

Introduction

Purpose of the Book List

The *Reading Recovery Book List* is intended to be a helpful resource for Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura educators in North America. Titles and levels can be guides as teachers, teacher leaders, and university trainers engage in the daily decisions of selecting books for students participating in Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura.

It is essential that Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura educators recognize the usefulness of the Book List, but realize that the list is only a resource and is of limited value unless teachers strive to “be the expert chooser and sequencer of the texts for a Reading Recovery pupil” (Clay, 1993, p. 13) and diligently attend to the teacher-child interactions which accompany the reading of the books. This is why the use of the Book List, without Reading Recovery or Descubriendo la Lectura training and ongoing professional development, is unlikely to result in accelerated progress for children receiving tutoring. Moreover, the levels used by Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura are designed especially for the children who are finding reading acquisition most difficult, and the fine gradient of difficulty is less useful for the rich primary classroom program.

How Books Are Leveled

The *Reading Recovery Book List* is a compilation of titles that may be in use at Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura sites throughout North America. Books on the list represent titles that have been leveled by Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura educators and recommended for inclusion. The Book List represents countless hours of volunteer work by trainers, teacher leaders, and teachers who engaged in an intensive review process that included an initial review and field testing of over 4,500 English titles and 1,300 Spanish titles. Under the leadership of Janet Bufalino, English title reviewers field tested the books with Reading Recovery children. Spanish titles were leveled and recommended by the Descubriendo la Lectura Book Committee. Educators who supported the process of review and field testing represent geographic, language, and cultural diversity.

Each book that was reviewed for possible inclusion was evaluated to see how well the book:

- supported strategic development;
- had text features that worked together appropriately for a particular level rather than creating undue challenges to the readers because of widely disparate features of text difficulty (language, concepts, spatial features, etc.);
- had a sufficient amount of text on which a child could engage in problem solving and practice fluent reading;
- represented ethnic, cultural, and language diversity in a way that valued all persons;
- had a story line that was of interest to children;
- had good-quality illustrations; and
- was constructed using good-quality materials.

Using the Book List

Books on the list are organized along a continuum of 20 levels, ranging in complexity from simple texts to stories similar to those found in first- and beginning second-grade readers. Levels are only approximate indicators of text difficulty and are intended to serve as a guide. A child’s prior experience, ability to employ strategies, and the richness of a story introduction will affect each child’s success in reading the same texts.