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Message From the Editor

BY ELIZABETH PENDERGRAFT, GUEST EDITOR

Approximately two years ago the University System of Georgia Reading Consortium members proposed the topic of a themed issue of the Georgia Journal of Reading based on the topic of "Literacy Theory into Practice: What Works." A call was sent out to Consortium members who would be interested in writing on this topic. What notable programs and innovative teaching approaches are being used in the schools in our state? This themed issue is the culmination of that effort. You will learn about successful practices that are occurring across the state of Georgia at the K-12 and university level.

Partnerships in literacy instruction seemed to be a theme in a couple of the articles. The literacy clinic established at Georgia State University, where university students are active tutors in the community, is described by Lori Elliott and Nancy Lee Daily. The literacy clinic is a true community partnership between the university and local organizations to provide literacy support for children. Another university partnership is described by Loleta Sartin and Vicki Luther. This partnership is between a university and a local public school where students are provided literacy instruction by teacher candidates. This partnership benefits the students receiving instruction, the teacher candidates, the school partner teachers, and the university faculty.

Effective strategies and practices were also featured in a number of the articles. Sallie Averitt Miller and Jeffery Conklin describe a successful intervention program to help students who are struggling readers. The assessment and intervention program described by the authors prepares preservice teachers to identify the needs of struggling readers and provide appropriate intervention strategies, similar to the RTI process. Sherry Sackor describes a successful approach for teaching preservice teachers about the five components of reading. She uses the classroom expertise of practicing teachers by incorporating a requirement of teacher-led workshops for her preservice teachers into the reading endorsement courses she teaches. This assignment benefits both the practicing teachers and the preservice teachers. Finally, Katie Greene describes how she engages her high school students by using *Tricks of the Trade*. She describes controlled choice activities that she has found successful in her classroom for increasing student engagement in literacy.

Engaging students in effective literacy instruction is a daily goal for Georgia educators. Quality, research-based practices are equally important. The practices you will read about in this issue are all supported by theory and research as successful practices.

Organically Grown:

Development of the Georgia State University Urban Literacy Clinic

BY
LORI ELLIOTT
AND NANCY
LEE DAILY



As an hour and a half of literacy instruction, skills demonstrations, and discussion of course content concludes, someone calls out: "Here they come!" – and the energy in the auditorium-style clinic space skyrockets, fueled by movement, smiles, laughter, and most of all, by the electrifying eye contact between students and tutors. For the next hour and fifteen minutes, individualized tutoring sessions are taught while master-level teachers observe lessons and offer feedback to the new teachers. Doctoral students lead parents in workshops focused on family literacy practices, and the university faculty instructor monitors progress and videotapes literacy session segments for future instruction.

This is a typical evening at one of many literacy sessions at the Georgia State University Urban Literacy Clinic (ULC). It is amazing that the scene depicted above illustrates a university literacy clinic that has been in existence for only two years. New parents frequently ask, "How long have you been here? Why didn't I know about you before now?" The answer is that we have only been in formal operation for two years, but the real beginning was almost 10 years earlier, inspired by a common sense idea best expressed by Benson, Harkavy, and Puckett (2007):

[R]esearch universities...must function as moral/intellectual institutions simultaneously engaged in advancing universal knowledge, learning, and improving the well-being of their local geographic communities;...not only in but for their local communities" (p. 79).

In the mid-1990s, the essence of the discussions swirling around teacher preparation was how to close two gaping chasms in education: 1) the perceived distance between "Ivory Tower" pedagogy instruction by university faculty and the "Real World" teaching situations of public school teachers, and 2) "closing the achievement gap" between white students and minority students (Education Trust, 2006). These social conversations seemed to have increased in volume at precisely the same time that the Middle-Secondary Education and Instructional Technology Department (MSIT) at GSU began a redesign of its undergraduate middle grades teacher preparation program and Lori arrived as a new doctoral student. The guiding idea was that preservice teachers should be working in schools "from the start," seamlessly blending theory and practice throughout the program.

This idea was the conceptual "seed" from which the ULC first began to grow.

School Partnerships – Grades 4-8

Lori was eager to participate as a teaching assistant in this newly designed program because, having just completed her ninth year as a public school special education teacher, reading Goodlad (1984) and Dewey (1916) was inspirational. Here was an opportunity to see the concept of experiential learning in action, situated in a university-school partnership. The middle grades program included a block of two literacy courses – one in content area reading and one in literacy assessment. Dialogue with administrators and faculty members at a nearby middle school established a mutual teaching-learning partnership in which the undergraduate literacy block classes met at the middle school two days each week for instruction from 1998-2001, followed by reading and writing tutoring in literacy sessions under direct supervision. This literacy block, taken during their first semester, offered the preservice teachers a first opportunity to work with children, while at the same time absorbing the "pulse and rhythm" (Paley, 1979) of an inner-city school. As Lori grew from teaching assistant to course instructor there, the partnership deepened and the ideal of "education as a form of intervention in the world" (Freire, 1998, p. viii) and the goal of transformative learning (Mazirow, 2000) increasingly became realities.

In 2001, the need to provide experience with fourth and fifth grade students required that the partnership be transplanted to an elementary school, where it continued to be nurtured through the summer of 2004 by a new cohort of 25 preservice teachers each

semester, the school's principal, and its teachers. During that final summer, students in a new middle grades Master of Arts in Teaching program joined this partnership, bringing new growth into the process and working with the fourth and fifth grade summer school students as part of the Content Area Reading course required during the first term in that program. For almost all of them, this was their first opportunity to interact with children that age in an academic endeavor.

Adding a Master's Degree Field Experience – TIP & The Study Hall

In 2003, when a juvenile probation officer approached the MSIT department seeking help, the faculty decided to add a field experience to the M.Ed. in Reading program and an offshoot partnership was established with the non-profit Truancy Prevention Project (TIP) associated with the local juvenile court. That connection branched again in 2005 into a new association with The Study Hall, a non-profit after-school program serving several children from the elementary school and TIP partners. The Study Hall, like our partner schools and the Truancy Intervention Program, is located in an impoverished area near the university.

