SPECIAL FOCUS

Marie Clay’s quest to discover what is possible for all learners

Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura
First Nations Students in Canada
Allyson Matczuk, Gloria Sinclair, and Irene Huggins

American Indian Students in South Dakota
Garreth Zalud and Mark Baron

Spanish-Speaking Students
Annette Torres Elias

Literacy Lessons

Marie Clay’s Vision for Special Populations
Mary K. Lose and Eva Konstantellou

Early Implementation in Kentucky and Ohio
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This issue focuses on Marie Clay’s quest to discover what is possible for all learners who struggle to acquire early literacy.

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Editor’s Corner

Mary Anne Doyle, Editor-in-Chief

“What is possible?” All Reading Recovery educators are aware of Marie Clay’s quest for learners who struggle to acquire early literacy. Reading Recovery experience and evidence reveal that over many years of implementation in varying contexts with widely diverse learners, Reading Recovery teachers produce impressive outcomes for children who differ in multiple ways. Thus, the evidence confirms that Reading Recovery disrupts predictive correlations of diminished literacy achievement resulting from individuals’ personal, instructional, home, or community characteristics (Clay, 2015, p. 249–250).

The authors of this issue’s articles heighten our awareness of what is possible by reporting on the growth and success of Reading Recovery in ever-expanding, diverse sets of communities, on Descubriendo la Lectura for Spanish-speaking children, and on developments in the redesign of Clay’s early intervention for special populations, Literacy Lessons™. To share these discussions, the content is presented in two distinct sections that focus on the teaching, implementation, and research of Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura and of Literacy Lessons.

Section 1: Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura
Matczuk, Sinclair, and Huggins share an enlightening account of introducing and sustaining the growth of Reading Recovery in First Nations communities in Manitoba, Canada. Their report depicts their special wisdom and care in initiating awareness of Reading Recovery by honoring the interests and practices of the local community and by demonstrating instructional and implementation practices aligned with this First Nations’ cultural mores. By working closely with local community and school leaders, the authors have established an exciting implementation and they will continue to nurture this growth. They anticipate important accomplishments for the children and the schools involved.

In South Dakota, Zalud and Baron report that 8% of the state’s population is American Indian; and, with 6 years of Reading Recovery data collected in rural communities, they could explore the effects of Reading Recovery on participating indigenous students. Their results are exciting and confirming. The authors conclude that the indigenous students receiving Reading Recovery were successful; they demonstrated accelerated learning and reached average levels of achievement in literacy. Authors additionally discuss positive evidence of the effects of Reading Recovery on closing the achievement gap among their American Indian students.

Torres-Elias highlights the important need for Descubriendo la Lectura (DLL) given the increasing numbers of Spanish-speaking children entering America’s first-grade classrooms. She reviews key aspects of the implementation of DLL and confirms the success and sustained effects for participating students. Important observations of closing the achievement gap in literacy among these native Spanish-speaking children are also discussed.

Section 2: Literacy Lessons
The Literacy Lessons intervention creates the opportunity to explore what is possible for special populations of learners, beyond those eligible for Reading Recovery, who are offered individual literacy instruction supporting their acquisition of an early literacy processing system. Lose and Konstantellou present an overview of Literacy Lessons, reminding readers of Clay’s vision, intention, and directions for development of this treatment. They clarify the standards developed to ensure the quality of the Literacy Lessons intervention, detail procedures for the selection and training of Literacy Lessons teachers, and discuss the evaluation procedures.

Harmon and Williams add to our understanding of how Literacy Lessons instruction is designed and delivered by sharing informal case studies of children and the reactions of Literacy Lessons

continues on page 4
Reading Recovery Council of North America

Vision
We ensure that children who struggle in learning to read and write gain the skills for a literate and productive future.

Mission
We achieve reading and writing success for children through partnerships that foster:

- Reading Recovery in English, Spanish, or French as an essential intervention within a comprehensive literacy system
- Teaching of children that is expert and responsive
- Professional development for teachers that is specialized and continuous
- Ongoing development of knowledge and practice based on research, data, and the theoretical framework that has underpinned Reading Recovery since its founding

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SECTION 1: Reading Recovery® and Descubriendo la Lectura

The Journey to Implementation: Reading Recovery for Manitoba First Nations Students

Allyson Matczuk, Canadian Institute of Reading Recovery Western Region
Gloria Sinclair, Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre
Irene Huggins, Canadian Institute of Reading Recovery

In the autumn of 2014, the first Reading Recovery Training Centre in a First Nations community in Canada opened. Staffed by a First Nations teacher leader, the centre currently 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. The journey to launch this new implementation is a story of importance for Canada's indigenous children, teachers, and families, and the story is told here.

Planning the implementation of Reading Recovery® is a complex undertaking. Educators and administrators often consider how to fund the work of teachers who work with individual students in Reading Recovery lessons. Very quickly in the planning process it becomes clear that there are multiple perspectives to consider related to implementing an innovation within a school system and that some adjustments will be necessary in order to assure quality.

One of the primary considerations in implementation is the training of trainers and teacher leaders. These professionals are key to the implementation as they provide quality control in the school and school system. Trainers train the Reading Recovery teacher leaders who train and support the Reading Recovery teachers who work with students. Teachers become problem solvers. They plan a series of lessons to support each student to construct effective literacy processing systems so that he is able to grow each time he reads and writes, while also benefitting from classroom experiences.

In Manitoba, Canada, trainers support the 28 public school divisions

The training centre logo is derived from First Nations symbolism. The circle of life is surrounded by the protecting wings of the eagle and represents the role and responsibility of parents, extended family, community, elders, staff, and teachers in the process of education.
implementing Reading Recovery, helping each implementation to manage staffing, scheduling, professional development requirements, required materials, data collection, and analysis. The trainers also provide guidance to school division leaders and teacher leaders by monitoring the effectiveness of the implementation of Reading Recovery through data reporting and planning to improve results for students. Some independent First Nations schools have established formal affiliations with local public school divisions and are included in student support initiatives. Other First Nations schools have been able to access Reading Recovery and implement the intervention through an informal arrangement with a nearby public school training centre at no cost to the community.

Canadian First Nations’ Education
First Nations treaties in Canada are constitutionally recognized agreements between the government of Canada and the First Nations people. In Manitoba, most communities are part of one of seven treaties, while five communities have not signed any treaty. These treaties describe exchanges where First Nations groups agree to share some of their interests in their ancestral lands in return for services from the federal government. In Manitoba there are five language groups: Cree, Dene, Oji-Cree, Ojibway, and Dakota. Peguis is the largest First Nation community in Manitoba with a population of approximately 10,000 people of Ojibway and Cree descent, and it is a part of Treaty Number One. It is important to recognize that within each of the treaty areas, the communities are independent and the education administrative structure varies from place to place.

There are more than 110,000 registered First Nations people in Manitoba, or about 17% of the province’s total population. About 60% of First Nations people live in First Nations communities. Approximately 14,500 First Nations students attend Grade 1 in their home communities, and if we were able to provide Reading Recovery to 20% of these children, we would provide service to 2,700 students. Another 18,400 attend public schools in Manitoba either through agreements with the communities or because the family has moved into urban or another nontreaty location.

Manitoba’s First Nations population is very young. This is evident when compared to the non-indigenous population of Manitoba. According to the Statistics Canada 2011 census for Manitoba, 56% of the First Nations population is age 25 or younger, compared to 30% of the non-indigenous population in that age group. If we look specifically at the age 6 population, projections show the number of 6-year-old First Nations children will increase every year by 5.7%, while the same age group within the non-indigenous population will increase by approximately 2% per year. This profile suggests that Reading Recovery could be an important addition to the intervention needs of the First Nations population.

Unquamisin
An Ojibway word that means to be focused, determined, with a goal; a vision

There are many First Nations schools in Manitoba that do not access public school support but do access support services through an organization called the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre (MFNERC). Established in 1998 by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, MFNERC provides consultant services to First Nations schools in the areas of education, administration, technology, language, and culture. The funding for MFNERC services is provided by the government of Canada through the Department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs established MFNERC through a resolution to provide coordinated education services to 58 Manitoba First Nations schools from 49 out of 63 Manitoba First Nations communities. Many (23) of these communities are located in remote areas of the province with no all-season roads and are accessed only by plane or winter ice-roads. A provincial organization such as MFNERC that provides professional services for educators in independent First Nations schools is unique to Manitoba.

At an MFNERC school administrators’ meeting in May 2013, a principal from one of the First Nations schools inquired about the possibility of having a First Nations teacher trained as a Reading Recovery teacher leader and having a training centre established. The school wanted to implement Reading Recovery and requested support from MFNERC and from Service Delivery Unit Director Rab Subedar. As a result of this request, Gloria Sinclair, an MFNERC literacy facilitator, was selected and participated in teacher leader training in 2013–2014 at the Canadian Institute of Reading Recovery (CIRR) Western Region in Winnipeg, Manitoba. During Sinclair’s training year, Peguis Central School was identified through a consulta-
tive process with administrators of multiple possible facilities as the location for construction of the Reading Recovery Training Centre. Criteria for identification of the best location included the needs within the region, road accessibility, and the distance from Grade 1 classrooms.

The shared vision was to support First Nation children in their home communities by the teachers in those communities where the teacher leader and the training centre would be operating with First Nation leadership. The MFNERC Board of Directors, executive director, associate executive director, director of programs, Peguis education director, and Peguis Central School principal worked collaboratively with trainers from the CIRR Western Region to begin the first steps on the path towards the goal of Reading Recovery service for students. While professional services from MFNERC had always included support in literacy, math, school planning, and language, Reading Recovery would be included beginning in 2014.

Several schools within a 3-hour drive of Peguis Central School sponsored teachers for Reading Recovery training during the 2014–2015 school year. Prior to this time, achieving the necessary instruction for the students was not always easy or convenient Achieving this goal took partnership, collaboration, time, commitment, and determination. The local Early Years Vice Principal Sharon Bear was an integral part of a committed team of education professionals who never gave up hope that the centre would become a reality, despite the challenges of building a facility in a rural community. She was the individual who worked to build the bridge between vision and reality. A former Reading Recovery teacher, she organized and guided efforts to find space, hire a construction team, and source furniture and equipment. At the same time, she assigned four teaching staff within her own school to train in Reading Recovery to ensure Peguis students would be able to access literacy support.

Teachers-in-training visited the Reading Recovery centre every 2 weeks for the in-service course. In the case of Peguis, there were nine teachers from communities including Fisher River, Jackhead, and Riverton enrolled in the first year of operation.

At the centre’s grand opening, many community members joined chiefs from Peguis and other communities in Treaty One territory, education leaders from Peguis, and leaders from Manitoba Education and Training of the Province of Manitoba, including Deputy Minister Gerald Farthing.

Many of the First Nations communities are located in remote areas of the province with no all-season roads and are accessed only by plane or winter ice-roads.

Formal portions of the program included a blessing from the elders, a meal of thanks, messages from the leaders, and a ribbon-cutting ceremony led by two Reading Recovery students.
Local elders, teachers, and Reading Recovery students came together for a day of thanks and celebration. The sound of Mother Earth’s heartbeat through traditional drumming opened and closed the event, connecting all guests, staff, and students. Formal portions of the program included a blessing from the elders, a meal of thanks, messages from the First Nations and education leaders, and a ribbon-cutting ceremony led by two Reading Recovery students.

