effective

Steps for School-Wide
Reading
Improvement

reading

Barbara M. Taylor
University of Minnesota

Barbara J. Frye
University of South Florida–St. Petersburg

Debra S. Peterson
University of Minnesota

P. David Pearson
University of California–Berkeley

Center for the Improvement of
Early Reading Achievement

instruction

June 2003

nea
NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
www.nea.org
Great Public Schools for Every Child

Table of Contents

effective

reading

instruction

Background:

The question of what makes schools successful in improving students' reading achivement has been a key area of inquiry at the Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA). The process for school-wide reading improvement described in this booklet is based on the framework for change used in the CIERA School Change Project. Research found this approach to school-wide reading improvement to be effective in enhancing students' reading growth (Taylor, Pearson, Peterson, & Rodriguez, in press a).

Leadership Team Part I—Getting Started

Part **1**

A group of committed teachers and administrators who want to see a significant reading improvement effort unfold at their school take a first pass at developing a general reading improvement plan so that others have some idea of the purpose of and process for such an effort.

a. Review the research on effective schools, school improvement, collaboration, and shared leadership (See Resources 1.1 – 1.4).

b. Review the research on effective reading instruction and effective teachers of reading (See Resources 1.5 – 1.10).

c. Discuss the following questions: How can the teachers and administrators in our school begin or improve a collaborative approach to leadership? How can we make the reading achievement of our students a school-wide priority with teachers feeling a shared responsibility for all students' success? How can we develop a plan to ensure that all teachers are monitoring students' progress using a variety of assessments and using these data to inform their instruction? How can we develop a

school-wide reading plan that supports teachers in the implementation of a balanced reading program that develops thinkers as well as readers? How will we foster relationships and partnerships with parents and the community in the effort to improve the reading achievement of our students?

d. Look at data on students, classroom instruction, school collaboration, leadership, and parent partnerships to determine needs for improvement of reading instruction and student achievement in reading. Consider student performance in relation to standards (See Resources 1.12, 1.13). Consider effectiveness of classroom reading instruction (See Resource 1.14). Consider time spent on reading instruction/balance in reading instruction across the school (See Resource 1.15). Consider school climate,

extent of collaboration, extent of shared leadership, extent of parent partnerships (See Resources 1.11, 1.15).

e. Develop a detailed but simple plan for professional development (See Step 3 below). Successful schools have ongoing professional development and a strong sense of community. How will we provide opportunities for teachers to learn, and how will we support their learning in order to improve their success as teachers of reading?

f. Present a plan for professional development to teachers, make modifications based on teachers' input, and move forward with a plan that 75% of teachers vote to accept. Keep in mind that developing a culture of learning and ongoing professional development involving teachers as educational leaders takes time and

Leadership Team Part I—Getting Started
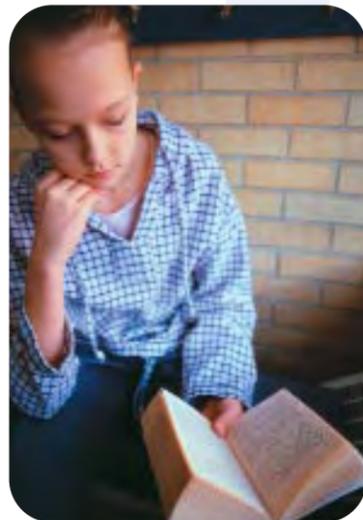
patience. Allocate the necessary resources, make a commitment, and remain focused on your plan. Avoid being tempted by other new initiatives that may be presented.

g. After the plan is accepted, add members to the leadership team so that all teachers within the school are represented. Clarify roles of members of the internal leadership team.

h. A school should get help from an external facilitator if possible.

Resources

1. Fullan, M. (1999). *Change forces: The sequel*. London: Falmer.

2. *Hawley, W.D. (Ed.) (2002) *The keys to effective schools: Educational reform as continuous improvement*. Washington, DC: National Education Association.

3. *Taylor, B.M. (2002). *Characteristics of schools that are effective in teaching all children to read*. Washington, DC: National Education Association.

4. *Taylor, B.M., Pressley, M., & Pearson, P.D. (2002). *Research-supported characteristics of teachers and schools that promote reading achievement*. Washington, DC: National Education Association.

5. National Reading Panel. (2000). *Report of the national reading panel: Reports of the sub-committees*. (Available by calling 1-800-228-8813, publication number EX 0114P).

6. *NEA Task Force on Reading. (2002). *Advice on reading from experts: Teachers*. Washington, DC: National Education Association.

7. *Pressley, M. (2002). *Effective beginning reading instruction: The rest of the story*. Washington, DC: National Education Association.

8. Pressley, M. (2002). *Reading instruction that works: The case for balanced teaching*, second edition. New York, NY: Guilford.

9. *Taylor, B.M. (2002). *Characteristics of teachers who are effective in teaching all children to read*. Washington, DC: National Education Association.

10. Taylor, B.M., Pearson, P.D., Peterson, D.S., & Rodriguez, M.C. (in press b). Reading growth in high-poverty classrooms: The influence of teacher practices that encourage students' cognitive engagement in literacy learning. *Elementary School Journal*.

11. *Keys 2.0 (wwwkeysonline.org)—The Keys 2.0 Initiative is an online resource that includes a comprehensive, research-based survey that helps a school evaluate its strengths and weaknesses pertaining to characteristics of effective schools. The Keys Initiative provides an action guide with resources and group activities related to the six "keys" that define school quality.

12. New Standards Primary Literacy Committee. (1999). *Reading and writing grade by grade*. Washington, DC: National Center on Education and the Economy.

