Preventing Reading Difficulties in very Large Numbers of Students: The Reading First Initiative

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Some Reading First Fun Facts…

1. Largest federal/state initiative every conducted to prevent early reading difficulties

2. Established and specified in Part B of the No Child Left Behind Act, signed into law in 2002

3. Budget of approximately 6 Billion Dollars over 6 years, more than 300 million for Florida

4. To receive funds, States were required to submit applications that met specific requirements with regard to nature of instruction, assessments, professional development, leadership, etc.

5. The first awards were made in June, 2002 (Alabama, Colorado, Florida)-and continued over next two years
6. Currently, 5,200 schools in 1550 Districts in every state have received awards—based on size of population – 590 schools in Florida

7. A few states (including Michigan) began implementing at the school level in 02-03, but most (including Florida) began implementing in 03-04

8. Reading First money is spent primarily for:
   - Professional Development
   - Curriculum Materials
   - Early assessments
   - Classroom and school libraries

20% can be used at state level- the rest goes to schools
Why do we have Reading First?

1. Far too many children, particularly poor and minority children, are being “left behind” when it comes to growth of proficient reading skills.

2. Prevention of reading problems is far more effective and humane than trying to remediate after children fail.

3. New discoveries from scientific research about reading can provide the basis for improved outcomes for all children.
The most important Reading First goals:

1. **Increase** the percentage of students reading “at grade level” each year at each grade level from kindergarten through third grade.

2. **Decrease** the percentage of students with serious reading difficulties each year at each grade level.

These goals are to be met while considering **all children taking the year end test**, not just those who have received the full treatment.

In Florida, Reading First schools have about 30% new students each year from the previous year.
The most important Reading First goals:

Overall student performance should increase each year due to two factors:

- In each successive year, many of the students will have had the advantage of previous RF instruction.

- Each year, instruction at each grade level, and school-level systems as a whole, should be stronger.
The broad Reading First model for preventing reading failure in grades K-3:

1. Increase the quality, consistency, and reach of instruction in every K-3 classroom

2. Conduct timely and valid assessments of reading growth to identify struggling readers

3. Provide immediate, intensive, skillful, and properly focused interventions to prevent students from falling too far behind
The Intervention in Florida: What schools agree to do in their application to participate

1. Adopt a common, comprehensive core reading program that is to serve as a scaffold for explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension strategies

2. Provide at least 90 minutes of protected reading time every day

3. Administer a common set of progress monitoring measures 4 times a year, and a common set of outcome measures once a year. Submit results to FCRR within a specified time schedule

4. Identify some means to provide more intensive instruction to students lagging behind in reading development
The Intervention: What schools agree to do (cont.)

5. Pay for a reading coach to serve K-3 teachers in each school
6. Support attendance of all teachers at a 4-day Reading First Teacher’s Academy during the summer
7. Participate in the state and federal evaluations of Reading First

Funding: $300 per K-3 student – minimum 40,000/year, maximum 175,000/year- with declining funds over six years
Ongoing support from State

The work of Regional Reading First Professional Development Coordinators is coordinated by the University of Central Florida – Currently have 26 coordinators for 590 schools, but began with only 12 for 326

Have provided summer academies for teachers (4 day), summer conferences for coaches (4 days) and principals (2 days)

Provide all assessment training and support through FCRR, including the Progress Monitoring and Reporting Network for student reports

Lots of technical assistance about use of data, selection of programs, assessments, etc.
Outcomes after three years of implementation in first cohort of schools – the schools

1. 326 schools began their RF implementation in 03-04

2. We have complete data for 318 schools that participated for three years.

3. The schools were varied, both demographically and geographically – 33 school districts.
## The Students and Schools:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average number of students per grade</td>
<td>32,300</td>
<td>32,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average number of students per school</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent qualifying for FR lunch</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent minorities</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent English Language Learners</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mobility**