Amid such auspicious formalities, one event stood out for everyone. Guests were given the opportunity to observe a live Reading Recovery lesson with one of the students. Observers were told that the student they were about to see, Ray, knew seven letters prior to his enrollment in the one-to-one intervention and could write his full name, although he could not yet tell which word was his first name or which was his last. He was falling behind and was often in the principal’s office for behavior concerns.

To see Ray in action on that day was described as nothing short of extraordinary. After only 12 lessons this remarkable Grade 1 student read little books, wrote in full sentences with the correct sequence of words to recreate his message, and answered questions about what he was doing — all with confidence and all while staying focused and engaged. The local newspaper exclaimed it “truly was amazing to see.” Following the lesson, the teacher leader was very quick to transfer any praise she received onto the student. “It’s all him!” Glo-
ria said. “I just encourage and guide him. He does all the work.” And just like that, a student who may have fallen through the cracks now has a chance to reach his full potential.

**Gradual Expansion**

As time has passed, the number of teachers accessing the centre has increased and there are currently both training and continuing teachers delivering lessons and participating in professional development in Peguis. Outcomes for students, enthusiasm from teachers, and interest in Reading Recovery by other communities have resulted in the training of a second teacher leader, Evannah Braun, who this fall opened a second training centre in the northern community of Thompson, Manitoba.

The question now is, “What is possible?” How many First Nations students can Reading Recovery teaching help to become successful readers and writers? The answers will become clear in the future.

When leaders asked how Reading Recovery could possibly be connected to First Nations, teacher leader Gloria saw the “fingerprints” of the indigenous people reflected in Reading Recovery practices: The helping circle in Reading Recovery is similar to the traditional circle of life. That circle is always learning and supporting. *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* (Clay, 2013) and *Roaming Around the Known* lessons are similar contextually to traditional ways of knowing that each child is gifted with strengths. But, more importantly, it is the individual child who must be considered when providing lessons.

With persistence, insistence, and additional hands, every effort is being made to provide First Nations students with high-quality instruction in the classroom along with the extra support provided in Reading Recovery. The support of the broader Reading Recovery community, careful expansion, and support to sensitively monitor the results for students will help identify areas that require more attention in the teaching of children and work with the teachers. These efforts promise to result in greater success for First Nations students; indeed, all students, to achieve self-actualization and “Mino Pimatisiwin” — the good life.

**References**


*Photos courtesy of “The Arrow” MFNERC Newsletter, Spring 2014*

**About the Authors**

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Dr. Irene Huggins is a former Reading Recovery trainer and past president of CIRR, currently supporting MFNERC schools Early Years classroom teachers in literacy instruction.
The Effectiveness of Reading Recovery with American Indian Children

Garreth Zalud, University of South Dakota
Mark Baron, Wayne State College

End of third grade reading achievement has dramatic implications for children and society. Low literacy achievement affects individual earning potential and national productivity (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2010). The gap in achievement levels related to income, racial, and ethnic groups is a major civil rights issue and challenge to our educational system. The Foundation characterizes the percentage of low-income African American, Hispanic, and Native American children scoring below proficient at the end of third grade as catastrophically high—89%, 87%, and 85%, respectively (p. 7).

One approach to this problem is effective early intervention. Reading Recovery®, which focuses on students who are at the greatest risk for early literacy failure, has proven effective in a variety of school settings (May, Sirinides, Gray, & Goldsworthy, 2016). Moreover, this intervention successfully narrows the critical reading gap involving African American, Hispanic, and American Indian children (Batten, 2004; Rodgers, Wang, & Gómez-Bellengé, 2004). Our goal in this article is to demonstrate that the Reading Recovery early intervention is also effective in closing the achievement gap for American Indian children.

Reading Recovery teachers specifically and explicitly support children’s strategic problem solving in reading and writing. Teachers make no assumptions about children; they start instruction by focusing on where the child is currently in literacy development and move forward with highly responsive individualized teaching.

Editor’s note: With sensitivity to our diverse populations, authors have used local preferred descriptions of indigenous peoples in their articles.
Closing the Achievement Gap

Batten (2004) examined the impact of Reading Recovery on closing the achievement gap for low-SES African American and Hispanic children in an urban setting—specifically those who had successfully discontinued Reading Recovery lessons. Focusing on changes in stanine levels on the Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words (HRSIW) and the Text Reading Level (TRL) tasks, Batten employed these changes as the measure for determining achievement gap closure. Batten discerned a notable progression from below-average performance (beginning of the year) to well within average range (end of the year); this applied to both African American and Hispanic children. With regard to the HRSIW task, both groups progressed from stanine 3 (fall) to stanine 7 (year-end). In the context of TRL, both groups progressed from stanine 1 to stanine 7 in the same time frame. Based on these findings, Batten concluded that the achievement gap had been effectively eliminated.

Conducting a statewide study, Rodgers, Wang, and Gómez-Bellengé (2004) sought to assess the effect of Reading Recovery on the achievement gap that exists along economic and racial/ethnic lines. The progress of a test sample (children who were struggling African Americans and/or receiving free school lunches) was compared to that of a control sample (students who were White and/or paying full price for school lunch). Three tasks—HRSIW, TRL, and Concepts About Print (C.A.P.)—were utilized in the fall/spring comparisons designed to illuminate existence of gaps. Researchers identified a closure of the gap for C.A.P. and HRSIW measures for those African American children who had successfully completed the intervention. Upon examining TRL, researchers detected a reduction in the gap for these same students.

In 2005, Rodgers, Gómez-Bellengé, Wang, and Schulz studied the impact of race and economic status (reflected in school lunch subsidies) on reading outcomes. This research was predicated on the acknowledgment of achievement gaps attributable to economic status and race/ethnicity of African Americans, Hispanics, and American Indians. Investigators in the 2005 study compared the TRL of struggling readers who received the Reading Recovery intervention with those who did not. Using logistic regression analysis, the researchers examined effects of Reading Recovery instruction on achievement of a criterion text level with a year-end TRL of 16. (This level was considered the benchmark of success as it corresponds to the fourth stanine on national norms for Reading Recovery.) Based on results, the research team concluded that participation in Reading Recovery and student economic status were the stronger predictors of success; race was determined to be a weaker predictor. This inquiry did not specifically address American Indian students; that is, data relevant to this group were neither obtained nor included. Relevance of the findings to this group is uncertain.

Questioning Mainstream Proven Effects with Indigenous Students

Individuals within the American Indian community have suggested that successful educational programs aimed at mainstream students may not be impactful to American Indian students. For example, St. Charles and Costantino (2000) noted that variations in culture, learning style, and economic status confound the issue of program effectiveness. Reyhner and Hurtado (2008) critiqued the application of programs identified as scientifically based under No Child Left Behind legislation since the research supporting these programs had not included American Indian students.

Collins (2012) conducted a 5-year study in which she compared closure of the end of first-grade achievement gap between American Indian and non-American Indian students. Her study included 23,261 students, all of whom met the criteria for successfully discontinuing their Reading Recovery intervention. These students were differentiated into two groups: 2,198 American Indian students and 21,063 non-American Indian students. Collins discerned an entry-level difference between the two groups in relation to HRSIW and TRL: American Indian students performed at a lower level. At the end of the year, however, a significant difference was no longer detected; both groups were reading at the first-grade level or above.

In this study, Reading Recovery eliminated the achievement gap for American Indian students. While the outcomes for these students were very positive, further research is warranted to examine whether the Reading Recovery intervention is equally effective for all American Indian and non-American Indian children with complete programs.
Participants and Context
For further research, South Dakota presents an optimal location as its population is comprised of 8% American Indian people. Consequently, the Reading Recovery Center at the University of South Dakota is uniquely positioned to conduct a careful and relevant examination. To conduct the study, we pooled 6 years of data collected by a single Reading Recovery site that encompasses rural schools situated across the state. Potential participants consisted of 1,546 children who either successfully discontinued Reading Recovery lessons or were recommended for further action. This selection criterion guaranteed maximal opportunity to benefit from a full series of Reading Recovery lessons. Of the potential participants, 1,224 (79.2%) discontinued their series of lessons, and 322 (20.8%) did not discontinue lessons and were categorized as recommended action. Ultimately, the final population used in the study included 93 American Indian students and 1,263 White students. All students with missing data were eliminated from the study. This breakdown of 6.9% American Indian and 93.1% White participants aligns well with state demographics.

Data Sources
In order to measure literacy achievement, the typical program assessments associated with Reading Recovery were used, including all tasks on An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (Clay, 2013).

This decision was reasonable because earlier research used the Observation Survey tasks, as cited earlier in this article. In addition, use of the Observation Survey to assess outcomes allows for comparison to nationally reported findings.

Procedures
Each student’s entry assessment, end-of-program assessment, and end-of-school year data were analyzed. Results were disaggregated by race/ethnicity, and only data from children who were identified as American Indian or White were included in the analysis. These categories were selected because, as stated in the literature review, questions regarding the effectiveness of Reading Recovery with American Indian children have been limited in the literature.
few studies exist in the literature that have specifically examined the impact of Reading Recovery on the achievement of American Indian students.

We had several objectives in mind as we initiated the study. First, we hoped to gain insight regarding the extent of growth all the children in our study exhibited from the time of entry into Reading Recovery until the time they completed the intervention; and from the time they left Reading Recovery to the end of the school year. Second, we wanted to see how similar their growth was over that time period. In essence, we were looking at what happened to children while they were in Reading Recovery and what happened after they left Reading Recovery. Finally, we wondered how our results would compare to national norms as presented in D’Agostino’s (2012) report of U.S. norms on the Observation Survey.

To achieve our objectives, we computed mean scores and standard deviations for each of the subtests on the Observation Survey. Additionally, we used the national norms (D’Agostino, 2012) to convert our mean scores to percentile ranks in order to determine the percentage of students who reached average levels in text reading.

Findings
In order to judge the extent of growth for the American Indian and White children in our study, we compared mean scores on each of the tasks from the time of entry into Reading Recovery until exiting the intervention. Examination of the difference between mean scores from program entrance to program exit scores demonstrated nearly identical achievement growth for American Indian and White students. For example, on the HRSIW task, the American Indian students gained 13.77 points and White students gained 14.23 points during instruction. Similarly, on TRL, the American Indian students gained 11.69 levels and White students gained 11.55 levels during instruction. Results summarized in Table 1 reveal that for students who entered Reading Recovery in the fall, both American Indian and White students showed significant growth across all six tasks.

Clearly, the fall entry students knew most of the letters on the Letter Iden-

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Table 1. Fall Start — Observation Survey Task Gain Scores (Entry to Exit) Disaggregated by Ethnic Group for Students with Complete Interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Entry Mean</th>
<th>Entry SD</th>
<th>Exit Mean</th>
<th>Exit SD</th>
<th>Gain Mean</th>
<th>Gain SD</th>
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tification (LI) task, most of the words on the Ohio Word Test (OWT), many of the concepts on the C.A.P. task, and could hear and record most of the sounds on the HRSIW task by the end of their Reading Recovery intervention. They also showed dramatic improvement in the number of words they could write and in the text level at which they could read.

A similar pattern of success was realized with the mid-year entry students as well, summarized in Table 2. The mid-year entry students started with higher mean scores on entry into Reading Recovery. At exiting, on the tasks with ceilings, they reached a level that showed they had learned most of the items. For example, on HRSIW, the American Indian students gained 2.38 points and White students gained 2.13 points during instruction. Similarly, on TRL, the American Indian students gained 12.36 levels and White students gained 12.50 levels during instruction. Also, the mid-year entry students in both groups demonstrated dramatic improvement in the number of words they could write and the text level at which they could read.

