



Reading Recovery® Council of North America

April 28, 2000

Kendra Brooks, Assistant Director
White House Domestic Policy Council
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Ms. Brooks:

We look forward to President Clinton's visit on Thursday, May 4, 2000, and hope the President will consider visiting a school where he could observe a Reading Recovery lesson. Reading Recovery is very consistent with President Clinton's initiatives for education, such as strengthening teacher training and integrating accountability and high standards into education reform.

Therefore, it is with great pleasure that I introduce Reading Recovery, which is implemented in over 10,000 schools in the U.S.A. to assure that first grade students successfully develop reading, writing and comprehension skills. More than 4000 school districts and 20,000 specially trained Reading Recovery teachers served nearly 140,000 students last year.

Attached is a list of some of the schools in Columbus that implement Reading Recovery. Also enclosed are brief fact sheets about Reading Recovery's contributions to early childhood literacy and comprehensive school reform. We will be happy to respond to any questions you may have. You can reach me at 614/292-1795 or Lucy Gettman, Director of Public Affairs, at 614/292-1138.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jean F. Bussell".

Jean F. Bussell, Executive Director
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Enclosures



Reading Recovery® Council of North America

SELECT READING RECOVERY SCHOOLS IN COLUMBUS, OHIO

Beck Urban Academy
387 E. Beck St.
Columbus, OH 43206-1399
614/365-6513

Clinton Elementary School
10 Clinton Heights Ave.
Columbus, OH 43202-1244
614/365-6532

Douglas Elementary School
43 Douglas St.
Columbus, OH 43205-1148
614/365-6087

Eakin Elementary School
3774 Eakin Rd.
Columbus, OH 43228-3008
614/365-5928

Salem Elementary School
1040 Garvey Rd.
Columbus, OH 43229-4131
614/365-5351

"Reading Recovery is the best evidence yet of the direct link between good design and education excellence."

— K.G. Wilson and B. Daviss

READING RECOVERY: BASIC FACTS

GOAL

The goal of Reading Recovery is to dramatically reduce the number of first-grade students who have extreme difficulty learning to read and write and to reduce the cost of these learners to educational systems.

WHAT

Reading Recovery is a highly effective short-term intervention of one-to-one tutoring for low-achieving first graders. The intervention is most effective when it is available to all students who need it and is used as a supplement to good classroom teaching.

WHO

Reading Recovery serves the *lowest-achieving first graders* — the students who are not catching on to the complex set of concepts that make reading and writing possible.

HOW

Individual students receive a half-hour lesson each school day for 12 to 20 weeks with a specially trained Reading Recovery teacher. As soon as students can read within the average range of their class and demonstrate that they can continue to achieve, their lessons are discontinued, and new students begin individual instruction.

OUTCOMES

There are two positive outcomes for students:

- Over 15 years of Reading Recovery in North America, 82% of students who complete the full 12- to 20-week series of lessons, and 59% of all students who have any lessons in Reading Recovery, can read and write with the average range of performance of their class. Follow-up studies indicate that most Reading Recovery students also do well on standardized tests and maintain their gains in later years.
- The few students who are still having difficulty after a full series of lessons are referred for further evaluation. They may be candidates for longer-term programs.



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¹ Wilson, K.G.. & Daviss, B. (1994). *Redesigning Education*. New York: College Teachers Press.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development is an essential part of Reading Recovery. Training utilizes a three-tiered approach that includes teachers, teacher leaders, and university trainers. Professional development for teachers and teacher leaders begins with year-long graduate level study and is followed by ongoing training in succeeding years. In Reading Recovery, teachers develop observational skills and a repertoire of intervention strategies tailored to meet the individual needs of at-risk students.

HISTORY OF SUCCESS

Reading Recovery has a strong tradition of success with the hardest-to-teach children. Developed in New Zealand over 20 years ago, Reading Recovery now also operates in 49 states, the District of Columbia, Department of Defense Dependents Schools, plus Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia. In its 15-year history in the United States, Reading Recovery has served more than 700,000 students.

"...As schools systematize and create more opportunities for serious staff development, the thoroughness of the Reading Recovery model seems to be well worth emulating."

— R. Herman and S. Stringfield

READING RECOVERY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Professional development and continuing education are hallmarks of Reading Recovery.
- Continuing education ensures the quality of lessons for each child and promotes success across all schools that implement Reading Recovery.
- Reading Recovery conducts professional development at three levels: university trainers, teacher leaders, and teachers.