Of approx 32,000 students in these schools in year 1, 48% remained at the end of the third year.
Changes in performance at kindergarten – letter knowledge, phonemic awareness, and phonemic decoding
First Grade – changes in performance on SAT10 Reading Comprehension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% grade level</th>
<th>% high risk</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003-04</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004-05</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005-06</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>16</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2nd Grade – changes in performance on SAT10 reading comprehension
3rd Grade – changes in performance on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test – reading comprehension

% grade level | % high risk
---|---
57 | 27
59 | 25
67 | 19
Relationship of “school challenge” to student performance

Level of School Challenge based on % of students qualifying for FR lunch

% of 1-3 Students Performing At Grade Level at the End of Year

Increasing Challenge

Decreasing Performance

587 RF schools in Florida

Average % at GL

AverAge % at GL

587 RF schools in Florida
The Adult Learning and Performance Gap

% of 1-3 Students Performing At Grade Level at the End of Year

Level of School Challenge based on % of students qualifying for FR lunch

Approx. 25%
Percent of Students at “grade level” in RC, ORF, and Vocab in grades 1-3 using Hasbrouk and Tindal ORF norms and 40th percentile as goal

Rcomp = SAT10
ORF = Dibels
Voc = PPVT
What proportion of students are being identified as learning disabled?

Two longitudinal cohorts from three-year schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School year</th>
<th>RF beginning in K</th>
<th>RF beginning in 1st</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>K – 1.6%</td>
<td>1 – 4.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>1 – 2.2%</td>
<td>2 – 4.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>2 – 2.2%</td>
<td>3 – 5.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>3 – ???</td>
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Development of Phonemic Decoding Fluency in students ultimately identified as learning disabled

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<tr>
<th>Performance Benchmark</th>
<th>K-3</th>
<th>K-4</th>
<th>1-1</th>
<th>1-2</th>
<th>1-3</th>
<th>1-4</th>
<th>2-1</th>
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<th>3-2</th>
<th>3-3</th>
<th>3-4</th>
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<tr>
<td>LD-K</td>
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<td>NonLD-K</td>
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<td>LD-1</td>
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Development of Oral Reading Fluency in students ultimately identified as learning disabled
Improvements in mean score in phonemic decoding from year to year in RF schools at the beginning of first and second grade
Changes in students at benchmark and “high risk” from year to year at mid first grade
Speculations about remaining instructional problems in 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} grade

In the core programs, most instruction in phonics is whole group.

Since the core programs do not provide strong outlines for specific, skills based instruction in small groups-a lot of small group work is “guided reading”

Even in the group instruction, there is not enough explicit instruction or mastery oriented review of knowledge and skill as it is taught.

There is not enough well monitored, fluency oriented instruction and practice.
A broad, three pronged plan for meeting the needs of all students

1. Increase the quality, consistency, and reach of instruction in every K-3 classroom

2. Conduct timely and valid assessments of reading growth to identify struggling readers

3. Provide more intensive interventions to “catch up” the struggling readers

The prevention of reading difficulties is a school-level challenge
1. Increase the quality, consistency, and reach of instruction in every K-3 classroom

Instruction during the Reading Instructional Period is typically divided into two sections:

Whole group instruction -

Small group, differentiated instruction, time

Teacher works with small groups of homogeneously grouped students to meet specific instructional needs.

When not in a teacher-led group, students work on "independent student learning activities."
Improve the power of instruction provided during the “small group instruction” time within the 90 minute reading block

1. Bring additional instructional personnel into the room so that the weakest readers don’t have to spend as much time working independently

2. Increase the quality of the teacher-led small group instruction

3. Increase the quality of independent student learning activities during the “small group instruction time”
Enhancing the power of instruction during the “small group time” by having some of the small group instruction provided by another teacher or paraprofessional.