13. New Standards. (1997). *Performance standards: Elementary school*. Washington, DC: National Center on Education and the Economy.

14. Taylor, B.M. & Pearson, P.D. (2000). *The CIERA school change classroom observation scheme*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota.

15. Taylor, B. (in preparation). *School change manual*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota.

* Available from National Education Association.

Leadership Team Part 2—Maintaining Momentum

Part 1

a. Meet regularly (e.g., at least once a month) to keep the improvement effort moving forward and provide leadership to the professional development effort. Continue to get help from an external facilitator if possible.

b. Visit classrooms and provide support /peer coaching for all teachers, extra support for some. Provide demonstration teaching and modeling of effective practices as requested by teachers.

c. Work with teachers who are not on board with the improvement effort. Listen to their concerns and recommendations before problem solving.

d. Continue to examine data on students, teaching of reading, and school climate. Look at student assessment data to determine progress and to decide where further change is needed. Look at data on classroom reading instruction —what is taught, how lessons are being taught, how much time is spent on different aspects of reading instruction—and determine strengths as well as further changes that are needed. Look at data on school climate, collaboration, leadership, and parent partnerships and determine strengths as well as further changes that are needed.

e. Look at the school-wide reading program (See Step 4 below).

f. Have staff evaluate the plan every several months under the direction of the leadership team and make adjustments.

Resources

1. Crowther, F., Kaagan, S.S., Ferguson, M., & Hann, L. (2002). *Developing teacher leaders: How teacher leadership enhances school success*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

2. Daresh, J.C. (2003). *Teachers mentoring teachers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

3. Fink, E. & Resnick, L. (2001). Developing principals as instructional leaders. *Phi Delta Kappan* 82(8), 598-606.

4. Fullan, M. & Hargreaves, A. (1996). *What's worth fighting for in your school?* New York, NY: Teachers College.

5. Taylor, B. (in preparation). *School change manual*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota.

6. Taylor, B.M., Pearson, P.D., Peterson, D.S., & Rodriguez, M.C. (in press a) *The CIERA school change project: Using research, data, and study groups to improve classroom reading instruction and increase students' reading achievement*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota.

Engage in Professional Development To Improve Reading Instruction

Getting Started

a. Plan study groups (See Resources 3.2, 3.4, 3.5), with specific foci. These study groups are a core component of ongoing improvement of reading instruction. Study group activities include reading about and discussion of research-based practices (See specific reading foci in part 2). Before the next meeting, teachers try out the same set of new teaching techniques as a group. At subsequent meetings and based on new techniques being implemented, study group members engage in the following: examination of student work to determine how to improve teaching (See Resources 3.1, 3.4), lesson planning and study (See Resource 3.3), examination of effective instruction through visits or video viewing, and video sharing of members teaching in order to reflect on practice (See Resources 3.4, 3.5).

b. Start study groups. They should meet for an hour once a month. Roles should rotate: leader, time-keeper, recorder. Develop an action plan that includes data on students' progress and teachers' successes. Keep meeting notes that are shared with the rest of the school.

c. Get support from an external facilitator, if possible, who would provide peer coaching and demonstration teaching.

d. Provide internal support through a literacy coordinator, other members of the leadership team, or other teachers who would be willing to provide peer coaching and/or demonstration teaching.

Maintaining Momentum

e. Remain on a specific topic/technique or set of techniques for at least four sessions. (Thus, it is important to select a topic, technique, or set of techniques that would warrant four–six sessions of study).

f. Evaluate the process: What went well? What needs to be done to make the study group more productive?

g. Reflect on improvements in instruction. This is a crucial aspect of study groups that is often overlooked. Ask questions such as: How has my teaching improved based on my study group work?

h. Look at student data to identify progress or to identify areas of instruction in need of further attention.

i. Add new techniques or areas of study to the study group process as the group feels ready for new challenges.

Resources

1. *Looking at student work*, www.lasw.org.

2. Murphy, C. & Lick, D. (2001). *Whole-faculty study groups: Creating student-based professional development,* second edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

3. Stigler, J. W. & Hiebert, J. (1999). *The teaching gap: Best ideas from the world's teachers for improving education in the classroom.* New York, NY: Free Press.

4. Taylor, B. M. (in preparation). *School change manual.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota.

5. Taylor, B. M., Critchley, C., Paulsen, K., MacDonald, K., & Miron, H. (2003). *Learning to teach an early reading intervention program through Internet-supported professional development.* Paper submitted for publication.

6. Taylor, B. M., Pearson, P. D., Peterson, D. S., & Rodriguez, M. C. (in press a). *The CIERA school change project: Using research, data, and study groups to improve classroom reading instruction and increase students' reading achievement.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota.

7. York-Barr, J., Sommers, W. A., Ghere, G. S., & Montie, J. (2001). *Reflective practice to improve schools: An action guide for educators.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Make Adjustments to Your School-Wide Reading Program

Part 1

Getting Started

a. Consider and propose adjustments in the amount of time devoted to reading instruction, when blocks of time are allotted for reading instruction, collaboration in delivery of reading instruction, use of a pull-in or push-out model for supplemental instruction, placement of instructional aides, and interventions for struggling readers.

b. Check alignment of state and/or district standards, instruction, and assessments in reading.

Maintaining Momentum

c. Structure grade-level and cross-grade level meetings regularly to discuss the school-wide reading program.

Resources

1. Morrow, L. M. (2003). *Organizing and managing the language arts block: A professional development guide.* New York, NY: Guilford.

