



Resources for Early Literacy

Instruction and Intervention Sampler

There are many resources to support the implementation of early literacy strategies. Sometimes, navigating the wealth of resources available can be overwhelming.

This document serves as a sampler of key origins, definitions, directions for additional inquiry, and examples of evidence-based powerful practices. While this is not a comprehensive collection of resources or strategies, it can provide educators with a starting point for finding information to support early literacy interventions. See also Toolkit components “Research-Based Intervention Strategies” and “Reading Intervention Strategies Crosswalk.”

KEY RESOURCES

The following two resources are seminal works on the topic of early literacy, and additional resources follow to provide more essential background on the topic.

National Reading Panel Report

Work on this report was done from 1998–2000, and it remains a cornerstone of federal policy. The report from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2000) drew evidence from research that required a high degree of certainty before identifying an instructional practice as one that precipitates higher achievement. This panel asserted the five big ideas of beginning reading: Phonemic Awareness, Alphabetic Principle, Fluency with Text, Vocabulary, and Comprehension. The report can be accessed here: <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/research/supported/Pages/nrp.aspx#overview>

What Works Clearinghouse

Ongoing work through the national Institute of Education Sciences is available at <http://ies.ed.gov>. The Clearinghouse review research on programs, practices, and policies and publishes results from only high-quality research. The goal is to provide educators with information that they need to make evidence-based decisions. A relevant publication, Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten through Grade 3, is available here: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/practiceguide.aspx?sid=14>

INSTRUCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Level of student skill produced by an instructional practice or intervention.

INSTRUCTIONAL EFFICIENCY

Rate of accurate student performance produced by an instructional practice or intervention.

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

An instructional practice repeatedly demonstrated (in controlled research conditions) to produce high levels of both instructional effectiveness and instructional efficiency. Note: Under specific circumstances, a teacher may consider either effectiveness or efficiency to be of variable importance. In other words, if a student is facing statewide testing in the near future, a teacher may prioritize an intervention known to be highly efficient.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION

Explicit, generally applicable techniques. Systematically implement each component, monitor student progress, retain components that contribute to progress, remove components that do not impact progress.

- **Modeling/Demonstration:** Student observes, listens attentively, and follows along as teacher or capable student reads proficiently; teacher simultaneously shows and explains how to handle the book, sound out words, and read with expression.
- **Prompting and Error Correcting:** Teacher verbally prompts student to read words correctly. If student makes errors, teacher corrects and has student practice correctly. Scaffold by demonstration. Support and gradually release as student executes independently.
- **Opportunities to Respond/Reported Practice:** Structure lessons that elicit maximum student response. Make sure student is accurately pronouncing words. Practice does not make perfect; perfect practice makes perfect.
- **Shaping/Reinforcement:** Teacher offers praise and rewards for selected aspects of a student's performance. Let student know what aspects s/he is completing correctly and then focus on next aspect the student should master.

Specific Techniques

PHONEMIC AWARENESS

Increase student's awareness of individual sounds letters make. Identify beginning, middle and ending sounds. Practice blending, segmenting and categorizing sounds.

- **Sound Manipulation Activities:** Explore sound elements of spoken language. Find a variety of ways to play with words. Involve gestures, hopping, marching, dancing or other movement. For instance, have the student segment sounds and clap along while pronouncing syllables. Incorporate music.
- **Sound Boxes and Word Boxes:** Connected boxes are drawn on paper. One sound is written in each box. The teacher says the word. Then the student slides a token across the boxes while the teacher and student together say the word slowly. The structure of the connected

boxes is gradually faded. Eventually, student can write letters and articulate sounds that form the words.

- **Sound Sorts:** Categorize sounds according to beginning and ending sounds. Find rhyming words. Teacher begins by modeling and narrating process. After sorting words, student should pronounce them and explain why s/he sorted them together.
- **Alphabetic Principle:** This principle refers to letter-sound correspondences. Teach phonics skills directly through demonstration 1:1 correspondences with letters and sounds in words. Have student practice and provide feedback. Once the student reads a word successfully several times, ask him or her to distinguish it from another. Teach word families, or phonograms—also called onsets and rimes. These allow the student to generalize and thereby command a greater number of words. Follow by teaching sight words from lists of irregular and high frequency examples.
- **Word Sorts:** Devise activities that allow the student to sort phonograms. Allow the student to identify and discuss similarities and differences in spelling and sound patterns.

FLUENCY

Target oral reading rate and expression, which contribute to comprehension, first through repeated practice under timed conditions.

- **Traditional Flashcard Drill and Practice:** The teacher models reading the word printed on a flashcard, asks the student to read the word and follows up with feedback.
- **Simultaneous Verbal Prompting:** Use flashcards as above. Teacher presents the word and its definition, then pronounces word just ahead of student who repeats the word in quick succession. To a listener, this drill sounds like teacher and student are reading the words simultaneously.
- **Incremental Rehearsal:** This technique is built on teaching 10 percent of new words in a group that is 90 percent familiar words. The teacher writes 10 new words and nine known words on cards. The teacher presents the new word and its definition, then asks the student to pronounce it. This first unknown word is added to the deck of nine known words and flashcard drill is conducted nine times. Once the student masters the first new word, it becomes part of the known deck, the first known word is dropped, and a second unknown word is presented. This continues until all 10 new words have been mastered and the original deck of nine has been completely replaced.
- **Repeated Readings:** In successive lessons, student repeats reading of same text. Readings may be timed to determine correct words per minute. The texts are usually short passages, 50–300 words. Teacher records and corrects errors. Student should be able to read 85 percent of the words on the first try and with these repeated readings, work toward 100 percent.
- **Phase Drill:** The student reads a text while teacher notes words read inaccurately. Teacher gives feedback on oral reading miscues, models correct reading, and has student reread the sentence or phrase where the error happened three times. After practice, student rereads entire text.
- **Listening While Reading:** If a student has difficulty reading words in a passage or reads very slowly, teacher models reading a text aloud and requires student(s) to follow along with their finger. After student follows along, s/he rereads the text.

VOCABULARY AND COMPREHENSION

When a student experiences difficulty, the teacher must provide explicit instruction on comprehension. Comprehension difficulties may arise for many reasons, but various vocabulary deficits seem to contribute significantly. New words and concepts should be taught a few at a time, and care should be taken to constantly review those that have been mastered (see Incremental Rehearsal).

- **Semantic Webs:** A graphic organizer, effective for pre-reading. Key concept or word is placed in center of web. Characteristics applicable to the word are placed around the center. The teacher guides the student to complete the web by asking questions.
- **Story Map:** A graphic organizer, effective during or after storybook reading to aid comprehension of characters, setting, theme/main idea, plot, conflict and additional elements. A teacher demonstrates and guides practice.
- **Response Cards:** This strategy increases participation among all students. Teacher uses available media to prepare either blank spaces where students construct a response or options for them to select. After reading, teacher asks group comprehension questions and students respond on their cards.
- **Questioning:** Student generates his or her own factual and inferential questions—before, during and after reading.
- **Paraphrasing:** Student restates reading in his or her own words.
- **Retelling:** Student reports reading in exact words from the text.
- **Increasing Rate of Comprehending Text:** Teacher sets up and helps student participate with/track timed repeated readings and timed repeated drills answering comprehension questions.

SUGGESTED TEXTS AND ARTICLES TO GUIDE INSTRUCTION:

Alber-Morgan, S. (2010). *Using RTI to teach literacy to diverse learners, K–8: Strategies for the inclusive classroom*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Archer, A. L., and Hughes, C. A. (2011). *Explicit instruction: Effective and efficient teaching*. New York, NE: The Guildford Press.

Bursuck, W. D., and Damer, M. (2011). *Teaching reading to students who are at risk or have disabilities: A multi-tier approach*. (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Inc. (2015. 3rd ed, e-textbook available)

Fox, B. J., and Hull, M. A. (2005). *Phonics for the teacher of reading*, (9th Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Inc.

Johnson, K. R., and Street, E. M. (2013). *Response to intervention and precision teaching: Creating synergy in the classroom*. New York: Guilford Press.

Joseph, L. M. (2006). *Understanding, Assessing, and Intervening on Reading Problems*. NASP. Bethesda, MD.

Oakhill, J., Berenhaus, M. S. and Cain, K. (2015). *The Oxford handbook of reading*. New York: Oxford University Press, (Oxford Library of Psychology).

Shanahan, Timothy. (2006). The National Reading Panel Report: Practical Advice for Teachers. Learning Point Associates: Naperville, IL. Available online: <http://www.learningpt.org/pdfs/literacy/nationalreading.pdf>

SUGGESTED JOURNALS

- Education and Treatment of Children Journal
- Intervention in School and Clinic
- Preventing School Failure
- Reading and Writing Quarterly
- Remedial and Special Education
- Teaching Exceptional Children

FREE ONLINE RESOURCES

- **“About UDL: What is Universal Design for Learning? Why is UDL Necessary?” Center for Applied Special Technologies (CAST):** <http://www.cast.org/udl/index.html>
- **Achieve the Core:** <http://achievethecore.org/>
- **Beach Bags with Fun Summer Reading Activities:** <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Early-Learning/News/Beach-Bags-offer-Fun-Reading-Activities-for-Summer>
- **Elementary Video modeling of Explicit Instruction:** <http://explicitinstruction.org>
- **“For Educators: Student Center Activities.” Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR):** <http://www.fcrr.org/for-educators/sca.asp>
- **OHIO Guidance Manual: Third Grade Guarantee:** <http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Early-Learning/Third-Grade-Reading-Guarantee/TGRG-Guidance-Manual.pdf.aspx>
- **Parent Roadmaps:** <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Early-Learning/News/Third-Grade-Reading-Guarantee-Parent-Roadmaps>
- **Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC):** <http://www.parcconline.org/>

- **Response to Intervention videos:** <http://www.rti4success.org/>
- **Read about: Problem Solving, Reasoning, and Analytical Thinking in a Classroom Environment:** <http://www.baojournal.com/BAT%20Journal/VOL-12-1/A05.pdf>
- **Talk Aloud Problem Solving Video:** <http://www.peerinternational.org/taps.html>

RECOMMENDED DIRECT INSTRUCTION CURRICULA

- Teach your Child to Read in 100 easy lessons (preK-2)
- Reading Mastery (K-6)
- Corrective Reading (4-12)

RECOMMENDED COMPUTER-ASSISTED INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS:

- Funnix
- Headsprout
- Reading Assistant
- Reading Horizons
- Read Naturally