Classroom teacher and group of 7

Resource teacher and group of 4

Independent Learning Activity (5)

Independent Learning Activity (6)
Increasing the quality and power of teacher-led, small-group, differentiated instruction

Instruction should be differentiated to meet the needs of individual students in at least **four** ways

  * **Frequency and duration of meeting in small groups** – every day, three times per week, etc.
  * **Size of instructional group** – 3 students, 6 students, 8 students, etc.
  * **Focus of instruction** – work in phonemic awareness in phonics, work in fluency and comprehension, etc.
  * **Lesson format** – guided reading vs. skills focused lessons
Teachers should provide differentiated instruction using at least two different lesson formats

**Guided Reading Lesson Structure**

**Purpose:** to allow students to integrate their new acquired skills and knowledge while reading text for meaning

Selecting the text  
Introducing the text  
Reading the text  
Discussing the text  
Teaching for strategic activities  
Extending meaning (optional)  
Word Work (optional)
The *Guided Reading* lesson structure provides teachers the opportunities to monitor how well students are applying skills to reading of text, encourage and support application of skills during text reading (e.g., word level skills and comprehension skills), engage students in thinking about the meaning of text, and build a sense of reading as a meaningful, enjoyable activity.
Guided Reading Lesson Structure

Limitations for students still acquiring initial skills

Does not support systematic instruction and practice on foundational knowledge and skills

Does not provide enough opportunities for mastery oriented practice on foundational skills

Does not provide a good structure for systematic review required by struggling readers

Often, the leveled books used in guided reading lessons do not provide good practice on early phonemic decoding skills
The Skills focused lesson format

Purpose:

- Provide explicit and systematic instruction
- Provide targeted and teacher-planned instruction in areas of weakness
- Provide mastery and fluency oriented practice in critical skills and knowledge
The Skills focused lesson format

Strengths

- Allows explicit re-teaching (I do it, we do it, you do it)
- Provides extended opportunities for mastery oriented practice to solidly establish fundamental skills

Challenges

- Can be dull and boring if not fast paced, energetic, and positive
- Once skills are established, they must be integrated during reading for meaning
Work on phonemic awareness
Blending sounds into words
Directly building sight recognition of high utility words
Comprehension-story grammar...
Three good books for instructional ideas

**Bringing Words to Life:**
Robust Vocabulary Instruction
Beck, McKeown, & Kucan: Guilford (2002)

**Making Sense of Phonics:**
The Hows and Whys
Isabel Beck: Guilford (2006)

**Comprehension Process Instruction:**
Creating Success in Grades K-3
Block, Rogers, & Johnson (2004)
Download at:

Or, just go to the FCRR website (www.fcrr.org) and its listed on the home page under the new stuff.
Improve the power of instruction provided during the “small group instruction” time within the 90 minute reading block

1. Bring additional instructional personnel into the room so that the weakest readers don’t have to spend as much time working independently

2. Increase the quality of the teacher-led small group instruction

3. Increase the quality of independent student learning activities during the “small group instruction time”

Providing teachers with high-quality materials and activities for independent student learning activities
Organization of a classroom during small group instruction

Are these students working productively on appropriate practice activities?

- Classroom teacher and group of 5
- Independent Learning Activity (4)
- Independent Learning Activity (4)
- Independent Learning Activity (3)
- Independent Learning Activity (5)
Effective independent student learning activities...
Available free to all schools and teachers

To download up to 240 independent student learning activities for K-1, and 170 activities for 2-3 classrooms, go to http://www.fcrr.org/activities/

Can also download instructions on classroom management during small group instruction and up to 70 minutes of video training
## Student Center Activities

### Phonological Awareness

**Part One**
- Rhyme
- Alliteration

**Part Three**
- Phonemes

**Part Two**
- Sentence Segmentation
- Syllables
- Onset and Rime

### Phonics

**Part One**
- Letter Recognition

**Part Three**
- Onset and Rime

**Part Five**
- Syllable Patterns
- Morpheme Structures

**Part Two**
- Letter-Sound Correspondence

**Part Four**
- Word Study

### Fluency

**All Parts**
- Letter Recognition
- Letter-Sound Correspondence
- High Frequency Words
- Oral Reading

### Vocabulary

**All Parts**
- Word Identification/Words in Context
- Word Categorization/Word Knowledge
- Words That Describe/Word Meaning
- Word Structure/Word Analysis
Contents

