

SECTION 2

Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura Sites

Reading Recovery is implemented by education districts and consortia that are affiliated with university Reading Recovery centers. Typically one or more school systems decide to implement Reading Recovery and employ a teacher leader, or leaders, to train teachers for Reading Recovery. A Descubriendo la Lectura site must employ a Descubriendo la Lectura–trained teacher leader. Establishing a teacher training site requires careful study and a strong, long-term commitment from the sponsoring district or consortium. The stakeholders who collaborate to provide the structures for successful implementation within the system need to have a sense of shared responsibility for the success of each child served. To sustain the innovation over time, understandings about the purposes, rationales, and processes of the innovation must be shared and maintained. Key understandings concern the need to serve the lowest-achieving children first, to be economical with time in selecting and teaching children, and to work towards full implementation which means allocating sufficient staffing and teaching time to service the most at-risk children in the first-grade cohort.

Teacher leaders and site coordinators play a critical role in maintaining the integrity and effectiveness of Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura. Teacher leaders participate in ongoing professional development through the university training centers and Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura network to explore current developments in research and theory and hone their analytical and teaching skills. Site coordinators attend meetings organized by the university training center and receive up-to-date information and publications through their membership in RRCNA. Administrators are cautioned to refrain from stretching the roles of the Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura teacher leaders and teachers beyond their training expertise and beyond their ability to continue to perform their primary role successfully. When this happens, program results may suffer.

A. Standards and Guidelines for Establishing a Site

1. Teacher Selection

The adoption of Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura represents an investment in the development of teacher expertise and careful selection of appropriate teachers is critical to the effectiveness and success of the intervention. Standards and guidelines for teacher selection are specified in Section 3.

2. Training Classes

Training classes that center on collaborative discussion of in-progress lessons are a defining feature of Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura. Frequent

opportunities to observe and discuss lessons taught behind a one-way glass are critical for effective teacher training. The standards specified below are designed to ensure that these learning conditions are in place. A group size of eight or more teachers is needed to allow for many and varied lesson observations and a rich collaborative dialog about teaching.

Standards

- 2.01. Train classes of at least 8 and no more than 12 teachers.
- 2.02. Arrange for training teachers to earn graduate academic credit through an accredited college or university, with the teacher leader serving as instructor.
- 2.03. Meet the contact hour class requirements of the credit-granting institution.
- 2.04. Ensure that at least 80% of the training classes in any 1 year (or a minimum of 18 sessions, whichever is greater) include two behind-the-glass lessons.

3. Selection of Children

Selection of children for Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura is based on the following rationale provided by Marie Clay:

Reading Recovery is designed for children who are the lowest achievers in the class/age group. What is used is an inclusive definition. Principals have sometimes argued to exclude this or that category of children or to save places for children who might seem to “benefit the most,” but that is not using the full power of the program. It has been one of the surprises of Reading Recovery that all kinds of children with all kinds of difficulties can be included, can learn, and can reach average-band performance for their class in both reading and writing achievement. Exceptions are not made for children of lower intelligence, for second-language children, for children with low language skills, for children with poor motor coordination, for children who seem immature, for children who score poorly on readiness measures, or for children who have been categorized by someone else as learning disabled. (p. 60)

Clay, M. M. (1991). Reading Recovery surprises. In D. DeFord, C. A. Lyons, & G. S. Pinnell (Eds.), *Bridges to literacy* (pp. 55–74). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Standards

- 2.05. Select the lowest-achieving children for service first (based upon Observation Survey or Instrumento de Observación tasks) in all decisions.
- 2.06. Administer Observation Survey or Instrumento de Observación and begin service to children within 2 weeks of school opening at the beginning of the year. During the year, selection of children should occur within 2 days of an available teaching slot.
- 2.07. Ensure students selected for Descubriendo la Lectura are in a bilingual program receiving Spanish reading instruction throughout first grade.

Guidelines

- 2.08. Ensure Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura children are in heterogeneously grouped classes with exposure to peer models, appropriate curriculum, and opportunity to move to average grade-level performance.
- 2.09. Develop school teams for Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura to help monitor student progress, communicate information about the intervention, and assist with difficult selection decisions.
- 2.10. Design programs for bilingual students that will strengthen language and literacy in both languages.

B. Standards and Guidelines for Operating a Site

Standards

- 2.11. Maintain a training facility with a one-way glass and sound system for behind-the-glass lessons.
- 2.12. Maintain affiliation with a registered university training center.
- 2.13. Submit data on an annual basis to the IDEC using approved format, procedures, and materials.
- 2.14. Assure that a site report is developed annually and a copy is submitted to the university training center.
- 2.15. Continue to choose the lowest-achieving children for service first in all selection decisions.
- 2.16. Support the teacher leader in monitoring and supporting the progress of trained Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura teachers.
- 2.17. Assure consistent, daily, 30-minute individual lessons for all Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura children on all days school is in session.

- 2.18. Assure utilization of all available teaching time by avoiding delays in assessment, selection, and the teaching of Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura children.
- 2.19. Provide continuing professional development and support services for trained teachers.
- 2.20. Provide resources annually for teacher leader participation in professional development opportunities through the affiliated university training center and for site visits and consultation from the university training center.
- 2.21. Provide resources annually for teacher leader attendance at the Teacher Leader Institute and one RRCNA-approved Reading Recovery or Descubriendo la Lectura conference.
- 2.22. Assure that Descubriendo la Lectura teachers and teacher leaders hold bilingual certification or are nearing completion of requirements for certification.

Guidelines

- 2.23. Ensure that first-grade classes are heterogeneously grouped. (see 2.08)
- 2.24. Limit the number of teachers supported and monitored by the teacher leader to 42, or considerably fewer, depending on factors such as distance, the number of teachers per school, and the number of districts.
- 2.25. Consult the teacher leader on planning and budgetary issues. Teacher leader training develops understanding of the rationales for Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura elements and standards as well as an awareness of factors influencing implementation plans and decisions.
- 2.26. Continue to train appropriately selected teachers toward the goal of full implementation.
- 2.27. Collect and maintain additional data at the school, district, and site levels.
- 2.28. Obtain written agreements specifying ongoing fiscal, operational, and professional development responsibilities with all other districts for which the site will train teachers.
- 2.29. Provide means for supporting and interfacing with other programs in the school or district.
- 2.30. Examine the need for a second training and observation facility to accommodate an expanding number of training activities in districts with multiple teacher leaders.