Easing into the CERA Rubric
Team Tool 6.13 from *Leading for Literacy*

The CERA Rubric can appear daunting at first glance. It describes three levels of a student's control of reading processes across a number of items in terms of metacognitive conversation, use of cognitive strategies, and evidence of knowledge-building — with items specific to student annotations on the text and to responses to the CERA questions. Teams have several ways to become familiar with the rubric and to simplify or customize their use of it.

•   **Talk to the Text.** The three-page rubric is a table ripe for a previewing exercise that includes annotating the text. How is it structured? What are the headings? What's in a column, what's in a row? How do individual cells relate? Share your annotations with team members.

•   **Work with a small, representative pre- and post-sample from a single class.** Initially, the team will benefit from practicing with a common sample of CERAs that represent distinct levels of control of reading processes.

•   **Work with one rubric scale at a time.**

    -   Start with the scale for Metacognitive Conversation. What can you see in student annotations and responses to the short answer questions? What are you noticing as a group? What implications might it have for instruction?

    -   In another session, add the Using Cognitive Strategies scale. What does this lens on student literacy learning offer? What more do you want to know about student use of cognitive strategies? How might these strategies take on different shapes in the different disciplines? [The Student Learning Goals, Appendix C, might provide insights here.]

    -   In yet another session, add the Building Knowledge scale. Consider breaking into disciplinary groups, with discipline-specific CERA samples per group. Explore interpretations and theories about student learning. Reconvene in cross-disciplinary group to share your insights.

•   **Warm up with the Metacognitive Funnel.** Teams may find the Metacognitive Funnel (Appendix C) a supportive first step in gauging where their students are as a group. Work from class samples of Talking to the Text or Metacognitive Logs or CERA samples. Where on the Metacognitive Funnel would they place each of the annotations a student has made? Looking across a set of samples, are there patterns in what students are and are not doing, as readers? What does this imply for instructional next steps?