2. New Standards Primary Literacy Committee. (1999). *Reading and writing grade by grade.* Washington, DC: National Center on Education and the Economy.

3. Taylor, B. (in preparation). *School change manual.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota.

4. Taylor, B. M., Pearson, P. D., Peterson, D. S., & Rodriguez, M.C. (in press b). Reading growth in high-poverty classrooms: The influence of teacher practices that encourage students' cognitive engagement in literacy learning. *Elementary School Journal.*

Improve Parent Partnerships

Part 1

Getting Started

a. Meet as a leadership team to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of your school's current involvement with parents. Keep in mind that what is important is the concept of parent partnerships, not simply parent involvement.

b. Survey parents and assess what parents need in order to become more involved in their children's schooling.

c. Devise a plan to develop or improve partnerships with parents.

Maintaining Momentum

d. Ask parents and teachers if the plan for improving partnerships with parents has been successful.

e. Study data from parent feedback or attendance at scheduled events to determine which aspects of the program have been successful and which have not.

Resources

1. Christenson, S. L. & Sheridan, S. M. (2001). *Schools and families: Creating essential connections for learning.* New York, NY: Guilford.

2. Epstein, J.L., Sanders, M.G., Simon, B.S., Salinas, K.C., Jansorn, N.R., & Van Voorhis. F.L. (2002). *School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action*, second edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
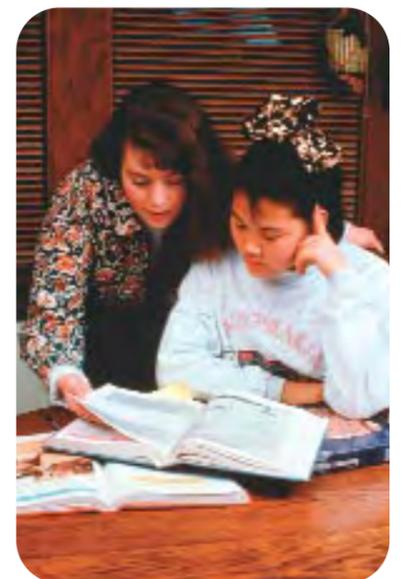
Providing Ongoing Professional Development through Study Groups

Ongoing professional development in the form of teacher study groups is a key element in school-wide improvement of reading. This section provides guidance for initiating and sustaining such groups.

Getting the Study Group Started

a. Review relevant research on effective reading instruction and teachers of reading (See Resources below). Use data on students' and teachers' needs to select a study group focus area (topics 2-10 below).

b. Ask key questions to help groups select a focus area. Questions should deal with the content of instruction, the process of instruction, time allocations, and individual student needs. Possible questions: Am I teaching important aspects of X? Am I using research-based processes to teach X? Am I spending the right amount of time on X? Am I meeting individual needs related to X?

c. Learn, implement, and reflect on the effectiveness of new research-based techniques in a focus area. Ask questions to reflect on teaching that deal with the purpose of the lesson, the teaching of the lesson, the timing of the lesson, and other aspects of teaching. Possible questions: What new technique am I trying? Why am I teaching this? How will it help my students develop their ability in X? What is my plan for teaching? Did I spend the right amount of time on the lesson? How could I have taught differently, provided more scaffolding as students were engaged in activities, or involved students more actively to be more effective in my teaching?

Maintaining the Study Group Momentum

d. Continue to implement and reflect on the effectiveness of one or several new research-based techniques over multiple months (at least four).

e. Assess students' progress to inform your teaching. Sample questions: How are my students doing in phonemic awareness? What do I need to do differently to help students be more successful?

f. Reflect on/refine teaching by asking questions on content and process. How should I adjust the content I teach? What have I learned or observed in the study group that will help me make these changes? How should I adjust the way I teach?

g. Meet individual needs. For which students do I need to adjust my instruction to meet their needs? What resources can I draw from to help me make the necessary instructional changes? What should I do to provide additional support for some students to meet their needs?

h. Continue to implement and reflect on the effectiveness of a new research-based technique or set of techniques over multiple months, but also move to a new technique within the focus area as the group feels ready. Examples of questions for reflection: Am I ready to focus on learning a new technique to teach X? What should I do next to refine my ability to use this new technique in my teaching? How will this new technique improve my teaching?

Resources

1. Block, C.C., & Mangieri, J.N. (2003). *Exemplary literacy teachers: Promoting success for all children in grades K-5.* New York, NY: Guilford.

2. Morrow, L.M., Gambrell, L.B., & Pressley, M.P., (2003). *Best practices in literacy instruction,* second edition. New York, NY: Guilford.

3. *Taylor, B.M. (2002). *Characteristics of teachers who are effective in teaching all children to read.* Washington, DC: National Education Association.

4. Taylor, B., Pearson, P.D., Clark, K., & Walpole, S. (1999). Effective schools/Accomplished teachers. *The Reading Teacher* 53, 156-159.