Because we were interested in what happened to children after they left Reading Recovery, we compared the exit mean scores on each task to the end-of-year mean scores for the fall entry children. Results summarized in Table 3 indicate that both American Indian and White students demonstrated slight growth in the levels of achievement measured by tasks with ceilings (LI, OWT, C.A.P., and HRSIW). For example, on HRSIW, the American Indian students gained 0.16 points and White students gained 0.35 points from the conclusion of instruction until the end of the year. Results also indicate that both American Indian and White students showed strong growth on end-of-year scores for tasks without ceilings (Writing Vocabulary (WV) and TRL). For example, on TRL, the American Indian students gained 6.51 levels and White students gained 5.77 levels from the conclusion of instruction until the end of the year.

Ultimately, we wanted to know if Reading Recovery instruction would narrow or eliminate the achievement gap compared to national averages for first graders. In order to consider this, we converted the end-of-year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. Mid-year Start — Observation Survey Task Gain Scores (Entry to Exit) Disaggregated by Ethnic Group for Students with Complete Interventions</th>
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<td>Text Reading Level</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
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<td>White</td>
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</table>
mean TRL for fall and mid-year start American Indian and White students into national percentile ranks. We also converted the end-of-program mean TRL for fall start American Indian and White students into national percentile ranks. Results summarized in Table 4 demonstrate that while both American Indian students (TRL mean = 1.1 for fall entry and 7.6 for mid-year entry) and White students (TRL mean = 1.3 for fall entry and 7.8 for mid-year entry) began Reading Recovery at risk of failure, both groups essentially reached expected grade-level norms for text reading by the end of the school year (American Indian students = 19.4 for fall entry and 20.3 for mid-year entry students; White students = 18.6 for fall entry and 20.8 for mid-year entry students).

**Conclusions**

The following conclusions emerge from results of this study:

1. American Indian and White students respond equally well to Reading Recovery instruction.
2. American Indian and White students benefit similarly from Reading Recovery regardless of time of entry into the program.
3. The achievement benefits gained during Reading Recovery instruction are sustained by both student groups throughout the remainder of the school year.
4. These results strongly suggest that on average, Reading Recovery instruction successfully reduces the achievement gap in TRL.

**Discussion**

Scull (2016) described effective and evidence-based principles for teaching literacy to indigenous students. She stated that successful literacy interventions must connect to the community, home, and school; must address the need for differentiated levels of support; and must include teaching that is responsive to each individual’s needs. All of these points are hallmarks of Reading Recovery that have been in place since its inception. In fact, Clay’s (2009) foundational research demonstrated that the individualized and responsive nature of Reading Recovery was an effective intervention design for meeting

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Entry Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Exit Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
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the literacy learning needs of indigenous students in New Zealand.

The evidence suggesting that Reading Recovery is an effective intervention with children is clear and abundant. However, studies of the impact of Reading Recovery on the achievement of American Indian children have been limited in the literature. Table 5 compares results of several studies that measured gains in TRL from fall entry through the end of the school year for students with completed interventions. Results demonstrate very similar mean gain scores across all of these studies for all ethnographic groupings identified, from a mean gain of 15.09 (Rodgers, Wang, & Gómez-Bellengé, 2004) to 19.54 (Batten, 2004). The two studies that disaggregated results by student ethnicity also found that mean gain scores for TRL varied by less than 1.00 for African American vs. Hispanic students (Batten, 2004) as well as for American Indian vs. White students (Zalud & Baron, 2016).

Our study found Reading Recovery to be as effective for American Indian children as it is for White children. The gains and outcomes of American Indian children and their White classmates were similar across all measures. Both groups of children achieved reading levels by the end of the intervention that placed them at the average level for grade, and thus reduced or eliminated the achievement gap. Our findings cause us to conclude Reading Recovery does work with American Indian children in rural settings. Reading Recovery provides highly responsive individualized lessons for all children. Reading Recovery teachers specifically and explicitly support children’s strategic problem solving in reading and writing. Teachers make no assumptions about children; they start instruction by focusing on where the child is currently in literacy development and move forward with highly responsive individualized teaching. Reading and writing is treated as an emerging and continuous process of growth. This approach to teaching worked with both American Indian and White students in this study, and our findings reflected those in other similar studies that examined the impact of Reading Recovery on closing the achievement gap with minority populations.
References


About the Authors

Dr. Garreth Zalud is a professor in the Curriculum and Instruction Division of the School of Education at The University of South Dakota, where he directs the Reading Recovery training center and teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in literacy. He has been a Reading Recovery trainer for more than 20 years. Dr. Zalud has published and presented at numerous international and national conferences.

Dr. Mark Baron serves as assistant to the dean, School of Education and Counseling at Wayne State College. He served as full professor of educational leadership and associate dean for the School of Education, University of South Dakota, for more than 25 years and spent nearly 20 years as a teacher and secondary school principal in the U.S., Latin America, and West Africa. Dr. Baron has published extensively and presented at numerous national and international conferences on the topics of educational assessment, research design, and school improvement.
Where Are They Now?

Remembering One Special Student

by Patricia R. Kelly

Drake Kelly begins his junior year at the University of California Santa Barbara in September 2017. As I reflect on my Reading Recovery® work with him, I appreciate how much the design of Reading Recovery fostered his success and the success of the children who are confused by the world of print. Let me explain.

As a preschooler, Drake enjoyed being read to and he always chose a pile of books to make story reading time last. He had exceptional language skills, was imaginative, inquisitive, very active, and he had a big personality. He had many friends and he welcomed everyone into his circle.

Drake entered kindergarten when he was 5 years 2 months old. He was small for his age, but what he lacked in size he made up in personality. He fit in well socially and was a leader on the playground among his peers. His brother, who was 5 years older, had learned to read very easily, so it was a shock to his family when it came to literacy, Drake was one of the lowest-performing students in his kindergarten class. His teacher wanted to retain him, but his parents did not like that option. Reading Recovery was a better option.

The Observation Survey revealed many of Drake’s understandings about print as well as his confusions and unknowns. His Text Reading Level was 1. He had emerging understandings about books and print. His use of meaning and language on text reading was good. He caught on how to use patterns and pictures in reading but did not know how to use print. He knew 35/54 letters by letter name. He could read no words on the Ohio Word Test. The Concepts About Print tasks (score 13) revealed that he understood a lot about how books work, but he did not know how to match one-to-one or how to visually scan print. His writing was labored and letter formation was difficult. He wrote six words: Drake, mom, DAD, no, A, i. He identified 10 sounds (mostly beginning and ending consonants) on the Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words task. He was cooperative, but paying attention was difficult for him.

Drake reminded me of Clay’s (2005) description of the child who has difficulty going from scanning his environment to learning to apply rules to the order in which we scan print. “Some children find this learning difficult or tedious. Others are carried along by their speech and pay as little visual attention to the detail of print as they can get away with” (p. 3). This was Drake. As I worked with him, it was apparent that learning details of print was very hard for him, as was writing letters. It took a long time to build letter and word knowledge. On the other hand, he understood stories very well, could generate complex sentences of his own, and above all, he loved reading the new book. Each day, the first thing he would ask at the beginning of lessons was, “What is the new book today?”

Drake made slow but steady progress. He gradually became more flexible in problem solving new words using meaning and structure, and gradually he learned how to use more and more visual information. Simultaneously, Drake took charge of his writing. He wrote many words independently and generated complex sentences. By the end of his Reading Recovery intervention, he performed at or above grade level on each task of the Observation Survey and was reading independently at Text Level 18.

I continued to follow Drake’s progress in school. He attended the same elementary school from kindergarten through fifth grade, which was unusual for the child of a military officer. He did well academically and continued to develop literacy skills. One of his favorite pastimes was drawing. At the end of third grade he gave me a book that he wrote and illustrated — including speech bubbles: Detective Jack and the Stolen Money. It was evident that both his imagination and his literacy skills were expanding.

Drake’s family moved to northern California at the beginning of Grade 6, the first of several moves. His middle school years were spent in three different schools in Monterey, CA, and Stafford, VA. He channeled his high energy into becoming an excellent soccer player — named Most Valuable Player twice and team captain of his traveling team. As he moved on to high school in Virginia (Grades 9 and 10) and California
Learning how to focus has been key to Drake’s success in both sports and in academics. From struggling with reading and writing to graduating from high school with a 3.5 GPA, Drake continues to use the systems that have helped him build confidence.

(Grades 11 and 12), he expanded his sports interests to include soccer, wrestling, lacrosse, basketball, and track and field. He received letters in three sports while maintaining good grades. And he became interested in economics and investing due to encouragement from his AP economics teacher, an interest he still maintains.

Drake graduated from high school in 2015 and entered San Francisco State University that September. He chose economics as his major. However, as his interests expanded to include psychology and neuroscience, he applied to and was accepted at University of California Santa Barbara.

I recently spoke with Drake about school. He remembered reading with me, but he did not remember much about Reading Recovery lessons. I asked him about why he thought it was hard for him to learn to read. He was clear: “I had a hard time focusing.” When he got to college, he wanted to improve his ability to focus on academics and began investigating how to do it. Consequently, he made changes to his lifestyle. He paid more attention to his health, eating a healthier diet, and concentrating on fitness. He eliminated sugar and fast foods and added more healthy foods. He became more disciplined about exercising. Drake credits his improved ability to focus academically (he had a 3.9 GPA) on these lifestyle changes along with developing study skills that worked for him.

While figuring out how to be successful academically, Drake also participated in a rich social life. The fraternity he joined had a philanthropic mission that allowed him to work with various organizations in the Bay Area. When he came home for Christmas, he took on his own mission of filling bags with necessities and food and giving them to homeless people. He believes that, “There is no success no matter how great without sharing with those who have less.”

When I asked Drake what he sees himself doing after he finishes his undergraduate work, he was unsure but was thinking about graduate school or medical school.

A note about the Reading Recovery teacher
Drake taught me as much as I taught him. As a Reading Recovery trainer, I studied Drake’s running records and lesson records for my work with teacher leaders and teachers. I used his running records at conference sessions because his developing strategic abilities were so well illustrated by his running records. I was able to follow Drake’s progress closely after Reading Recovery and will continue to do so because Drake is my grandson. While I do not recommend that Reading Recovery professionals work with their children or grandchildren, I am happy that I was available to help Drake at the beginning when it counted so much.

Patricia Kelly, a Reading Recovery trainer emerita, retired from San Diego State University. She enjoys cooking, traveling, gardening, making quilts, and volunteer tutoring.

DLL: Effective Early Literacy Intervention in Spanish for Students in Bilingual Education Programs

Annette Torres Elías, Texas Woman’s University

Descubriendo la Lectura (DLL) is an early literacy intervention designed to support first-grade children struggling to acquire literacy in Spanish. Since the initial development of this reconstruction of Reading Recovery® guided by Marie Clay, it has impacted expanding sets of learners and assisted Spanish-speaking children to reach the average literacy performance levels for their age cohort. The purpose of this discussion is to confirm the ongoing need of this intervention for our school population of non-native speakers of English and to review the procedures, processes, and observed benefits of DLL.

A Growing Population of Spanish Speakers

Spanish is the most commonly spoken language in the United States other than English. A vast number of the 35 million Hispanics ages 5 and older speak Spanish at home. In fact, the number of Spanish speakers in the U.S. has increased more than 230% since 1988 and continues to grow rapidly. Spanish has also become the second language of choice in the U.S., leading the list of all non-English languages spoken by non-Hispanics. In other words, Spanish is the leading, non-English language of the U.S. for Hispanic and non-Hispanics alike (López & González-Barrera, 2013).

