



## Reading Recovery®

### **Is Reading Recovery Aligned with a Specific Approach?**

*Marie Clay responded to this question in a 1996 newsletter article.*

Reading Recovery aims to bring a high proportion of the lowest achievers to average band performance in their classrooms in both reading and writing, getting them off to a good start in literacy learning. Even critical reviewers of the program acknowledge that such changes occur.

Children can enter Reading Recovery from any program and return to any program. Reading Recovery does not require classroom programs to change. However, some things make it harder for Reading Recovery children to continue to improve after discontinuing [their lessons], and these things include a weak classroom program or one with low achievement outcomes.

The Reading Recovery program cannot be compared with any classroom program or any teaching method. It is designed to take the children who become the lowest achievers in any classroom program and were taught by any teaching method and provide them with a series of lessons supplementary to that program.

Good classroom programs will not arise from a supplementary program like Reading Recovery. They would exclude many things I would want to see occurring in quality classrooms. A classroom program must be more extensive, more varied, with stimulating activities to meet the needs of the whole variety of talent found in classrooms.

No classroom program in the first year of instruction will be adequate for all children because those who fail have problem diagnoses that differ one from another. Therefore, there are two problems for an education system to solve: how to deliver good first instruction in literacy, and what kind of supplementary opportunity to provide for children who are low achieving in the classroom's good instructional program.

Reading Recovery professionals are trained specifically to assist the lowest achievers in a program targeted only to that group. Their first priority is to bring the Reading Recovery program to full implementation. Reading Recovery personnel also have roles as contributing members of school teams aimed at improving classroom programs.

Reading Recovery also functions as a pre-referral program offered prior to referral to special education.

Reference:

Clay, M. M. (1996). Is Reading Recovery aligned with a specific approach? *Council Connections* [newsletter], 2(1). Columbus, OH: Reading Recovery Council of North America.