

CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

Officially launched during the 2020 National Conference,
the 35th year of Reading Recovery in North America
began with the 2019–20 school year.
This special section continues the celebration.

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Reflections on 35 Years of Reading Recovery in North America

Editor's note: For this celebration of the 35th anniversary of Reading Recovery in the U.S., we asked the three professors from The Ohio State University who worked to implement Reading Recovery in Ohio and establish training centers across the U.S. to reflect on this momentous occasion.

Gay Su Pinnell

*Professor emeritus and trainer emeritus
The Ohio State University*

As we celebrate 35 years of Reading Recovery in the U.S., it's fitting to reflect on how Marie Clay's words have influenced our work. Marie Clay was a precise user of words. She thought carefully and deeply about her choices of vocabulary. Her publications were crafted with an eye to clear communication with her readers. You notice this as you read her work, but as you enter Reading Recovery training, you become even more aware of Clay's words and your own. Marie's attention to language over the years brings one idea to clarity: language communicates thinking and, in turn, shapes thinking.

Many of us over our years of study have found that Clay's thoughtful consideration of language pushes us to deeper thinking and even new ideas. I'll mention just a few examples. When we became involved in Reading Recovery, the word *acceleration* made an impact — not a new word but one being used in a new way to shape our expectations. We were always proud of the “progress” that our students made. But students who are lagging behind along the trajectory of literacy learning must do more than that. They must accelerate to reach the usual trajectory; otherwise, the paths will be parallel rather than converging and the gap will remain (or widen) as the years go on. That inspiring concept strikes to the heart of the purpose of what used to be called “remedial” education. Students must catch up and keep going; teachers make it happen.

Let's try another word: *strategy* (later spoken by Clay as *strategic actions*). That word was extensively used in literacy education usually to refer to a set of teaching moves or a new study system. Clay moved our use of strategy to a consideration of the complexity of the human brain as the child becomes literate. She also wrote about how the com-

bination of a few items and a powerful strategy truly support a self-extending system. Becoming literate is building a complex system of strategic actions rather than acquiring pieces of knowledge, such as phonograms, one at a time. Yes, the young reader does accumulate these items but learning accelerates through using information to process continuous text.

There is room for one more — *conversation*, an ordinary, day-to-day word. But in Clay's work, it becomes a description of the powerful teaching interactions in which the teacher listens very carefully (and “notices”) the learner before responding in a way that will focus attention on the information he needs or an action to take. This way of working alongside the child provides succinct and precise guidance but keeps the control within the learner's actions. It supports the strategic actions that build the system. The young learner is *active* in problem solving, using all of the sources of information available to him, and processing a text with proficiency and comprehension, every day. There are many more words that Clay has helped us use in a thoughtful way, revealing new insights into teaching. That is one of her greatest gifts.

Carol A. Lyons

*Professor emeritus and trainer emeritus
The Ohio State University*

Congratulatory greetings to the Reading Recovery community of administrators, university trainers, teacher leaders, and teachers on our 35th anniversary in North America. This is a major and significant accomplishment for all involved in the implementation of Reading Recovery because for the last 35 years, over 2.4 million children who were at highest risk of not learning to read in first grade have learned how to read. This feat could not have been achieved without 35 years of careful research and excellent teaching.

As a primary and special education teacher for 8 years before starting graduate school, I learned first-hand how difficult it is to teach struggling children how to read. It wasn't until 1979, when I heard Marie Clay lecture at Ohio State, that I began to understand the complexities of learning in general and becoming literate.



Through the years ... Diane DeFord, Gay Su Pinnell, and Carol Lyons



Successfully teaching three children labeled “learning disabled” and “language/developmentally delayed” during my Reading Recovery training year in 1985–1986 convinced me that Reading Recovery works. Why? Because teachers have learned *what* the reading and writing processes look like over time; *how* to carefully observe and respond to children’s developing growth and behaviors; *how* to develop rationales for their decisions; and *why* it is important to *accelerate* a child’s progress so that they can catch up and join in with their successful peers. Most importantly, daily interactions with struggling first-grade readers have helped teachers to better understand and address the emotional side of learning and the idiosyncratic needs of struggling readers.

Finally, to Reading Recovery teachers everywhere ... Your efforts are oftentimes not known, recognized, or appreciated, but the children you reach and teach will be forever thankful. You have prevented them from experiencing a lifetime of frustration and reading failure. On behalf of all the struggling children who have had Reading Recovery and their parents and families, thank you for making such a big difference in their lives forever.

Diane DeFord
Distinguished professor emeritus
The University of South Carolina

From my first observation of a Reading Recovery lesson early in 1985, I was captured by the astonishing progress a young reader could make with the skillful tutelage of an accomplished teacher. I could see how the teacher’s keen observations, use of supportive language, and the lesson framework that focused on both reading and writing was integral to the progress he had made. My professional journey through Reading Recovery, begun in the fall of 1985, has been the highlight of my career. It has fed my

intellectual growth, deepened my theoretical understandings, impacted my teaching of children and adults, and influenced the research I’ve done. I believe the future of Reading Recovery is in the capable hands of its teachers, teacher leaders, university trainers, researchers, and school administrators who each contribute to the quality of each implementation and the results we’ve achieved. We all owe our success to the genius of Dr. Marie Clay who developed this highly effective educational innovation.

In celebration of the 35th anniversary of Reading Recovery in North America, I was asked to contribute to this special issue of *The Journal of Reading Recovery*. As I reread my most treasured materials, I was struck by three themes that continue to impress me: Innovation, Endurance, and Effectiveness.

Innovation is woven throughout Reading Recovery’s history: (a) from Marie’s initial research in 1966; (b) her assessment tools, originally published in 1972; (c) the research and development that led to Reading Recovery instructional procedures and professional education program; and (d) the body of research that has sustained Reading Recovery to this day. Endurance is seen in our consistency of service to schools and the growth we have achieved. Effectiveness is proven by the research that documents the quality of the results we achieve with children, teachers, and schools.

With every Reading Recovery event I attend, every lesson I see, and every new article I read, I am awed that I was granted the opportunity to participate in and personally benefit from my involvement in Reading Recovery. This comprehensive approach to literacy instruction is advancing changes in each educational system we enter, and for each child we touch. For that, I am thankful.

U.S. Reading Recovery's International Presence

Mary Anne Doyle, University of Connecticut

Our reflections of the 35th anniversary of Reading Recovery® in the United States highlight stellar, unparalleled accomplishments in the history of literacy education in America. Imagine an innovation enjoying such endurance in our nation during times of ongoing ‘reading wars’ and quests for the ‘quick fix’ that will ensure that ‘no child is left behind.’ Reading Recovery educators have forged a unique, different path and present a remarkable story — validated by data. Resultantly, we have advanced our nation’s commitment to supporting all learners in realizing their full potential, unbridled by equal access to high-quality educational opportunities, most essential of which is literacy. For children struggling to acquire beginning literacy, Reading Recovery educators have provided the powerful instruction that ensures their access to this basic civil liberty.

While the distinction and contributions that mark Reading Recovery’s anniversary nationally are the primary foci of our current celebrations, Reading Recovery holds a prominent place on the international stage. Hence, our national story contributes to and extends an international story of development and success. There is a reciprocal relationship between international Reading Recovery implementations, and this is by design, one of Marie Clay’s goals.

The purpose of this discussion is to explore Marie Clay’s vision for the international presence of Reading Recovery, to detail Clay’s structures for international development and strength, and to highlight the collaborative role enjoyed by our U.S. Reading Recovery network. Our international story further enhances the celebrations of our remarkable, national accomplishments.

Initial International Connections

When pioneering educators at The Ohio State University invited Marie Clay to join them in Columbus to launch the inaugural Reading Recovery training class in the U.S., they were initiating international exchange, collabora-

tion, and exploration. At that time, Reading Recovery was well underway in New Zealand and was being introduced to educators in Australia. Clay’s reaction to these new ventures, beyond New Zealand, was cautious optimism. She was very aware of the differences in mores, policies, practices, and attitudes in each new, national entity, and she recognized that such differences presented challenges to be addressed as each new intervention was initiated.

Questions included:

- Would the training for teachers be adequate?
- What implementation modifications would need to be made to accommodate for different contextual and educational factors?
- Would it work?

Identifying our nation’s unique needs, Clay determined what modifications to her systemic innovation were acceptable and what procedures had to be maintained to ensure that the replication was grounded in the established research. “Using a process of accommodation, she found adaptive ways to implement Reading Recovery without lessening the high standards that lead to optimal results for both teachers and children” (Doyle, 2009, pp. 292–293).

