

## The Guarantee

*Cynthia Hutchinson, Reading Recovery Teacher, Palm Beach, Florida*  
The Journal of Reading Recovery, *Spring 2004*

While working in the staff room  
One busy, August day,  
A group of teachers chatted and  
Here's what one had to say...

"How Johnny makes me worry!  
He's fragile—insecure.  
I'm not sure how to help him.  
I try, but he needs more.

He doesn't know his letters—  
He thinks a *v*'s a *y*.  
He struggles so with reading,  
It makes me want to cry."

A different voice rose softly  
Yet firmly, from the group...  
"So you're our brand new teacher...  
Well, welcome to our school!

We all have little Johnnies  
And little Janies, too,  
But we have something special here  
For kids and teachers, too!

Our school has Reading Recovery!  
Do you know what that means?  
It means that struggling children  
Will have a better chance to read!

All Reading Recovery teachers  
Must study for a year:  
To learn good reading strategies  
The process must be clear.

Then they teach the lowest readers  
(That frustrate me and you),  
They teach them up to 20 weeks  
And know just what to do.

They look at kids' confusions  
And build on what kids know.  
They teach kids how to check themselves  
And help themselves to grow.

These teachers are relentless.  
They really don't remediate.  
They analyze and focus—  
Then our kids accelerate!

Your Johnnies and Janies will be helped.  
They'll all read, *I guarantee!*  
Now that you're teaching at a school  
That has Reading Recovery!"

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## A Change of Course

Donna B. Franklin, *Reading Recovery Parent, Capitol Heights, Maryland*  
The Running Record, *Spring 1997*

*The author dedicated this poem to Pat Gird, her son's Reading Recovery teacher.*

A small child  
*l o s t* in frustration  
drifted in loneliness  
in a sea of  
*confusion.*

To the child,  
the seas were black-gray and unforgiving;  
the skies were dark and  
unwielding to the sun;  
the winds were cold and cruel.

The child was on the verge of giving up  
when a life-saver appeared—  
Not a foam ring that floated past by happenstance,  
but a life-saver in the form of a  
wise and loving woman who  
came armed with great purpose and  
determination to change the course of  
the drifting child.

Once the Wise One held tight the  
child's hand, his vision changed.  
No longer was he drifting aimlessly,  
for now he had a *destination!*  
He was part of an exciting adventure  
on the high seas, with a trusted friend to  
help him to face challenges with courage  
and turn them into successes.

His companion has gone on to rescue  
other drifting boats,  
but *he sails on!*  
For he is the captain of  
his own destiny and will  
sail steady and straight and sure.