

A Teacher's Guide to Peace Literacy

Peace literacy is an idea created by Paul K. Chappell, a West Point graduate, former Army captain, and Iraq war veteran who grew up in a violent household and struggled with trauma throughout his school years. Realizing that humanity is facing new challenges that require us to become as well-trained in waging peace as soldiers are in waging war, he created peace literacy to help students and adults from various backgrounds work toward their full potential and a more peaceful world.

Peace literacy frames peace not merely as a goal, but as a practical skill-set that helps us to increase realistic peace in our lives, communities, nations, and the world. Peace literacy also helps us fully develop our human capacity for **empathy, conscience, reason, and realistic hope**.

Since our understanding of peace is only as good as our understanding of the human condition, **peace literacy provides a realistic and empowering framework for understanding what it means to be human, the root causes of violence, the nature of peace, and the anatomy of trauma, including childhood trauma, racial trauma, and war trauma.**

In a world where so many proposed solutions merely address surface symptoms, **peace literacy teaches people how to create solutions that heal the root causes of our human problems.** The wellbeing of our communities and the world will depend on humanity moving from **preliteracy in peace to peace literacy**, and every bit helps.

There is a lot you can do to help create a more peace literate world. **Here are a few ideas:**

- Learn peace literacy skills so that you can use them to make a positive difference in your life and the world around you.
- Learn how to model peace literacy for your students (teaching through example).
- Invite us to give a peace literacy training for faculty at your school.
- Teach peace literacy curriculum in your classroom (we offer free curriculum at **peaceliteracy.org**).
- Have students read *Soldiers of Peace* or *A New Peace Paradigm: Our Human Needs and the Tangles of Trauma* (these and materials for younger students are available at peaceliteracy.org).
- Learn how the core standards of your discipline can be met with peace literacy content (visit peaceliteracy.org for curricular guidance).
- Inform your colleagues about the idea of peace literacy and its necessity in the twenty-first century.
- Contribute ideas, curriculum, or feedback to the peaceliteracy.org website so that other educators can learn from your work.
- Make peace literacy an organizational theme for faculty and students at your school.
- Organize a fundraiser or donate at peaceliteracy.org to help keep peace literacy curricular materials free and widely accessible.
- Share with us your ideas for helping to create a more peace literate world.

You can contact us at peaceliteracy.org or e-mail our Peace Literacy Curriculum Coordinator, Dr. Sharyn Clough, at sharyn.clough@oregonstate.edu. We would be grateful to hear about how you are using peace literacy. We are here to support you as best we can.