The answers to the initial questions of Reading Recovery’s effectiveness in the U.S. were resoundingly positive. Our Reading Recovery teachers profited from their training and achieved intervention goals. From the earliest years of implementation, annual evaluations of their student data confirmed the efficacy of Clay’s program design, including teacher training and implementation strategies. Thus, exploration of the transfer of this early intervention from New Zealand to the U.S. confirmed remarkable success and promise for international exchange and collaboration guided by astute and informed planning.

As the international presence of Reading Recovery grew to encompass additional English-speaking nations, Clay built on the models of success in New Zealand, Australia,

and the U.S. to inform these ventures. Hence, Reading Recovery teachers in each nation deliver the same Reading Recovery intervention with appropriate modifications to accommodate for the respective national, academic, and cultural realities. Their success, confirmed by annual data evaluations, reveal Reading Recovery works! This revolutionary intervention strategy, replicated across settings and countries by many teachers under different educational policies, creates new possibilities for children struggling to acquire initial literacy (Clay, 2001).

In writing about factors that contributed to the international success of Reading Recovery, Clay (2009b) asserted that “Reading Recovery professionals have learned how to hold fast to principles, practices, and rationales while at the same time allowing for variability in the education practices and beliefs and change over time in society” (p. 222). More generally, Clay (2001) suggested that design features key to the success of Reading Recovery in the U.S. and all other international contexts include

- guidelines for program delivery.
- a long period of training that prepares teachers to be decision makers.
- lesson components that support perceptual/cognitive processing.
- a complex theory of literacy learning.
- a theory of constructive individuals pushing the boundaries of their own knowledge, rather than group led through each step by a teacher. (pp. 299–301)

Hence, accommodating for these features has involved all of us in

- operating Reading Recovery implementations according to our standards and guidelines for Reading Recovery in the U.S. developed by trainers and updated on an ongoing basis;
- ensuring that all Reading Recovery training is high-caliber, graduate-level coursework delivered over an academic year — followed by continuing professional development opportunities for all Reading Recovery professionals;
- applying Clay’s Reading Recovery instructional procedures, designed to reflect her literacy processing theory, with fidelity and consistency; and

- observing and honoring each learner’s unique strengths, scaffolding instruction to ensure the learner’s construction of new learning, and creating a unique path to success for each child in one-to-one settings.

Clay observed that adherence to these key factors, directing both implementation and instruction, were essential to guard against ineffective, unproven practices that would jeopardize children’s chances of learning (Clay, 2009b). This has remained true for our 35 years of Reading Recovery.

Clay’s problem solving of U.S. issues led to very specific structures and practices for us. Among these are the establishment of university training centers (UTCs) and the acquisition of a U.S. trademark for Reading Recovery. Our UTCs are directed by trainers and serve as the coordinating unit for Reading Recovery training, implementation, monitoring, expansion, and research. This work involves both local and national concerns. Then and now, our university trainers offer the research capacity to conduct both the rigorous self-evaluations necessary to examine the effectiveness of the national implementation and ongoing investigations of complex issues that contribute to the development of new understandings.

Trainers, faculty members at a UTC, are responsible for providing the advanced, university course work that individuals pursue to secure the qualifications and expertise to fulfill the role of teacher leader. They instruct trainees in research, practical knowledge, and leadership to prepare them to train teachers effectively and to engage with their administrators and the public in explaining and advocating for Reading Recovery. Trainers also play an important role in supporting the professional learning of teachers and monitoring the implementation at all levels “to prevent massive change so that it no longer fulfills its promise” (Clay, 2009b, p. 239). As needed, this monitoring leads to problem solving with teacher leaders and administrators to ensure that the intervention will remain powerful and be sustained.

The need to seek a U.S. trademark for Reading Recovery, which is held by The Ohio State University, became important to protect Reading Recovery from look-alike, substitute programs. The trademark is an assurance of quality and protection for our schools from any program deviations to Clay’s research-based Reading Recovery. In effect, Clay knew “how destructive unlimited variants and poor training could be to an intervention which had dem-

onstrated that children who were hard to teach could succeed under a special set of conditions” (Clay, 2009b, p. 239).

Our innovation now in its 35th year is an exemplar of successfully sustaining an intervention’s effectiveness and relevance by adhering to standards for implementation and instruction with fidelity. This unwavering commitment to excellence and integrity by implementing Reading Recovery as designed is the practice that will ensure the ongoing, powerful impact of Reading Recovery in the U.S.

Organizing for International Collaboration

While working globally and supporting the successful expansion of Reading Recovery to three continents, Clay promoted international collaboration. She valued international communication and she realized the benefits accrued by sharing research, implementation challenges, and successful problem solving across borders.

For example, when U.S. educators launched Reading Recovery in Ohio, the experiences of the New Zealand and Australian educators were beneficial prototypes. Then, the successful processes for initiating Reading Recovery in the U.S. became models for the initiation of Reading Recovery in the U.K. (Burroughs-Lange, 2009). With Clay’s guidance, the successful redevelopment of Reading Recovery in Spanish (Rodríguez, 2007) established the processes followed by Reading Recovery professionals engaged in redeveloping Reading Recovery in French (Canada), Danish, and currently Maltese (Malta).

For many years (1983–2001), Clay served as the liaison, ambassador, proponent, and problem solver of Reading Recovery internationally. At the same time, her vision was to create a leadership body and structures that would weave the separate, national Reading Recovery entities into an international collaborative charged with sustaining Reading Recovery around the world. In this way, Clay transferred her global role(s) for Reading Recovery implementations to the international trainers in a well-planned way. This led to the establishment of the International Reading Recovery Trainers Organization (IRRTO) launched in 2001. Per Clay’s design, IRRTO “guides, supports and monitors every participating Reading Recovery intervention in each language in which it is available (at present, in English, Danish, French, and Spanish)” (Clay, 2016, p. 4).

IRRTO members are the trainers affiliated with all trademark Reading Recovery implementations across the globe. This organization’s leadership is vested in an elected executive board of five trainers giving equal representation to five countries. Currently, members of the board include Prudence Smith (Australia), Allyson Matczuk (Canada), Christine Boocock (New Zealand), Susan Bodman (the United Kingdom/Europe), and Elizabeth Kaye (the United States). They are supported by Executive Chair Mary Anne Doyle.

With Marie Clay’s guidance, IRRTO developed structures and procedures to assure that Reading Recovery professionals sustain implementations of Reading Recovery internationally, address ongoing change and development, and ensure that Reading Recovery’s future remains dynamic (Doyle, 2009). The specific functions of the executive board as detailed by Clay (2016) are:

- To conduct ongoing monitoring of Reading Recovery by requesting annual reports of national data collection from each of the five national trademark holders.
- To respond to challenges to the implementation of Reading Recovery at the international level and to specific national issues if these have international ramifications according to IRRTO’s set of standards.
- To support ongoing research in order to provide direction for change and growth in Reading Recovery through international collaboration and investigation.
- To consider ramifications for IRRTO member countries of a significant body of research findings.
- To consider recommendations for changes in policy, implementation, and/or practices of Reading Recovery on the basis of international collaboration and research.
- To oversee international developments including the introduction of Reading Recovery in a new country and/or re-development of Reading Recovery in another language. (p. 4)

IRRTO is designed to serve all professionals engaged in Reading Recovery. Therefore, each professional engaged in the U.S. trademark program has a direct connection to the benefits and services of IRRTO through their local teacher leader and UTC. The international trainers, IRRTO members, meet approximately every 18 months; they present an international institute for all Reading Recovery professionals and their colleagues every 3 years. Each international institute has been very successful, and

participants have reported valuing the unique opportunities to meet and engage with international colleagues in Reading Recovery. The U.S. trainers have hosted this institute in Maui (1992), Palm Springs (1995), and Baltimore (2007). The 2022 institute will also be held in the U.S.

Sharing International Discoveries

As Clay envisioned, the opportunities for international collaboration have promoted shared problem solving and beneficial discoveries resulting from the exploration of common challenges. In the earliest years of Reading Recovery's expansion, Marie Clay monitored international developments and ensured communication of new learning across the global network. Several examples of discoveries of importance to all Reading Recovery educators relate to instructional and implementation practices (Clay, 2009b) and include the following:

- Discovery of the consistency in the amount of time needed for a child's series of lessons, culminating in the learner's independent, proficient literacy processing, to average from 12 to 20 weeks.
- Discovery that children's learning did not show any differences across countries, except for those associated with age or created by different classroom programs and learning opportunities.
- Discovery that discontinuing rates depend on a number of factors, including whether daily lessons are delivered in addition to the length of the school year.
- Discovery of the challenges in training teachers due to their hidden assumptions about literacy and learning that indicate important foci of training.
- Discovery of the potential cost effectiveness for the education systems as approximately two thirds of those receiving the intervention are returned to average levels of performance in all the countries offering Reading Recovery.