Through TIP and The Study Hall, certified teachers studying to become master-level teachers have extended theory-into-practice learning experiences into classes in the courthouse with teenagers identified by the court as at risk of dropping out and with third through eighth grade youths at The Study Hall. These "beyond school" experiences opened the teachers' eyes to the web of people and organizations joining schools in working for children and families in the community.

In 2006, when the Special Education Department added a Reading Endorsement to their M.Ed. program to meet the "highly qualified" requirements of No Child Left Behind, more classes were added, and those students joined the reading majors at The Study Hall. Classes met in a small trailer attached to the main building, added more children to the literacy sessions, and closed with a group reflection on that session's experiences.

Another new element added in 2006 was the integration of the reading majors' culminating practicum course as an overlay to the M.Ed. course in The Study Hall, allowing them to develop clinical practice in preparation for their future work as school reading specialists and literacy coaches. Reading majors were now able to apply their skills in professional

development, teacher and student observation, in-depth assessment, and reflection and feedback as they worked with the tutoring pairs each week. Children learned from teachers who were learning to teach reading, those teachers learned from the literacy coaches in the practicum course as well as from the children, and the coaches learned from both teachers and students how to implement their own new knowledge and skills. Learners at all three levels grew in knowledge, skills, and confidence in an increasingly powerful teaching-learning circle.

Opening The Urban Literacy Clinic On Campus

Field-based reading courses are, of course, not new. Reading clinics are not new. Reading clinics have a long history, primarily serving as a place for reading-specialists-in-training to apply their developing diagnostic skills (Morris, 1999). They have typically served the very specific goal of providing an evaluation by a reading teacher-in-training, followed by specific skill lessons for a designated number of weeks. Given the vast research advancements in the field of reading, including a broader definition of literacy and the multi-dimensional tasks required of literacy professionals in schools today, the purpose of literacy clinics is evolving to include much more than one specific purpose (Evensen & Mosenthal 1999).

It had long been a goal of literacy faculty and college of education administrators at GSU to sponsor an on-campus literacy clinic. The growing collaborations with local schools and community organizations within the neighborhoods surrounding the university built a foundation for the ULC to become a reality in 2006 and opened possibilities to move the traditional reading clinic concept to a new level. The multi-dimensional perspective "organically grown" in the community, continues to be the focus of the ULC. It both draws upon and expands the rich history of reading clinics (Kibby & Barr, 1999) in pursuing two main goals--to provide a place for literacy leaders at all levels of preparation to practice their craft (Morris, 2003), while simultaneously providing important literacy services to children and families in the community.

Courses in the ULC focus on preparing literacy leaders who are adept at many different tasks and who will work under a wide array of titles, such as reading specialist, literacy coach, curriculum coach, Title I reading teacher, ESL teacher, special education teacher, content-area teacher, special education teacher, literacy researcher, and university literacy teacher educator. From all of its continuing collaborations in the community, the ULC has grown into an

organization able to provide opportunities for literacy educators at every level to *learn-practice-educate* simultaneously.

In the two years since its opening, over 300 children and their families have participated in the literacy sessions in the ULC and 289 master-level teachers across five different programs have applied their new skills, while doctoral researchers help to gather and analyze data. Our collaborative work with community organizations continues to find creative ways to provide services, and everyone is working together to 'close the gap'.

Continuing Growth

Since 2006, our message has spread. We now also collaborate with the After-School All Stars non-profit program during the summer semester to provide an opportunity for pre-service teachers in our English and Middle Grades M.A.T. programs to develop strong content-area literacy knowledge. These associations allow us to work with over 200 students in four local middle schools during the summers. Additionally, we have established a connection with the Metro Atlanta Boys and Girls Club as an opportunity for pre-service teachers in the Early Childhood Education department to learn more about supporting the literacy development of young children. The most recent foray has been into an early childhood ESOL class working with children and families for whom English is not their first language. Additionally, conversations have begun with faculty members in the Counseling and Special Education department who prepare school psychologists to administer initial, reading-screening assessments for children.

Each semester brings new possibilities. Each new expansion adds a new opportunity for collaboration to deepen our understanding and broaden our perspectives about literacy learning. The ULC is the hub of the literacy program, with students ranging from children to Ph.D. level involved in some manner, demonstrating that universities have an important role in community development, innovation, and research. It has quietly grown into a place within *and* for the community that brings together an ever-widening circle of like-minded people to serve children. Its organic and flexible framework is its strength.

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University-School Partnerships: A true story of how they work and who they help

BY LOLETA D. SARTIN AND VICKI LUTHER



University researchers are calling for partnerships as a way to improve PK-12 schools and their own teacher education and school policy research (Via, 2008). Amongst the approximate 107,235 persons graduating with a degree in education, many are in need of additional support and best practice acquisition (NCES, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2000). Henderson, Mapp, Johnson and Davies (2007), in their book *Beyond the Bake Sale*, postulate that partnerships and student achievement are closely linked.

In the push for systemic reform in education across the nation, calls for the formation of partnerships among university and school professionals are prominent. Partnership building has become a vehicle for massive restructuring of curriculum at all pre-college levels, as well as professional development of teachers. (Richmond, 1996, p. 214).

As cited in Dyson (1999), university-school partnerships and collaboration have been the most frequently recommended approaches to educational reform (Clark, 1988; Kersh & Masztal, 1998). Universities and schools provide each other with resources and benefits in research and practice (Stump, Lovitt, & Perry, 1993) and need each other to reach their common and respective goals (DeBevoise, 1986; Goodlad, 1988; Lasley, Matczynski, & Williams, 1992).