Children constitute a large segment of this Spanish-speaking population. In terms of school-age children, the data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau (2009) indicate that over 11 million students in Grades K–12 speak a language other than English at home and of this subgroup, 8 million speak Spanish. Observations of the English language proficiency of school children reflect this increase. About 1 of every 5 children of immigrants who are of school age are learning how to speak English, compared with 1 in every 100 children born in the U.S. of native-born parents (Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 2005). Spanish is the home language for the majority of English language learners (ELLs) and emergent bilingual students (Batalova & McHugh, 2010). Based on the demographic trends of the last two decades, the number of children enrolled in U.S. schools who are emergent bilingual students with varied levels of language proficiency will likely continue to increase.

The largest group of emergent, bilingual children is in the elementary school in pre-kindergarten to fifth-grade classrooms. In order to accommodate the linguistic diversity of our school population, bilingual education including one-way and two-way dual language programs are continuing to flourish across the country. There are a number of options in terms of instructional services for bilingual students in the current educational landscape, and it is interesting to consider the alternatives for instruction and for early intervention.

Current Landscape of Spanish-English Bilingual Education in the U.S.

The population of students participating in Spanish-English bilingual programs of instruction has increased two-fold in recent years, and the programs of instruction vary depending on the students’ first language. The group of students comprised of native Spanish speakers who are engaged in learning English and are challenged to acquire literacy and academic knowledge in English, are enrolled in bilingual programs that are transitional, maintenance, or dual language programs (described below). These programs are designed to supplement their instruction in English with Spanish instruction to ensure their linguistic, literacy, and academic success. For this group of students, bilingual education is a critical necessity, a must; without access to bilingual education, they would find it very difficult to be successful in school.

A second group of students, whose first language is English, is offered two-way, dual language immersion programs of instruction. The goal for these students is to learn Spanish as a second language and to become fully bilingual while learning academic content knowledge in both languages. Many parents enroll their children in two-way, dual language programs when available as a way to enrich their education and foster bilingualism and biliteracy. For these students, bilingual education could be consi-
dered a plus; they may not need it to be successful in school, but it offers a beneficial, enriching academic experience.

There are many approaches to the education of emergent bilingual students. Some models such as English as a second language (ESL) use only one language, English. This model—as well as some transitional models of bilingual education that promote an early exit to the mainstream (all English) curriculum—are considered subtractive because the students do not continue to develop their native language and may not continue to read and write in their native language beyond the third or fourth grade. Other bilingual education models such as late exit, maintenance, and dual language models use two languages of instruction and accomplish a bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate goal (Baker, 2007). These models are considered additive because the students add a second language while strengthening and developing their first language at the highest levels possible. The strongest forms of bilingual education use two languages in an additive form that yields pluralistic results (Yoon, Hutchison, & Winsler, 2015). The characteristics of the most-common programs utilized to serve bilingual students are briefly described in Table 1 that follows.

**DLL Overview**

When planning comprehensive bilingual education programs designed to ensure academic success for divergent groups of students, the important differences in the students’ first language and related instructional needs are taken into consideration. In regard to the acquisition of reading and writing abilities, research confirms that literacy instruction in a learner’s native language is beneficial (Collier & Thomas, 2004). In fact, early literacy instruction in the first or dominant language supports literacy success in the second language (Cheung & Slavin, 2005). Thus, the research evidence supports the efficacy of providing Spanish-speaking children beginning reading instruction in Spanish. Additionally, a comprehensive literacy plan for these learners should include a well-designed early literacy intervention that matches the language of initial literacy instruction. In Spanish, this early intervention is DLL.

The theoretical constructs of the DLL intervention parallel Clay’s (2015, 2016) complex theory of literacy acquisition and reflect her instructional design. Briefly, key principles include

- a literacy processing theory of reading and writing acquisition in any language,
- a constructivist theory of learning,
- the important role of oral language,
- the power of reading and writing continuous texts,
- the reciprocity of reading and writing,
- the need to accommodate for individual’s diversity and recognize that children take different paths to learning to read and write,
- an emphasis on development of a learner’s independence,
- the use of systematic observation and assessment to guide instruction, and
- the importance of intervening early to prevent ongoing difficulties.

While Reading Recovery and DLL are built upon Clay’s theoretical foundation, there are differences in the DLL assessment procedures that have been designed to accommodate the unique features of the Spanish

**DLL professionals contribute substantially to school success for Spanish-speaking children, allowing them to pursue their highest potential.**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Linguistic Goal</th>
<th>Language of Instruction</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Language Group(s)</th>
<th>Form Results</th>
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<td>PK-12</td>
<td>English proficiency Immediate entry to the mainstream</td>
<td>Monolingual: English</td>
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<td>Structured Immersion to English (not bilingual)</td>
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<td>English proficiency Quick exit to the mainstream</td>
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<td>English proficiency Some Spanish Exit to the mainstream Academic success in English</td>
<td>Bilingual: Spanish as a bridge to English Gradual but accelerated decrease of Spanish use</td>
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<td>Develop English, maintain and further develop Spanish Bilingualism and biliteracy Academic success in L1 and L2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual Language; Two way; PK-5 at minimum; No exit</td>
<td>PK-5 +</td>
<td>Develop English, maintain and further develop Spanish; Enrichment; Bilingualism and biliteracy; Academic success in L1 and L2</td>
<td>Bilingual: English and Spanish throughout the full academic program</td>
<td>Typically 6+ years</td>
<td>2 groups: Spanish-dominant students and English-dominant students</td>
<td>Additive Pluralism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Instructional Programs for Spanish-Speaking Bilingual Students
language. In fact, the reconstruction of an Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (Clay, 2013) in the new language of instruction, was the very first step in the process of developing DLL. Rodríguez, Hobsbaum, & Bourque (2003) offer clear descriptions of the process and the important linguistic considerations in reconstructing the Observation Survey in a new language. In order to participate in DLL, students must receive daily reading instruction in Spanish at least through third grade.

DLL students receive an accelerated intervention tailored to meet their individual areas of need by way of their strengths. Teachers provide individual lessons and work intensively for 30 minutes while using continuous text in reading and writing activities. They use observation, assessment, and data analysis to plan daily lessons and teach students how to problem solve in reading and writing. Teachers address word work, phonemic awareness, and the alphabetic principle in every lesson. The interventions last only a short period of 12–20 weeks. As soon as students reach the average performance of their peers, their interventions are discontinued and new students take their places.

Contributions of DLL

To children
English learners or emergent bilingual students in the U.S. are working very hard each year to reach a moving target. They simply do not have time to waste with interventions that do not work! The DLL intervention works, and numerous evaluation studies have confirmed this (Neal & Kelly, 1999; Lomax, 2017).

The progress of all DLL students is monitored and reported each year by the International Data Evaluation Center (IDEC, 2017). (See Lomax, 2017, for the most recent report.) These annual evaluations consistently and clearly show how effective DLL instruction is in closing the gaps in reading achievement that are initially observed in first grade (Lomax). Moreover, students who successfully complete the intervention not only close the gaps shown at the beginning of the school year when compared with a random sample of their peers, but they surpass the performance of the random sample at the end of the intervention (Escamilla, Loera, Ruiz, & Rodríguez, 1998).

To teachers’ learning
DLL teachers receive in-depth training through graduate-level university coursework facilitated by a DLL teacher leader employed by their school system. Their preparation includes an initial full year of Reading Recovery training that focuses on Clay’s theoretical perspectives of early literacy and language development, early literacy intervention, and effective instructional practices. During this first year of training, teachers delve into the intricacies of tutoring first-grade Reading Recovery students while working with at least two rounds of 4 students in addition to their other responsibilities in the school. Many Reading Recovery and DLL teachers, for example, also support push-in or pull-out small reading groups of students who need supplemental, early literacy instruction, or serve as classroom teachers or literacy coaches for a portion of the day.

The initial Reading Recovery training may also include working with English learners who are receiving initial literacy instruction in English. This is usually the case as English learners, or emergent bilingual students, constitute a large percentage of the population in these teachers’ school districts.

After their first year of training in Reading Recovery, the teachers receive a full additional year of DLL training. This year is designed to bridge teachers’ understandings of the reconstruction of Reading Recovery in Spanish. The training of DLL teachers and their continued professional development opportunities also take into consideration the educational, sociocultural, and linguistic contexts in which bilingual children learn (Escamilla et al., 1998).

Often, DLL teachers and teacher leaders become the bilingual early literacy experts in their school buildings. They assist their colleagues and provide support to administrators by leading literacy teams in monitoring the progress of all children. They work with their teams to make instructional decisions collaboratively for the benefit of all bilingual students.

Current Trends and Future Research in DLL
The initial research supporting DLL was conducted in bilingual education programs for students whose first language was Spanish. These students were enrolled in transitional, late exit, or maintenance bilingual education programs, and they were receiving early literacy instruction in their first language (Escamilla, 1994). There is strong evidence to support the positive outcomes and sustained effects of DLL with this group of students (Escamilla et al., 1998; Lomax, 2017).
Current implementation of DLL has widened to also support students who are not native Spanish speakers. This is due to the rising demand for early literacy intervention for students enrolled in Spanish immersion, two-way dual language programs. While the results for DLL students continue to be monitored, more information is needed about this particular group of DLL students.

Conclusion
In this interconnected world, bilingualism, biliteracy, and multiculturalism are important goals for the future of our society. However, designing programs for emergent bilingual students necessitates careful consideration. There are many details to be explored and many challenges to surpass. Initial literacy instruction must be carefully orchestrated and include early literacy intervention that matches the language of instruction in reading. Equity in terms of access to intervention is an important aspect of program design. Careful attention to all these aspects will ensure literacy success for all our bilingual students. DLL professionals contribute substantially to school success for Spanish-speaking children, allowing them to pursue their highest potential. We will continue to advocate for the expansion and availability of Descubriendo la Lectura to increasing numbers of students.

References

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Realizing Clay’s Vision for Special Populations of Students: Implementation and Impact of Literacy Lessons

Mary K. Lose, Oakland University
Eva Konstantellou, Lesley University

Clay’s vision for special populations of students was to offer the one-to-one literacy instruction that has been proven so successful with diverse populations of first graders to a wider group of students in elementary grades experiencing difficulty acquiring beginning literacy. Clay had observed the success of Reading Recovery® teachers instructing children with learning difficulties, often identified as special education (SPED) students, and with English language learners (ELLs), and she invited explorations of the implementation of Reading Recovery procedures by specialist teachers offering individual instruction focused on the acquisition of early literacy. These specialist teachers trained in Literacy Lessons may instruct SPED children and ELLs who were served by Reading Recovery in first grade but need longer-term treatment and/or SPED students and ELLs in elementary grades beyond Grade 1 who are in need of developing an early literacy processing system. Her goal was “to establish a well-documented, redesigned intervention that ensures the highest effectiveness for special populations of children requiring individual instruction to address extraordinary literacy difficulties” (Doyle, 2009, p. 300).

Clay’s invitation for a redesigned intervention was introduced in her first edition of Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals in 2005, and this led to initial explorations, the establishment of the trademarked Literacy Lessons™ intervention, and the initiation of Literacy Lessons training for SPED and English as a second language (ESL) teachers. “As in the case for Reading Recovery, implementations of Literacy Lessons occur within the existing infrastructure for training and dissemination by the holder of a national trademark” (Clay, 2016, p. 3).