These discoveries, based on observations documented repeatedly in settings across the globe, were beneficial in "providing a guideline within which to shape our expectations and policies" (Clay, 2009b, p. 233) and in confirming the soundness of decisions related to many implementation factors. The related guidelines have remained key to both established and new Reading Recovery implementations in all instances.

The discoveries that have had the most relevance for us all are those verified by the formal studies conducted by Marie Clay and by an international body of researchers who have studied key questions for over 35 years. Marie Clay has shared that the earliest studies of the Reading Recovery intervention addressed her question: "What is possible when we change the design and delivery of traditional education for children that teachers find hard to teach?" (Clay, 2009a, p. 98). Conducting both developmental studies examining instructional and training procedures and field studies verifying exciting outcomes with children, Clay established the evidence-based foundation upon which all subsequent implementations around the

Marie Clay engaged in and inspired continuous attention to new questions and new issues. Her challenges to the international network of trainers include investigations that not only guide implementation and redesign processes, but also extend theoretical understandings of literacy processing and children's literacy learning changing over time.

world have been built. Resultantly, we are confident that Reading Recovery is an optimal early intervention in literacy education. The theoretical base for Reading Recovery is robust and is supportive of our understandings of how children learn, how teachers can teach, and how a delivery system can be designed and launched in a wide array of settings (Doyle, 2009).

Most importantly, Marie Clay engaged in and inspired continuous attention to new questions and new issues. Her challenges to the international network of trainers include investigations that not only guide implementation and redesign processes, but also extend theoretical understandings of literacy processing and children's literacy learning changing over time. These are global terms for Marie Clay's unending curiosity as a developmental psychologist focused on the construction of new knowledge regarding children's development and the contributions of this research to inform and improve instruction.

Since the early years of our implementation, Reading Recovery investigations have been conducted by our national Reading Recovery trainers as well as a number of interested researchers unaffiliated with our network. Likewise, important and informative research of Reading Recovery has been conducted by colleagues in international settings. The result is a research base of the practices and outcomes of Reading Recovery that has “been used to continuously develop and refine Reading Recovery professional practice, optimizing the outcomes of local implementations everywhere” (Schwartz, 2009, p. 162). Schwartz summarizes this body of research as follows:

- Carefully controlled experimental studies that show the efficacy of Reading Recovery in lifting students’ literacy achievement in schools.
- Evaluation studies conducted annually by each national authority that show replication of results across thousands of education settings.
- Evaluation research documenting the sustained effects of Reading Recovery instruction and the reduction of achievement gaps among subgroups of learners.
- Meta-analyses and large-scale independent assessments of the body of research arising from Reading Recovery confirming its positive effects.

A newer avenue of international research and development was introduced with Clay’s (2005a, 2005b) publication of *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals, Parts 1 and 2*. For the first time, Marie Clay confirmed the appropriateness of applications of Reading Recovery instructional procedures with two new sets of learners struggling with early literacy acquisition. These groups include special education students and English language learners, including students beyond Grade 1, up to age 9. The international Reading Recovery trainers were charged with establishing the standards and strategies for this Literacy Lessons™ intervention for their respective countries.

Clay (2016) detailed required parameters for new standards for Literacy Lessons including the requirement for an appropriate trademark in each participating nation. To date, the U.S. trainers have developed, explored, and monitored Literacy Lessons training for teachers and instruction for students making it possible for sites across the country to engage in this venture. They are also examining annual data collected on all participating students to explore the effects of the implementation. Our exciting

work is available to inform our international colleagues as other Reading Recovery sites in other nations launch new implementations of Literacy Lessons. The problem solving shared by our international network will enhance implementation efforts and extend understandings of Literacy Lessons.

In summary, international exchanges provide beneficial opportunities for shared explorations, learning, and identification of new issues and research directions. Ongoing research, conducted internationally by trainers and others, must continue to inform and direct new developments.

Future Directions

Our national Reading Recovery, 35-year celebration is enhanced by the story of our international presence. The reciprocal nature of our collaboration and exploration with the global network of Reading Recovery professionals has enriched our work and offers promise for the future.

My response to questions about the future of Reading Recovery has always been that our future is secure because I trust Marie Clay’s processes — the carefully designed system, the strong research base, the ongoing monitoring of annual data, the evidence-based decision making, and the commitment to professional learning. Clay (2001) attributed our international success to the central tenets of Reading Recovery: tentativeness, flexibility, and problem solving. These qualities are found in how national leaders have negotiated solutions to all implementation challenges as well as how teachers have designed series of lessons for individual learners. The continued success of Reading Recovery/Literacy Lessons rests on our strong foundation created with Marie Clay and supported over 35 years with unwavering commitment to Reading Recovery’s theoretical base and research evidence.

The story of Reading Recovery, derived from our national and international efforts, details an unparalleled demonstration of a successful educational innovation on an international scale. In varying contexts found in the range of countries served, with diverse populations of students, Reading Recovery educators have successfully reduced early literacy learning difficulties. Likewise, for those students served by a redevelopment of Reading Recovery in Spanish, French, or Danish, the results are equally strong. We are therefore afforded a global view of Reading Recovery that both enhances shared understandings and informs ongoing inquiry.

The International Reading Recovery Trainers Organization formalizes our international network and provides leadership and guidance by collaborating across national entities, responding to issues, supporting growth and development, and exploring new research directions. Ongoing research efforts are needed to continue the quest for understanding multiple theoretical and implementation issues and to maintain our relevance. An exciting initiative launched by our U.S. Reading Recovery educators involves applying the investigative processes of improvement science (Bryk, 2015) to explore a range of implementation issues. U.S. and Canadian colleagues are engaged in this work; their efforts and their findings will be an important contribution to Reading Recovery internationally and continue the reciprocal relationship and sharing that Marie Clay envisioned.

In summary, the inquiries conducted by researchers within and beyond our Reading Recovery network will combine to form a vast resource of understandings and insights key to the dynamic future of Reading Recovery and Literacy Lessons. This quest and future discoveries will sustain Marie Clay's rich legacy and refine understandings that enlighten the world as to: What is possible? May the celebrations continue!

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About the Author

Dr. Mary Anne Doyle is chair of the International Reading Recovery Trainers Organization Executive Board and is a past president of the Reading Recovery Council of North America. She is the consulting editor for the Marie Clay Literacy Trust and assists with the ongoing republication of Clay's many texts.



Dr. Doyle is a Reading Recovery trainer emeritus, former professor of education in the Neag School of Education at the University of Connecticut, and former director of Reading Recovery in Connecticut. Her interests include early reading and writing development, literacy assessment, and literacy instruction. She is a former editor-in-chief of *The Journal of Reading Recovery* and has served as an area editor of the *Journal of Literacy Research*.

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Training Centers Help Ensure Fidelity and Sustainability

Current U.S. trainers share brief comments on the history and significant contributions made by their university training centers, presented in chronological order by the year established, and followed by the Canadian network of regional training centers.

The Ohio State University — 1984

Trainers: Jamie Lipp, Lisa Pinkerton, Jim Schnug

Reading Recovery® was introduced in the United States through The Ohio State University (OSU) by two professors—Gay Su Pinnell and Charlotte Huck—who traveled to New Zealand to meet Marie Clay and learn more about the intervention. That same year, Marie Clay and Barbara Watson came to Ohio to train Dr. Pinnell as the first university trainer, three teacher leaders, and 13 teachers from Columbus City Schools. The rapid expansion of Reading Recovery across the U.S. was led by Dr. Pinnell, along with Drs. Carol Lyons and Diane DeFord. Marie Clay requested that OSU hold the trademarks for both Reading Recovery and Literacy Lessons™ in the United States. OSU is one of two university training sites training university trainers. In 2010, OSU was awarded a \$54 million grant to scale up Reading Recovery across the U.S. The grant required matching funds of \$9 million for a total of \$63 million. OSU has trained 58 teacher leaders who have trained 3,270 teachers who worked with 206,600 Reading Recovery students.

Ongoing collaboration with school districts and OSU faculty led to the development of a project to train building-level coaches to support primary teachers which was initially called Early Literacy Learning Initiative. Later, capacity to train coaches for upper grades and middle school was added and the name changed to Literacy Collaborative. Another significant project emerging from OSU's work with Reading Recovery was the design of KEEP BOOKS, inexpensive yet interesting little books designed for young readers using natural language.