UNIVERSITY TRAINERS

- Trainers are faculty members working in university-based academic settings in their role as Reading Recovery trainers.
- In the United States, instruction for trainers is provided by The Ohio State University and Texas Woman's University.
- The one-year residency program prepares postdoctoral university faculty to train Reading Recovery teacher leaders.
- After their initial training, university trainers teach at least one child in Reading Recovery each year.

TEACHER LEADERS

- Teacher leader candidates must have a master's degree and leadership potential. They are selected by a school district or consortium of school districts that have made a commitment to implement Reading Recovery.
- The teacher leader candidate attends one of 25 university training centers in North America for a year of full-time training.
- Candidates teach four Reading Recovery students daily. They attend graduate-level classes, clinical and leadership practicums, and seminars in reading, writing, and adult learning theory. In addition, they participate in teacher training classes and conduct fieldwork at established sites. They attend professional conferences and prepare their home districts for Reading Recovery implementation.



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¹ Herman, R. & Stringfield, S. (1997). *Ten promising programs for educating all children: Evidence of impact*. Arlington, VA: Educational Research Service.

- After their initial training, teacher leaders teach at least two children daily in Reading Recovery, conduct teacher training classes, and provide implementation leadership.
- Teacher leaders are responsible for data collection on all Reading Recovery children in their area and for using these data to prepare a site report.

TEACHERS

- Reading Recovery teacher candidates must be certified teachers selected for training by their school system. In the United States, Reading Recovery teachers receive a full academic year of training from teacher leaders.
- During the training year each teacher receives graduate credit while working with four children on a daily basis and attending a weekly class. In addition, each teacher-in-training is observed at least four times by the teacher leader.
- Training integrates theory and practice. A one-way mirror enables trainees to observe, discuss, and reflect on Reading Recovery lessons with the teacher leader.
- Reading Recovery teachers develop effective observational skills and a repertoire of teaching approaches that can be tailored to meet the needs of individual students.

KEEPING TRAINING UP-TO-DATE

- For ongoing training, Reading Recovery teachers attend at least six continuing contact sessions each year conducted by teacher leaders. At least four of these sessions include observing a lesson through a one-way mirror.
- Teacher leaders annually participate in professional development conducted by the university trainers and visit colleagues to learn from their peers. One of the sessions includes the annual Teacher Leader Institute.
- University trainers attend at least two professional development sessions annually.
- The Reading Recovery Council of North America (RRCNA) is the membership organization that links Reading Recovery professionals around the world. RRCNA provides research findings, newsletters, publications, and conferences for its members.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

- Ongoing professional development, coupled with strict adherence to the RRCNA standards and guidelines, assures the quality of Reading Recovery.
- Regular data collection on student performance provides the basis for continuous quality improvement.

LONG-TERM IMPACT OF TEACHER LEADER TRAINING

Training a teacher leader is an investment that pays dividends over time. A single teacher leader can train as many as 12 teachers a year with each teacher serving at least eight students per year. Under ideal conditions as many as 400 students could be reached over five years through the training of a single teacher leader.

“If a state truly wants to impact student achievement, it would mandate and fund Reading Recovery programs in all its elementary schools.”

— Janet L. Emerick, Superintendent, Lake Central School Corporation, St. John, Indiana

READING RECOVERY AND COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM

OBEY-PORTER COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM DEMONSTRATION (CSR D)

Reading Recovery was designed to be the early intervention component of a comprehensive literacy program. Although the Obey-Porter Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSR D) Act does not list Reading Recovery as a comprehensive school reform model, it can be an important and effective part of any comprehensive reform model.

Reading Recovery embodies eight of the nine primary conditions that are a part of the qualifying factors of CSR D. More specifically, Reading Recovery includes:

1. Effective, research-based, replicable methods and strategies

Reading Recovery is built on a foundation of more than 20 years of research about how young low-achieving children take on the process of reading and writing.

2. Professional development

Reading Recovery teacher leaders provide graduate-level instruction and on-site follow-up coaching to teachers in the program.

3. Measurable goals and benchmarks

Reading Recovery has specific measurable goals for each child, including bringing the child's reading and writing performance into the average range of performance in the class.

4. Support within the school

Collaboration and team decision-making among key staff members are typical in schools with Reading Recovery.