Levine (2002) claimed benefits of pooling resources such as participants' knowledge and skills are at the heart of university-school partnerships. The

collaboration offers a "potentially powerful tool for transforming our environment" (Dickens, 2000, p. 37). The time and effort to try to work across two or more organizations is worthwhile compared with trying to achieve the same goals internally (Teitel, 2003). Furhman (2008) posits universities are publicly responsible for what happens in schools; they must have a deep sustained partnership with schools in which the university shares accountability for student outcomes. Darling-Hammond (2008) further states, partnerships are possible and necessary to make the American education system work for children, families and the economy into the 21st century.

Universities and schools are addressing the issues of teacher quality, student learning and the gap between research and practice. Both entities must collaborate and work together to create learning communities grounded in current evidence-based research and practitioner knowledge (Vernon-Dotson, Lengyel & Lane, 2008).

According to Warren and Peel (2005), "teachers receive a greater sense of unity, greater sense of empowerment, a higher sense of responsibility for their school's destiny and an increased level of pride" (p. 351) as a result of successful partnerships between universities and schools. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) recognizes that university-school partnerships have the impending power to support continuous learning and improvement for both the school and the university (Levine & Trachtman, 2005; NCATE, n.d.). University-school partnerships between universities and PK-12 schools have the potential to increase teacher quality and student learning while reducing the gap between theory and practice (Vernon-Dotson, Lengyel & Lane, 2008).

Loleta Sartin:

When I interviewed for the position at Macon State College, one of my initial questions was, "Am I able to partner with the local schools?" My motivation was due to my desire to work with elementary students. More importantly, I knew I could not teach literacy courses absent of students, which provides the opportunity for candidates to apply the skills they are taught in class. The partnership started with two teachers at the respective schools and has grown into a third and fourth grade initiative at both sites.

Our Story

A partnership was initiated between the School of Education at Macon State College and two elementary schools, Barden Elementary in Bibb County and Miller Elementary in Houston County, to develop the course "Literacy Assessment and Instruction." The course is a four-hour credit course that is delivered one day a week on the college campus and another day in the respective schools.

Everyone has worked diligently with the schools to create a partnership that involves the administration, teachers, instructional coaches, students, families, teacher candidates and professors. Though the process has taken a lot of planning and organizing to ensure the effectiveness of the partnership, the benefits have been worth the time and effort.

Vicki Luther:

Teaching "Literacy Assessment and Instruction" in the schools is a wonderful opportunity for all. We have the opportunity to stay abreast of trends in P-12 schools and to bridge theory and application for the candidates.

Essential Elements

1. Preplanning

Communicating, collaborating and planning are essential ingredients in an effective partnership. The professors meet with the teachers, instructional coaches and principals at both sites to discuss the partnership prior to the course being offered each spring semester. There are no concepts too minute to discuss: all parties' receptiveness to the ongoing partnership, the time and dates of the course, the Georgia Performance Standards that will be taught, and the grouping of the students (it is important to ensure the candidates' and the students' personalities complement each other).

2. Assessment

Candidates are provided an in-depth overview of the literacy assessments used in each district. They are taught how to administer, interpret and design lessons based on the assessment results. Barden Elementary uses the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) and Miller utilizes the Houston County Literacy Inventory (HCLI).

3. Engaging Families

The voices of the students' parents (or caregivers) are essential to the process. A Family Engagement Night entitled "Meet and Greet" is held at the beginning of the practicum experience. During the event the

teacher candidates are able to discuss with the parents their child's reading behaviors, interests, strengths and weaknesses. The parents also identify areas they want the candidates to work on during the practicum experience. The night is filled with food, literacy games and great conversations that help assist the candidates in planning personalized instruction for the students they are assigned.

4. Weekly Experience

Candidates create various ways to engage students in the literacy process. They are required to ensure the students have the opportunity to read, be read to, write and engage in an activity that reinforces the concept being taught. An onlooker can see the excitement on the students' faces as their Macon State College teacher walks through the door. The professors and teachers observe the lessons and provide feedback and encouragement to both the students and candidates as they work together.

5. Ongoing Communication

The professors, teachers and candidates constantly confer during the practicum to discuss students' and candidates' progress. The candidates are also required to write weekly reflections that overview their teaching strengths and areas of concern. In addition, they consistently develop a plan of how they will utilize the students' strengths to design the weekly lessons.

6. Student-Led Conferences

To culminate the practicum experience a "Celebration of Learning Gala" is held at the school sites. The candidates and students create a tri-fold board with the students' work on display boards. During the Gala the students present their work to their family, teachers, Macon State College faculty, city officials and school district administrators. At the Gala the students participate in a program, dinner is served and the students provide a detailed overview of the concepts they have learned in a gallery walk setting.



The Benefits

The benefits of a collaborative partnership between a post-secondary institution and an elementary school are far-reaching, and many individuals are able to develop and grow through these learning opportunities. Because of this, the collaboration process truly becomes a 'win-win' situation for those who receive instruction, give instruction, and supervise the instruction. Four subgroups who receive the most help and support from these partnerships have been identified; these include the elementary students, the teacher candidates, the practicing elementary teachers, and the college professors.



• **THE ELEMENTARY STUDENTS:** Throughout the practicum experience, the third and fourth grade students are exposed to new strategies for learning and remembering familiar information. This is especially helpful to students who may be struggling with elements of the reading process. Educators know the importance of learning to read and read well, yet we still see an overwhelming number of low-functioning readers in our classrooms and in our society. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has named the inability to read as a life-threatening disease due to the fact that poor readers generally have a lower quality of life than those who are fluent readers (2006). As Boyer (1995) points out, "...learning to read is without question the top priority in elementary education" (p. 69). The practicum allows children to reinforce the skills they are learning in the classroom, and this additional practice can be extremely beneficial.

During the nine-week practicum experience, students are placed in small groups. These groups are formed based on reading scores and ability levels. The classroom teachers play a pivotal role in placing students together, and careful consideration is placed

on ensuring optimal learning experiences. Because each candidate works with the same two or three students each week, the students receive consistent small group instruction. Students get to know the teacher candidates in a more personal way and bonds are formed.