In an earlier article, Konstantellou and Lose (2009) explored both the history of Clay’s research on working with children who experience literacy difficulties and the promise of her theory of literacy processing for reaching special populations of struggling literacy learners beyond Reading Recovery. We provided the rationale for training Literacy Lessons intervention specialists and explored the historical and theoretical frameworks for developing this intervention. We stated that “Clay envisioned
instruction based on her theory of literacy learning through adaptations of the Reading Recovery training and implementation” (p. 63) and shared Clay’s thinking regarding the teaching of special populations of students who need long-term, specialist help:

If a policy of mainstreaming or inclusion for children with pronounced handicaps is operated and a specialist report is available, special conditions may be arranged, over and above the normal preventive thrust of the early intervention using the same theoretical and instructional model, under a label like ‘literacy processing theory’ but not labeled as RR. Work with such children proceeds for longer according to need and different rules for implementation and delivery, and the lower outcomes predicted are accepted as worthwhile. This then becomes a treatment intervention for individuals, not a preventative intervention which is adopted by an education system [Clay’s emphasis]; it involves longer-term treatments delivered to individuals but it uses the same literacy processing theory as RR to guide instruction for individuals who have a cluster of individual handicaps. (Clay, 2001, p. 218)

Clay’s thinking leads us to confirm the following:

• Literacy Lessons teachers are specialist teachers who receive intensive training in literacy processing theory and Literacy Lessons implementation.
• Literacy Lessons students include SPED and ELL students ranging in ages from 6 to 9 who are struggling to acquire a literacy processing system for beginning reading.
• Literacy Lessons instruction is delivered to individuals.
• The interventions for participating students may be longer-term treatments (beyond 20 weeks of instruction).
• The successful outcome of instruction is a literacy processing system. For those learners above a first-grade level, this success may be observed even if their achievement level remains below the expected level of average readers in their grade cohort.

For several years, Reading Recovery trainers and teacher leaders have engaged in exploratory trials of Literacy Lessons and have gained valuable insights informing the redesign efforts. Four important developments have transpired over this time, currently guide the Literacy Lessons implementation, and are the focus of this article.

First, Standards and Guidelines of Literacy Lessons in the United States (2013, updated 2015) have been developed by Reading Recovery trainers adhering to the four components for Literacy Lessons identified by Clay:

1. Individually designed and individually delivered instruction for children from special populations who are struggling to develop an early literacy processing system;
2. A recognized course for qualified teachers with ongoing professional development;
3. Ongoing data collection, research, and evaluation;
4. Establishment of an infrastructure and standards to sustain implementation and maintain quality control. (p. 3)

Second, annual reports from university training centers (UTCs) piloting Literacy Lessons have provided rich information informing ongoing efforts to establish the intervention. For example, students who participated in Literacy Lessons made considerable progress after receiving the intervention, acquiring a processing system for literacy in spite of initial difficulty with learning to read and write (see Harmon & Williams, this issue). These reports also revealed that some specialist teachers may initially find it difficult to shift from prescriptive approaches to literacy instruction to responsive, constructivist approaches that build on student strengths. Other accounts, anecdotal in nature, provided as feedback to Reading Recovery trainers, point to special educators’ appreciation for the training and the opportunities it has created to combine new learning about literacy processing theory with their specialist teacher expertise.

Third, the recent intensification of the ongoing debate on dyslexia and learning disabilities has highlighted the need for early identification and intervention designed by expert teachers to support learners who are at risk of early failure in beginning literacy. The success of Reading Recovery as an early intervention made possible the request for the training of specialist teachers in the theory and teaching procedures of Reading Recovery.

Fourth, early reports of the Literacy Lessons national data collection submitted by 14 UTCs as part of the national data collection reveal that
children in special education and ELLs have made significant progress in acquiring a processing system for literacy (Briggs & Lomax, this issue).

Literacy Lessons Standards
As in Reading Recovery, Literacy Lessons standards have been developed by the North American Trainers Group (NATG) to guide implementation. The purpose of these standards is to ensure that this trademark intervention is delivered with integrity and fidelity. The standards were established in 2013, informed by the results and observations of exploratory trials of Literacy Lessons training and instruction conducted by a number of UTCs in the U.S. The following descriptions of the Literacy Lessons implementation are detailed in the current Literacy Lessons Standards and Guidelines that are published by and available on the website of the Reading Recovery Council of North America (RRCNA).

Who are the students that the Literacy Lessons intervention is intended for?
The students served represent two distinct groups of learners who have not developed an early literacy processing system. They may be children identified for any form of special education or they may be ELLs, and generally, they are in Grades 1–4. Clay’s An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (2013) is the assessment used to identify participating students.

Who are the teachers who are eligible to train in Literacy Lessons?
Literacy Lessons training is offered to educators certified in specialist areas, including special education, ESL, or bilingual education. These educators are seeking additional expertise to help children from their specialist caseloads develop early reading and writing processing systems. Literacy Lessons intervention specialists are selected from among specialist teachers who have shown evidence of successful teaching and are employed in schools that are implementing Reading Recovery. Or, they may be in schools that exclusively support special populations of children.

What kind of training certifies one as a Literacy Lessons teacher?
Initial training consists of graduate level courses taught by a registered Reading Recovery teacher leader. There are two alternative models for Literacy Lessons teacher training: a 1-year model and a 2-year model. In the 1-year training model, Literacy Lessons teacher-candidates begin their training year by teaching individual lessons following the Reading Recovery procedures to a minimum of two first-grade students eligible for Reading Recovery daily for up to 20 weeks. Following the series of lessons for these Reading Recovery eligible children, they teach individual lessons for two students from their specialist caseload daily. These students are Literacy Lessons students selected for individual instruction to support their acquisition of an early literacy processing system. In some UTCs Literacy Lessons teacher-candidates instruct four Reading Recovery eligible first-grade students during the training year.

In the 2-year training model, Literacy Lessons teacher-candidates instruct at least four Reading Recovery eligible students during the training year following Reading Recovery procedures. During the second year, they begin teaching Literacy Lessons students from their respective specialist caseloads in daily, individual lessons.

The Reading Recovery eligible children are assigned to the Literacy Lessons trainees following selection of the school’s Reading Recovery teachers’ students. During their training, Literacy Lessons teachers-in-training teach a student behind-the-glass at least three times and receive at least four visits from the teacher leader.

What happens beyond the initial training?
To maintain Literacy Lessons certification, Literacy Lessons intervention specialists teach at least one Literacy Lessons eligible student, one-to-one, each day, in a school setting. They participate in a minimum of six professional development sessions during the school year and teach lessons behind-the-glass as scheduled. In areas where there are not enough Literacy Lessons teachers to form their own group for ongoing professional development, they join their Reading Recovery colleagues and in some instances receive other specially designed sessions for Literacy Lessons teachers as a part of their continuing learning. During these sessions, Literacy Lessons teachers observe and discuss the demonstration lessons behind the one-way glass and, when it is their turn, teach demonstration lessons with Literacy Lessons children for their colleagues. Through these experiences they not only co-construct and build theoretical and practical knowledge about the provision of individualized teaching in support of children’s literacy processing systems, but they also contribute to the group's knowledge about the benefits
of the Literacy Lessons intervention for special populations of children, the school, and the education system as a whole. Also like Reading Recovery teachers, Literacy Lessons teachers receive visits from their Reading Recovery teacher leader at their school in support of their teaching of Literacy Lessons students. These individualized visits to the Literacy Lessons teachers may also include discussions about a particular child and his overall progress that involve other specialists at the school, for example physical and occupational therapists, supervisors of English language programs, and the school psychologist.

**How is the Literacy Lessons intervention evaluated?**

Like Reading Recovery, Literacy Lessons is a research-based intervention. Thus, data are collected on every student served by Literacy Lessons teachers and are reported to the International Data Evaluation Center (IDEC) separately from Reading Recovery data. Data are analyzed to address specific research questions and to explore the effectiveness of the implementation in order to improve outcomes for students and schools (see Briggs & Lomax, this issue).

**Recent Reports of Literacy Lessons Implementations**

Many teachers and administrators have reflected on Literacy Lessons’ impact on student outcomes, teacher expertise, and whole-school benefits as presented in the RRCNA-published brochure, *Increase Literacy Expertise in Schools* (2016).

Because they are certified teachers of SPED or ELL students, Literacy Lessons teachers bring to their Literacy Lessons training and continuing development experiences particular expertise in the areas of their specialization. Literacy Lessons special educators have completed graduate-level coursework or hold a minimum of a master’s degree in one or more areas of specialization including the higher incidence conditions such as learning disabilities, multiple learning disabilities, cognitive or mental disabilities, emotional or behavioral disorders, and speech or language impairments. Other special educators are certified in lower incidence conditions such as vision or hearing impairments, combined deafness and blindness, autism, traumatic brain injury, and orthopedic impairments. Likewise, ESL teachers have also completed specialized programs of study. Depending on the particular state, several routes to certification as a teacher of ELLs are available at the undergraduate and graduate levels and involve course work in introduction to language, second language acquisition, assessment, and methods courses in literacy listening and speaking, as well as content area subjects. Many teachers of ELLs are often able to speak in one or more of the languages spoken by their students. Regardless of their particular specialization, these specialist educators bring additional credentials and knowledge beyond preparation as general education teachers to their Literacy Lessons training and continuing development sessions and to the instructional adaptations for their Literacy Lessons students.

**Appreciation for new learning**

Specialists in their own right, Literacy Lessons teachers often express gratitude for the new learning acquired in their training year and continuing development experiences as illustrated in the comments provided to a Reading Recovery trainer by one recently trained special educator: “I am just so appreciative of the training that I’ve been fortunate enough to have and use every day with my special services students. I am able to be a careful observer of my students, to take what they already know to move them forward and to foster their accelerated growth. Among the things I use are sound boxes and magnetic letters to show them how to take words apart. I provide them with real reading and real writing opportunities every day, and I always make sure they take anything in isolation back to continuous text.”

Another teacher shared the impact of a focus on helping children acquire a strategic processing system for reading and writing in contrast to acquiring items or skills: “I am truly beginning to understand the complexity of the theory, that it was not about drilling words and more words and teaching children to sound out words.”

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“Undoubtedly the biggest achievement has been the strengthening of school teams as more teachers on the team share conversations about children’s literacy development informed by Clay’s theory.”

— School Administrator
Contributions of specialist teachers to professional knowledge

Often in schools, specialist teachers and general educators do not have sufficient opportunities to share their expertise and contribute to each other’s learning. However, as several teacher leaders have commented, these Literacy Lessons intervention specialists have influenced the learning of other members of the training class. As reported by one teacher leader to her trainer, “The teachers who have participated in Literacy Lessons have been top-notch — frequently leaders in the class. I think it is because they have an in-depth grounding in their own specialty. The ESL teachers have been very handy when we talk about language structure (for all students) as well as the literacy support needed for English language learners.”

Literacy Lessons and a culture of collaboration

Literacy Lessons has impacted a wider range of teachers and students beyond those involved in Reading Recovery, as indicated in reports to teacher leaders and trainers. According to one school administrator, “Undoubtedly the biggest achievement has been the strengthening of school teams as more teachers on the team share conversations about children’s literacy development informed by Clay’s theory.” And as indicated in the following comments, extending the training to specialist teachers has resulted in a seamless system of support in response to struggling literacy learners and has fostered a culture of collaboration between the school’s specialist educators and Reading Recovery teachers. As one teacher leader stated: “I think that the positive impact Literacy Lessons training has on the wider school community and the discussions at team meetings is vital. It has allowed us to share a common language and philosophy of learning. The Literacy Lessons teachers have also been vocal advocates for their populations receiving Reading Recovery as a prereferral intervention and they seem more able to convince colleagues that these children should benefit from Reading Recovery. They have voiced that they find their new understandings are enhancing their teaching across the other parts of the day.”