National Louis University — 1988

Trainers: Mary Ann Poparad, JaNiece Elzy

Through initial teacher leader preparation and continuing professional networking, the National Louis Reading Recovery Center for Literacy has supported early literacy

teaching and learning networks that have reached nearly 100,000 first-grade children over the last 30 years. In recent years, through a collaboration with other UTCs and under the Partnerships in Comprehensive Literacy Model, the center developed a regional literacy leadership network; created K–12 literacy coach training courses; and designed a system for providing technical assistance around school improvement processes, curriculum development, and instructional intervention services that included Reading Recovery. Through the National Louis University-Tampa campus, the UTC established a Reading Recovery leadership network of 10 teacher leaders and site coordinators representing five major Florida school districts. Currently, the UTC supports 38 teacher leaders for Reading Recovery, Descubriendo la Lectura and Literacy Lessons in 120 school districts and four states (Florida, Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin).

Clemson University — 1989

Trainer: C.C. Bates

Throughout its almost 30-year history, the Clemson University Reading Recovery and Early Literacy Training Center (CUTC) has remained committed to working with teacher leaders and teachers to support literacy teaching and learning. As a result, close to 100,000 children have been served by Reading Recovery professionals in South Carolina. The CUTC's geographic location has always presented some challenges. Positioned in the northwest corner of the state, it is not centrally located. To this end, the CUTC has examined ways in which it can provide virtual professional learning for teachers regardless of their proximity to Clemson University. In recent years, the CUTC has explored various technologies for virtual coaching. While virtual coaching has not replaced face-to-face coaching, it has proved to be an alternative and cost-effective way to provide job-embedded support for teachers and students. Additionally, the center has built an extensive virtual professional learning library that

hosts a number of in-depth modules for K–2 and Reading Recovery teachers. These asynchronous resources allow teachers the opportunity to reflect and return to them as needed, accommodating their busy schedules and providing access to professional learning 24/7. The CUTC continues to operate in partnership with Clemson University, the South Carolina Reading Recovery Advisory Council, and the South Carolina Department of Education. This unique and longstanding partnership continues to support the implementation of Reading Recovery in the state.

Texas Woman's University — 1989

Trainers: Connie Briggs, Elizabeth Kaye, Annette Torres Elias, Nancy Anderson

Texas Woman's University (TWU) began offering credit for Reading Recovery teacher classes in 1989–1990 and hosted its first class of teacher leaders in 1990–1991. TWU is one of two UTCs to train university trainers, and it is the only UTC to train Descubriendo la Lectura (DLL) trainers and teacher leaders. Across the last 30 years, TWU has trained more than 20 trainers (including 6 for DLL), more than 220 teacher leaders, and well over 35,000 Reading Recovery teachers. TWU supports and values the relationships with their school district partners. The network's robust implementations of Reading Recovery, DLL, and Literacy Lessons reach across the country, presently serving students in Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Washington, Colorado, and New Jersey.

TWU's trainers are actively engaged in research, including studies related to Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura effectiveness, critical topics in early literacy teaching, effectiveness of blended learning environments for Reading Recovery training, dyslexia, and longitudinal studies of students' subsequent literacy progress. Trainers have worked to strengthen and sustain Reading Recovery by taking active leadership positions in the North American Trainers Group, the Reading Recovery Council of North America, the International Reading Recovery Trainers Organization, and the Reading Recovery Improvement Science Hub.

Children's continued literacy success fuels the work of the TWU Reading Recovery Center, and TWU is grateful for the opportunity to work in partnership with thousands of dedicated educators to ensure all young children learn to read and write.

Lesley University — 1990

Trainer: Irene Fountas

Since its inception 30 years ago, the Lesley University Center for Reading Recovery has become partners with hundreds of schools to assure access and equity in literacy for every child. The center was built on the early work of Don Holdaway, scholar in residence at Lesley and close colleague of Marie Clay. He created a partnership with Lesley and the Cambridge Public Schools to develop early childhood lab classrooms so teachers could observe children learning to read by reading joyful books in whole-group and small-group contexts. His strong encouragement to bring Reading Recovery to the schools fueled the decision for Lesley to become a UTC for Reading Recovery in 1990.

The underlying theoretical principles of Reading Recovery and its significant impact precipitated attention to the potential of partnerships in changing the trajectory of progress for the lowest-achieving students and improving the literacy outcomes of all the students in the system. With colleagues from The Ohio State University, the center focused on research-based practices in elementary classrooms and piloted a small-group intervention to work alongside Reading Recovery in other elementary grades. This led to broader research and the development of comprehensive literacy approaches to literacy improvement. The Teacher Quality Study, led by Tony Bryk with The Ohio State University and Lesley University as partners, shed new light on the role of coaches in supporting effective instructional practices that lead to improved student outcomes.

With a continued focus on equity and access for every child in the system, the center team has engaged in providing professional learning for administrators, coaches, teacher leaders, specialists, and classroom teachers and engaging them in cycles of inquiry to take small steps in the journey of improvement. Realizing the critical role of collective efficacy and the need to build professional and social capacity, the UTC will continue to advocate for Reading Recovery as an essential element of a plan that addresses the success of every child.

Georgia State University — 1991

Trainers: Sue Duncan, Cliff Johnson, Katie Kurumada, K. Journey Swafford

Since 1991, Georgia State University (GSU) has been a regional Reading Recovery university training center. In that time, 81 Reading Recovery teacher leaders and 300 Reading Recovery teachers have been trained and have served more than 75,000 students. Currently, the UTC supports Reading Recovery implementations in Georgia, Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Anguilla.

In addition, the UTC supports the improvement of classroom (Successful Start, Literacy Coaching), small group (Comprehensive Intervention Model), and other one-to-one (Literacy Lessons, Literacy Processing Specialists, HEROES) initiatives. GSU trainers have provided countless professional development opportunities for inservice teachers around the region and the Uyavula Reading and Writing Project in Cape Town, South Africa.

Oakland University — 1991

Trainer: Mary Lose

With 13 Reading Recovery sites, 3 of which were established in the last 3 years and 1 additional new site forthcoming, the Oakland University (OU) Reading Recovery Center of Michigan has been a leader in early literacy intervention services for Michigan for almost 30 years. Since its establishment in 1991, the OU center has trained over 1,500 teachers of Reading Recovery and, since 2006, a combination of 174 Literacy Lessons and Literacy Support teachers. Grounded in Marie Clay's literacy processing theory, these educators have positively impacted literacy teaching and learning statewide and have reached over 115,000 young learners in daily one-to-one literacy lessons.

Noteworthy among the UTC's recent accomplishments are Reading Recovery's successful review by the Michigan Department of Education and its inclusion on the state's list of research-based effective literacy instruction professional learning programs, thus providing schools and districts with a choice of continuing development opportunities that adequately enhances teacher quality and advances their capacity to implement research-based literacy instruction. Equally impressive are the scholarly publications of OU's Reading Recovery faculty on topics of literacy research and policy that have appeared in the nation's leading professional journals including *The Elementary School Journal*, *Journal for the Education of Students*

Placed at Risk, *Reading Research Quarterly*, *The Journal of Educational Psychology*, *The Journal of Reading Recovery*, and *The Reading Teacher*. The UTC looks forward to another 35 years of success supporting teacher and teacher leader development on behalf of young children and their literate futures.

University of Maine — 1992

Trainers: Mary Rosser, Lori Taylor

A comprehensive model for continuous school improvement includes powerful classroom instruction along with a broad range of literacy interventions, providing multiple layers of differentiated instruction for learners PreK to Grade 12. Since its inception in 1992, the University of Maine Reading Recovery Training Center has expanded to include Maine Partnerships in Comprehensive Literacy, a model for school improvement targeting classroom instruction, as well as a Comprehensive Intervention Model for Grades K-12. Currently, the Maine UTC serves children and teachers in school districts in 15 of Maine's 16 counties, through 9 Reading Recovery sites.

Teacher leaders in Maine provide initial training and ongoing professional development in a variety of literacy interventions that include and reinforce Reading Recovery, in order to support schools in meeting the needs of all students, across the grade spans. The portfolio of literacy intervention trainings includes Literacy Lessons for special educators and ELL teachers, small-group interventions for Grades PreK-5 that include a dyslexia intervention within a literacy processing framework, and literacy intervention designs for Grades 6-12. Additionally, teacher leaders provide training for classroom teachers in literacy processing, to support students in general education settings. The Maine team has designed specific variations of literacy processing including Building Foundations for Literacy: Literacy Processing in PreK and K and Literacy Processing in Middle and High School Settings, where the theory and practice is applied to various age group needs to support learners in developing effective reading and writing processes.

