



Reading Recovery Implementation Brief

Reading Recovery: Part of a Comprehensive Literacy Plan

What does a comprehensive literacy plan accomplish?

A comprehensive literacy plan is key to improving literacy achievement for all children. It addresses the quality of classroom instruction and attends to necessary extra intervention for learners who need additional support. Essential components include professional development for teachers, collaborative problem solving, and effective use of assessment.

What are the characteristics of a comprehensive literacy plan?

Professional development is central to improved student performance. Effective staff development must be tied to student achievement, be ongoing and intensive, and include coaching and support for classroom teachers. Successful professional developers promote teacher ownership for the comprehensive literacy plan and the sharing of instructional ideas and collaborative problem solving within and across grade meetings.

Research-based instructional approaches must be included at all grade levels. Explicit instruction, which includes teacher modeling and student opportunities to practice in authentic contexts, is an important characteristic of research-based approaches. The effectiveness of research-based instructional approaches needs to be monitored with appropriate assessment tools. Instructional approaches may need to be modified to produce better results with the student population of each particular school.

Excellent classroom instruction provides in-depth learning opportunities for diverse learners. Developing relationships and respect for individual students, setting high expectations for all learners, and providing learning opportunities within meaningful contexts are important characteristics of effective classrooms. Sufficient time to provide uninterrupted blocks of literacy instruction as well as a rich supply of high-quality books and materials are necessary for excellent classroom instruction.

Literacy assessment at all grade levels employs a variety of informal and formal measures of phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, and the development of each student's reading process. Classroom teachers use continuous assessment to address student learning as well as their own teaching. Data are used schoolwide for collaborative problem solving for individuals and for the evaluation of the comprehensive literacy plan.

Reading Recovery school teams provide for shared responsibility for the lowest-achieving readers and writers in the school. Although students are in first grade when they receive the Reading Recovery intervention, all of the educators in the building are responsible for the instructional decisions of these students. The school team takes responsibility for monitoring the progress of the lowest-achieving students, making decisions about selection of students for the intervention, problem-solving students who do not respond adequately to the intervention, and monitoring the progress of students after the intervention. Team members include the principal, teachers representing all grade levels, resource teachers, and other instructional support personnel.

Levels of intervention need to be available, based on the student need. All students deserve to have excellent classroom instruction. A few students will not make adequate progress, even with this excellent instruction. For those children who do not respond to classroom instruction after 1 year at school, Reading Recovery provides specialized instruction tailored to the needs and strengths of each child. Most children who receive Reading Recovery instruction accelerate their learning so that they are then

able to profit from excellent classroom instruction. For the small number of children who continue to need instructional support after receiving the Reading Recovery intervention, the school team needs to determine the long-term support that is most appropriate and effective for each child.

Key Questions

What staff development plan do you have that supports learning to implement research-based instruction?

What safety nets are in place for children who need support beyond excellent classroom instruction?

Do you have a school team that includes the principal and that closely monitors the progress of the lowest-achieving readers and writers and makes informed instructional decisions?

Are assessment data used to inform instruction and to monitor student progress?

Does the climate in your school promote collaborative planning and problem solving?

For Further Information:

Allington, R. L. (2001). *What really matters for struggling readers: Designing research-based programs*. New York: Longman.

Smith-Burke, M., Pinnell, G. S., Jackson, M., Wey, S., Askew, B. J., & Hambright-Brown, E. (2002). *A principal's guide to Reading Recovery*. Columbus, OH: Reading Recovery Council of North America.

Askew, B. J., Kaye, E., Frasier, D. F., Mobasher, M., Anderson, N., & Rodríguez, Y. G. (2003). Making a case for prevention in education. In S. Forbes & C. Briggs (Eds.), *Research in Reading Recovery, volume two* (pp. 133–158). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Dorn, L. J., & Soffos, C. (2001). *Shaping literate minds: Developing self-regulated learners*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

Jackson, M., Duvall, C., Ford, R., Frasier, D., Newman, C., & Salinas, K. (2004). Building ownership for Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura with school teams. *Journal of Reading Recovery*, 3(2), 44–51.

Fountas, I. C., & Pinnell, G. S. (2001). *Guided reading*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Fountas, I. C., & Pinnell, G. S. (2001). *Guiding readers and writers, grades 3–6: Teaching comprehension, genre, and content literacy*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Lyon, A., & Moore, P. (2003). *Sound systems: explicit, systematic phonics in early literacy contexts*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

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