Phonics

+ Letter-Sound Correspondence
  P027 Object Letter-Sound Matching
  P028 Alpha Eggs
  P029 Letter-Sound Train
  P030 Sandpaper Letters and Picture Match
  P031 Letter Stamp Mini-Books
  P032 Photo Chart
  P033 Letter-Sound Place Mats
  P034 Letter-Sound Big Book
  P035 Words Around Us Memory Game
  P036 Brown Bag It
  P037 Letter Bag
  P038 ChalkTalk
  P039 Write the Room
  P040 Letter Boxes
  P041 Letter-Sound Folder Sort
  P042 Letter-Sound Mobile
  P043 Letter-Sound Dominoes
  P044 Letter-Sound Bingo
  P045 Where's That Sound?
  P046 Picture Letter-Sound Match
  P047 Guessing Belts
PLSC-I Initial Letter-Sound Correspondence Cards
PLSC-M Medial Letter-Sound Correspondence Cards
PLSC-F Final Letter-Sound Correspondence Cards
Objective
The student will match initial sounds to letters.

Materials
- Scrambled letter boards (Activity Master P027.AM1a - P027.AM1c)
- Magnetic letters
- Tray
- Tub of "A-Z" objects
- Dry-erase marker boards or paper
- Dry-erase markers or washable markers

Activity
Students match the initial sounds of objects to letters
1. Place the scrambled letter board, tray of magnetic letters, and tub of objects on a flat surface.
2. The student chooses an object from the tub.
3. Places the object on corresponding letter (e.g., turtle, /t/).
4. Continues until all objects are matched with a letter.
5. Practise writing the letters on the marker board.
6. Self-check

Extensions and Adaptations
- Label the object.
- Use final and medial sounds.
Phonics

Letter-Sound Correspondence

Guessing Belts

Objective
The student will match initial/final sounds to letters.

Materials
- Set of initial and final sound picture cards (Activity Master PLSC-I.1 - PLSC-I.22 and PLSC-F.1 - PLSC-F.16)
- Yarn
  - Cut into 36 inch lengths.
- Hole punch

Activity
Students identify words on picture belts using letter and sound clues.
1. Place picture cards, yarn, and hole punch on a flat surface.
2. The students hole punch and "thread" four or more picture cards with yarn to make belts. Tie the belts around their waistlines (with the pictures on their backs facing outward).
3. Taking turns, the students provide clues until each student is able to guess the names of the pictures on his partner's belt. Clues should include the name of the beginning and ending letters. For example, "This picture begins with /d/ and ends with /t/.
4. Reverse roles and continue activity.
5. Peer evaluation

Extensions and Adaptations
- Include medial sounds in the clues. For example, "The middle sound in this word is /æ/.
- Include rhymes in the clues. For example, "This word rhymes with bat."
ant, apple, alligator, ax, ape, apron
We are also working to help schools develop stronger intervention systems.

A summary: practices in effective schools

Strong school-level leadership from principal
Effective and innovative scheduling for utilization of intervention resources
Strong beliefs about the being able to teach all children
Good strategies for data utilization and analysis
Strong intervention programs in place
Emphasis on professional development and teacher support
Obtain copy at:
http://www.fcrr.org/Interventions/pdf/teachingAllStudentsToReadComplete.pdf

Or,

Go to www.fcrr.org
Click on Interventions for struggling readers (in right column)
You will see the title of the document
To obtain a copy, go to:
http://www.readingfirstsupport.us/docs/Principals_Guide_Quality_Brief_Final_10-05.pdf

Or, go to
http://www.readingfirstsupport.us/default.asp?article_id=10
And click on the article
A concluding thought....

Reading First is very much a “work in progress”

We are learning as we go, and have almost no science to guide us in ways to improve effective instruction so broadly, in so many schools

It’s a little like building an airplane when it is in the air....
Sort of like this...
Thank You

www.fcrr.org

Science of Reading Section