A seamless system of support

Finally, specialist educators trained in Literacy Lessons provide a critical response to the diagnostic information obtained by Reading Recovery on behalf of children who need longer-term literacy interventions. As one teacher leader explained: “It is very useful this year having the resource room teacher trained in Literacy Lessons. She is available at team meetings to discuss how she will provide services for children who end up in special education. In addition to that she has told me that the training has changed the way she teaches all her special education children, even the children in the upper grades. From what I can see, this is the avenue to provide high-quality professional development to teachers in our Reading Recovery schools. The better the teaching is at our schools and the more the teaching staff understands the reading and writing processes, the better our results will be and the better our recommended students will do.” Clearly, Literacy Lessons has resulted in benefits to the system and the school as a whole that go well beyond improving children’s literacy performance.

Ongoing Debate on Dyslexia and Learning Disabilities and its Impact on Literacy Lessons Training

In the past few years there has been a resurgence of research debates on dyslexia and related disorders. The research on dyslexia, however, has yet to make a clear distinction among dyslexia, learning disabilities, reading disabilities, and reading difficulties (International Literacy Association, 2016). Indeed, each of these terms has been used interchangeably at various times to describe individuals experiencing difficulty with learning to read or specific skills associated with the reading process including decoding, letter and word recognition and discrimination, and comprehension. Clay’s own research (1987) had also shown that “it is not possible to identify causes of difficulties or to distinguish between experientially and constitutionally impaired readers” (RRCNA, 2015, p. 4). This led her to advocate for the importance and effectiveness of one-to-one instruction in preventing learning/reading difficulties in learners regardless of the factors that caused the difficulty (experience or organically based).

Clay argued that it is the expertise of the Reading Recovery-trained teacher that has prevented longer-term literacy difficulties in children labeled as learning disabled or dyslexic.

Reading Recovery has achieved unparalleled success with the lowest-performing first graders through excellence in teacher professional development. Indeed, abundant research including the recent evaluation of the i3 federal scale-up of Reading Recovery points to the effectiveness of Reading Recovery-trained
teachers in addressing literacy learning difficulties (RRCNA, 2015; May, Sirinides, Gray, & Goldsworthy, 2016). Additionally, two agencies funded through the U.S. Department of Education have reviewed Reading Recovery research studies. The What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) rated Reading Recovery as positive or potentially positive across all four domains — alphabets (phonics and phonemic awareness), fluency, comprehension, and general reading achievement. And among all programs reviewed by the WWC, Reading Recovery received the highest rating in general reading achievement (What Works Clearinghouse, 2013). Also, An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (Clay, 2013)—the screening tool used by Reading Recovery and Literacy Lessons professionals—is recognized as valid and reliable by the National Center on Response to Intervention* (D’Agostino, 2012). It is no wonder that in light of these strong endorsements, many administrators have inquired about investing in training their specialist teachers—special education and ESL teachers—in professional development based on Reading Recovery theory and teaching procedures.

Promising Outcomes
In the early implementation of Literacy Lessons, individual Reading Recovery sites had collected data informally on specialist teachers’ work and had produced accounts of the successes achieved with identified special populations of students. Since 2013, when systematic data on Literacy Lessons interventions were submitted to the IDEC, there is clear evidence of the promising outcomes for SPED and ELL students (Briggs & Lomax, this issue). Children served by Literacy Lessons intervention specialists in the one-to-one setting have assembled processing systems for literacy that will contribute to their continued progress. These outcomes confirm earlier research that children identified as learning disabled or ELLs can become strategic readers and writers if provided the opportunity to work one-to-one with Reading Recovery-trained educators (Lyons, 1994; Kelly, Gómez-Bellengé, Chen, & Schultz, 2008). Now that Literacy Lessons training is more widely accessible to specialist teachers working with struggling readers beyond first grade, it is anticipated that future research will reveal additional, powerful outcomes with an even greater number of children in more schools.

Early explorations of Literacy Lessons have led to implementation and research that clearly documents the significant value of using Clay’s (2016) Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals to expand teaching to include a greater number of children having difficulty in literacy learning. The impact of Clay’s extraordinary vision, her theory of literacy teaching and learning, and the contributions of Reading Recovery to children and teachers have opened up new possibilities in the form of Literacy Lessons for specialist teachers who work with children in special education and ELLs who find literacy learning difficult.

Editor’s note: The NCRTI database is now maintained by the National Center on Intensive Intervention funded by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs.
References


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Enhancing the Lives of Learners and Teachers: Literacy Lessons Implementation in Kentucky and Ohio

Lindy Harmon, University of Kentucky
Jeffery L. Williams, Solon City Schools, Solon, Ohio

In the beginning of our work together, he was defeated, lacked confidence, and had experienced failure again and again. Reading for him was painful, hard, and exhausting. He would always say, ’I can’t. I don’t know.’ Now, 13 weeks later, after independently writing caterpillar, he looked at me with a confident grin and said, ’I got this…I don’t think I need your help anymore.’ And that was all I needed to hear—pure joy!

— Specialist teacher trained in Literacy Lessons™

Literacy Lessons in Kentucky
Marie Clay developed Reading Recovery® as an intervention that would prevent reading failure before it could take root in a child’s life. She also understood that special education (SPED) and English language learner (ELL) specialists could benefit from the intensive training model and that the children they served could also make remarkable progress in literacy learning if provided with responsive instruction.

If a policy of mainstreaming or inclusion for children with pronounced handicaps is operated and a specialist report is available, special conditions may be arranged, over and above the normal preventive thrust of the early intervention using the same theoretical and instructional model, under a label like ‘literacy processing theory’ but not labeled as Reading Recovery. Work with such children proceeds for longer according to need with different rules for implementation and delivery, and the lower outcomes predicted are accepted as worthwhile. This then becomes a treatment intervention for individuals, not a preventive intervention which is adopted by an education system; it involves longer-term treatments delivered to individuals but it uses the same literacy processing theory as Reading Recovery to guide instruction for individuals who have a cluster of individual handicaps. (Clay, 2015, p. 218)

Kentucky has been implementing Reading Recovery for over 28 years with great success for our most-vulnerable young readers. In 2014, Lindy, a Reading Recovery university trainer, began piloting the new Literacy Lessons intervention with the special education and English as a second language (ESL) teachers. The growth of the Literacy Lessons intervention in Kentucky has been slow, but the intervention is starting to show great success with the children served by these specialist teachers.

For Literacy Lessons intervention specialists, one challenge with implementation is scheduling a 30-minute, one-to-one time for an enrolled student and insuring that minutes in IEPs are met. Literacy Lessons teachers have found several ways to problem solve around the scheduling and changing caseloads of these specialist teachers. One teacher shared ways that she accommodates packed schedules:

I worked with one of my students during morning duty hours. They were here before school started, and I got them right off the bus and into reading. I also worked with one right after that while their class was doing morning work and community circle. Another student I worked in at the very end of the day when his class was packing up and doing SSR time.

Some Literacy Lessons intervention specialists teach children after school, others have been successful in collaborating with school teams to make adjustments to their schedules, and some have even convinced administrators to hire additional specialist teachers to help cover caseloads while Literacy Lessons teachers provide one-to-one interventions for their special populations students. One Literacy Lessons intervention specialist summarized the problem solving:

Overall, I equate it to a puzzle. It can be solved, but it takes a lot of tweaking and help from collaborating teachers and the principal to make it work. If you’re able to, I highly recommend doing so. It’s made a world of difference for me as a teacher and for the students I teach.
Despite the slow growth, feedback received from Literacy Lessons teachers about the training year and beyond has convinced us that whatever it takes to provide this training to these specialist teachers must be done. It must be done because the Literacy Lessons intervention can be life-changing for their students and the Literacy Lessons professional learning model can be life-changing for the teachers as well, as evidenced in this quote from a trained Literacy Lessons intervention specialist:

The biggest impact that Literacy Lessons training had on my teaching is the idea that there is hope for students who have experienced struggle when learning to read. As a special education teacher, the focus was often placed on supporting and maintaining any reading knowledge and skills, whereas, this training has shifted my focus to accelerating literacy learning regardless of a previous label. As Marie Clay (2016) so eloquently stated, ‘If a child is a struggling reader or writer the conclusion must be that we have not yet discovered a way to help him learn’ (p. 165). This is a HUGE shift from ‘What are the next skills to teach and check off?’ to ‘What does this child show evidence of and what does this child neglect?’ and ‘How can I support accelerated learning through reading and writing?’ I am always deepening, refining, adjusting, and THINKING about what my students need to learn, and I do it without a script. I have to be extremely focused and deliberate in order to ensure I am providing the best, most impactful teaching and learning opportunities at every moment!

**Working with Literacy Lessons teacher leaders and teachers**

Lindy asked the teacher leaders supporting Literacy Lessons teachers to teach children who would support their own learning about adapting their instruction to meet the needs of children with language learning issues or other special needs. The teacher leaders believe, as Clay did, that the teaching of children supports teacher learning as well as the learning of children. So if teacher leaders are to support Literacy Lessons teachers, they must build their own case knowledge while working alongside diverse learners and adapting their instruction to meet their needs.

Lindy also tried to focus one or two professional development days on helping teacher leaders in supporting their Literacy Lessons teachers. As a university trainer, Lindy recently brought the teacher leaders together to problem solve a child who had a severe hearing loss that had gone undiagnosed in preschool, 2 years in kindergarten, and for most of first grade. Once the hearing loss was discovered and corrected, his hearing improved; but he had fallen far behind on even the most-basic concepts of learning to read. The problem solving done by the teacher leaders concerning this child was impressive. But the most impactful learning experienced that day occurred for all of the teacher leaders when they saw the child Clay was referring to when she said, “This child’s time in [Literacy Lessons] may be his one big opportunity for literacy learning. Do not give up on him” (2016, p. 169).

Even more impressive to witness on that day was the child’s motivation and desire to learn to read. It was a lesson for all in the power of resiliency observed in children who face some of the most-detrimental challenges life brings. Lindy used this demonstration lesson as a study session for the teacher leaders who were reading chapter 6: ‘Adjusting teaching for particular difficulties’ in the new edition of *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals* (Clay, 2016) and as a model for them to use in problem solving children with their own Literacy Lessons teachers. Lindy also used this same problem-solving format around a child to support the study sessions with *Teaching Struggling Readers* (Lyons, 2003).
In addition, it is important for the teacher leaders and teachers to understand that each and every child taught, whether in Reading Recovery or in Literacy Lessons, will require adaptations to meet their individual needs. That is what Clay (2016) intended:

> It is because these procedures are designed for adapting instruction to the learning needs of individual children that they can be applied to special education students who are experiencing difficulty with early literacy acquisition and to English language learners, including seven-to nine-year old children who need foundational instruction in English literacy. (p. 3)

Remaining flexible and tentative in teaching are paramount, and there should be an expectation of diversity in how children work on texts.

**Observations of Literacy Lessons teachers**

One of our early discoveries was that teachers of special populations are excellent observers of children when they come to Literacy Lessons training. Therefore, they make outstanding contributions to the training and ongoing professional development classes, and that is a beneficial aspect of classes blending Reading Recovery and Literacy Lessons teachers. The teachers are learning from one another, and these specialist teachers bring fresh eyes to the training classes.