5. Taylor, B.M., Pearson, P.D., Peterson, D.S., & Rodriguez, M.C. (in press b). Reading growth in high-poverty classrooms: The influence of teacher practices that encourage students' cognitive engagement in literacy learning. *Elementary School Journal.*

Literacy Development in Kindergarten: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics Instruction, and Oral Language Development

2

Part

Getting the Study Group Started

a. Review relevant research on phonemic awareness, phonics, and oral language development.

b. Ask key questions to determine where change is needed. Questions should deal with the content of instruction, the process of instruction, time allocations, and individual student needs. Possible questions: Am I teaching the important aspects of phonemic awareness for students who need it? Am I coaching students as they engage in phonemic awareness activities? Am I spending the right amount of time on phonemic awareness for individual students?

c. Learn, implement, and reflect on the effectiveness of new research-based techniques. Questions to discuss should deal with the purpose of the lesson, the teaching of the lesson, the timing of the lesson, and reflection on teaching. Possible questions: What new tech-nique am I trying? Why am I teaching this? How will it help my students develop their phonemic awareness, oral language, and understanding of phonics? What is my plan for teaching? Did I spend the right amount of time on the lesson? How could I have taught differently, provided more scaffolding as students were engaged in activities, or involved students more actively to be more effective in my teaching?

Maintaining the Study Group Momentum

d. Continue to implement and reflect on the effectiveness of one or several relevent new research-based techniques over multiple months (at least four months of study recommended).

e. Assess students' progress to inform your teaching. Possible questions: How are my students doing in phonemic awareness, phonics, and oral language? What do I need to do differently to help students be more successful?

f. Reflect on/refine teaching by asking questions on content and process. How should I adjust what I teach and the way I teach related to phonemic awareness, phonics, and oral language development?

g. Meet individual needs. What should I do to provide additional support to some students to meet their needs? Do some students need more opportunities to apply new knowledge?

h. Continue to reflect on and refine teaching of newly acquired techniques, but also add a new tech-nique as the group feels ready. Am I ready to focus on learning a new technique to teach phonemic awareness or phonics or develop oral language? What should I do next to refine my ability to use this new technique in my teaching?
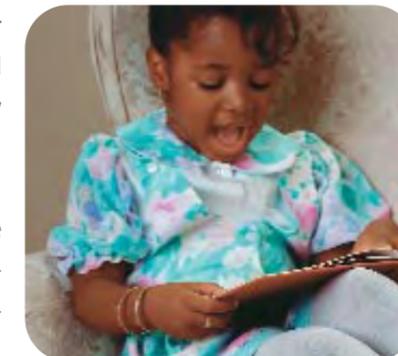
Resources

1. Button, K., Johnson, M.J., & Furgeson, P., (1996). Interactive writing in a primary classroom. *The Reading Teacher* 49(6), 446-454.

2. *IRA beginning reading study group module.* (2002). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

3. McCormick, C.E., Throneburg, R.N., & Smitley, J.M. (2002). *A sound start: Phonemic awareness lessons for reading success.* New York, NY: Guilford.

4. National Reading Panel. (2000). *Report of the national reading panel: Reports of the subgroups.* Washington, DC: National Institute for Child Health and Human Development.

5. Rasinski, T.V., Padak, N.D., Church, B.W., Fawcett, G., Hendershop, J., Henry, J.M., Moss, B.G., Peck, J.K., Pryor, E., & Roskos K.A., (Eds.) (2000). *Teaching word recognition, spelling, and vocabulary: Strategies from the reading teacher.* Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

6. Rog, L.J. (2001). *Early literacy instruction in kindergarten.* Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Word Recognition

Getting the Study Group Started

a. Review relevant research on word recognition.

b. Ask key questions to determine where change is needed. Questions should focus on the content of instruction, the process of instruction, time allocations, and individual student needs. Possible questions: Am I teaching explicit, systematic phonics to my students in kindergarten and first grade? Am I coaching students to apply phonics to reading? Am I spending more time on explicit phonics than some students need, especially in grades 2-3? Am I providing extra support to the students who are having a hard time grasping the alphabetic principle? Are practice activities useful?

c. Learn, implement, and reflect on new research-based techniques. Questions to discuss should include the purpose of the lesson, the teaching of the lesson, the timing of the lesson, and reflection on teaching. Possible questions: What new technique am I trying? Why am I teaching this? How will it help my students develop their symbol-sound knowledge, their ability to sound out words, and their ability to use strategies to figure out words when reading? What is my plan for teaching? Did I spend the right amount of time on the lesson? How could I have taught differently, provided more scaffolding as students were engaged in activities, or involved students more actively to be more effective in my teaching?

Maintaining the Study Group Momentum

d. Continue to implement and reflect on the effectiveness of one or several relevant new research-based techniques over multiple months (at least four months).

e. Assess students' progress to inform your teaching. Possible questions: How are my students doing in word recognition? What do I need to do differently to help some students be more successful?

f. Reflect on/refine teaching by discussing questions that deal with content and process. How should I adjust what I teach and the way I teach related to word recognition?

g. Meet individual needs. Possible question: What should I do to provide additional support to students to meet their needs related to word recognition skills?

h. Continue to reflect on and refine teaching of newly acquired techniques, but also learn a new technique as the group feels ready to move on. Am I ready to focus on learning a new technique to teach phonics or use of word recognition strategies when reading? What should I do next to refine my ability to use this new technique in my teaching?

Resources

1. Cunningham, P.M. & Cunningham, J.W. (1992). Making words: Enhancing the invented spelling-decoding connection. *The Reading Teacher* 46, 106-115.

2. Fry, E. (1998). The most common phonograms. *The Reading Teacher* 51, 620-62.

3. Gaskins, I.W., Ehri, L.C., Cress, C., O'Hara, C., & Donnelly, K. (1996). Procedures for word learning: Making discoveries about words. *The Reading Teacher* 50, 312-327.

4. Gaskins, R.W., Gaskins, J.C., & Gaskins, I. W. (1991). A decoding program for poor readers—and the rest of the class, too! *Language Arts* 68, 213-225.