Each week, the students are engaged in lessons on specific English language arts standards. These are standards that have already been introduced and taught in class but that the teachers feel need additional review. (The classroom teachers determine which standards should be addressed during the practicum sessions prior to the beginning of the collaboration). Students receive additional support in understanding these standards, but do so in a variety of ways. The teacher candidates utilize students' interests to teach the content and also make the instruction hands-on. They also give students the opportunity to play educational games, research information on the computer, conduct scavenger hunts in the library, read for pleasure, and engage in cooperative interactions with peers. This allows students the ability to become engaged in the learning, and this engagement increases the motivation for learning.

• **THE TEACHER CANDIDATES:** This collaboration between the elementary school and the college is extremely beneficial to our preservice teachers. The practicum experience allows the teacher candidates opportunities to apply the theories learned in class to the "real world" of the classroom and to practice their craft in a non-threatening environment. Because they are constantly supervised by both the college professors and the classroom teachers, the teacher candidates never have to feel alone. They are free to ask questions, seek advice, and discuss any difficulties they may be experiencing, and the professors and teachers are able to supply immediate feedback concerning the lessons and instructional techniques.

The teacher is ultimately the one who makes a huge difference in the reading instruction in a classroom (Reutzel & Cooter, 2009). If teachers are competent in their teaching of reading, the students will have a greater chance of being competent readers. There is a direct correlation between what teachers know about teaching reading and the reading achievements of their students (Snow, Griffin, & Burns, 2005). This practicum experience allows the teacher candidates to hone their skills so that they will become stronger teachers. It also increases their knowledge of the state standards, gives them a better understanding of appropriate lesson planning, increases their

classroom management techniques, and helps them to become higher-level thinkers.

• **THE CLASSROOM TEACHERS:** The partnership between the two educational institutions also has great benefits for the classroom teachers. While observing the lessons being taught, the teachers are learning new strategies and are given the opportunity to stay abreast of current research. Since the majority of these teachers have been practicing teachers for many years, this collaboration gives them the chance to see what is happening currently in college settings, and allows them to get a fresh perspective. Many of the teachers talk about the ideas they have gotten from the preservice teachers. This increases their level of knowledge and their motivation for teaching, which can also help their students' achievement improve.

Vicki Luther and Loleta Sartin:

We greatly enjoy the time we get to spend in the schools, as it affords us the opportunity to observe and work with elementary-aged students. We also get to work with our candidates in a closer and more meaningful way when we see them 'in action' with students. We are constantly delighted and amazed at the growth we

Because of this collaboration, the classroom teachers are also able to become mentors to the teacher candidates, and this can allow the veteran educators to feel that their work is substantiated. Teachers want to feel that their opinion matters and that they are valued, and being able to offer advice and support to those not yet in the field can be beneficial to their overall feelings of worth. The teachers at Barden Elementary and Miller Elementary have a great deal to offer our teacher candidates. As Strickland, Snow,

Gwendolyn Pearson-Kilgore,
Miller Elementary Principal:

Our goal at Miller Elementary School was to enrich the lives of our students in every way possible. Because of the collaboration with Macon State, our students were able to experience differentiated instruction in reading to a greater dimension. The Macon State students provided extensive individualized instruction, and the Miller Elementary students in turn truly experienced instruction that was specifically geared to their educational needs. The collaboration is truly a win-win situation...our students get extra assistance academically, and the Macon State students get practical teaching experience in an authentic educational setting.

Griffin, Burns, and McNamara (2002) state, "nothing ...can replace the power of a great classroom teacher" (p. 4), and when novice and preservice teachers have the ability to work with and encourage one another, great things can occur.

• **THE COLLEGE PROFESSORS:** The college professors benefit greatly from this collaborative partnership. The opportunity affords the professors to see first-hand what is currently happening in the public schools, empowering them to be more knowledgeable and effective in the college classrooms. In addition, the college professors are more immersed in the Georgia Performance Standards.

Summary

Research shows there are many benefits in university-school collaborations. Yet for Macon State College, Barden Elementary and Miller Elementary the proof truly lies in first-hand experience. The partnership has increased the teacher candidates' enthusiasm for the teaching profession and has given them more awareness of how to engage all learners. The partnership has also increased students' excitement and motivation about literacy, allowed teachers the opportunity to immerse themselves in current trends, and allowed the college professors to remain engaged in elementary schools. This partnership has been, and continues to be, a rich resource for all involved.

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Get Boys to Grab a Book!



Do you know that . . .

- ♦ biological and social issues influence boys' abilities and preferences in reading?
- ♦ more boys are referred to special reading services and special education than girls?
- ♦ generally, boys will not read books about girls, but girls will read books about boys?
- ♦ boys don't comprehend narrative fiction as well as girls do?
- ♦ few boys enter school calling themselves non-readers, but by high school over half do?

SO WHAT'S A TEACHER TO DO?

Check out these resources—soon you'll have a room full of boys grabbing books!

Blackburn, M. V. (2003). "Boys and literacies: What difference does gender make?" *Reading Research Quarterly*, 38(2), 276-287.

Brozo, W. G. (2002). *To be a boy, to be a reader: Engaging teen and preteen boys in active literacy*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Farris, P. J., Werderich, D. E., Nelson, P. A., & Fuhler, C. J. (2009). "Male call: Fifth-grade boys' reading preferences." *The Reading Teacher*, 63(3), 180-188.