Saint Mary's College — 1993

Trainers: Adria Klein, Deb Rich, Salli Forbes

Saint Mary's College Reading Recovery University Training Center has a long history of service with focus on early literacy programs. The only university training center in continuous operation since the beginning

of the program in California in 1993, teacher leaders and teachers from over 20 states have received training at Saint Mary's College. At this time, training is offered in Reading Recovery, DLL, and Literacy Lessons; and 55 active teacher leaders support 41 sites located in 12 states affiliated with the UTC. Four new teacher leaders are in training, plus one reactivating teacher leader — all of whom are opening new district sites in the next year. The UTC has two full-time trainers, one quarter-time trainer, and two affiliated trainer emerita.

During the 2018–2019 academic year, 5,141 children received literacy instruction from Saint Mary's affiliated teachers and teacher leaders. Supporting learners who bring a diversity of experiences is celebrated as a strength of the center. Children attend school districts that range in size from rural districts of less than 100 students to large urban centers of nearly 1.5 million students. In addition to children who receive lessons in Spanish through DLL, 25 additional languages are spoken in the homes of children. The Saint Mary's College Reading Recovery Center has had teacher leader training classes in 26 of the 27 years.

Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania — 1993

Trainer: Janet Bufalino

In 1993, Dr. Janet Bufalino entered trainer training at OSU. Funded by a state grant, her training was delivered by five extraordinary literacy educators: Gay Su Pinnell, Diane DeFord, Carol Lyons, Mary Fried, and Rosemary Estice.

Bufalino began her role as trainer at the Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania University Training Center in 1994. During her tenure, she has trained 78 teacher leaders who in turn trained approximately 4,253 teachers in the states of Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania. The literacy department faculty members have continually showed support for Reading Recovery. In fact, another literacy faculty member, Dr. Cheryl Slattery, is a trained Reading Recovery teacher.

One memorable event occurred in 2008 when Pennsylvania Secretary of Education Dr. Zahorcek, a proponent of Reading Recovery, earmarked \$5.7 million to train Reading Recovery teacher leaders and teachers. During the 3 years of the grant, 42 teacher leaders and 151 teachers from across Pennsylvania were trained.

The University of South Dakota — 1996

Trainer: Garreth Zalud

The Reading Recovery Training Center at the University of South Dakota began training Reading Recovery teachers and teacher leaders in 1997. The UTC is staffed by one person, Dr. Garreth Zalud, who has been the center's director since it started. Dr. Zalud has prepared Reading Recovery professionals who have worked in schools in South Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota, Minnesota, Montana, and Wyoming. Since its start, more than 79,000 children have benefited from the lessons provided by the teachers and teacher leaders who have affiliated with the UTC. Work has contributed to the research knowledge base regarding the effectiveness of Reading Recovery with indigenous children. Additionally, the center has provided numerous professional development opportunities to Reading Recovery stakeholders in the region throughout the years.

Emporia State University — 1998

Trainer: Annie Opat

Transforming teaching to lead emergent literacy learners in successful literacy processing is the ongoing mission at Emporia State University. Since 1998, Emporia State has supported over 23,000 children striving to learn reading and writing. Training teacher leaders, Reading Recovery, and Literacy Lessons professionals through intense graduate courses provides essential observation and theoretical study to help students achieve accelerated learning. Additionally, ongoing professional development and feedback during Reading Recovery teacher visits promote decisive, contingent teaching, thus increasing success and sustained progress. Districts utilizing Reading Recovery and Literacy Lessons provide the best intervention for their lowest-achieving literacy learners with approximately 78% achieving average or higher reading performance. Potential reduction of referrals and placements in special education is also observed, with 97% of Reading Recovery students not referred for special education.

Reading Recovery serves as part of a comprehensive approach for the lowest-achieving children and is supplemental to good classroom instruction. Literacy Lessons for special populations of students beyond first grade, specifically special education and English language learners, are interventions that Emporia State University is proud to

support, lead, and expand. Sustained success of the best early intervention available — a toast to 35 years of helping children achieve!

The University of Kentucky — 2001

Trainers: Judy Embry, Lindy Harmon

In 2000–2001, Dr. Judy Embry, under the direction of Dean Shirley Raines, College of Education, completed her trainer coursework at Texas Woman’s University and returned to establish a Reading Recovery university training center within the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development (CCLD) at the University of Kentucky. Governor and First Lady Fletcher and key legislators observed Reading Recovery lessons and small-group instruction in Frankfort. The Read to Achieve Act of 2005 provided additional funding to statewide literacy grants adding hundreds of intervention teachers to assist struggling readers throughout the Commonwealth. From 2008–2015—with bipartisan support from Governor and First Lady Beshear and Senators Dan Kelly, Jack Westwood, Robert Stivers, and others—the UTC continued to champion literacy efforts for the children of Kentucky through Read to Achieve and Reading Recovery.

Under the leadership of Dr. George Hruba, executive director of CCLD, the center received an i3 Grant to train 245 teachers and 5 teacher leaders in 223 schools and 118 districts. In 2011–2012, Dr. Lindy Harmon, under the direction of Dean Mary John O’Hair, College of Education, completed her trainer coursework at The Ohio State University.

The UTC continues to expand research with Literacy Lessons for teachers of special education/English language learners, Carnegie improvement science, technology to enhance professional learning, and increasing collaboration with classroom teachers. Across the past 19 years, the center has supported the implementation, professional learning, and student services for 45 teacher leaders, 1,286 teachers within 483 schools in 132 districts and 253,716 students.

Regional Training Centres in Canada

First introduced in Ontario and Nova Scotia in 1988, Reading Recovery expanded across Canada and is now implemented in 6 provinces and in the Yukon Territory.



In 2017, Canada also introduced Reading Recovery to the Cayman Islands in the Caribbean.

During the past year, 1,200 teachers and 61 teacher leaders served students in 1,064 schools and more than 60 school districts. Since the introduction of Reading Recovery in Canada, more than 200,000 students have benefited.

The Canadian Institute of Reading Recovery (CIRR) is a charitable organization that works collaboratively with wide-ranging and diverse educational communities and holds the royalty-free license for Reading Recovery in Canada. The CIRR was created in 1992 and formally opened in 1993 at the University of Toronto through a partnership with Scarborough Board of Education and the university faculty. Prior to this time, Canadian teacher leaders trained at the National Reading Recovery Centre in New Zealand or at The Ohio State University in the United States.

Donna Jean Forster Gill is the executive director and Sheila Barnes the current president of CIRR, which is comprised of four regions currently served by these Reading Recovery trainers:

1. Central Region, established 1992 in Ontario
Trainer: Janice Van Dyke
2. Western Region, established 1995 in Manitoba
Trainers: Allyson Matczuk and Jennifer Flight (also Caribbean implementation)
3. Atlantic Region, established 2000 in Nova Scotia
Trainers: Yvette Heffernan, Lisa Harvey, and Gretchen Gerhardt
4. Mountain Pacific Region, established 2009 in British Columbia
Trainer: Christine Fraser

As Canada is a nation of two official languages—English and French—two bilingual trainers support the imple-

mentation of Intervention préventive en lecture-écriture (IPLÉ)—Reading Recovery in French—for Francophone and French Immersion students across the country.

Among the memorable achievements:

- Nova Scotia began offering Reading Recovery in 1998. With a change in government it was dropped in 2011, but with another change in government was reintroduced in 2015. Since then, Nova Scotia has committed to ensuring equitable access to Reading Recovery and IPLÉ through the training of two additional trainers and six additional teacher leaders in 2019. Every school in Nova Scotia now has access to Reading Recovery.
- In the autumn of 2014, the first Reading Recovery Training Centre to serve a First Nations community opened. Staffed by a First Nations teacher leader, the centre provides support to Grade 1 students in Manitoba’s First Nations Schools, as well as professional development to teachers from Peguis and other nearby Manitoba communities. A second centre was added in 2017.
- In 2015–16, the CIRR and the Canadian trainer team were able to implement an alternative trainer training plan and train two new trainers in Canada. The team was again able to do this in 2018–19 and 2019–20. This approach to training new trainers has been invaluable in adding to the strength of Reading Recovery and IPLÉ.

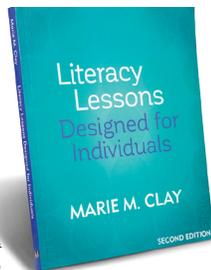


Building Independence in Writing



FREE
 to RRCNA
 Members
 in the
 e-Learning
 Center
 Until July 1

Explore Marie Clay’s guidance in a NEW video learning session!



