discourse community, one cannot communicate within the complex literacy unique to that community
* Critiquing dominant forms (constraints) of language, and how these forms shape (constrain) identities
* Hegemony (dominant forms of literacy surround each person and give the impression that we are obligated to replicate them and force them on others), history, and authenticity (what does it mean to be who you are as it relates to your dominant discourse and community)
* Subverting and/or affirming normative narratives of race/gender/ideology (capitalist)
* Connecting youth/artists/marginalized peoples through a shared literacy
* Paulo Freire believed that the foundation for all literacy and education achievement and progression was love for one and other
* Paulo Freire focused on virtue within oneself and within others, as well as tolerance without being naïve that does not demand that one lose his or her personality and self-essence
* It is impossible to think of language without thinking of ideology and power
* Essential that the educators make clear to their students that not only is their way of communicating beautiful and that they have a right to use it, but they also must learn the dominant syntax and language in order to be able to affect necessary change in the world so that they may be able to utilize their other discourses
* Critical thinking cannot happen without tolerance
* Key Terms from Freire:
  + Conscientizacao (critical consciousness)- as we start engaging in dialogue with others we become aware of the contradictions we see in our world and gain a self-awareness of our place in that world
  + Subject/object- there are two ways of being positioned in the world. You are either an active part of the learning process, or a receptacle to be passively stuffed with knowledge
  + The banking concept of education- does not allow for room for tolerance, incorporation of students’ other discourses, and gives the teacher full power to decide what the students should/need to know
  + Problem-posing education
  + Praxis: reflection (word) + action; to name the world is to change the world and to transform it
  + Dialogue: naming the world(identifying the contradictions) together
  + To exist, humanity is to name the world, to change it
  + Saying the word is not the privilege of some few persons, but the right of everyone
  + Dialogue is the encounter between men, mediated by the world, in order to name the world
  + The naming of the world…is not possible if it is not infused with love
  + If I do not love the world—if I do not love life—if I do not love people—I cannot enter into dialogue
* An established culture necessarily alienates someone
* Not having to extract who you are as an individual in order to be academically successful
* Scribner and Cole hoped to test Vygotsky’s beliefs about the consequences of literacy
* Vygotsky:
  + Learning is inherently social. It involves
    - The internalization of cultural tools, like language and literacy
    - Two (or more) people working together, especially when one person is more of an expert
    - “Human learning presupposes a specific social nature and a process by which children grow into the intellectual life of those around them” (88)
    - Instruction is very important
    - Ability is not fixed
    - Writing is especially important psychological tool
  + Vygotsky’s Triangle:
    - Tool (stick, hammer, language)
      * Psychological tool: language, writing, mathematics, works of art, diagrams
    - Subject
    - Object
    - The subject uses the tool to obtain the object
  + “Play creates a zone of proximal development of the child. In play a child always behaves beyond his average age, above his daily behavior…”
  + Internalization begins as something that is acquired through interaction/socializing, and is eventually internalized and can be done alone (while thinking, within an individual’s own head, etc)
* Reciprocal Teaching:
  + “the goal of any instruction is to enable students to function independently”
  + RT proceeds via dialogue between teachers and students as they jointly construct the meaning of a text
  + Summarizing, Questioning, Clarifying, Predicting
* Tips for Maximizing the zone of proximal development:
  + Don’t take over the task and complete it for the student. Instead, give hints or examples or otherwise provide the scaffolding necessary fir the child to carry out the task on his or her own
  + Sometimes kids can help each other
  + Reverse authority relations—let the student teach you something
* “Discourse” as an Identity Kit
* Literacies=reading and writing in secondary discourses
* Learning vs. acquisition
* Discourse: ways of using language, thinking, and behaving that signal membership in a group
* Ideology: ways in which members of a group view the world
* Ideological Becoming: how we develop our ways of viewing the world, our systems of ideas; characterized by struggle and conflict
* Bakhtin:
  + Heteroglossia:
    - Literally, “multi-languageness”
    - Multiplicity of languages that are apparent within any national language- dialects, languages of social groups, generations, professions
    - Characterized by tension and competition between forces pulling toward a standard central version, forces pulling away
    - Language as “stratified” into multiple social discourses, each representing different ideologies
  + Ventriolophation: the process of other voices and discourses speaking through you
    - “The authoritative word demands that we acknowledge it, that we make it our own; it blinds us, quite independent of any power it might have to persuade us internally; we encounter it with its authority already fused to it.”
  + Ideological Development (pg 79)
  + Struggle of Populating Others’ word with one’s own intentions: “The word in language is half someone else’s. it becomes “one’s own” only when the speaker populates it with his own intentions, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention…language is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily into the private property of the speaker’s intentions: it is populated—overpopulated—with the intentions of others. Expropriating it, forcing it to submit to one’s own intentions and accents, is a difficult and complicated process.”
  + Voices, or speaking consciousness, multi-voiced or double-voiced
  + Orchestration of voices
  + Addressibity and dialogue—always anticipating a response and being influenced by what we imagine a response to be
  + “The word in living conversation is directly, blatantly, oriented toward a future answer-word: it provokes an answer, anticipates it and structures itself in the answer’s direction”
  + Authoritative discourse, internally persuasive discourse
* Pratt:
  + Contact Zones: “social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world”
  + What is the place of unsolicited oppositional discourse, parody, resistance, critique, in the imagined classroom community? Are teachers supposed to feel that their teaching has been most successful when they have eliminated such things and unified the social world, probably in their own image?