5. IRA beginning reading study group module. (2002). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

6. National Reading Panel. (2000). *Report of the national reading panel: Report of the subgroups*. Washington, DC: National Institute for Child Health and Human Development.

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

8. Rasinski, T.V., Padak, N.D., Church, B.W., Fawcett, G., Hendershop, J., Henry, J.M., Moss, B.G., Peck, J.K., Pryor, E., & Roskos K.A. (Eds.) (2000). *Teaching word recognition, spelling, and vocabulary: Strategies from the reading teacher*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

9. Taylor, B., Short, R., Frye, B., & Shearer, B. (1992). Classroom teachers prevent reading failure among low-achieving first-grade students. *The Reading Teacher* 45, 592-597.

Fluency

Getting the Study Group Started

a. Review relevant research on fluency.

b. Ask key questions to determine where change is needed. Questions should focus on content of instruction, process of teaching, time allocation, and individual student needs. Possible questions: Are my primary grade students getting the opportunity to read stories more than once in a way that is engaging? Am I tracking students' progress in fluency growth and making adjustments for students who are not making progress? Are my students getting time to read independently everyday while I'm working with a small group?

c. Learn, implement, and reflect on new research-based techniques. Questions should focus on the purpose of the lesson, the teaching of the lesson, the timing of the lesson, and reflection on teaching. Possible questions: Did I explain to students why this fluency activity will help them? Will all of the stu-dents I have selected for this activi-ty actually benefit from it? Do my students understand how to engage in this fluency activity while I am with another group of students?

Maintaining the Study Group Momentum

d. Continue to implement and reflect on the effectiveness of one or sev-eral relevant new research-based techniques over multiple months (at least four months).

e. Assess students' progress to inform your teaching. Possible questions: Are my students progressing as I had predicted? Could I adjust my instruction to allow for more inde-pendent reading time? Do I have my books organized in such a way that children can find books appro-priate for their independent read-ing and interests?

f. Reflect on/refine teaching by dis-cussing content and process. Am I providing my students with a num-ber of different ways to build fluen-cy? Am I making sure that my students hear models of fluent reading?

g. Meet individual needs. Possible question: How am I differentiating my instruction to meet the needs of my ELL students, my LD students, and my gifted students?

h. Continue to reflect on and refine teaching of newly acquired tech-niques, but also add a new tech-nique as the group feels ready to move on. What is a new way I can have my students work on fluency?

Resources

1. Koskinen, P.S. & Blum, I.H. (1986). Paired repeated reading: A class-room strategy for developing reading fluency. *The Reading Teacher* 40, 70-75.

2. Martinez, M., Roser, N., & Stre-cker, S. (1998-99). "I thought I could be a star": A readers theater ticket to fluency. *The Reading Teacher* 52(4), 326-337.

3. Rasinski, T.V. (2000). Speed does matter in reading. *The Reading Teacher* 54(92), 146-151.

4. Samuels, S.J. (1997). The method of repeated reading. *The Reading Teacher* 32, 403-408. Also reprinted in the February 1997 issue of *The Reading Teacher*.

5. Stahl, S.A. & Kuhn, M.R. (2002). Making it sound like language: Developing fluency. *The Reading Teacher* 55(6), 582-584.

Vocabulary

Part 2

Getting the Study Group Started

a. Review relevant research on vocabulary.

b. Ask key questions to determine where change is needed. Discuss questions on content of instruction, process of teaching, time allocations, and individual student needs. Possible questions: Am I providing explicit instruction in how to use strategies to learn word meanings—context, dictionary, semantic mapping? Am I coaching students to develop word consciousness for unfamiliar words in their reading? Am I spending enough time discussing meanings of unfamiliar words encountered during reading? Am I providing enough opportunity for my ELL students to talk about meanings of words they encounter?

c. Learn, implement, and reflect on new research-based techniques. Discuss questions on the purpose of the lesson, the teaching of the lesson, the timing of the lesson, and reflection on teaching. Possible questions: Did I state the purpose of my vocabulary lesson to my students? Did I give my students an opportunity to actively participate in the vocabulary lesson? Did I spend too much time on vocabulary or not enough time? Did I select useful words to discuss? Did I provide sufficient opportunity for students to use new words?

Maintaining the Study Group Momentum

d. Continue to implement and reflect on the effectiveness of one or several relevant new research-based techniques over multiple months (at least four months).

e. Assess students' progress to inform your teaching. Possible questions: Are my students getting better at noticing new words when they are reading that they want to discuss? Are my students trying to use new words in their discussions and writing?

**f.** Reflect on/refine teaching by discussing questions on content and process. Am I missing opportunities to talk about the meanings of words encountered in text? Am I modeling and coaching in the use of context clues to figure out word meanings?

g. Meet individual needs. Possible questions: Am I selecting enough appropriate words to discuss with my ELL students? Am I selecting words that they already know?

h. Continue to reflect on and refine teaching of newly-acquired techniques, but also learn a new technique. What is a new vocabulary strategy I could teach my students that has research support behind it?

Resources

1. Beck, I.L., McKeown, M.G., & Kucan, L. (2002). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction.* New York, NY: Guilford.

2. *IRA vocabulary study group module.* (2002). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

3. National Reading Panel. (2000). *Report of the national reading panel: Report of the subgroups.* Washington, DC: National Institute for Child Health and Human Development.