Smith, M. W., & Wilhelm, J. D. (2002). *Reading don't fix no Chevys*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Zambo, D., & Brozo, W. G. (2009) *Bright beginnings for boys: Engaging young boys in active literacy*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Zambo, D. (2007). "Using picture books to provide archetypes to young boys: Extending the ideas of William Brozo." *The Reading Teacher*, 61(2), 124-131.

www.guysread.com

www.gettingboystoread.com

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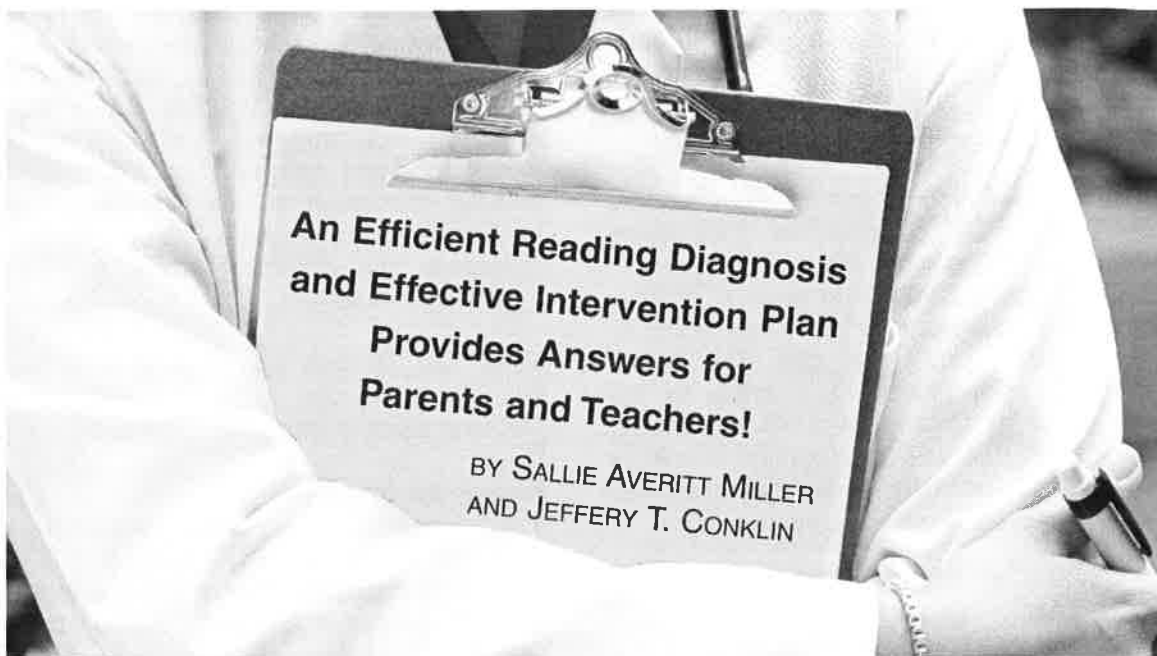


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Dr. Sallie Mills at 770-787-1770
E-mail: mills_sally@bellsouth.net

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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.

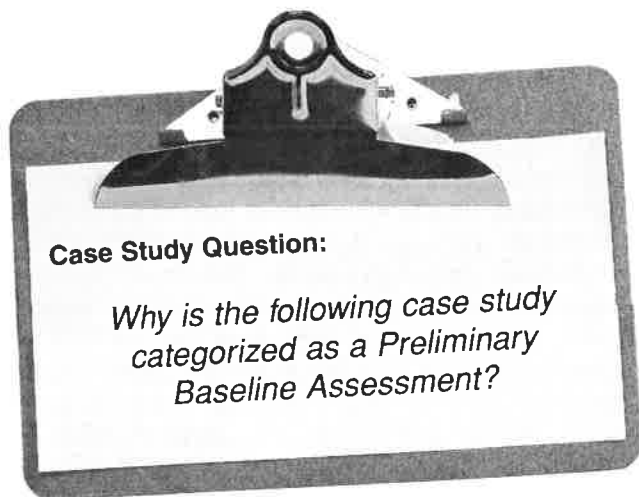
An issue that recently surfaced is the restricted number of interventions offered by the canned software programs. It appears that the software is excellent in developing documentation of the methods employed in remediation but that it is limited in its menu of research-based interventions. Once again 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 <i>Rubin/Opitz</i>	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 (Instructional / 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
Examiners: Professors and Graduate Teaching Assistant

Grade: 3rd

INTERVENTION STRATEGY	PROCEDURE	PURPOSE
Reading Aloud	The teacher or parent reads aloud to 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.com/kids>

<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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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.

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Articles for this column should describe creative teaching ideas and strategies that can be imple-

mented 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.

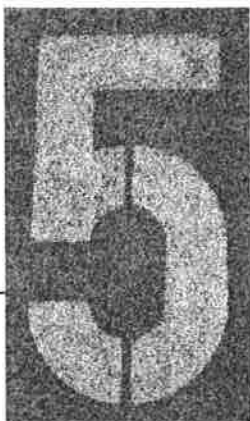
Photographs

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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Components of Reading Workshop: Preservice teacher learning from literacy practitioners

BY SHARRY SACKOR

During the fall semester of each school term for the past four years, I have taught an Early Childhood reading course at Albany State University. This is a graduate reading course, which was realigned in the fall of 2008 as a reading endorsement course. Initially there were several options for completing the major assignment for the course, one of which was to conduct a reading workshop. The first year an individual student presented one for her fellow classmates. The second year the students asked if they could present the workshop as a group project. I thought that was a good idea and provided them with an audience: pre-service teachers who were enrolled in my content area reading course and my children's literature course.

Since that time, I have made the group presentation of the workshop a requirement. Each year the presentations get better and better. The students have elected to present "The Five Components of Reading" workshop because it is emphasized in their reading endorsement course, which is relatively new to our campus. The National Reading Panel (2000) concludes that the five components (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency) are essential elements for teaching students to learn to read. This article describes how my students used the panel's conclusions and recommendations from Armbruster, Kehr, & Osborn (2003) to design and present the 2008 workshop—"The Five Components of Reading."

