



Accelerated Reading Interventions ("Double Dipping" Reading Strategy)

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Background...

- During the 1970's, Marie Clay's and John Downing's research and writing in the field of early literacy helped to shift the focus of reading interventions from slowing learning down to speeding learning up for struggling readers.
- In response to this paradigm shift many accelerated reading intervention programs were developed. The following list provides a few examples: 3-Tier Approach, Accelerated Learning Program (ALP), Accelerated Literacy Learning (ALL), The Boulder Project, Direct Phonics Instruction (DPI), District Literacy Plan (DLP), Early Intervention Reading (EIR), Project Accelerated Learning (PAL), Reading Recovery, Success for All, The Winston-Salem Project.
- A defining element in all accelerated reading interventions is providing extra time for readers performing below grade level in order to boost their skills to be able to read at grade level.

What works...

Many research studies and program evaluations have been conducted on a variety of accelerated reading interventions and there is a body of evidence that strongly supports providing extra time for struggling readers. The characteristics listed below are included in the most effective interventions.

- Early intervention is key, but not before there has been an opportunity for effective classroom instruction. First grade interventions are the standard time to begin.
- The successful interventions involve well-trained specialists, as well as ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers.
- Effective interventions are more intense and linked to the typical classroom experience, providing personalized, assessment-based instruction; more time and practice on selected skills, concepts and strategies; and smaller adult-student ratios (no more than 4-5 students) with the gold standard being a one to one ratio.
- Balanced instruction is important. Teacher directed instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, and contextual reading is necessary for gains to be made. Focus should also be placed on the writing/reading relationship because composing enhances comprehension.
- It is critical for students to be matched to an appropriate level of text. Repeated reading of leveled texts seems to be effective at helping at-risk children develop reading fluency. These texts should be interesting and students should be given a choice of what to read. Also, peer mentoring and allowing students to collaborate while reading has been shown to be effective.
- Effective interventions include provisions for connecting with both parents and regular classroom instruction.
- Interventions should be short-lived, consistently applied and finite in duration.
- Ultimately, interventions must aim to bring lower achievers to grade level. This is accomplished by tailoring interventions to reach each child by using some or all the effective strategies listed above. What works for one child may not work for another and the key is to keep working with a child until a strategy proves to be effective.

BOTTOM LINE ACTIONABLE MESSAGE

Many articles were reviewed to prepare this BLAM. Several of the best review articles are referred to below.

Recommended Reading:

In addition to Ministry documents, the following list contains other recommended reading suggestions:

Richard Allington, Michael Pressley and Dorothy Strickland are leading reading theorists who have published many articles. Some key ones to consider are:

Richard Allington:

- ❖ "What I've Learned About Reading Instruction" (Richard Allington)

The abstract for this article was retrieved in February 2006 from the following link:

http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/Home.portal?_nfpb=true&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=What+I%27ve+learned+about+reading+instruction&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=ti&_pageLabel=RecordDetails&objectId=0900000b8007d574

Based on a six-state survey of first- and fourth-grade teachers, this paper describes how exemplary teachers provided their students with effective reading and writing instruction.

Allington details six common features of effective elementary reading and writing instruction categorized as time, texts, teaching, talk, tasks, and testing.

- ❖ "No Quick Fix" (Richard Allington)

This book was retrieved in February 2006 from the following link:

http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2/content_storage_01/0000000b/80/24/c1/5d.pdf

This comprehensive book, edited by Richard Allington and Sean Walmsley, contains essays that provide suggestions for improving literacy instruction for all children. The introduction dispels six commonly held beliefs about reading development in children. Part 1: Chapters 1 - 4 provide theoretical background information on a Framework for Change and Part 2: Chapter 5 - 12 explores case studies. In the afterward, alternative suggestions are offered for improving student learning and educational professionals are encouraged to go the extra mile to ensure that all students learn.