Book not included

Building Independence in Writing

is the second session in the Deepening Reading Recovery Expertise online series from RRCNA

This new session focuses on messages about writing from Marie Clay and follows the “Building Independence in Reading” session. Both draw from the second edition of *Literacy Lessons for Individuals* for guidance.

Read, view video clips, discuss with colleagues, and strengthen your understandings in both training classes and ongoing professional development sessions.



35 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

Highlights and milestones from the past 5 years of Reading Recovery in the United States and Canada

The Fourth Decade in North America — 2015–Present

As Reading Recovery® enters the fourth decade of providing high-quality professional development for teachers and expert, responsive teaching for children, Marie Clay's publications continue to guide research and practice. New areas of study and service include Literacy Lessons™ training for special education teachers, teachers of English learners, and others who work with special populations; investigation of technology for distance learning in training and supervision of Reading Recovery teachers; and an expanded leadership role for Reading Recovery trained teachers in professional learning communities and school comprehensive literacy efforts.

With the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in December 2015, even greater emphasis is placed on evidence-based instruction. The legislation reduces the role of the federal government, giving states greater flexibility and control over education policy as they transition to full implementation by 2017. Reading Recovery ranks among the highest of all elementary reading interventions and programs meeting Strong Evidence of Effectiveness Standards under ESSA.

In March 2016, the Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE) releases *Reading Recovery: An Evaluation of the Four-Year i3 Scale-Up*. Findings from “one of the most ambitious and well-documented expansions of an instructional program in U.S. history” show the \$55 million Investing in Innovation (i3) scale-up of Reading Recovery was “highly successful.” A total of 3,747 teachers were trained, serving 61,992 students in one-to-one lessons. In addition, these Reading Recovery-trained professionals taught 325,458 students in classroom or small-group instruction. The randomized control trial study of immediate impacts in the scale-up schools—among the largest such studies ever conducted—revealed medium to large impacts across all outcome measures and a 131 percent higher growth rate over the national average rate for first-grade students.

In Canada. Canadian implementations continue to grow during this decade — even beyond its geographic borders. New teacher leaders train to expand Reading Recovery in Nova Scotia and a new Teacher Leader Training Centre opens in Vancouver to support the Mountain Pacific Region. Two trainers are trained within Canada for the first time through a collaborative plan with trainer training centers in the U.S., Texas Woman's University and The Ohio State University. This training plan is replicated in 2018–2019 to train two trainers for the Atlantic Region and in 2019–2020 to train one trainer for the Central Region, Ontario. Vintage sites celebrate milestone anniversaries, and the Caribbean Region is established in the Cayman Islands, offering Reading Recovery to all elementary schools in the country.

North American Trainers Group. Reading Recovery leadership is focusing on the future as the second half of this decade unfolds. In 2018, NATG engages Anthony Bryk and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching to explore principles and practices of improvement science as a way of operating within the Reading Recovery network. Trainers, RRCNA Board members, representative teacher leaders, teachers, site coordinators, school administrators, university deans, and researchers (IDEC and other) launch this work with Bryk at the Foundation in Palo Alto, California. NATG and RRCNA leaders consider improvement science as a way of identifying and addressing challenges within the network in a systematic and productive way. Trainers continue their professional development with the leaders of the improvement science effort, the Hub, and the improvement science consultant to create research efforts aimed at ensuring a promising future for Reading Recovery in North America.

Recognition of Reading Recovery's proven positive effects on student outcomes continues with new and updated reports from the What Works Clearinghouse, National Center on Intensive Intervention, National Center for the Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance for the Institute of Education Sciences, and others in the U.S. and Canada.

Yet despite the stellar findings, Reading Recovery continues to face past criticisms of the 'Reading Wars' and the latest “science of reading” arguments that extend even beyond the intervention — attacking many proven and well-respected reading programs. The Reading Recovery network continues to respond with data, facts, and the millions of Reading Recovery success stories of the past 35 years in North America.

2015 – A teacher and teacher leader use technology to stay in close communication. Exploration of the issues and potential uses of technology in Reading Recovery training, professional development, school visits, and ongoing communication is underway.



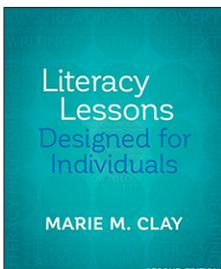
Conference. In addition, two trainers are trained in Canada for the first time.

2015 – The Marie Clay Literacy Trust continues to guide publication updates: *Becoming Literate: The Construction of Inner Control, Biks and Gutches, Change Over Time in Children’s Literacy Development, and Record of Oral Language.*



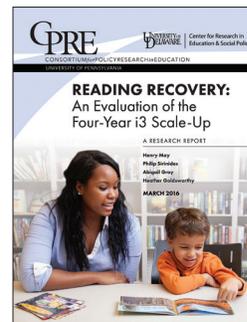
was among 33 evidence-based program models and interventions invited to the MBK Showcase and was one of only 6 with strong evidence of effectiveness that address the core tenets of the initiative.

2016 – *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals* (2nd ed.) is published by the Trust, combining the original 2005 two-part guidance into one volume.



2015 – In Canada, 12 new teacher leaders are being trained for the 2014-15 year; 6 of them in the Atlantic Division to expand Reading Recovery in Nova Scotia. Here, Canadian trainers Janice Van Dyke, Allison Matczuk, and Yvette Heffernan meet with Jeremy Burman, keynote speaker at the 2014 CIRRR

2016 – Reading Recovery: An Evaluation of the Four-Year i3 Scale-Up is published in March. Findings from “one of the most ambitious and well-documented expansions of an instructional program in U.S. history” show the \$55 million Investing in Innovation (i3) scale-up of Reading Recovery was “highly successful.” A total of 3,747 teachers were trained, serving 61,992 students in one-to-one lessons. In addition, these Reading Recovery-trained professionals taught 325,458 students in classroom or small-group instruction. In August, The What Works Clearinghouse reviews the final single study report and finds it meets standards without reservations with at least one statistically significant positive finding and at least one finding showing strong evidence of effectiveness (ESSA Tier 1).



2016 – A special themed issue of the *Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk*, released in January, focuses on advances in Reading Recovery research. The articles examine student motivation and achievement, effectiveness, scaling, and sustaining Reading Recovery.

2016 – Canada opens a new Teacher Leader Training Centre in Vancouver to support the Mountain Pacific Region.

2017 – Canada expands to the Cayman Islands, establishing the Caribbean Region and offering Reading Recovery to all elementary schools in the country.

2017 – Two more Marie Clay books are updated with second editions: *Concepts About Print* and *Running Records for Classroom Teachers*.

2017 – Throughout the year, RRCNA partners with the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) producing magazine articles, advertorials, Twitter chats, and a 30-minute video entitled, “Promising Literacy for Every Child.” The on-demand webcast extends the “Systems Change for Literacy Gains” article in the May/June issue of *Principal* magazine written by a team of Reading Recovery professionals. Both resources focus on the six essential components of a comprehensive literacy system.



2017 – In August, “The Reading Wars and Reading Recovery: What Educators, Families, and Taxpayers Should Know” appears in *Learning Disabilities: A Multidisciplinary Journal* published by the Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA). In it, the authors make misleading, misguided, and blatantly false claims about Reading Recovery. RRCNA immediately and strongly objects. Resultantly, the LDA publishes a response article, “The Truth About Reading Recovery” online and in its quarterly journal.

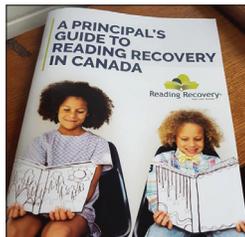
2017 – The National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII) again recognizes the evidence-proven effectiveness of Reading Recovery for students who struggle in learning to read and write. An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement, the screening tool central to Reading Recovery’s evaluation and instruction and used widely by classroom and specialist teachers and researchers, again receives the highest possible ratings on the Academic Screening Tools Chart. Reading Recovery also retains high marks on the updated Academic Intervention Tools Chart.

2018 – A National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE) report finds that 9 of the first 67 completed i3 grant evaluations — including the Reading Recovery Scale-Up — met What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards and found evidence of adequate implementation fidelity and positive impacts on student academic outcomes. Of the four scale-up interventions in the report, only Reading Recovery met both short and long-term goals of i3 and adequately represented the population served.

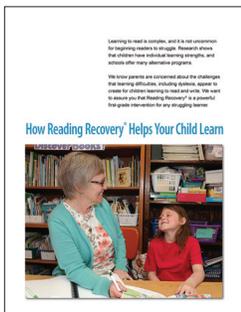


2018 – Canada celebrates anniversaries of vintage sites at Cariboo-Chilcotin (20), and Manitoba (25), where a second Reading Recovery Training Centre opens just 4 years after the first centre.