Another discovery was the way Literacy Lessons teachers discuss the progress of their students. While both Reading Recovery and Literacy Lessons teachers focus on making accelerated progress, Reading Recovery teachers typically discuss progress in terms of 12–20 weeks and in text levels. Literacy Lessons teachers, on the other hand, discuss progress in terms of months and years of growth. For example, one specialist wrote, “I currently serve a third-grade girl who started the year reading at a Text Level 12. After 3 months of instruction, she is currently at a Text Level 22. That is 1.5 years of growth in 3 months!”

Lastly, specialist teachers seemed enamored of the professional learning model of Literacy Lessons and Reading Recovery training and the ongoing professional development. They are appreciative of learning about literacy processing theory, the problem solving at behind-the-glass sessions, and the collegiality this professional learning model provides. “It is the most highly effective training and professional development that I have received in my 15 years of experience in special education,” one of the Literacy Lessons teachers reported.

**Observations of Literacy Lessons student success**

Lindy and Kentucky’s teacher leaders are seeing great success with Literacy Lessons students—both the SPED students and ELLs—as well as their teachers. One of the many success stories is Steven’s progress shared below.

Steven entered kindergarten in 2011. During that year he was referred for special education testing due to a variety of concerns. He was evaluated and subsequently qualified for special education services under the category of ‘developmental delay.’ He also qualified for speech/language services due to expressive language and articulation delays and began receiving these services that year.

The Literacy Lessons specialist started working with Steven as he began third grade. He had made limited academic progress and his academic achievement was well below that of his peers, especially in reading. *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* (Clay, 2013) was administered in the fall of 2014, and Steven began receiving Literacy Lessons. Across 19 school weeks, he participated in 63 individual lessons. The Observation Survey was administered again in mid-January 2015, and because he demonstrated an early processing system, he exited successfully from Literacy Lessons.

Steven was re-evaluated for special education services in May 2015, and due to his progress, he no longer qualified. The re-evaluation report showed that he did not demonstrate any disability in the areas of basic reading, reading comprehension, or written expression. Steven exited special education services. Literacy Lessons kept him from a possible long-term special education label and placement. Steven was again given the Observation Survey at the end of the 2015 school year. The results in Table 1 show that

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Fall 2014 Entry</th>
<th>January 2015 Exit</th>
<th>May 2015 End of Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text Reading Level</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter Identification</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concepts About Print</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Vocabulary</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio Word Test</td>
<td>17/20</td>
<td>19/20</td>
<td>20/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words</td>
<td>34/37</td>
<td>37/37</td>
<td>37/37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
even after his series of Literacy Lessons ended, he continued making progress in reading.

The following testimony from a Literacy Lessons teacher in Kentucky summarizes our experiences:

Literacy Lessons has been the best training I’ve had as a special education teacher. It was very intense and it greatly increased my knowledge of how children acquire literacy. I am so much better equipped to help my special education students who are struggling with reading and writing. Literacy Lessons has had a direct and measureable impact on their learning. I am able to use the knowledge gained from Literacy Lessons not only in my one on one lessons, but also when I am working with groups of students.

Literacy Lessons in Ohio

Similar to Kentucky’s history, Ohio has also benefitted from over 30 years of successful Reading Recovery implementation in districts across the state. Before her death in 2007, Marie Clay provided guidance, insight, and the authority for The Ohio State University (OSU) to seek a registered trademark for Literacy Lessons in the U.S. The OSU trainers, along with Ohio teacher leaders and trained teachers, were extensively involved in initial pilots of Literacy Lessons and worked with trainer colleagues as the North American Trainers Group (NATG) developed and refined the Standards and Guidelines of Literacy Lessons in the United States (2013, updated 2015). Though implementation of Literacy Lessons was small during this time, in 2014–15 OSU trainers decided to train all Ohio teacher leaders in Literacy Lessons. Teacher leaders were expected to work with Literacy Lessons students, collect data, and complete a case study. They were also involved in extensive professional development across the year, including visitations with and experiences observing trained teachers work with older children through a one-way mirror. Teacher leaders who went on to sustain Literacy Lessons in their respective sites continue with yearly professional development that is in addition to their required Reading Recovery professional development.

Observations of Literacy Lessons student success

As an Ohio teacher leader, Jeff began training teachers in Literacy Lessons in 2015–16. His first cohort consisted of seven teachers, all of whom were already Reading Recovery trained. Three teachers were certified in special education and the remaining four were teachers certified to work with ELL students. One teacher who trained in 2015 was Mandy, a veteran ELL teacher with almost 40 years of experience who had close familiarity with Reading Recovery because she shared a room with Jeff during his first 3 years as a Reading Recovery teacher and then through her own training in 2013.

One student whom Mandy worked with in Literacy Lessons was a particularly interesting success story. Jasleen, an immigrant from the Middle East, was a struggling second grader. On her Language Assessment Scales (LAS) Placement Screener, her speaking and listening strengths, as shown by scores of 100% on both subtests; but she only scored 33% in reading and 27% in writing on the LAS at the beginning of the year. Jasleen had many areas of concern as indicated by the raw scores on both the Observation Survey and several additional measures (see Table 2, September). Her scores indicated she was an excellent candidate for Literacy Lessons.

Mandy reflected:

On a personal level, Jasleen was a very quiet girl. She was hesitant to read aloud or to voice her word solving. This made it difficult to determine the strategic activity she was using and what she needed to learn to do. It was important to build her confidence level to problem solve aloud with me. Jasleen had strong oral skills but was a quiet and persistent worker. However, from the inception of Literacy Lessons, at difficulty, Jasleen never appealed. She kept her head down, looked at the pictures, and re-read. Furthermore, she would not move on when stumped. When she got stuck, I would have to intervene. She was either too shy or too proud to ask for help. I worked hard to open her to trying new strategic behavior and often said to her, ‘I need to hear you try.’

Mandy worked with Jasleen one-to-one, in 30-minute sessions for approximately 18 weeks. In that short time, Jasleen grew tremendously, as evidenced on her January exit scores in Table 2.

Jasleen’s growth was also observed in her classroom performance. She made the mid-year benchmark in second grade and continued to make good progress without needing daily, one-to-one lessons. In fact, Jasleen continued to show growth in the classroom over time — ending second grade on level, maintaining her growth in third grade, and subsequently passing high-stakes, end-of-year tests with scores that allowed her to avoid retention in grade due to low reading achievement, as stipulated by Ohio’s Third
Grade Reading Guarantee law. This type of progress — securing a self-extending system in reading and writing that ensures ongoing literacy learning—is an expressed goal for teachers working in Reading Recovery and Literacy Lessons: “Learners would need to be able to read and write texts relatively independently in ways that could lead to the learner taking on new competencies through his or her own efforts in the classroom” [Clay’s emphasis] (Clay, 2015, p. 219).

Mandy explained Jasleen’s progress:

[T]he appropriateness of Literacy Lessons lay in being able to customize the focus, expanding or contracting according to need, and to be able to meet English language learners at their actual level and take them forward. English language learners can be really excellent candidates for Reading Recovery as well as Literacy Lessons. It is a question of being sensitive to a little different set of needs, a little different timeframe for acquisition, and some modified teaching strategies.

Mandy also gives some important cautionary advice about working in Literacy Lessons or Reading Recovery with ELLs. She states that teachers of students who are acquiring English must consider how to use language in ways that support, not confuse, the learner.

Saying, ‘Does that ‘sound’ right?’ or ‘Does that make sense?’ or ‘How do you know it was right?’ may only confuse the child more since they are learning English structures and may have limited English vocabulary. Ultimately what helps the most is the same advice given to Reading Recovery teachers by Clay (2016), ‘The teacher is concerned with how the child works on problem-solving and new learning. Attention is paid to what that child can do well and how to use these strengths to enable him to do the things he finds difficult’ (p. 15).

Another ELL teacher who trained in Literacy Lessons, Jill, had a similar story during last year’s training, Jeff’s first with Literacy Lessons implementation at his site.

My student entered second grade with limited English and very few skills. She was literally transformed by Literacy Lessons. Together with the classroom teacher’s efforts, the intense, daily lessons turned her into an independent reader with a newfound love of reading. Literacy Lessons changed the trajectory of second grade and became a catalyst for academic success.

Alyson, a special education teacher in Jeff’s district, began training in and teaching Literacy Lessons and documented similar success during her first 2 years of instruction with Charlene. A third-grade student in special education,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Entry Scores (September)</th>
<th>Exit Scores (January)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letter Identification</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio Word Test</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concepts About Print</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text Reading Level</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(She reached grade-level benchmark for classroom standards.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Entry Scores (September)</th>
<th>Exit Scores (January)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slosson Oral Reading Test (SORT)</td>
<td>36 words</td>
<td>75 words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeFord Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words</td>
<td>Phonemes: 47/3rd stanine</td>
<td>Phonemes: 63/6th stanine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentences for Grade 2</td>
<td>Spelling: 9/4th stanine</td>
<td>Spelling: 11/5th stanine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Assessment Scale (LAS) Placement Test</td>
<td>Speaking: 100%</td>
<td>Reading: 83% (up more than 150%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Listening: 100%</td>
<td>Writing: 72% (up nearly 200%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading: 33%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing: 27%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Charlene was far behind her peers; after 3 years of school and 2 years of special education services, she was reading material equivalent to an end-of-first-grade level. Table 3 documents Charlene’s scores on the Observation Survey and the Slosson Oral Reading Test (SORT) when Alyson began Literacy Lessons with her.

During her third-grade year in Literacy Lessons with Alyson, Charlene made tremendous progress and achieved over a year’s growth in Text Reading Level in just 1 year, progress that had never been seen for Charlene since she started kindergarten. Alyson continued one-to-one, daily 30 minutes of Literacy Lessons with Charlene in fourth grade and Charlene’s accelerated progress continued. By the middle of fourth grade, Charlene was reading grade-level text, demonstrated a literacy processing system, and went on to pass the fourth-grade, high-stakes, end-of-year literacy test. In effect, Charlene had made more progress in just 14 months of Literacy Lessons than she had made in the previous 3 years combined.

Alyson explains Charlene’s progress:

Literacy Lessons has provided Charlene with the ability to read with confidence. It allows me to provide lessons that are unique to the child’s specific learning needs. Being flexible is key, and knowing and adjusting to their needs is imperative. Due to Literacy Lessons and a high level of collaboration with her classroom teacher and other interventionists in the building, her reading progress continues to flourish. When I reflect back to my training year for Literacy Lessons, having Jeff observe and model procedures that could help move Charlene was so helpful. I now feel I have a plan. I know what a child needs and can quickly adjust in the moment in order to move them to where she needs to be.

Comparisons of Reading Recovery and Literacy Lessons

Because Reading Recovery and Literacy Lessons training uses a common text for initial training, Clay’s (2016) Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals, there could be some confusion about the two interventions. Common to both Literacy Lessons and Reading Recovery are Clay’s theories of literacy processing, understandings about how to create conditions under which learning happens, and the aim to both accelerate learning and to support the learner’s construction of a self-extending system. Table 4 on the following page highlights some of the similarities and differences that may be helpful for readers new to Literacy Lessons or Reading Recovery.