4. Rasinski, T.V., Padak, N.D., Church, B.W., Fawcett, G., Hendershop, J., Henry, J.M., Moss, B.G., Peck, J.K., Pryor, E., & Roskos K.A. (Eds.) (2000). *Teaching word recognition, spelling, and vocabulary: Strategies from the reading teacher.* Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
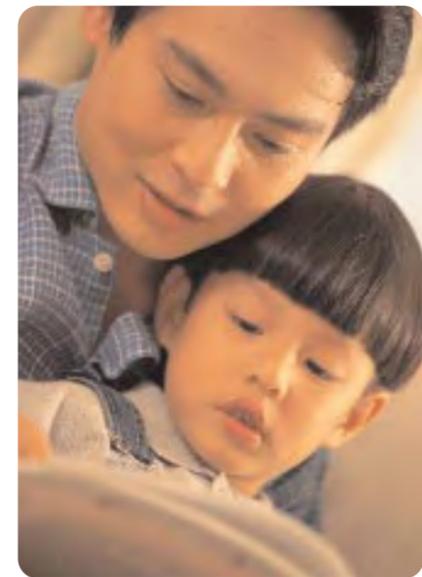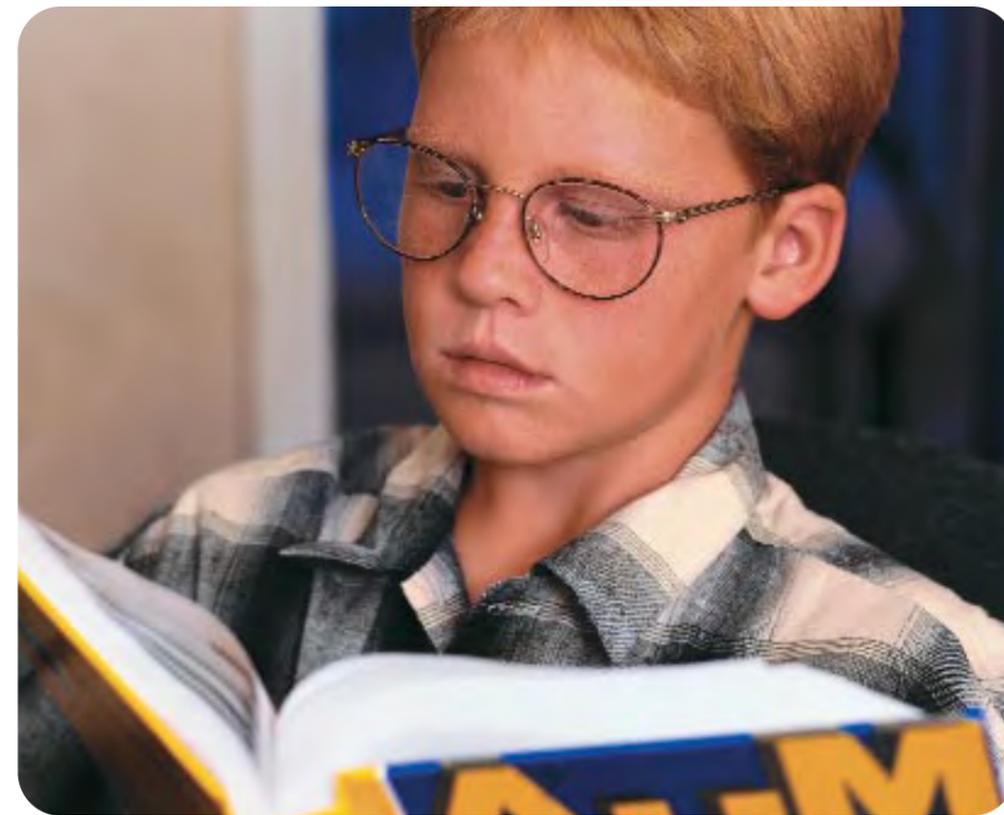
Comprehension Strategies

Part 2

Getting the Study Group Started

a. Review relevant research on comprehension strategies.

b. Ask key questions to determine where change is needed. Questions should focus on content of instruction, the process of the teaching, time allocations, and individual student needs. Possible questions: Am I providing explicit instruction in how to use comprehension strategies to better understand what is being read? Am I modeling how to use comprehension strategies and then coaching students as they are attempting to use them when reading independently? Am I teaching comprehension strategies every day? Am I providing extra support to students who have difficulty with comprehension?

c. Learn, implement, and reflect on new research-based techniques. Discuss the purpose of the lesson, the teaching of the lesson, the timing of the lesson, and reflection on teaching. Possible questions: Did I have students explain to me why they are learning how to summarize and when to use it? Did I do enough modeling of how to summarize? Am I releasing responsibility to students through coaching? Did I spend enough time on summarizing in my lesson? Too much time?

Maintaining the Study Group Momentum

d. Continue to implement and reflect on the effectiveness of one or several relevant new research-based techniques over multiple months (at least four months).

e. Assess students' progress to inform your teaching. Possible questions: When students write summaries, do they show improvement according to our rubric? Are students becoming more independent in using strategies for identifying what they know about a topic before reading?

f. Reflect on/refine teaching by discussing content and process. How has what I teach in the area of comprehension strategies chan-ged? What changes have I seen in how I teach students to use comprehension strategies? What else could I do to help students get better at summarizing?

g. Meet individual needs. Possible question: What can I do to support students who are not catching on to summarizing?

h. Continue to reflect on and refine teaching of newly acquired techniques, but also learn a new technique. What comprehension strategy should I teach next?

Resources

1. Almasi, J.M. (2003). *Teaching strategic processes in reading.* New York, NY: Guilford.

2. Bergman, J. L. (1992). *SAIL—a way to success and independence for low-achieving readers.* The Reading Teacher 45(8), 598-602.