5. Parental and community involvement

Reading Recovery requires parental permission or notification. Teachers routinely communicate with parents about ways they can support their child's literacy learning at home.

6. External technical support and assistance

Twenty-five university training centers provide ongoing technical support and assistance to the Reading Recovery teacher leaders they train.

7. Evaluation strategies

Reading Recovery monitors implementation and measures results for every student.

8. Coordination of resources

Reading Recovery teacher leaders and site coordinators are responsible for working with individual districts and schools to create the funding base required for implementation.



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“...An impressive and growing body of authoritative opinion and research evidence suggests that reading failure is preventable for all but a very small percentage of children.”¹

— John Jay Pikulski

TEN PRINCIPLES IN LITERACY PROGRAMS THAT WORK²

by Gay Su Pinnell

National attention is focused on early literacy, as several panels investigate and debate new directions in teaching children to read and write. The National Research Council Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children has analyzed research on effective programs for students who are having difficulty learning to read and write. This research meets the criteria established by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) for reliable, replicable research. Based on a survey of research that met the NICHD criteria, including the research presented in *The Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children* (Snow, Burns, and Griffin, 1998), 10 principles provide guidance for designing early intervention programs.

Research has demonstrated that young readers having difficulty are mostly of average intelligence, and they have problems resulting from multiple and differing causes. With appropriate intervention, almost all can learn to read, provided instruction is intensive and begins early. It is therefore important that reading interventions be multi-dimensional to meet the diverse needs of learners.

The following discussion illustrates how Reading Recovery epitomizes the 10 principles in literacy programs that work. These principles operate throughout a Reading Recovery lesson and apply differently for each child who is learning to read and write (see box, below). The power of Reading Recovery lies in the integration of the 10 research-based components and the careful, sensitive application of these components during a Reading Recovery lesson.

PRINCIPLE #1

Phonological Awareness:
Teach students to hear the sounds in words.

Developing the ability to hear the sounds in words is explicitly recognized in Reading Recovery. When children are evaluated for selection for Reading Recovery, a measure of ability to hear and record sounds in words is used. Performance on this measure of phonological awareness provides data that teachers use daily as

THE READING RECOVERY LESSON

- Reading familiar stories
- Reading a story that was read for the first time the day before
- Working with letters and/or words using magnetic letters
- Writing a story
- Assembling a cut-up story
- Introducing and reading a new book



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¹ Pikulski, J.J. (1994, September). Preventing reading failure: A review of five effective programs. *The Reading Teacher*, 48:1, 30-39.

² Pinnell, G.S. (2000). *Reading Recovery: An analysis of research-based reading intervention*. Columbus, OH: Reading Recovery Council of North America.

they work individually with young children. Children selected for Reading Recovery are the lowest achievers in their first grade classes. Most, although not all, need instruction to develop phonological awareness.

PRINCIPLE #2

Visual Perception of Letters: Teach students to perceive and identify letters of the alphabet.

Students are assessed for letter recognition as part of the battery of tests used for selection. Most children who enter Reading Recovery need to learn more about letters, have very limited knowledge, and need to learn how to look at print.

Because Reading Recovery teachers work one-to-one every day and keep daily records, it is possible to identify with precision what the child knows or is confused about. Teachers begin with the known set of letters and work for expansion. For children with very low letter knowledge, teachers use movement and, if necessary, verbal and visual approaches to help the child remember the letter. Children write letters, construct their own alphabet book recording their knowledge to date, and work extensively with magnetic letters.

Program evaluation reports indicate that with very few exceptions, children who participate in the program can identify the 54 characters (upper and lower case letters of the alphabet, plus the print version of *a* and *g*) by the end of the 12- to 20-week program.

PRINCIPLE #3

Word Recognition: Teach students to recognize words.

First-grade children who are having extreme difficulty in learning to read and write generally know very few if any words. These children are just learning to look at print and to identify a few letters and sounds. It is helpful to build a small but expanding repertoire of words that the child knows in detail and can recognize quickly. With that goal in mind, early in the program, the teacher works to extend knowledge of words by having children make words using magnetic letters, trace words, and write words. Word cards may also be used. The words that the teacher selects to teach to children are

- words with high utility,
- words which occur most often in the language,
- words needed often in writing, and
- words the child almost knows that a little more practice will bring to overlearning.

PRINCIPLE #4

Phonics/Decoding Skills: Teach students to use simple and complex letter-sound relationships to solve words in reading and writing.