- ❖ "Ideology is Still Trumping Evidence" (Richard Allington)

The abstract for this article was retrieved in February 2006 from the following link:

http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/Home.portal?_nfpb=true&ERICExtSearch_Operator_2=and&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=au&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_2=&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_1=%22Ideology+is+still+trumping+evidence%22&ERICExtSearch_Operator_1=and&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_1=ti&ERICExtSearch_PubDate_To=2007&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=Richard+Allington&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_2=kw&ERICExtSearch_SearchCount=2&ERICExtSearch_PubDate_From=0&_pageLabel=ERICSearchResult&newSearch=true&rnd=1162579364463&searchtype=advanced

Allington comments on the current research on reading and weighs in on the findings of the National Reading Panel's (NRP) paper. He also offers recommendations for ensuring no child will be left behind. He reviews a chapter in *The Voice of Evidence* written by Guthrie and Humenick. Their chapter is a meta-analysis of 22 reading studies. They found large effect sizes for the following: 1) set knowledge rather than performance goals, 2) provide students with choice about what to read, where and with whom, 3) supply interesting texts, and 4) allow pupils to collaborate while reading. Whole-group approaches to reading instruction is identified as an ineffective strategy for struggling readers.

- ❖ ""The Other Five Pillars of Effective Reading instruction" (Richard Allington)

This article was retrieved in February 2006 from the following link:

http://www.reading.org/publications/reading_today/samples/RTY-0506-pillars.html

Allington says that the five pillars identified by the NRP are important and need to be considered in conjunction with the additional five he details in this article. The five pillars are: classroom organization; matching pupils to texts; access to interesting texts, choice and collaboration; writing and reading; and expert tutoring.

Richard Allington & Michael Pressley:

- ❖ "The Nature of Effective First Grade Literacy Instruction" (Michael Pressley, Richard Allington)
This report was retrieved in February 2006 from the following link:

http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2/content_storage_01/0000000b/80/11/4f/09.pdf

This article explores the practices of teachers who were identified as exemplary in literacy instruction. Five teams of researchers studied practices of teachers in 28 classrooms and put together a list of effective strategies for teaching literacy. Results indicated that the lowest achieving students in classrooms where effective strategies were employed outperformed their peers in more typical classrooms.

Michael Pressley:

- ❖ "Comprehension Instruction: Research-Based Best Practices. Solving Problems in the Teaching of Literacy" (Michael Pressley)

The abstract for this book was retrieved in February 2006 from the following link:

http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/Home.portal?_nfpb=true&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=Michael+Pressley&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=au&_pageLabel=RecordDetails&objectId=0900000b80177cde

This book is edited by Cathy Collins and Michael Pressley and contains 25 essays on comprehension instruction from preschool through high school. It summarizes current research and provides guidelines for teachers and teacher educators on the following topics: assessment, curriculum, and methods.

- ❖ "Reading Instruction that Works: The Case for Balanced Teaching" (Michael Pressley)

The abstract for this book was retrieved in February 2006 from the following link:

http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/Home.portal?_nfpb=true&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=Michael+Pressley&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=au&_pageLabel=RecordDetails&objectId=0900000b801759f0

This book provides information about effective literacy instruction in elementary school. It makes a case for balanced literacy instruction and states that research to support this strategy has continued to grow. It incorporates findings from reports by the National Reading Panel and the National Research Council, as well as ongoing research by the author and others. Topics covered in the book include the various components of both whole language and skills instruction; how the balanced approach is effectively applied in real classrooms; and motivational issues. Further, the book contains information on the following: phonemic awareness, comprehension, problems, decoding and comprehension, vocabulary instruction, development of word knowledge, and "flooding" the classroom with motivation. It also features a discussion of the place of Reading Recovery within balanced instruction, including an in-depth case study.

Dorothy Strickland:

- ❖ "Supporting Struggling Readers and Writers: Strategies for Classroom intervention 3-6" (Dorothy Strickland)

The abstract for this book was retrieved in February 2006 from the following link:

http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/Home.portal?_nfpb=true&ERICExtSearch_Operator_2=and&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=au&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_2=&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_1=%22Supporting+Struggling+Readers+and+Writers%22&ERICExtSearch_Operator_1=and&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_1=ti&ERICExtSearch_PubDate_To=2007&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=Dorothy+Strickland&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_2=kw&ERICExtSearch_SearchCount=2&ERICExtSearch_PubDate_From=0&_pageLabel=ERICSearchResult&newSearch=true&rnd=1162580239589&searchtype=advanced

This book explores research-based practice on literacy learning. It recognizes that the intermediate years offer a last opportunity for struggling readers and offers information about effective strategies to prevent failure in reading and writing. Topics include: effective teaching practices for all of the key aspects of literacy instruction that can be realistically implemented in the context of a busy classroom; recommendations for motivating low-achieving students; suggestions for working with English English-as-a-Second-Language learners; strategies for small-group instruction, word study, reading comprehension, and writing; clear descriptions and numerous vignettes that illustrate teaching practices in action; an emphasis on differentiated instruction and ideas for integrating interventions with regular classroom

instruction for struggling students; and ways to help students perform better on standardized tests.