Ten female students were enrolled in the fall 2008 class and eagerly accepted the task of presenting the workshop. One student had ten years of teaching experience and the others had less than five. Two each selected one of the five components and planned the workshop, gathered their materials, and prepared a booklet as a handout. My tasks were to provide the audience and have the room equipped with the appropriate technology—a laptop computer and a projector. The workshop was scheduled for

November 21, 2008, at 4:00 p. m. The audience was made up of students in my children's literature course who agreed to extend our fifty minute class to an hour and a half for extra credit. They also agreed to write a reflection of the workshop.

Research Background

In our courses students often get the theory but few opportunities to practice what they learn. Like Jacobson (1998) I believe that theory or subject matter is important; but so is pedagogical knowledge. Literacy practitioners in the classrooms can be effective teachers and models of reading content knowledge and pedagogy. This was demonstrated in this student-led workshop.

I was pleased to observe that the workshop presenters implemented many of the strategies they learn about in their literacy courses. A read-aloud was used or suggested in the booklet for each component. Research indicates that reading aloud to children has numerous benefits. Roe, Smith, & Burns (2009) suggest that it is the foundation of emergent literacy development. Reading aloud also increases comprehension (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998), it is central to engaging children in the joys and rewards of reading (Darigan, Tunnell, & Jacobs, 2002), and as stated by Vacca & Vacca (2008) reading aloud is considered by many experts to be the single most important activity in developing student literacy ability regardless of age.

Writing was incorporated in their presentations as well. Writing can build comprehension before, during, and after reading (Roe, Smith, & Burns, 2009). According to Kane (2007) writing is an excellent way to build higher-level thinking skills.

Technology use was infused during the workshop. In a position statement, the International Reading Association indicated that "literacy educators have a responsibility to effectively integrate the Internet and other forms of information and communication tech-

nologies (ITC) into the literacy curriculum in order to prepare students for the literacy future they deserve" (International Reading Association, 2001, par 1).

According to Gunning (2008), the reader plays a very active role in constructing and understanding text and the way this is done by using strategies. Dowhower (1999) also encourages the teaching of strategies because she believes that they allow readers to become autonomous and in control of the comprehension process. The presenters used strategies before, during, and after reading to actively involve their audience.

The workshop was introduced by one of the students. She identified the components and indicated that the presenters of each component would introduce themselves and provide information about where they teach and the grade level. All were K- 5 educators. The workshop presenters were well equipped with the knowledge of the subject matter and the pedagogy for teaching literacy in today's classroom. Following are highlights of the workshop by components.

Phonemic Awareness

The first component, phonemic awareness, was presented by two young educators from a small county. During their Power Point presentation, phonemic awareness was defined as the understanding that words are made up of sounds which can be assembled in different ways to make different words. The presenters pointed out that teachers can build phonemic awareness through the use of nursery rhymes, riddles, songs, poems, and read-aloud books that manipulate sounds. They ended their presentation with a read-aloud and encouraged student participation. The read-aloud, *Annabel*, was written by Joy Cowley (1993). Initially, the students were reluctant to respond; however, before the story ended everyone was involved.

Phonics

The presenters of the phonics component worked at the elementary magnet school in our county. One taught third grade and the other was a paraprofessional who worked with kindergarten students. They began their presentation by defining phonics as an instructional method for teaching children to read English. To demonstrate how phonics is taught, the presenters shared an interesting worksheet on word families. The worksheet was found at the www.KidZone.ws website. The instructions directed the students to match the picture and the word. The presenters guided the students through the worksheet involving the "-an" family. They named the first

picture, which was a man and asked a volunteer to identify the matching word; then the class spelled the word. This process was followed as the worksheet was completed. They concluded their presentation with a story—*Mr. Fantastic* (Lee & Kirby, 1961). As the story was being read, the students were asked to identify all the words that made the sound of "F." The audience was quite obliged to honor that request.

Vocabulary

The presenters of this component taught at two different elementary schools in our county. Their Power Point presentation began with the definition of vocabulary. They indicated that it involves the words we use to communicate effectively. They shared some quick facts posited by Hart and Risley (1995) that suggest kindergarten students' vocabulary size is a predictor of comprehension in middle school. These presenters identified and defined the four types of vocabulary: listening, speaking, reading and writing. They also suggested that vocabulary can be taught directly, indirectly, through repetition, rich context, and through active learning games (NRP, 2000). They concluded their presentation with two games ("Versatile" and "Rally Table").

Comprehension

One of these two presenters taught in our county and had ten years of experience. The other taught in a rural area and was a first year teacher. They began their Power Point with several points about reading comprehension, one of which indicates that it is the process of constructing meaning from a text. They indicated that this component is extremely important and that successful learners of comprehension should be able to apply strategies before, during, and after reading. Time constraints precluded their discussion of the various strategies; however, they directed the students to their section of the handout, which listed several strategies for the three phases of reading. Some of the strategies were KWL, Anticipation Guides, sticky notes, graphic organizers and others. They planned to conclude with a read-aloud of *Granddaddy's Gift* by Margaree King Mitchell (2006) and a discussion web that was obtained from www.readwritethink.org. The presenter gave a brief synopsis of the story that involved a grandfather sharing his struggle for the right to vote. She equated his success to the 2008 election.

Fluency

The two presenters of the fluency component were special education teachers. One taught in a small county south of the university and the other taught in our county. They began with an anticipation guide

and allowed volunteers to share their responses. One of the presenters read aloud to demonstrate how a student who struggles with fluency reads. She indicated that fluency could be developed through repeated reading—a method developed to produce automaticity (Samuels, 1997). She also provided guidelines for creating, using and scoring repeated reading passages in their portion of the booklet. A fluency passage was also provided. The last presenter concluded with several questions regarding fluency and comprehension. She ended the presentation with this quote by Wolf & Katzir-Cohen (2001) “The unsettling conclusion is that reading fluency involves every process and sub-skill involved in reading” (p. 220). The students responded to the quote in writing. A couple of volunteers shared their interpretations.