2018 – During the 2017-18 year, 1,203 teachers are trained, and two new trainers are training in Nova Scotia for the 2018-19 year. As implementations continue to grow, the Canadian Institute of Reading Recovery releases *A Principal’s Guide to Reading Recovery in Canada*, a new online publication.



2018 – RRCNA provides resources to share with classroom teachers, special education teachers, administrators, and parents detailing responses to critics of Reading Recovery. Resources correct misconceptions and illustrate how Reading Recovery instruction is appropriate for all struggling first-grade readers, including those who may be identified as dyslexic.



2018 – NATG trainers engage Anthony Bryk and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching to explore principles and practices of improvement science as a way of operating

within the Reading Recovery network. Focusing on identifying and addressing challenges in a systematic and productive way, the work continues with Phase Two beginning in 2019-20.

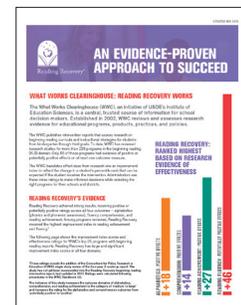
2019 – Jady Johnson retires after 16 years as RRCNA executive director and, after a nationwide search, Billy Molasso is named to the position in August.



2019 – *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* (4th ed.), is published by the Marie Clay Literacy Trust.

2019 – Canadian anniversary celebrations continue with York Regional District School Board in Ontario (25), and Prince Edward Island (20). Also in Ontario, one trainer is in training during the 2019-20 year.

2019 – Incorporating the 2016 single study i3 report (reviewed but not yet included in the WWC report), Reading Recovery ranks highest based on research evidence of effectiveness among the top 25 programs with What Works Clearinghouse beginning reading reports. Positive or potentially positive ratings are shown across all four outcomes – alphabetic (phonics and phonemic awareness), fluency, comprehension, and reading achievement.



2020 – The 2020 National Reading Recovery & K-6 Literacy Conference celebrates the 35th anniversary with a special luncheon featuring Gay Su Pinnell as guest speaker. The 4-day event offers outstanding professional development and for the first time includes a Middle Grades Institute for educators in Grades 5-8.



This update extends the original history and timeline published as a pullout section in the fall 2014 issue of *The Journal of Reading Recovery*.

Anniversary Luncheon Special Guest Speaker Gay Su Pinnell

Learning How to Make a Difference

If we begin at the real beginning, in a little house on the campus of the University of Auckland, Reading Recovery is closing in on its fifth decade of service to a particular group of children — the youngest in school and the most vulnerable. They exist in a demanding environment where they find it hard to know what is expected of them. Somehow, they are not “keeping up” and they don’t know why. Families are equally bewildered. They need to “recover” a satisfactory trajectory of progress so they can thrive in a classroom rich with literacy and in a world where there are demands for a high level of literacy.



Picture it — the 1970s, (one of my favorite decades). Marie Clay and her colleagues were watching a teacher working with a child behind a one-way glass screen. They described in detail the teacher’s moves and the child’s

responses. They noted evidence of shifts in learning. They challenged each other and engaged in analytic thinking about teaching and learning.

Clay was an expert observer of young readers’ behaviors. She received prestigious awards for her detailed observational studies of young children’s interactions with print. At the request of teachers and the national department of education in New Zealand, she created the Diagnostic Survey, a checkup at age 6, after the child in New Zealand had completed 1 year of schooling. I took this training electronically, and that’s how I was able to learn running records and teach it in my classes. Later I had the honor of learning it again and the orange Early Detection was my guide. (The first version predated even me.) Technology wasn’t at a peak in New Zealand. The first 30 minutes was a tutorial on how to use a cassette tape recorder. But professional inquiry and noticing children’s behavior were at a peak and stayed there.

Every teacher in New Zealand learned to individually administer the Diagnostic Survey and the effect was that of a volcanic eruption. They could see better, see more, as

they worked with children. They could identify children who were confused. And, they challenged Clay to help them with the children who were confused, who weren’t becoming literate on a normal trajectory. These children were bright, intelligent, but something was going wrong. What can we do? That was the challenge for Marie and her colleagues and the reason they spent so many hours watching through the one-way screen.

Marie was a special education teacher and a cognitive psychologist. She knew the field and the repertoire of teaching approaches. With expert teachers, they tried every technique and approach. The remarkable results were documented through careful research; they were reproducible across New Zealand, then Australia, then the United States, Canada, Great Britain. They were reproduced in Spanish, French, and Danish.

Marie said afterwards that what she and her researchers left out of the lesson framework was as important as what they kept in it. They tried 45-minute lessons and found them no more effective than shorter ones. What they boiled it down to was an extremely effective, tight, fast-moving 30-minute, daily lesson that could save a child’s life. And, it inspired nations of literacy teachers.

The foundation of Reading Recovery is deep. It is rooted in Clay’s theory of reading as highly complex brain activity. The reader is intelligent and active; she uses everything at her disposal—language, perception of the world, grapho-phonemic information, the sounds of language, intonation patterns—to move through a written text with on-the-run problem solving, accuracy, and understanding. I first read Clay’s *Reading: The Patterning of Complex Behavior* as a graduate student the night before my 3 days of qualifying exams — not the first time I’ve read all night; it shifted my thinking and my writing on those exams. But not as much as Reading Recovery training.

There, I was deeply involved in my own observations of children with a direct connection to my teaching. The result was humbling, but the connection with my colleagues and the deep discussions we had were most important. I have to say that an almost equally important outcome of Clay’s work in Reading Recovery is the teacher training. We observe each other — not to critique but to challenge ourselves to analyze the teaching and learning. It was unique; it is unique. We take our work seriously.

In doing so, each of us enters the world of those early researchers. We stand beside them.

We have learned to look, to observe behaviors in detail, to learn what they know and need to know, and to act in response within a structured experience that involves real reading of engaging texts, writing and work with words — all of this tailored to the individual child.

We pieced together five different grants, including a distinguished professorship for Clay. And so to Columbus, OH, where a screen was waiting for Marie and her colleague Barbara Watson — a real screen, like a window screen. You see people here had never called glass a screen. But, it was soon rectified and we set out to accomplish miracles. We got very excited with our results, perhaps too much early on, but it was impossible not to be thrilled. And colleagues joined us from all over North America.

I am sometimes credited with bringing Reading Recovery to Ohio. But the hero of Reading Recovery in Ohio is someone you may not have heard of if you are “young.” G. Robert Bowers, associate superintendent of education in Ohio, brought Reading Recovery here and thus was instrumental in spreading it across North America. He was the guy who communicated, who made tough decisions, who acquired and superintended the money. He saw us through the first challenging years and advised me for years after that. What did I do? I told him about it. He saw the potential immediately. So, one day at the end of a meeting, when he said “Let’s do it.” I knew something would happen.

The future was uncertain then. It is uncertain now and always will be. Literacy researchers and educators are a fiercely divided community. We have critics. Marie’s work has been criticized—even attacked—by every side in this great debate. I think that is because she is so hard to categorize; she sees learners as using letters and sounds, using meaning, using content knowledge, noticing patterns, using syntax to make sentences work like language, and many other sources of information. Her theory is complex.

Of course, our greatest criticism is not philosophical but cost related. And our greatest challenge is to look at our own work with critical eyes. We must make our work fulfill its promise; and I believe it can. Marie said to us many times, “Pick up the stones and look at the creepy crawl-

ly things underneath.” A group is working hard to put improvement science to work in Reading Recovery and I hope many of you will become involved.

My assignment here is not to read the future but to look back and reflect. What is important about Reading Recovery? Why does it deserve a place in literacy education history and a place in the future? In addition to the obvious contribution of teaching so many thousands of initially at-risk children to read, I offer two.

Marie taught us how to look—really look—and notice. She gave us a new lens for the detailed observation that helps us make teaching decisions, those moves that result in shifts for the learner. It’s amazing.

And, she taught us to feel the power of our teaching. We learn through teaching; we are amazed to see evidence that we are making a difference every day. One of the first articles on Reading Recovery in the U.S., written by Mary Fried, Rose Mary Estice, and me, was titled “Learning How to Make a Difference.” I wish that for every teacher.

These two contributions are priceless, and they are life-lasting. Classroom teachers, administrators, parents and grandparents, once you have the eye, you can’t escape noticing, and you don’t want to. Awareness creates a moral imperative. Once you know that powerful teaching is possible; you must work to provide it to every child and constantly work to make it better.

