Effective literacy draws on a repertoire of practices that allow learners, as they engage in reading and writing activities, to

- break the code of written texts by recognizing and using fundamental features and architecture, including alphabet, sounds in words, spelling, and structural conventions and patterns;
- participate in understanding and composing meaningful written, visual, and spoken texts, taking into account each text's interior meaning systems in relation to their available knowledge and their experiences of other cultural discourses, texts, and meaning systems;
- use texts functionally by traversing and negotiating the labor and social relations around them -- that is, by knowing about and acting on the different cultural and social functions that various texts perform inside and outside school, and understanding that these functions shape the way texts are structured, their tone, their degree of formality, and their sequence of components;
- critically analyze and transform texts by acting on knowledge that texts are not ideologically natural or neutral -- that they represent particular points of views while silencing others and influence people's ideas -- and that their designs and discourses can be critiqued and redesigned in novel and hybrid ways.