❖ "Teaching Phonics Today" (Dorothy Strickland)

This book was retrieved in February 2006 from the following link:

http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2/content_storage_01/0000000b/80/24/7f/12.pdf

This book written by Dorothy Strickland examines effective literacy strategies with a special emphasis placed on phonics. Chapters five, six and seven may be of most interest in terms outlining strategies that are supported by research. Many of the strategies listed are the same ones reported as being effective by other leading researchers thus strengthening the evidence base for these strategies.

❖ "Beginning Reading and Writing" (Dorothy Strickland)

This book was retrieved in February 2006 from the following link:

http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2/content_storage_01/0000000b/80/23/48/c4.pdf

This book is a compilation of essays where scholars in the area of early literacy instruction provide strategies for achieving excellence in literacy instruction. The collection of 15 essays presents current and research-based information on topics such as: literacy instruction for students from diverse backgrounds, how to effectively structure literacy instruction, classroom intervention strategies, reading aloud, collaborating with parents, fostering reading comprehension, and assessment strategies.

The International Reading Association's paper Making a difference means making it different is a list of "10 rights for children learning to read" based on recent research and evidence-based reviews of programs. This paper was retrieved in February 2006 from the following link:

http://www.reading.org/downloads/positions/ps1042_MADMMID.pdf

John J. Pikulski's paper, Preventing reading failure: A review of five effective programs, reviews "Success for All", "The Winston-Salem Project", "EIR", "The Boulder Project" & "Reading Recovery" to discover the most effective elements in each project. He provides 11 key conclusions about effective elements of reading interventions. The abstract for this report was retrieved in February 2006 from the following link:

http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/Home.portal?_nfpb=true&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=Pikulski&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=au&_pageLabel=RecordDetails&objectId=0900000b8003c29c

The National Reading Panel's report is long (449 pages) and offers insight into reading strategies. The report was retrieved in February 2006 from the following link:

http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/nrp/upload/report_pdf.pdf

The National Reading Panel has issued another report which summarizes the research literature on reading. This paper called Teaching Children to Read was retrieved in February 2006 from the following link: http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/nrp/upload/smallbook_pdf.pdf

These papers endorse using a combination of strategies to teach children to read such as increased opportunities to read, repetition in teaching reading and comprehension skills, and giving children the opportunity to practice reading. However, the NRP cautions against reading silently (eg. DEAR) as there is little evidence to support its effectiveness. A few researchers (Richard Allington, Michael Pressley and others) have criticized the NRP for being narrow in both its scope and findings, but say that if the results are considered along with what else has been discovered, the findings still contain value.

RAND Education's Reading for Understanding report (2002) explores research on primary-grade reading instruction and summarizes reading strategies that are known to be effective, as well as makes suggestions for future research. The paper acknowledges that good instruction coupled with knowledgeable and prepared teachers is key in developing proficient readers and comprehenders. The paper states that "a substantial amount of practice over an extended period

of time is required for a reader to acquire fluency". Reader engagement and allowing students to take responsibility for their reading achievement are other factors that determine a strategy's effectiveness. Also, research shows that teachers that use a variety of instructional practices, use classroom management routines that ensure minimal disruption, use reliable and valid assessments tied to the curricula, and provide an atmosphere of support and encouragement are effective in teaching children to read.

Resources for evaluating reading programs:

- The Alabama Department of Education's Reading Initiative Department put together and excellent PD module called [Effective Intervention](#). This module clearly and concisely provides information about what research says are effective reading intervention strategies. Pages 21-23 provide an example of a School Plan for struggling readers. Pages 33-39 offer practical tips to help struggling readers. Page 41 contains a framework for effective reading intervention.
- A useful resource to consider when choosing a core reading program would be IDEA's (Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement) [A Consumer's Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program – Grade K-3: A Critical Elements Analysis](#) (2003). This paper offers suggestions for selecting an effective, evidence-based primary reading program. As well, it contains a detailed checklist for each grade from Kindergarten to Grade 3 to use when evaluating the program in question.
- The US Department of Education's article: [Identifying and Implementing Educational Practice Supported by Rigorous Evidence: A user Friendly Guide](#) provides useful information in discerning the evidence base for a program. It also lists a few attributes of programs that have been proven to be effective. On page 22, it provides recommendations for good research websites to visit.