

PRINCIPAL INFORMATION SERIES

Hiring the best candidates for Reading Recovery positions is critical for a successful implementation. You want to select teachers for training who have the potential for intensive, high-quality service to children with the most difficulties in literacy learning.



Reading Recovery

THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHER SELECTION

You may ask the teacher leader serving in your area to provide lists of roles and responsibilities for Reading Recovery teachers to aid in the selection process or to sit in on interviews. Regardless of what process you choose to follow, these additional points may be helpful in selecting teachers for training. They were identified by the Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE) in their external evaluation of the 4-year i3 scale-up of Reading Recovery.

Principals who prioritize the program are more apt to select strong teachers for Reading Recovery training; to collaborate with teacher leaders to ensure that teachers receive the support they need to develop their skills; and to protect Reading Recovery teachers' lesson schedules.

The level of confidence teachers and administrators have in the people associated with Reading Recovery in their school or district can easily overcome any staff questions and concerns. This finding reinforces the notion that selection of teachers to be trained in Reading Recovery is a high-stakes matter; it also suggests that the position held by a teacher in a building (e.g., seniority, centrality to teacher networks) may be an important consideration when selecting teachers for training.

Reading Recovery teachers' instructional strength ultimately rose above all other findings of the implementation study as the most important issue in the effectiveness of lessons and a likely source of the school-to-school variation in impacts.

Your teacher leader is a valuable resource. Administrators and teachers must share a strong commitment to high-quality implementation of Reading Recovery within their schools. Please enlist the help of your local teacher leader who can provide job posting information, sample interview questions, consultation on teacher candidates, and the standards and guidelines that ensure fidelity of the implementation.

From the CPRE Report

Our research on instructional strength in Reading Recovery reveals that the strongest teachers bring a set of “background” attitudes and dispositions to their practice. These attributes interact with Reading Recovery training to facilitate the development of deliberate, dexterous practice. Specifically, we find that these teachers exhibit:

- **Openness to change** - This fundamental openness, said one university trainer, “sets the stage” for the reflectiveness and learning mindset that characterize deliberate Reading Recovery teachers.
- **Excellent interpersonal skills** - Strong Reading Recovery teachers also possess excellent relational and communication skills. Strong teachers are skilled at managing relationships with their colleagues at school—in particular, the 1st-grade teachers who work with the students most of the day. In addition, these teachers are skilled at interacting not only with children but with their families as well.
- **A strong work ethic** - Strong teachers' willingness to “do whatever it takes” to come to each lesson fully prepared—having documented and carefully analyzed the prior lesson, reflected on the success of the previous lesson's instruction and on the child's trajectory overall, and prepared a plan for the new lesson. Deliberate practice is therefore facilitated in part by a commitment to doing the work of a strong teacher, regardless of the time demands.
- **Belief in the ability of all students to learn** - Strong Reading Recovery teachers bring to their practice a deep belief that every child can learn to read and write well. Strong teachers understand that every student learns differently, and that some may face greater challenges in becoming proficient readers than others. (p. 100)



Resource

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