Student Reflections

The students indicated that they appreciated the workshop. Some stated that they were not expecting very much, but were pleasantly surprised. Highlights from their reflections are presented below.

“I think that the best thing about the workshop was that the presenters did not just talk about their information; they actively engaged our class in their presentations. It made the time a lot more interesting because we got to participate instead of just sitting there listening.”—Pam

“I was very intrigued by the various techniques used by the various individuals, such as the various books they used in their classrooms and etc. It is always helpful to have a teacher's point of view, especially from those who are now in the school system because it gives a more adequate measure of the challenges I may soon face.”—Shakeria

“I really didn't know what to expect from this workshop before attending, but I am glad I had the opportunity to attend. I walked away with valuable information and resources.”—Keanna

Conclusion and Professor's Reflection

The way the presenters engaged the audience in the activities was impressive. Throughout the semester, the importance of reading aloud was stressed; therefore, I was pleased that several of the presenters shared read-alouds with the audience. Further, it was evident that the students were receptive to the information and the methods of presentation. Many of them interacted with the presenters with the same enthusiasm as young readers and writers would. The students and I appreciated the well-prepared book-

lets filled with lesson plans, strategies, websites, and activities that were provided by the presenters.

I think that those teachers who are aware of and practicing the current trends in literacy are the best models for preservice teachers. They can articulate the effectiveness of active involvement, strategic instruction, the role of technology, and reading aloud to students because they are experiencing this first hand.

Some of the presenters expressed that they valued the experience of sharing this workshop with teacher education candidates and certainly think that it should remain as one of the requirements for the reading endorsement course. Upon reflection, I am sorry that I did not ask them for written reflections. I think that is the one piece that is missing from this successful and satisfying experience of teacher practitioners sharing “The Five Components of Reading” with preservice teachers.

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Okay, I will admit it—sometimes
I trick my ninth grade students.

I trick them into reading intimidating texts and
trick them into facing difficult content head-on.
I trick them into studying by playing review
games days in advance of a unit test and
I trick them into sharing insights about
novels by focusing on the novelty
of Socratic seminars.

I spend many sleepless
nights hoping that my
hooks will catch all of
them and that they will
be fully engaged in the
content area games I
tediously design. I have
found that many of my graduate education classes
share strategies to help teachers build reading
engagement through high-energy games and external
stimuli. And there is certainly a reason teachers
consult their “bag of tricks” in times of need.

But my students also arrive with their own bags of
tricks, although they may not admit it so readily. They
pull from these bags when they trick me into believing
that they read the whole novel, *each and every*
time. They reach into their bags as they trick me into
believing that they studied for days in advance for a
test and they trick me when they claim, most sincerely,
that they really *do* love reading about William
Shakespeare and Homer as much as I do.

The Worn Out Bag

With all of our bags bulging with familiar tricks and
tools, I have found it difficult to engage *all* of my
students *all* of time. This year I decided that I
needed to add a new trick to my bag. Therefore, I
began to review research about student choice
(Atwell, 1989; Graves, 1983) and discovered the
importance of controlled choice, which allows for
student choice within a set of standards-based
parameters. While students are able to choose topics
and genre, standards and learning goals are still
paramount. Atwell, in her hallmark text *In the Middle*,
explains, “Freedom of choice does not undercut
structure” (p. 15). Confident that this was the trick I
needed, I chose to incorporate controlled choice into
various writing activities throughout the year.

However, the use of controlled choice can be
challenging. Since choice activities are student-
focused, such plans involve more time, more plan-



ning, and more facilitation for the teacher as opposed
to generic, one-size-fits-all teacher-based writing
topics. Projects that involve student choice, if not
implemented well, can also draw attention away from
the standard that is being taught. With these facts in
mind, I designed activities that successfully in-
corporate student choice and that have had positive
outcomes for my students.

Strengthening the Seams

Creative Writing

During our unit on short stories, my ninth grade
students use *The Mysteries of Harris Burdick* (1984)
by Chris Van Allsburg as inspiration for their own
creative writing pieces. *The Mysteries of Harris Bur-
dick*, a picture book that contains very little writing,
includes fourteen illustrations that are left by Harris
Burdick at the office of Peter Wenders, a gentleman
who works for children’s book publisher. According to
the introduction of the book, Harris Burdick drops
fourteen illustrations off at Mr. Wenders’ office but
does not include a story with any of the drawings.
Instead, only a title and caption accompany each
picture. After asking Mr. Burdick to return the next
day with the accompanying stories, Mr. Wenders
anxiously awaits Mr. Burdick’s return. However, Mr.
Burdick never returns and the mysteries of the
pictures endure (Van Allsburg, 1984, introduction).

After sharing the story and pictures with my students,
I invite each student to select a picture. The students
then draft individual stories that they work with
throughout the entire unit. As we learn new literary
devices such as mood, tone, and foreshadowing, the
students decide whether or not to incorporate the
literary devices into their creative writing pieces. At
the conclusion of the unit, my students submit their

final drafts and include a letter that explains why they chose to include certain devices and exclude others. As we examine each device, the students master the concept of author's purpose and the reasons why authors include or exclude certain literary devices.

The Mysteries of Harris Burdick activity allows for students to experiment with the controlled choice and "offers the students real choices" (Mendler, 2000, p.45). Since the students are constantly revising and editing their pieces, revision occurs throughout each draft and not just before the final draft is published. Furthermore, I ask my students to revisit the structures of their papers. I ask them to use the accompanying caption as the first line of their papers. Then, I ask them to use the caption as the basis for the climax of their stories. Finally, I encourage my students to use the caption as the concluding line of their creative pieces. At each step, we discuss the impact that such revision has on their papers and purposes. As a result of the activity, my students learn to interact with their writing more authentically and purposefully (Mendler, 2000; Smede, 2000). And, last but not least, the use of controlled choice provides an opportunity for my students to experience ownership.