3. Block, C. & Pressley, M. (2002). *Comprehension Strategies: Research-based Practices.* New York, NY: Guilford.

4. Dowhower, S. (1999). Supporting a strategies stance in the classroom: A comprehension framework for helping teachers help students become strategic. *The Reading Teacher* 52(7), 672-688.

5. Koskinen, P. S., Brown, R., El-Dinary, P. B., Pressley, M., & Coy-Ogan, L. (1995). A transactional strategies approach to reading instruction. *The Reading Teacher* 49(3), 256-258.

6. National Reading Panel. (2000). *Report of the national reading panel: Report of the subgroups.* Washington, DC: National Institute for Child Health and Human Development.

7. Palincsar, A. & Brown, A. (1986). Interactive teaching to promote independent learning from text. *The Reading Teacher* 39(8), 771-777.

Talking and Writing about the Meaning of Text

Part 2

Getting the Study Group Started

a. Review relevant research on talking and writing about the meaning of text.

b. Ask key questions to determine where change is needed. Discuss the content of instruction, the process of teaching, time allocations, and individual student needs. Possible questions: Am I asking enough higher level questions to give students opportunities to think? Am I coaching students to give more complete responses to challenging questions? Am I giving students the opportunity to actively engage in discussion about text and to write about text? Am I giving students opportunities to write and show thoughtful responces to what they read? Am I providing extra support in book discussion to ELL students?

c. Learn and implement new research-based techniques. Discuss the purpose of the lesson, the teaching of the lesson, the timing of the lesson, and reflection on teaching. Possible questions: Am I clear about what I am hoping to accomplish with my students through discussion involving higher level thinking? Am I asking enough higher level questions and coaching students to elaborate on responses? Am I giving students enough wait time?

Maintaining the Study Group Momentum

d. Continue to implement and reflect on the effectiveness of one or several relevant new research-based techniques over multiple months (at least four months.).

e. Assess students' progress to inform your teaching. Possible questions: When my students write answers to higher-level questions, do they give longer, more complete answers? Do they give relevant support for their answers?

f. Reflect on/refine teaching by discussing content and process. Am I asking good higher-level questions (0nes that engage my students)? Am I giving all students a chance to participate or are only a few getting the floor too often? Am I doing too much talking during discussions?

g. Meet individual needs. Possible questions: Am I providing extra support to students who need it so they all feel successful answering higher-level questions?

h. Continue to reflect on and refine newly acquired techniques, but also learn a new technique. Am I teaching students how to lead their own discussions?

Resources

1. Beck, I.L. & McKeown, M.G. (2002). Text talk: Capturing the benefit of read-aloud experience for young children. *Reading Teacher* 55(1), 10-20.

2. Gambrell, L.B., & Almasi, J.F. (Eds.) (1996). *Lively discussion: Fostering engaged reading.* Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

3. Goldenberg, C. (1993). Instructional conversations: Promoting comprehension through discussion. *Reading Teacher* 46 (6), 316-326.

4. McKeown, M.G. & Beck, I.L. (1993). Grappling with text: Questioning the Author. *Reading Teacher* 46(7), 560-566.

5. Raphael, T. R. & McMahon, S., (1994). Book Club: An alternative for reading instruction. *Reading Teacher* 48(2), 102-116.

6. Wood, K.D., Roser, N.L., & Martinez, M. (2001). Collaborative literacy: Lesson learned from literature. *Reading Teacher* 55(2), 102-111.

Motivation

Getting the Study Group Started

a. Review relevant research on motivation.

b. Ask key questions to determine where change is needed. Discuss the content of instruction, the process of teaching, time allocations, and individual student needs. Possible questions: Am I giving my students many opportunities to be actively engaged in motivating literacy learning activities? Am I teaching students to become independent, self-motivated learners? Am I providing enough time for motivating independent, partner, or small work group activities? Am I working with unmotivated readers to determine their interests?

c. Learn, implement, and reflect on new research-based techniques. Discuss the purpose of the activity and reflect on activity. Possible questions: Have I discussed sufficiently with students the techniques for working effectively in small groups? Have I monitored students and provided feedback on their small group work?

Maintaining the Study Group Momentum

d. Continue to implement and reflect on the effectiveness of one or several relevant new research-based techniques over multiple months (at least four months.).

e. Assess students' progress to inform your teaching. Possible questions: Are my students growing in their ability to stay on task during small group work time? Are they becoming more capable of identifying their reading interests?

f. Reflect on/refine teaching by discussing content and process. Am I providing my students with enough variety in motivating small group activities? Am I having class problem-solving discussions when groups are getting off-task?

g. Meet individual needs. Possible questions: Are my lower achieving students getting to take leadership some of the time during small group work?

h. Continue to reflect on and refine teaching of newly acquired techniques, but also learn a new technique.

Resources

1. Block, C.C. & Mangieri, T.N. (2002). Recreational reading: 20 years later. *Reading Teacher* 55(6), 572-580.

2. Gambrell, L.B., Palmer, B.M., Codling, R.M., & Mazzoni, S.A. (1996). Assessing motivation toward reading. *Reading Teacher* 49(7), 518-533.

3. Rasinski, T.V., Padak, N.D., Church, B.W., Fawcett, G., Hendershop, J., Henry, J.M., Moss, B.G., Peck, J.K., Pryor, E., & Roskos K.A., (Eds.) (2000). Teaching word recognition, spelling, and vocabulary: Strategies from *The Reading Teacher*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

4. Sweet, A. P. & Guthrie, J. T. (1996). How children's motivations relate to language development and instruction. *Reading Teacher* 49 (8), 660-662.