I thought of Marie when I read this poem by the beloved Ohio poet Mary Oliver who died last year. The title is *When Death Comes*; I won’t read it all, just the end.

When it’s over, I want to say: all my life
I was a bride married to amazement.
I was the bridegroom, taking the world into my arms.
When it’s over, I don’t want to wonder
If I have made of my life something particular, and real.
I don’t want to find myself sighing and frightened,
Or full of argument.
I don’t want to end up simply having visited this world.

Mary Oliver didn’t simply visit this world. Neither did Marie M. Clay. And if you have taught even one child to read, neither did you.

Congratulations! I hope the next decade is as amazing as the last four.

Anniversary Luncheon Guest Speakers

Former Students Share Successes

Seamus Bruns, a high school junior, and Chris Graham, a successful entrepreneur, shared the impact of Reading Recovery on their lives with funny, touching, and inspiring stories at the anniversary luncheon.

Seamus Bruns

Good Afternoon. My name is Seamus Bruns and in 2009 I was a first-grade student at Colonial Hills Elementary School in Worthington, OH. I was falling behind my peers in learning to read and write. Luckily, Worthington Schools had been implementing Reading Recovery for over 30 years. In the fall of 2009, I started Reading Recovery with (now) Dr. Jamie Lipp, but who I will always know and refer to as Mrs. Lipp.

Despite finding reading and writing to be challenging at the time, my parents and teachers described me then as a sweet and bubbly kid who had a happy go lucky attitude. I remember enjoying my time with Mrs. Lipp. We were reading lots of books and I quickly began to feel like a reader. And I was a reader! In just 13 short weeks I was discontinued from Reading Recovery. That means I became a confident reader and a writer in just 47 short lessons. That is just 23.5 hours of instruction when you break it down!

I remember Mrs. Lipp challenging me with high expectations and supporting me to take risks in reading and writing. I also remember that my classroom teacher, Mrs. Samantha Fell, spent a great deal of time talking about me with Mrs. Lipp. Mrs. Fell is now the Reading Recovery teacher at Colonial Hills Elementary. I remember Mrs. Fell coming to see me in a Reading Recovery lesson and Mrs. Lipp coming to see me reading in the classroom. It's like they were working together — and looking back now, that's exactly what they were doing. Mrs. Lipp tells me they were "problem solving my strengths and difficulties." I also know that Mrs. Fell, my classroom teacher, provided me with an excellent learning environment. She was also an awesome teacher.

I was lucky enough to have two teachers so committed to my learning that they would stop at nothing to see me succeed. And succeed I did!

Since those days of Reading Recovery, I have had many great things happen in my life. I never again received reading intervention after first grade in Reading Recovery. I scored Accelerated when taking the 3rd grade Reading Assessment, doing the same again in 6th and 9th grade for English. Right now, I am a junior at Thomas Worthington High School. I have earned several distinct academic honors as a high school student. I just found out I am being inducted into National Honor Society! I have also been identified as gifted in reading, inducted into the Spanish National Honor Society, and was a Bronze Key Recipient, earning recognition for receiving a 3.5 GPA or above for 3 consecutive semesters in high school.

Nowadays, I would like to think I am still that happy go lucky kid. I like soccer and golf and I am beginning to explore my college options. I've thought about Penn State, Miami University, or maybe The Ohio State University. Maybe I'll be an accountant. Maybe I'll be a teacher. I'm not quite sure yet. What I do know is that when I was



High school junior Seamus Bruns now and as a first-grade Reading Recovery student

6 years old I became a reader. After that, anything was possible.

I want to say thank you to my teachers, Mrs. Lipp and Mrs. Fell, who gave me such wonderful opportunities to learn. Thank you to my parents who always believed in me, then and now. Coincidentally, my mom now works at Colonial Hills and supports one Reading Recovery student with homework. The program has meant a lot to her, too. And thank you to Worthington Schools for valuing Reading Recovery, so that kids like me can go on to do great things. Reading Recovery works—and I am a real life example of that!

Chris Graham

In 1989, I was a first grader at Olde Sawmill Elementary, in Dublin, OH, and I had two big problems: One of them was that I sat out most recesses for cussing. The second problem was that I couldn't read.

Mrs. Barnett was my lovely first-grade teacher. Unfortunately, my normal day included sitting at my little table and Amy Blankenship saying, "Mrs. Barnett, Chris said a cuss word." And just like that—no recess. It was rough not being able to quote *Back to the Future's* Doc Brown at will.

Not much later in the year, I was introduced to Mrs. Lowery. I was told I'd be taken out of the classroom and I couldn't have been more excited. We started to hang out and immediately my reading started to improve. It didn't take a whole lot of time. It seemed like no time at all. I remember sitting down with my mom one night and I read her, the whole book, *A Fly Flew By*, which was about 42 pages. My mom was just ecstatic, and I was ecstatic.

Shortly thereafter, I went back to Mrs. Lowery and we sat down and she showed me a chart. Then she said, "You know, when we started, you were here. You were towards the bottom of the first graders, and now you are towards the top of second graders." And I thought, "This is amazing. This is so great." And then she told me we were done.

Now, there were only two things that I like at school: Mrs. Lowery and Amy Blankenship. It was wild transformation, because now I knew how to read. But I was still a huge troublemaker. And I remember, later on that next year, Amy told me, "Chris, I would like you, if you just wouldn't get in trouble so much." It was then that I knew our love wasn't meant to be.



Chris Graham is a reading advocate in his industry.

My schooling from that point on was being the class clown. I had the most detentions, most Saturday schools, and was definitely disruptive. Teachers would say things like "doesn't pay attention" or "disorderly" on all of my grade cards.

However, the beautiful thing about Reading Recovery is that sometimes literacy lays dormant. Teach a child to read, and it might not seem like a lot has happened. There's a compounding effect of literacy.

About 20 years after Mrs. Lowery kicked me out, I started a small business, Chris Graham Mastering. And my goal was to have people send me their records; I would make them sound better, then release them, and money would be involved. I tried this. I built a website and it took off really, really fast but I couldn't handle it because I had no idea how to run a business.

A friend of mine mentioned a book called *The Four Hour Work Week*. I picked it up and I read it. As my business changed overnight, I finally felt like I knew what I was doing. I built systems for my company that gave me free time to read more books. I did that and I didn't stop. I read 60 or 70 business books after that and business exploded and was growing 30% per year.

Eventually a friend of mine invited me to cohost a podcast with him called "The Six Figure Home Studio." Through

it, we give business book reports to people in the recording industry and talk to them about how to get more customers and to keep their customers happy, and how to grow their business. Essentially, it's a reading podcast.

I get tagged on Instagram all the time with stories of listeners who are reading books. Listeners who probably wouldn't have read a book that year had it not been for our podcast promoting reading as the best way to grow their businesses.

I'm a reading advocate in my industry now, and it's been wild to see people's reaction to catching the bug of learning that they are in control of their own destiny because they can buy a book, learn about a problem, and can fix it.

We live in a tough time right now. A lot of people are on opposite sides of a lot of different fences. Alexander Hamilton is famous for saying that the safe keep of democracy is the education of the people. At its core, education is literacy. It is because literacy can lay dormant. You can teach a kid and he can get all Cs like I did. Then he can graduate and rediscover books and become successful through literacy 20 years later.

If you look at democracy as a machine and you want to improve it, there's one knob — literacy. If we turn that up, it will impact every aspect of our society. I encourage you that the work that you're doing truly matters — not just for the kids, but for our society. Literacy can change everything. It might take 20 years after these kids learn it, but there's a compounding effect to the work that you do. A kid who goes out and has literacy has the world open to them. Anything is open to them.

The work you do matters. And it impacts us and it's relevant to democracy surviving. It's essential. Thank you.

Jady Johnson Receives Special Excellence in Service Award

A special award was presented to Jady Johnson, retired executive director of RRCNA, in recognition of her significant contributions to the work of the Council. Johnson led RRCNA for 16 years and throughout that time, she strived to help others understand the power of Reading Recovery for students, teachers, and schools, and how it could influence schoolwide literacy more deeply.



The award was presented during the anniversary luncheon by RRCNA President Karen Scott who stated: "Jady believes that all of us in Reading Recovery have reason to celebrate and be grateful for the opportunity to do this life-changing work. She worked tirelessly for the teachers, for the children, for all educators, and for our entire community. The foundation she built continues to influence the direction of the organization. To show our appreciation, it is a pleasure to present the 2020 Excellence in Service Award to her for her extraordinary service and dedication to the Reading Recovery community. It goes without saying that it is well deserved."

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