Characteristics of Teachers Who Are Effective in Teaching All Children to Read

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   Task Force on Reading

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Characteristics of Schools
that Are Effective in Teaching All Children to Read
   by Barbara M. Taylor
Characteristics of Teachers Who Are Effective in Teaching All Children to Read

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National Education Association

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Research from the 1970s and 1980s on the characteristics of effective elementary school teachers highlighted the importance of a strong academic focus, explicit instruction, and high levels of pupils on task (Hoffman, 1991). Extending this earlier research, recent large-scale studies on effective teachers of reading have highlighted the importance of motivating and balanced instruction, the teaching of strategies as well as skills, the encouragement of higher-level thinking, and the use of coaching as children are reading and writing. Common findings across recent studies on effective elementary teachers of reading are highlighted in the following pages.
Effective teachers of reading maintain instructional balance. They teach basic skills as needed but do not overemphasize them.


Resources:


Higher-level Thinking

Effective teachers of reading stress higher-level thinking. They engage children in challenging discussions and writing in response to what they have read.


Resources:


Effective teachers of reading teach word recognition and comprehension strategies as well as skills. They teach children how to transfer word recognition and comprehension skills they have learned into strategies they can use independently when reading or writing.


Resources:


Effective teachers of reading do not rely only on teacher-directed instruction. They provide a substantial amount of coaching in the form of support and feedback as their students are reading and writing. They refrain from doing too much talking, allowing their students ample time to engage firsthand in literacy activities.


**Resources:**


Fostering Self-regulation

Effective teachers of reading foster self-regulation in their students. They encourage students to work independently and take responsibility for their own learning.


Resources:


Motivating Instruction

Effective teachers of reading provide motivating instruction and foster active pupil involvement. They give their students many opportunities to engage in meaningful reading and writing activities.


Resources:


High Expectations

Effective teachers of reading have high expectations for their students’ behavior and their reading growth. They believe their students can achieve at high levels in reading and writing. They also believe their students will work hard whether they are with the whole class, in a small group, with a partner, or working on their own.


Resources:
Effective teachers of reading are excellent classroom managers. They work with their students to develop class rules and routines and are persistent in seeing these rules and routines honored in the classroom.


**Resources:**


Parent Relationships

Effective teachers of reading build strong relationships with their students’ parents. They communicate regularly with parents, treat them with respect, and make them feel welcome in their classrooms.


Resources:


Additional Resources