* Globalization and Digital Media:
  + “Arguably, the Harlem Shake meme is a form of cultural appropriation in that it is the popular use (and misuse) of a cultural artifact to black culture by a predominantly white crowd. Most importantly, this new Harlem Shake has already began to eradicate the original Harlem Shake from popular culture online, already making it increasingly difficult for one to find the existence of the original dance anywhere on YouTube”
  + What does it mean, educationally speaking, to live in a global and digital world?
  + “we have obligations to others, obligations that stretch beyond those to whom we are related by the ties of kith and kind, or even the more formal ties of shared citizenship” Kwame Anthony Appiah
  + “Cosmopolitanism implies and requires both reflexivity and tolerance. In political terms it demands justice and liberty. In social terms, hospitality. And in media terms it requires an obligation to listen” (Roger Silverstone, pg 14)
  + How can we position youth to communicate and understand across differences in language and other modes and media for communication, in ideology, in culture, and in geography, to develop, that is, cosmopolitan literacies?
  + “Proper Distance- the capacity to enlarge one’s perspective, and the willingness to recognize the other in her sameness and difference” (Silverstone)
  + Immorality of distance: so removed from other people that they seem beyond reach of care or compassion
  + Immorality of identity: refusal to accept difference; resistance to recognize and valuing the stranger
* Language is wrapped around identities- Freire
* In school, students attempt to feel smart and as if they belong; language barriers are a strong inhibitor of that emotional security that helps enable children to be successful in school
* The Ebonics Debate:
  + In the 1960s there was a lot of research on the historical development and linguistic description of AAVE, showing that it is a rule-governed logical system of language, just like any other
  + In 1977, a court in Michigan ruled that a school district must help its teachers recognize the home language of its students and use that knowledge in their attempts to teach reading skills in Standard English
  + In 1996, the Oakland School Board passed resolution recognizing Ebonics as a valid linguistic system
  + A firestorm erupted as people across the nation objected to the use of Ebonics in classrooms
* Lisa Delpit:
  + “The teacher’s job is to provide access to the national ‘standard’ as well as to understand the language the children speak sufficiently to celebrate its beauty. The verbal adroitness, the cogent and quick wit, the brilliant use of metaphor, the facility in rhythm and rhyme, evident in the language of Jesse Jackson, Whoopi Goldberg…”
* Geneva Smitherman:
  + A foreign language, either an African language spoken widely on the continent, where the everyday people do not speak English (or French), or Spanish, because of the large number of Spanish speakers in the US and the Caribbean
* 1998:
  + Proposition 227: English Language in Public Schools: “it is resolved that: all children in California public schools shall be taught English as rapidly and effectively as possible”
* Lily Wong Fillmore:
  + “The strategy most often adopted for students who are deemed to be at risk educationally is remedial instruction, whereby they are drilled in the basic skills of literacy—the letters of the alphabet, the sounds that make up word, which words rhyme, and the like”
  + “I will argue that the best way to prepare students for literacy in the early years…is opportunities to get acquainted with books, the printing world, and the language of literacy”
  + “The most effective method for helping students learn the language for text understanding…is through ‘instructional conversations’”
* Race, Stereotypes, and Literacy:
  + Henry Lewis Gates:
    - Writing as a “complex certificate of humanity”; writing oneself out of slavery
    - Writing as gate-keeper
    - The idea of those who are born with these skills and those who are not, and how those who are not should be relegated to a subservient category
    - “my great inspirations were people who happened not to be black, that is, happened not to look like me but people with whom I shared a certain sensibility. So it has never occurred to me that to be a mentor one must look like one’s subject or share the same religion. One must just share a similar sensibility and, fortunately, that’s not defined by ethnicity or gender or sexual preference…”
    - Strong supporter of affirmative action “’We want to diversify the ruling classes in this country. The elite. We want women, we want black people, we want people of color, we want gay people’”
    - What is a trope, and what does Gates mean by saying race is a trope? (paragraphs 1-3)
    - Trope: a figurative or metaphorical use of a word or expression; a conventional ideal or phrase
    - Phillis Wheatley:
      * An accomplished African American woman of letters
      * Wrote amazing poems, but no one believed she wrote them simply because of the fact that she was a slave
      * First African American to publish a book
      * First African American woman to earn a living from her writing
      * First woman writer encouraged and financed by a group of women
    - Gates: “Writing, for these slaves, was not an activity of the mind; rather, it was a commodity which they were forced to trade for their humanity” (594) But: “Black writing, and especially the literature of the slave, served not to obliterate the difference of race; rather, the inscription of the black voice in Western literatures has preserved those very cultural differences to be repeated, imitated, and revised in a spate Western literary tradition, a tradition of black difference” (596)
  + Nu Shu writing and communication system
* Quantitative vs. Qualitative Research:
  + Quantitative: generate things to count that document what people do (through surveys, questionnaires); concerned with numbers and data
  + Qualitative: make direct contact with people in the course of their everyday lives to try to understand the how and why; participate in their activities yourself (through informal interaction, observation, interviews)
  + To do excellent ethnographic research (to tell “my story” about “their story”) we need:
    - Observational data that is detailed and later to what is important to people you are working with themselves (field notes)
    - Concepts and ideas, theories, questions (big ideas from this class and from your own knowledge)
    - “well-grounded and illuminating analytic points flow only from bringing concepts into a relationship with the messiness of ordinary life”
  + “’data analysis’—working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important, and deciding what you will tell others” (Bogden)
* David Pearson:
  + The Reading Wars