5. Worthy, J. (1996). A matter of interest: Literature that hooks reluctant readers and keeps them reading. *Reading Teacher*, 50 (3), 204-212. discussion. *Reading Teacher* 46 (4,) 316-326.

Balanced Literacy Instruction and Assessment

Part 2

Getting the Study Group Started

a. Review relevant research on balanced literacy instruction and assessment.

b. Ask key questions to determine where change is needed. Discuss the content of instruction, the process of teaching, time allocations, and individual student needs. Possible questions: Am I teaching skills as needed and also focusing on strategies, higher-level thinking, and application of skills to authentic reading and writing activities? Am I releasing responsibility to students as appropriate and, not being overly directive? Am I spending enough time on comprehension each day? Am I providing multicultural balance in my literature selections?

c. Learn, implement, and reflect on new research-based techniques. Discuss the purpose of the lesson, the teaching of the lesson, the timing of the lesson, and reflection on teaching. Possible questions: Am I increasingly guided by my teaching purposes? Are there parts of my lesson that actually won't help students advance in their literacy abilities? Am I spending the right amount of time on different parts of my reading lesson so that valuable time is not wasted, and am I getting through all parts of my lesson? Am I spending too much time on certain activities for certain students?

Maintaining the Study Group Momentum

d. Continue to implement and reflect on the effectiveness of one or several relevant new research-based techniques over multiple months (at least four months).

e. Assess students' progress to inform teaching. Possible question: What data am I looking at to assess students' progress and make instructional adjustments as needed? Do I need other data?

f. Reflect on/refine teaching by discussing content and process. Are my lessons focused on skills that students have not yet mastered? Am I doing less unnecessary controlling or talking during my lessons?

g. Meet individual needs. Possible questions: Am I providing different amounts of coaching in word recognition or summarizing to students, based on their needs?

h. Continue to reflect on and refine teaching of newly acquired techniques, but also learn a new technique. What do I need to work on most to become an even more effective teacher?

Resources

1. Arter, J.A. & McTighe, J. (2001). *Scoring rubrics in the classroom: Using performance criteria for assessing and improving student performance*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

2. Duffy, G.G. (2003). *Explaining reading: A resource for teaching concepts, skills, and strategies*. New York, NY: Guilford.

3. Flippo, R. (2003). *Assessing readers: Qualitative diagnosis and instruction*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

4. McKenna, M. & Stahl, S. (2003). *Assessment for reading instruction*, New York, NY: Guilford.

5. Morrow, L.M. (2003). *Organizing and managing the language arts block: A professional development guide*. New York, NY: Guilford.

6. Paris, S.G., Calfee, R.C., Filby, N., Hiebert, E.H., Pearson, P.D., Valencia, S.W., & Wolf, K. P. (1992). A framework for authentic literacy assessment. *Reading Teacher* 46 (8), 88-98.

7. Pressley, M. (2002). *Reading instruction that works: The case for balanced teaching*, second edition. New York, NY: Guilford.

Meeting Individual Student's Needs

Part 2

Getting Started

a. Review relevant research on meeting individual students' needs.

b. Ask key questions to determine where change is needed. Discuss the content of instruction, the process of teaching, time allocations, and individual student needs. Possible questions: Am I providing reading interventions to my struggling readers? Am I teaching my struggling readers strategies to become independent? Am I working with my struggling readers every day? Am I giving extra support to and opportunity for my ELL students to develop their first language learning (if possible) and to accelerate their English language learning?

c. Learn, implement, and reflect on new research-based techniques. Discuss the purpose of the lesson, the teaching of the lesson, the timing of the lesson, and reflect on teaching. Possible questions: Is my instruction moving my students forward or does it involve more practice than they need? Am I coaching my struggling readers?

Am I helping them too much? Is my pacing effective for all my students?

Maintaining Momentum

d. Continue to implement and reflect on the effectiveness of one or several relevant new research-based techniques over multiple months (at least four months).

e. Assess students' progress to inform your teaching. Possible questions: What does this student need in order to make progress? Are my assessment activities giving me the information I need about individual student's needs?

f. Reflect on/refine teaching by discussing content and process. How do I need to vary the content to meet individual needs? What instructional accommodations do individual students need?

g. Meet individual needs. Possible questions: How am I differentiating my supplemental instruction for struggling readers based on their needs?

h. Continue to reflect on and refine teaching of newly acquired techniques, but also learn a new technique.

Resources

1. Allington, R. L. (1998). *Teaching struggling readers: Articles from the reading teacher*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

2. Garcia G.G. (2002). *English learners: Reaching the highest level of English literacy*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

3. Kottler, E. & Kottler, J.A. (2002). *Children with limited English: Teaching strategies for the regular classroom*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

4. Paine, R. *A framework for understanding poverty*. Highlands, TX: Alta! Processes.

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

6. Taylor, B., Short, R., Frye, B., & Shearer, B. (1992). Classroom teachers prevent reading failure among low-achieving first-grade students. *The Reading Teacher* 45, 592-597.

NEA has produced six additional booklets related to reading.
The titles are:

Advise on Reading from Experts: Teachers
based on the report of the
National Education Association Task Force on Reading

Research-Supported Characteristics of Teachers
and Schools That Promote Reading Achievement
by Barbara M. Taylor, Michael Pressley, and David Pearson

Beginning Reading Instruction:
The Rest of the Story from Research
by Michael Pressley

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
by Barbara M. Taylor

10 Research-Based Principles of
Comprehension Instruction
developed by the Center for the Improvement
of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA)