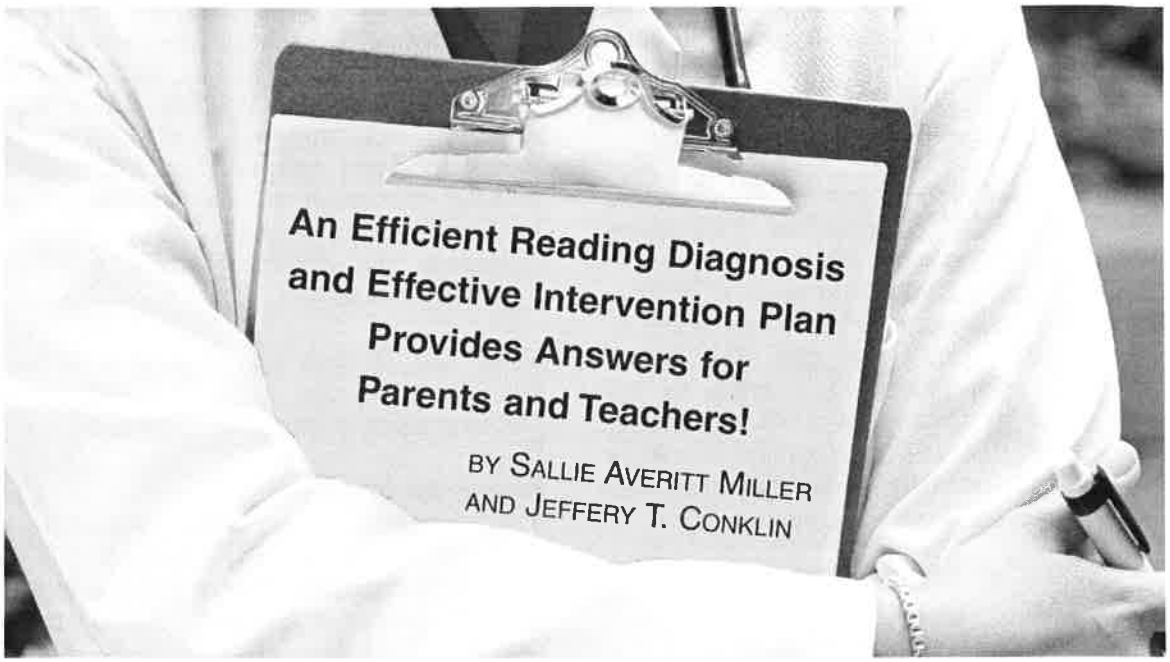


Case Study Introduction

JJ is a third-grade student who is reading on the pre-primer level. He does not receive Special Education services. His teacher is frustrated and does not know what to do for JJ since he is reading on such a low level. JJ is repeating the third grade; this is the first grade to be repeated. Without focused, efficient diagnosis and intense, effective intervention [provided by a teacher, parent, or tutor], JJ will not learn to read on a level that will allow him to be successful academically. Thus, if JJ is unsuccessful academically, he will surely struggle in our literate society. JJ's potential will never be achieved. How sad since he has a natural right to read (National Council of Teachers of English, 1998).

There are many JJs in our educational system that, with proper instruction, can *learn to read* and *read to learn*. The authors of this article have seen the positive results of an efficient reading diagnosis and effective intervention process for teaching reading. Not only have they seen the results, they teach and practice the model and hold fast to the philosophy that every child has a "right" to learn to read from knowledgeable classroom teachers.

Is there really hope for my child? He is in third grade and still reading below grade level.

Yes, there is hope for children who are reading below grade level. Case study after case study document grade level advances for struggling readers. The case study addressed in this article advocates early identification and is built on reading diagnosis and prescribed intervention. The following text demonstrates the case study procedures. A typical [and actual university generated] case study using the diagnostic and intervention process is showcased.

Since 2007 the United States has spent 13.6 billion dollars in Federal grant funding for programs to increase student reading ability (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). The chronic problem is that we continue to have a large group of students who cannot read. One of the recent federal initiatives is the Early Reading First program. The Early Reading First grants are just the beginning in the reformation of the enrichment process for pre-readers in an attempt to refer fewer children to special education programs.

Research has shown that 50% of the students in special education would not be there if they were able to read (Partnership for Accessible Reading Assessment, 2006). With the advent of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the push for higher standards for students with Special Education needs it was thought that additional teachers would be trained in reading techniques that had, through research, been demonstrated to be effective (NCLB, 2002).

One reading model that is now in the forefront of today's reading programs is the Response-to-Intervention (RTI). The emphasis of RTI is to focus on providing more effective instruction by encouraging

earlier intervention for students experiencing difficulty learning to read. The assumption is that this will prevent some students from being identified as having learning disabilities by providing intervention as concerns emerge (Fuchs, Deshler, & Reschly, 2004).

RTI is a multi-tiered process that provides services and interventions to struggling learners at increasing levels of intensity. RTI is a problem-solving approach that allows struggling students to receive effective reading interventions early as an alternative to the IQ discrepancy model used in the past. The federal government purposely provided few details for the development and implementation of RTI procedures, *stating specifically that states and districts should be given the flexibility to establish models that reflect their own community* (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Compton, 2004).

It is disheartening to learn that some teachers of students in the elementary grades, middle grades, and secondary education are unaware of the requirements of the RTI provision of the NCLB Act. These teachers do not believe that they are a part of the RTI process, but rather feel that it is a special education mandate. Since the federal government purposely provided few details for the development and implementation of RTI procedures, the authors are advocates not only for RTI but also for other research-based reading diagnostic and intervention processes.

Many of the reading techniques that are currently being employed to provide intervention to improve student reading achievement could be integrated into an assessment and intervention process; however for the most part, many classroom teachers in general education are unprepared to integrate these techniques. Instead, the teachers choose to remain loyal to the same methods that in the past have proven to be ineffective. And we know and research shows that if the teacher is not prepared to correct a reading problem, everyone loses...especially the child.

So where does the problem lie? With the classroom teachers who refused to support proven strategies to remediate the reading deficiencies that are revealed through curriculum based assessment? Or with the administration who at best turns a blind eye to the classroom teachers' lack of involvement in the RTI and/or other assessment and intervention processes? Or does the problem lie in preservice teacher education programs that have not made the necessary curriculum changes to educate students (pre- and inservice teachers) in an assessment and intervention process?

Some educators (preservice teacher preparation faculty members, preservice teachers, and in-service teachers) do not understand the fundamentals of assessment and intervention. When questioned formally and informally during conferences, workshops, and university graduate courses the authors discovered an alarming lack of sufficient knowledge by educators to conduct efficient reading diagnoses and provide effective, evidence-based intervention strategies.

Thus, the authors conclude that strengthening educator knowledge, skills, and awareness in the following areas is critical:

Knowledge and Skills

1. Knowledge and skills to identify students who are struggling with the reading process and conduct efficient reading diagnoses. How do educators strengthen their knowledge and skills? By participation in a Georgia Professional Standards Commission Approved Graduate Reading Endorsement Program.

2. Knowledge and skills to provide struggling readers with evidence-based intervention strategies. How do educators strengthen their knowledge and skills? Again, by participation in a Georgia Professional Standards Commission Approved Graduate Reading Endorsement Program.

Awareness

3. Educators must understand that the general education teacher is the pivotal player in the reading assessment and intervention process. How can awareness in this area be strengthened? Awareness can be strengthened by professional development—workshops, conferences, surveys, university coursework (undergraduate and graduate), articles, professional organizations.

4. Classroom teachers should conduct the initial screening, the ongoing follow-up and then the initial research-based remediation through the first two tiers of the RTI procedure, or other evidenced-based assessment and intervention processes that may prevent students from being referred to special education. How can awareness be strengthened? Again, by professional development—workshops, conferences, surveys, university coursework (undergraduate and graduate), articles, professional organizations.

Classroom teachers *must* be active participants throughout the identification, diagnosis, and intervention procedures. However, informal surveys of early

childhood and elementary teacher preparation programs at the undergraduate level, where the majority of elementary level classroom teachers are trained, found little or no knowledge of RTI.

Although Columbus State University in Columbus, Georgia, does not refer to their reading program as RTI, its undergraduate Early Childhood Education and Special Education majors are trained in an efficient assessment and effective intervention process. The success of this evidenced-based process is documented in articles and hundreds of case studies. Furthermore, graduate reading endorsement program participants in Early Childhood Education, Middle Grades, Special Education, and Secondary Education are trained in assessment and intervention strategies using case studies and state-of-the-art reading technology. Reading assessment and intervention strategies may not lie within the special education domain but rather in the general education classroom to prevent students from failing in reading and being inappropriately placed into special education classrooms and labeled as having a learning disability.

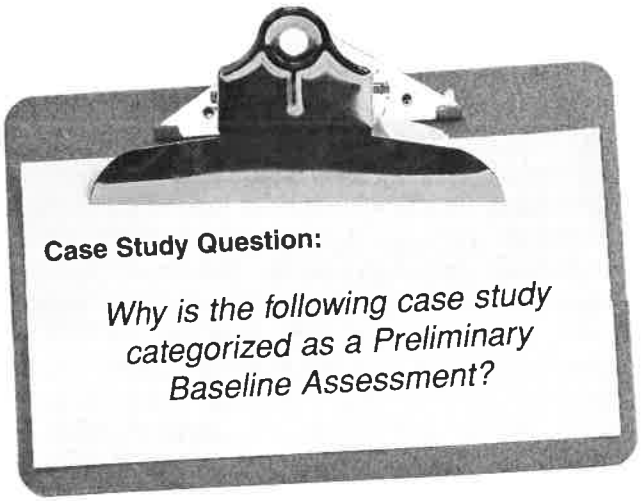
An issue that recently surfaced is the restricted number of interventions offered by the canned software programs. It appears that the software is excellent in developing documentation of the methods employed in remediation but that it is limited in its menu of research-based interventions. Once again the problem in reading intervention lies in too few options for the classroom teacher to employ to remediate the problem in an attempt to prevent special education placement. Thus, appropriate interventions must be carefully evaluated and added to the process if teacher preparation programs are going to use RTI exclusively.

According to an International Reading Association's (1999) position statement, there is no single method or single combination of methods that can successfully teach all children to read. As a result, teachers must be familiar with a wide range of instructional methods and have strong knowledge of the children in their classrooms in order to provide the most appropriate instruction for all learners. Numerous large-scale research studies support the position that children can learn to read from a variety of materials and methods. Though focused studies show that various methods "work," no one of these methods is necessarily better than others (International Reading Association, 1999).

Research by Fuchs and Deshler (2008) in RTI has uncovered several problems with its use in classrooms to remediate reading difficulties; many teachers are unaware of research-based interventions and even fewer teachers have been trained in the graphs and other evidence needed to document the success or failure of RTI interventions. They found that many general education teachers needed to be trained on basic data collection and then on methods for transforming the data into a format usable for interpretation as to whether or not intervention strategies were effective and if so in what areas of weakness. Fuchs and Deshler recommended that all teachers should receive training in curriculum-based assessment to screen for outliers to be further monitored as prelude to an RTI process. Again, based on this research, one method such as RTI is not sufficient for teaching reading. Classroom teachers must have the knowledge and skills necessary for successfully teaching children to read; thus, they must also have a large repertoire of reading assessments and intervention strategies.

The assessment and intervention process used at the authors' university, although not referred to as the RTI process, does train undergraduate and graduate students to identify the struggling readers, provide appropriate and efficient assessments, analyze the assessments, prescribe effective interventions, and write a diagnostic reports. The following case study is exemplary of the case studies prepared by undergraduate and graduate students at a Georgia university. Note: All interventions are based on assessment data and aligned with the Georgia Performance Standards, International Reading Association Standards, and the National Reading Panel's Report.

In summary, the federal government purposely provided few details for the development and implementation of RTI procedures, *stating specifically that states and districts should be given the flexibility to establish models that reflect their own community* (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Compton, 2004). Hence, the authors of this article have seen the positive results of an efficient reading diagnosis and effective intervention process for teaching reading. Not only have they seen the results, they teach and practice the model and hold fast to the philosophy that every child has a "right" to learn to read from knowledgeable classroom teachers. The following case study, like all case studies, is a work-in-progress. The *Case Study Question and Answer* will help set the case scenario.



Case Study Answer:
During December 2008, a concerned principal, teacher, and parent contacted a Georgia university on behalf of a third-grade student struggling with *learning to read* and *reading to learn*. Although the university was closing out the semester and the holidays were rapidly approaching, a reading professor [also a reading specialist], special education professor, and graduate teaching assistant conducted a baseline diagnosis to provide interim help during the holidays. A comprehensive follow-up diagnosis and intervention was outlined, but scheduled at a later date.

Unit: College of Education
Table of Contents
Preliminary Baseline Assessment
Examinee: JJ

I. Preliminary / Baseline Evaluation Matrix
   a. Name of tests –Conducted and Planned for January Testing Session
   b. Purpose –See Initial Instructional Focus for the Graded Word Lists and Graded Passages
   c. Results
II. Initial Intervention Strategies
III. Initial Recommended Websites
IV. Recommended Books–Compile during Spring Semester
V. Teacher / Parent Packet

Preliminary Baseline Report
Examinee: JJ Age: 9 Grade: 3
Examiners: Professors and Graduate Teaching Assistant

Case Study Introduction
JJ is a third-grade student who is reading on the pre-primer level. He does not receive Special Education services. His teacher is frustrated and does not know what to do for JJ since he is reading on such a low level; basically a nonreader. JJ is repeating the third grade; this is the first grade to be repeated. Without focused, efficient diagnosis and intense, effective intervention [provided by a teacher, parent, or tutor], JJ will not learn to read on a level that will allow him to be successful academically.

TEST	PURPOSE	RESULTS
Interest Inventories (Lower Primary Grades)	To help the teacher learn about the likes and dislikes of her students. To identify areas of interests for groups or the class as a whole. To inform the teacher about background knowledge in order to plan for instruction.	Schedule an interest inventory.
Attitude Survey *Rubin/Opitz*	To determine if students have positive or negative thoughts toward reading.	Schedule an attitude survey.
Auditory Memory Span Test	To measure student's ability to recall single syllable spoken words in progressively increasing series.	Schedule the Wepman Auditory Memory Span Test.

TEST	PURPOSE	RESULTS
Auditory Sequential Memory Test	To measure the student's ability to recall the exact order of an auditory stimulus.	Schedule the Wepman Auditory Sequential Memory
Visual Discrimination I	To determine if the examinee has the ability to use visually presented materials in a productive way; i.e., being able to distinguish between/among letters and words.	On the Visual Discrimination I, JJ scored 100% in a period of one minute.
Visual Discrimination II	To determine if the examinee has the ability to use visually presented materials in a productive way; i.e., being able to distinguish between/among letters and words.	On the Visual Discrimination II, JJ scored 86% in a period of one minute.
Auditory Discrimination	To determine if the examinee has the ability to detect differences in sounds, such as the differences made the sounds of the letters "m" and "n".	JJ scored 90% on the Auditory Discrimination Test.
Graded Word Lists	To help the examiner decide which level of passage to administer to the student first. The word lists can provide a quick estimate of the student's word identification ability. Initial Instructional Focus Increase word recognition vocabulary through repeated readings of text. Repeated readings of text will also build the examinee's word recognition, comprehension,fluency, and confidence.	Primer Word List JJ identified 16 out of 20 words on the Primer List automatically (Instructional Level). He recognized and decoded 19 out of 20 words (Independent Level). Level One Word List JJ identified 9 out of 20 words automatically (Frustration Level). He recognized and decoded 17 out of 20 words (Instructional Level). Level Two Word List JJ identified 6 out of 20 words automatically (Frustration Level). He recognized and decoded 14 out of 20 words (Instructional Level).

TEST	PURPOSE	RESULTS
Graded Passages	To determine a student's independent, instructional, and/or frustration reading levels. Initial Instructional Focus Vocabulary and Word Recognition Activities Story / Text Retelling Text Comprehension Reading Fluency Examiner's Notes JJ tracks the lines of print when reading. He reads with a lot of repetition [repeats the words read] and substitutions.	Caption Reading Caption reading assesses the student's ability to read a brief story with helpful picture clues. This is a helpful assessment to use with children who are just beginning to read. JJ had no problems reading the text; his reading was an exact match with the text. Pre-Primer 1 Passage JJ correctly answered 5 out of 5 comprehension questions (100% - Independent Level). He scored six miscues, two were significant (Frustration Level). JJ was able to recall 5 ideas from the story. His reading rate was 48.39 words per minute. JJ's target rate is 162 correct words per minute on the third grade level (The Reading Teacher, 59(7), 636-645). Pre-Primer 2 Passage JJ correctly answered 4 out of 5 comprehension questions (80% Independent / Instructional Level). He scored four miscues, two of which were significant (Instruction-al / Frustration Level). JJ was able to recall 5 ideas from the story. His reading rate was 32.26 words per minute. JJ's target rate is 162 correct words per minute on the third grade level (The Reading Teacher, 59(7), 636-645). Level Primer Passage JJ correctly answered 6 out of 10 comprehension questions (60% Instructional / Frustration level). He scored ten miscues, three of which were significant (Frustration Level). JJ was able to recall 7 ideas from the story. Fluency was lacking. His reading was slow and choppy. JJ was decoding many words as he read. His reading rate was 39.22 words per minute. JJ scored at the frustration level.

TEST	PURPOSE	RESULTS
Listening Comprehension	Measures the level of comprehension (understanding) of a student if he were able to read the passage on his own.	Schedule a Listening Comprehension Test.
Keystone Visual	The Keystone Visual is a screening test to provide a general picture of visual efficiency. It measures 14 basic skills, not just visual acuity. The measures include simultaneous vision, vertical and lateral posture,fusion, color perception, and usable vision.	JJ scored in the expected range at both Far and Near Point. However, he did indicate some symptoms of Intermittent Central Suppression (ICS). JJ will be reassessed for ICS during Spring Semester.
Visagraph III	The Visagraph III is a reading assessment system that records a student's eye movements during reading. It measures whether the eyes are correctly tracking (moving left to right) during reading. It also measures eye fixations and tells whether the eyes are moving quickly, smoothly, and simultaneously across the line of print.	Schedule the Visagraph III.

As a pre-literacy screening, JJ was evaluated on her Letter Knowledge (Score 100%), Rhyme Detection (Score 100%), and Phoneme Segmentation (Score 100%)

Initial Intervention Strategies – *plus abbreviated intervention document*
Confidential Information

Date: November 18, 2008
School: ABC Elementary

Examinee: JJ Grade: 3rd
Examiners: Professors and Graduate Teaching Assistant

INTERVENTION STRATEGY	PROCEDURE	PURPOSE
Reading Aloud	The teacher or parent reads aloud o JJ. Tell JJ he will retell the story. This will establish a purpose for the reading.	Reading aloud allows for the development of fluency by providing a model of fluent reading. It may encourage the student to practice reading the selection on his own.
Partner Reading	Parent or partner or teacher and JJ read alternating pages to each other. Partners may each read the same selection to each other or read in unison.	Provides an effective way to have the student practice reading and increases the fluency and word recognition of the reader.

INTERVENTION STRATEGY	PROCEDURE	PURPOSE
Choral Reading	JJ reads aloud the same text together with parent, teacher, or other student.	Choral reading provides a means for students to become more fluent readers by practicing the reading at the same time as other students are reading.
Echo Reading	Teacher or parent reads a short passage aloud to JJ to model fluent reading. JJ is then asked to imitate or echo the reading.	Echo reading is used to provide a model of what fluent reading sounds like. The model allows the student to try and imitate the fluency he hears.
Dolch Sight Words Scavenger Hunt	JJ will benefit from practice in saying and learning the Dolch sight words. He should work on levels Pre-Primer, Primer, 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade lists. Once JJ learns a word, he will try to locate the words as he reads to establish purpose for the vocabulary. For fun, make the word list into a scavenger hunt and as JJ finds the words in text he reads, he can mark them off his list.	To increase JJ's vocabulary.
Retelling	JJ can read a short, narrative passage. After reading, JJ will re-write the story from a different point of view (i.e. another character).	This strategy will aid in JJ's ability to retell a story he has heard, which in turn aids in his comprehension and expressive vocabulary.
Story Maps	JJ will use story maps while he reads to help him with the main idea and details from the story.	Story maps help students with comprehension, as well as main idea and details of the story.
Taped Readings	The Reading & Writing Connection JJ will read books that have accompanying tapes or CDs. He can follow along and read aloud with the tape or CD.	The taped readings will aid in word recognition, vocabulary development, fluency, and comprehension.
SQR3 Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review	Teacher or parent can use SQR3 with any passage that JJ reads.	SQR3 is a study strategy that will aid in comprehension. See the attached explanation.

INTERVENTION STRATEGY	PROCEDURE	PURPOSE
Think-Alouds	JJ can use the think-aloud strategy to aid him in understanding the text.	Think-alouds help build comprehension.
Learning Log	Ask JJ to keep a log of books he reads with (initially) short sentences telling what the story is about. After writing his sentence, JJ can re-read the story and review his sentences with a parent or teacher and see what details he missed from his first reading.	The learning log will aid in comprehension and retelling. It will also serve to identify details of the story.
Word List Scavenger Hunt	As JJ reads a story, ask him to make a list of unfamiliar words. Once he has completed the story, he should work with a teacher or parent to learn the new words and word meanings. He will re-read the story after learning the words to see how his new knowledge of the words helps to increase his understanding of the story. JJ will compile a longer list of all his new words and go on a scavenger hunt (in a magazine or appropriate periodical) to find all the words from his list that he can.	The word list will help build JJ's vocabulary.
Pacing Technique	Teacher or parent can use a pointer or pencil to move across the lines of text as JJ reads. This is used to help improve his fluency.	The pacing technique is used to increase fluency for readers; it assists with tracking the lines of print.
Sight Word Bingo	The teacher or parent can use a blank Bingo card to fill in words from the Dolch Word List. The teacher, parent, or another student can play Bingo with JJ.	Sight Word Bingo will help improve JJ's recognition of sight words.

Preliminary Baseline
Assessment Date: November 18, 2008
Examinee: JJ
Examiners: Professors and Graduate Teaching Assistant

Abbreviated Intervention Document
Focused Intervention Activities Based on Preliminary [Baseline] Assessment

Sight Words
1. Practice the Dolch Sight Words Lists 1, 2, and 3.
2. Keep a list of difficult or unfamiliar words and practice writing and saying them. JJ should also use vocabulary organizers to help him learn the meaning of the words.

Fluency
1. Read aloud with parent, teacher, or chorally with other students to help JJ improve fluency.
2. Use the pacing technique described in the Intervention Strategies to help increase JJ's fluency.

Comprehension
1. Use graphic organizers when JJ reads to help him understand main ideas and details of stories.
2. Practice reading orally at home for 20 minutes each night. Parent can read aloud with JJ by alternating pages with him through a story.
3. Practice retelling what JJ reads after all selections. Teacher or parent should discuss the story with JJ after he retells what he remembers.

Initial Websites
http://www.readinga-z.com/fluency/reading-fluency.php

http://www.abcteach.com/directory/reading_comprehension/grades_24/

http://www.starfall.com/n/level-c/index/play.htm?f

http://www.janbrett.com/games/flash_card_dolch_word_list_main.htm

http://www.nationalgeographic.comkids

http://www.randomhouse.com/kids/home.pperl

http://yahooligans.yahoo.com/

http://www.enchantedlearning.com/Dictionary.html

http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/

http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=2983

Recommended Books
Compile this section during the comprehensive diagnostic and intervention session.

Suggested Teacher Desk References for JJ's Reading Specialist, Teacher, Parent, and Tutor
Teaching Beginning Readers –Jerry L. Johns
Reading Tools, Tips, and Techniques Reminders –Jim Burke
Improving Reading Strategies and Resources –Jerry L. Johns

Acknowledgement
Ms. Shelly Edwards is a certified classroom teacher, graduate teaching assistant for the Columbus State University Center for Assessment and Reading Education, and one of the clinicians for the case study included in this article.

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Partnership for Accessible Reading Assessment. (2006). *Reading and students with specific learning disabilities.* Retrieved December 17, 2008, from The Partnership for Accessible Reading Assessment (PARA) web site: http://www.readingassessment.info/resources/publications/readingandld.htm

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CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

The Georgia Journal of Reading is published twice yearly in Spring and Fall. The Journal is a refereed journal with national representation on the editorial board and is published by the Georgia Reading Association. We are seeking manuscripts concerning the improvement of reading and language arts instruction at all levels of education.

Manuscripts should be double-spaced and the format should conform to the guidelines presented in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th Ed.). The author's name, full address, email address, affiliation, and a brief statement about professional experience should be submitted on a cover sheet. Three copies of the manuscript should be included. All submitted articles undergo blind review by multiple reviewers.

Authors are to process manuscripts in Microsoft Word. If a manuscript is accepted for publication, authors will be expected to send an electronic copy to the editor after revisions are made. Three types of manuscripts are being solicited.

Full-length Articles
These articles should deal with research, current issues, and recent trends in reading or literacy programs. Appropriate topics for the Journal include project descriptions, research reports, theoretical papers and issues in reading education at the local, state, or national level. Preference is given to articles focusing on topics that impact Georgia's students.

Articles for the Exchange Column
Articles for this column should describe creative teaching ideas and strategies that can be implemented in the classroom. These articles are shorter than full-length articles and may or may not require references. If references are needed, they should conform to APA format mentioned above.

Book and Resource Reviews
Reviews should describe and critique children's books, professional books, or reading resources (such as software, assessment tools, etc.) that are appropriate for use by teachers and reading professionals. Complete bibliographic information, the address of the publisher, and the cost of the materials (resources) should be included.

Photographs
Do you have photos that illustrate the use of innovative literacy practices in your classroom? How about important literacy events–a child reading a book for the first time, a family member sharing a favorite book from childhood at storytime, an adolescent reader lounging in a special spot engrossed in a book? Please share them with others by submitting them for possible publication. High-quality resolution and pleasing composition are expected in submissions. If selected, you will be asked to submit the photos electronically and to provide a signed release form for anyone appearing in the photos.

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