In Reading Recovery lessons, children learn letter-sound relationships in several different ways, and they are taught to apply that knowledge in reading and writing. Word-solving skills are assessed on a word reading test, a test of hearing and recording sounds in words, and a test of text reading. Analysis of students' errors while they read texts reveals their current skills, and the teacher works from there. Through explicit instruction based on the individual's needs, students are taught to analyze words while reading text. Strategies include left-to-right letter or letter cluster sound analysis as well as noticing word parts. Several different components of the lesson foster the use of sounds and letter correspondence. All instruction is directed toward helping children learn how words work and the automatic, rapid recognition of words while reading for meaning.

If the child has low letter knowledge, the teacher will work intensively with letters; but when the child knows about 20 letters, the teacher will also begin to do some work with words in isolation. This

procedure is called *making and breaking*. Using magnetic letters, the teacher works with the child each day, moving from making words that the child knows to using predictable (regular) letter-sound sequences, to simple analogies, and to less predictable letter-sound sequences. The process is systematic in that the teacher has a precise record of the sound-letter sequences that the child already knows and can use; the expansion of knowledge moves from that place to more complex associations. The emphasis is on flexibility and on helping children learn principles to apply in solving many words.

PRINCIPLE #5

***Phonics/Structural Analysis:* Teach students to use structural analysis of words and learn spelling patterns.**

In Reading Recovery, word analysis is integral to the reading and writing of continuous texts, and there is also explicit instruction in structural analysis of words. Words are considered in isolation to illustrate principles that help children gain control of the principles that underlie English spelling. There is a strong link to reading and writing, with the goal of helping children quickly use knowledge of word structure to take words apart and to spell words.

PRINCIPLE #6

***Fluency/Automaticity:* Develop speed and fluency in reading and writing.**

In Reading Recovery, there is a strong emphasis on teaching for fluency and phrasing in oral reading. In the 30-minute Reading Recovery lesson, the majority of time is devoted to students' reading of continuous text. While it is important for children to read and use problem-solving skills on a new, challenging text every day, Reading Recovery teachers also make extensive use of rereading texts. Teachers select texts carefully to encourage fluency.

PRINCIPLE #7

***Comprehension:* Teach students to construct meaning from print.**

Reading Recovery students are taught that what they read must make sense. Instruction helps students develop a variety of strategies directed toward helping children search for meaning as they read. In fact, the Reading Recovery teacher assures that children never lose meaning by careful text selection, careful introduction, and conversation about the story. These strategies (called a self-extending system) include helping children

- monitor their own reading and writing;
- search for cues in word sequences, in meaning, and in letter sequences;
- discover new things for themselves;
- repeat as if to confirm the reading or writing so far;
- self-correct, taking the initiative for making cues match or getting words right; and
- solve new words by using all the above strategies.

PRINCIPLE #8

***Balanced, Structured Approach:* Provide a balanced approach so that literacy develops along a broad front and students can apply skills in reading and writing.**

Reading Recovery consists of an interrelated set of learning experiences. Teachers intentionally work to be sure that students make connections across components of the lesson framework. A key concept in Reading

Recovery is that “every new thing learned should be revisited in several other activities.” A lesson consists of a variety of activities including reading and comprehending both familiar and new texts, writing a message of importance to the child, phonemic awareness, letter-sound correspondence, basic sight words, fluency, and teaching for strategic processing. It is this balance of activities, providing the opportunity to use skills in many ways, that allows for acceleration.

PRINCIPLE #9

Early Intervention: Intervene early to undercut reading failure.

Reading Recovery is a short-term (12 to 20 weeks) safety net intervention. Children are entered into Reading Recovery at a critical time in their school careers (age six or during first grade). Reading Recovery helps children make accelerated progress and catch up with their first-grade peers. The program also helps students continue to progress with good, ongoing classroom teaching. It is a supplementary opportunity and is not intended to replace classroom instruction.

PRINCIPLE #10

Individual Tutoring: Provide one-to-one assistance for the students who are having the most difficulty.

Reading Recovery is defined as one-to-one tutoring. It is not a classroom program; it is not a small group program. Quite simply, if the instruction is not one-to-one, it is not Reading Recovery.

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Literacy Collaborative™

The Ohio State University



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Educational Excellence for All Children Act of 1999



AN OVERVIEW OF THE
CLINTON ADMINISTRATION'S PROPOSAL
TO REAUTHORIZE THE ELEMENTARY
AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT