

Finally Seeing the Link Between Theory and Practice

Lynne Brandenburg, Reading Recovery Teacher Leader, Rock Island, Illinois



Marie Clay and Lynne Brandenburg, Reading Recovery teacher leader.

Reading Recovery teacher leader training in 1991–1992 at the University of Illinois opened a whole new world to me as a reading and literacy educator. I finally saw the link between theory and practice after decades as a teacher! I'm delighted to work with children and teachers daily in Reading Recovery. I'm awed by each teacher's insights and each child's progress within their zone of proximal development. The constructive learning of each teacher, teacher leader, and child, and Reading Recovery as a preventive intervention are concepts which I would not want to have missed in my career as an educator. Thank you, Marie Clay!

From Reading Recovery Teacher to Principal to Teacher Leader

Anne Jordan, Reading Recovery Teacher Leader-in-Training, Central Maine Site, Dexter, Maine

I entered Reading Recovery training following 6 years in the classroom, and it was a profound career move for me. The support and encouragement that occurs when you are involved in the Reading Recovery program is like no other. The theory and training came easily to me, as I had a solid foundation to build upon having worked with young readers and writers in the classroom. It was wonderful to now have a whole group of people ready to discuss my teaching of an individual student. For years, students were taken out of my first-grade classroom for Reading Recovery and seemingly magically transformed into readers and writers. I was thrilled to now be a part of that magic.

When I became the elementary principal in my district, I wanted desper-

ately to be a catalyst for teacher learning and professional development in our district. I found that I brought to my principalship from my Reading Recovery training a practical wealth of knowledge about literacy learning. During team meetings for students struggling with literacy acquisition, I could understand and translate for parents what the classroom teachers and Reading Recovery teachers' concerns were. I had learned how to be empathetic and supportive with parents and how to involve them in their child's learning. I learned how to make partnerships with our already strong Reading Recovery program to strengthen the school overall. It was seeing the benefits Reading Recovery had on our district as a systemic intervention that helped us continue to grow.

I have since shifted positions once again and am in training as a Reading Recovery teacher leader. I want to help other teachers learn to work magic with students and see the pure enthrallment when a child realizes that he or she can read and write. I came back to the world I once knew to feel like a master of something rather than a jack-of-all-trades. Every day that I see a child's eyes light up with that moment of realization that they have just done something previously out of their reach confirms that I am now indeed home.