The "Big Book" Project

Another assignment that incorporates free choice is titled the "Big Book" project. At the close of each semester, my ninth grade students complete a formal outside reading project. During the spring semester, my students complete the "Big Book", which assesses their understandings of various literary devices. The book is divided into nine sections and students spend time planning each page and organizing their ideas.

"BIG BOOK" CHECKLIST

Page One: Title Page

Create a title page with symbolic elements. Make it unique!

Page Two: Table of Contents

Create your own table of contents. Make sure it "fits" with the book you make. Please incorporate symbols and thematic elements.

Page Three: Major Character

Please find your major character at his/her most emotional moment and cast a person for the part. The person must be either famous or a major figure at our school. Take a picture of the person. Your page needs to briefly (3-5 sentences) explain why the character is a good representative of the major character from the novel.

Page Four: Irony

Artistically recreate a scene where the reader knows something the main character does not know. You must somehow represent the reader and what the reader knows using creative elements (collage, different mediums, etc...).

Page Five: Minor Character

Create an award for a minor character highlighting his/her purpose in the novel.

Page Six: Mood Shift

Take a photograph that shows you exaggerating the most intense mood that is established in the novel.

Page Seven: Major Conflict

Identify the major conflict in the novel (must include the major character from Page Three) and create a visual representation of the conflict. Place the element or individuals in conflict in some type of competitive arena.

Page Eight: Narrator

Do you trust the narrator? Create a page that indicated what type of narration is in the book (the point of view). Identify the actual narrator and the level of reliability of the narrator.

Page Nine: Theme Link

Write a well-developed paragraph and link the title of the book to a major theme in the book. Make sure that your paragraph flows logically.

Throughout this activity, students must plan and organize each page so that the pages are linked by mediums or ideas. Furthermore, each page requires that students think critically and carefully about their choices. When the books are complete, the students share their "Big Books" with the class. The fluidity of the project and the creativity that students incorporate into their Big Books allows for constant planning, revising, and publishing.

The TIPCASTT Activity

The TIPCASTT activity involves student choice and poetry. The TIPCASTT project allows my students to explore poetry in meaningful ways and helps students identify a poem's Title, Connotation, Attitude, Shift, and Tone (hence the acronym as the project title). Furthermore, The TIPCASTT system encourages the beginning student of poetry to integrate the literal and figurative meanings conveyed by a poem into a coherent summary. The activity focuses on an understanding of the literary devices that helped the author to convey the poem's purpose.

TIPCASTT Activity

Title	Write the title and author of the poem.
Paraphrase	Silently read the poem. Then, listen to it read aloud by someone else. Finally, restate its literal meaning in your own words. Try to write at least one sentence for each stanza of the poem, capturing all of its literal ideas.
Connotation	Read the poem and state its point of view. Then, look for especially significant or unusual words in the poem. Why were they included? What meaning do they convey?
Attitude	Reread the poem, looking for diction, images, and details that hint at or suggest the poet's attitude to the poem's subject. Note these examples below.
Shift	Reread the poem, marking the places in it where the speaker's feelings shift or change. Watch for changes in line length, sound, diction, and punctuation, and pay special attention to the conclusion.
Title	Reread the poem's title again and your initial explanation for it. Now that you've reread the poem several times and analyzed its features, explain the title of the poem in light of its meaning again.
Theme	First, identify the literal subject(s) of the poem. Then, identify the abstract or figurative subject of the poem. Finally, write the theme of the poem in a complete sentence.

After completing the TIPCASTT activity, I invite my students to create a book of poetry based on the lyrics of their favorite song. Each student selects five poems from their textbook and connects them to the song that they selected. The easiest way to connect the poems with the original song is through the theme, title, or rhyme scheme. However, with a sense of ownership and an interest in the subject, I have found that the students often choose to connect the poems to the original song through the use of hyperbole, figurative language, and/or other poetic devices. Through the application of choice, students can relate to poetry in unique and authentic ways.

Cleaning Out the Bag

By incorporating controlled choice into classroom activities, educators can tap into the learning styles and interests of each student and help each student create meaning from a variety of learning experiences (Beers, 2006; Fogarty & Pete, 2003). In addition, the idea of controlled choice encourages student ownership and accountability. The suggestion of incorporating student choice allows for students to interact with their own learning more meaningfully. And, by adding this new trick to your bag, you can get rid of all of your rusted tools—but only if you choose!

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An Efficient Reading Diagnosis and Effective Intervention Plan Provides

Answers for Parents and Teachers

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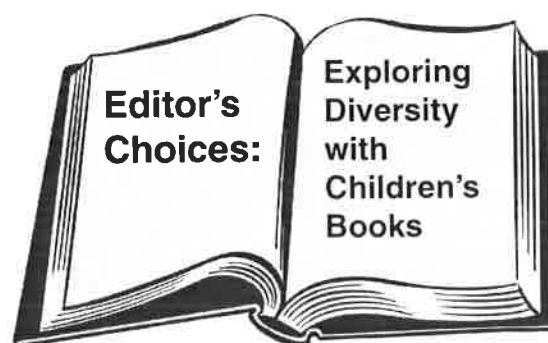
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The Five Components of Reading Workshop: Preservice Teacher Learning From Literacy Practitioners

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Tricks of the Trade: Using Controlled Choice to Increase Student Engagement and Accountability

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I'm always searching for culturally diverse books of quality. I hope you'll enjoy my old and new favorites below! —E. Lilly

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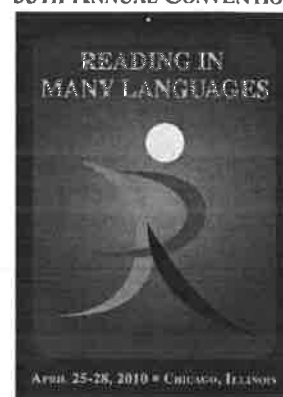
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