Summary of Our Literacy Lessons Implementations and Observations

In this article, the experiences of a university trainer (Lindy) and teacher leader (Jeff) have illustrated that Literacy Lessons training is a powerful tool in the hands of SPED and ELL teachers. Like Reading Recovery, Literacy Lessons shares Clay’s literacy processing theory, a rigorous training model with ongoing professional development, and the collection and analysis of data to inform instruction and guide ongoing implementation (see Konstantellou & Lose, 2009). The observations and informal data from the individual case studies shared in this article and interviews with teachers reflect what Stanford researcher Eliot Eisner (1993) said of educational research:

The major aim…in which we are engaged…has to do with the improvement of educational practice so that the lives of those who teach and learn are themselves enhanced… (p. 10)

Indeed, the implementation of Literacy Lessons in Kentucky and Ohio seems to be doing just that — enhancing the lives of those who teach and learn.

Authors’ Note: All names are pseudonyms. Special thanks to the Literacy Lessons specialists in Kentucky and Ohio for sharing these important stories of success.
### Implementation

**Journal of Reading Recovery**

Fall 2017

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#### Component Reading Recovery Literacy Lessons

**Teacher Training Qualifications**

A licensed teacher with successful teaching experience is qualified to train in Reading Recovery for a school committed to the Reading Recovery implementation.

A licensed teacher certified in special education, ESL, or bilingual education who presents evidence of successful teaching experience and is working in a school that has a Reading Recovery intervention is qualified to train in Literacy Lessons.

**Academic Course Foci**

The Reading Recovery teacher acquires knowledge of early literacy assessment, literacy processing theory, and instructional procedures for ensuring each learner’s acquisition of a processing system that is a self-extending system for reading and writing. Teachers-in-training teach multiple lessons for their peers behind a one-way glass and receive four visits from their teacher leader.

The Literacy Lessons teacher acquires knowledge of early literacy assessment, literacy processing theory, instructional procedures for ensuring each learner’s acquisition of a processing system that is a self-extending system for reading and writing. They also study the learning needs of older students, students with special needs, and students who are acquiring English. Teachers teach multiple lessons for their peers behind a one-way glass and receive four visits from their teacher leader.

**Students Taught During Training**

The Reading Recovery teacher-in-training works with first-grade students who are struggling to learn to read and write. These students are the lowest-performing children in their age cohort and are included irrespective of labels, including learning disabled, special education, or ELL. A minimum of eight Reading Recovery children are taught during the school year: four children in the first wave and four children in the second wave.

Initially, the Literacy Lessons teacher-in-training works with first-grade children eligible for Reading Recovery in a school setting. These students are selected after the Reading Recovery teacher has identified her caseload of the lowest-performing learners. The training model specifies the number of Reading Recovery children instructed (two or more) and the timing of the initial teaching of their special-area Literacy Lessons students (e.g., in round two of Year 1 or in Year 2).

**Students Taught Beyond the Training Year/Experience**

The Reading Recovery teacher works with first-grade students who are struggling to learn to read and write. These students are the lowest-performing children in their age cohort and are included irrespective of labels, including learning disabled, special education, or ELL.

A trained Literacy Lessons intervention specialist works with either a) students who have been identified for any type of special education and have not developed an early processing system; or b) ELLs who are struggling to learn to read and write and have not developed an early literacy processing system. Literacy Lessons students are ordinarily in Grades 1–4.

**Instruction**

The Reading Recovery teacher provides individually designed lessons 30 minutes daily for each child for a maximum of 20 weeks.

The Literacy Lessons teacher provides daily, individually designed lessons for Literacy Lessons students. Individual lessons may extend beyond 30 minutes and the series of lessons may extend beyond 20 weeks. Decisions regarding the length of daily lessons and duration of the treatment are based on the judgments of the teacher leader and the Literacy Lessons teacher, in consultation with the school team.

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Table 4. Comparing Components of Reading Recovery and Literacy Lessons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Reading Recovery</th>
<th>Literacy Lessons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Table 4. Comparing Components of Reading Recovery and Literacy Lessons continued

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Reading Recovery</th>
<th>Literacy Lessons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Daily Lessons</strong></td>
<td>Instruction includes daily reading, writing, and letter/word work. The child learns by reading and writing continuous texts. Selections of leveled texts, appropriate for each individual and presenting a gradually increasing gradient of difficulty, are based on daily running records and teacher observations.</td>
<td>Instruction includes daily reading, writing, and letter/word work. The child learns by writing and reading continuous texts that are leveled and present a gradually increasing gradient of difficulty. The selections of texts for each individual are based on daily running records and teacher observations and are appropriate for the learner’s age or grade level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Daily Records</strong></td>
<td>Reading Recovery teachers monitor progress daily and maintain records of reading and writing progress over time.</td>
<td>Literacy Lessons teachers monitor progress daily and maintain records of reading and writing progress over time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data Collection</strong></td>
<td>Annual data collection includes every child served by a Reading Recovery teacher with records submitted to the IDEC for annual reporting and evaluation.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Following Training</strong></td>
<td>Reading Recovery teachers continue to receive school visits and participate in ongoing professional development sessions with their teacher leader annually after training. These sessions provide opportunities to participate in behind-the-glass lessons.</td>
<td>Literacy Lessons teachers continue to receive school visits and participate in ongoing professional development with their teacher leader annually after training. These sessions provide opportunities to participate in behind-the-glass lessons.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### About the Authors

**Dr. Lindy Harmon** is a Reading Recovery teacher at the University of Kentucky Reading Recovery Center which operates in the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development in Lexington, KY. She has been a Reading Recovery professional for over 30 years and continues to teach Reading Recovery full time in Washington County, KY. Lindy currently is past president of the Reading Recovery Council of North America.

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**References**

About the Cover

When Nora started first grade at Chapelfield Elementary, she was reading below grade level. By January, after her series of lessons with Reading Recovery teacher Sara Imerman, Nora was a successful reader and writer. Now a third grader, she continues to meet grade-level expectations and loves to read—especially Magic Tree House books—and says her favorite part of the school day is reading. When she is not at school, Nora enjoys gymnastics and basketball, and she loves to curl up on the sofa with a good book.
Literacy Lessons: An Innovation in Progress

Connie Briggs, Texas Woman’s University
Richard Lomax, The Ohio State University, International Data Evaluation Center

In the 2005 edition of *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals Part One*, Marie Clay wrote that “Reading Recovery training for teachers of special education children had been approved and supervised from time to time [and that] the new title of the book acknowledges that these things have occurred and implies that further exploration of working with some special education children is appropriate” (Clay, 2005, p. ii).

In 2006, Clay challenged the Reading Recovery® trainers in North America to share what had been learned about teaching students who struggle to learn to read and write with other specialist teachers (i.e., special education teachers and teachers of English language learners). As a result of her request, a group of trainers within the North American Trainers Group (NATG) began the discussion of how to design this new innovation at their September 2006 meeting.

When Clay challenged trainers to pursue a redesign of her early intervention for special populations, she specified that they establish an infrastructure and standards to guarantee quality control, and that they monitor the effectiveness of the Literacy Lessons™ implementation through ongoing data collection, research, and evaluation. Trialing aspects of initial implementations of Literacy Lessons involves attention to observed outcomes for both teachers and children. Other articles in this issue share observational reports and anecdotal feedback (see Harmon & Williams; Lose & Konstantellou). The foci of this article are the reiterative research process leading to the current standards for Literacy Lessons and a report of the student data collected during the 2016–2017 academic year.

Developing and implementing a new innovation is complex and time consuming as it involves a reiterative process that allows for ongoing revisions of practice based on each year’s outcomes. Data are collected and analyzed annually to evaluate outcomes and identify needs for revisions; thus, learning is ongoing and enhancements are based on evidence. This was considered key to establishing the Literacy Lessons intervention. For while the Literacy Lessons innovation is based on the theory, research, and teacher training processes applied in Reading Recovery, working with special education teachers and teachers of English language learners (ELLs) offers new challenges, including differences in the cultural contexts within schools.

As observed in other contexts, successful implementation of new innovations is usually planned and initiated in stages. Research literature has named stages of implementation in a variety of ways typically ranging from four to six stages (Berman & McLaughlin, 1976; Fixsen, Naoom, Blasé, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005; AI Hub, 2017). For the purposes of this article, we have combined some of the labels and discuss the Literacy Lessons development process based on three stages — initiation/exploration, implementation, and incorporation/full implementation. We follow this with discussion of the analysis of the 2016–2017 Literacy Lessons data.

Any new innovation will have to prove itself. Still in its infancy, Literacy Lessons data show promising results.
Implementing a New Innovation

Initiation/Exploration

The Initiation/Exploration stage is the planning stage. For trainers in the U.S., this followed Marie Clay’s suggestion during the September 2006 meeting of the International Reading Recovery Trainers Organization (IRRTO) that a Literacy Lessons trademark be secured in each country with Reading Recovery. Following that challenge, a committee of Reading Recovery trainers met in Columbus, OH, to begin planning the innovation and designing the training for Literacy Lessons teachers. Central to this plan were Clay’s four non-negotiables for a Literacy Lessons implementation. (See Lose & Konstantellou this issue for discussion of Clay’s four non-negotiable components.)

The outcome of the meeting was a draft of standards for Literacy Lessons training and tentative plans for university training centers (UTCs) to begin trialing this innovation. In 2007–2008, The Ohio State University secured the U.S. trademark for Literacy Lessons for use by sites that meet the annual requirements for implementation of the Literacy Lessons innovation. A key requirement of this trademark program is the collection of data on all Literacy Lessons children served.

Implementation

Implementation is a crucial stage when the project must be translated into practice. Initially, trainers at four UTCs began working with teacher leaders and teachers to trial Literacy Lessons training. Informal data were gathered and reported annually to NATG.

Based on discoveries gleaned from observations of the first years of Literacy Lessons training and analyses of the student data, the standards and processes for Literacy Lessons implementations were revised for clarification. In 2013, a task force of trainers initiated work with the International Data Evaluation Center (IDEC) to formulate research questions for the annual assessment and to identify needed data and establish a standardized process for collecting the data. Again, the processes of trialing, evaluating, and refining the research methodology was a reiterative cycle with the goal of seeking outcome data that would clearly answer questions useful to all stakeholders. This has been a 3-year process, and it is continuing. Informed by this year’s results, descriptions of status categories (described with the data reported below) will be further refined and related questions will be revised for the 2017–2018 data collection process.

There is still work to do and challenges to solve. The training of Literacy Lessons teachers seems to be working well and UTCs are providing professional development for teacher leaders who are training and supporting Literacy Lessons teachers; however, the content of teacher leader training has not been formalized at the national level. Recently, a second NATG task force was convened to work on the content and support that would be beneficial to these teacher leaders. Refinement will continue to be an ongoing process.

Incorporation/Full Implementation

The term incorporation, or full implementation, is used to denote the final stage in innovation. At this stage, the innovative practice loses its “special” status and becomes institutionalized as regular practice. The decision to incorporate the innovation as regular practice “may involve more than the success or failure of the project during its trial period. Economic, political, and organizational pressures and constraints may play major roles in determining the innovation’s future” (Berman & McLaughlin, 1976, p. 350). This has certainly been true of Reading Recovery, as reported in the evaluation of the i3 scale-up report (May, Sirinides, Gray, & Goldsworthy, 2016). Despite the positive outcomes for children who struggle to learn to read and write, and the fact that many schools and districts have institutionalized Reading Recovery as regular practice, there are still many factors at play that keep schools from either electing to implement this proven intervention or from pursuing full implementation of Reading Recovery within their schools or districts. It is assumed that Literacy Lessons implementation will face the same challenges.

Any new innovation will have to prove itself. Still in its infancy, Literacy Lessons data show promising results. It will take several years to collect enough data to begin to see patterns emerge that inform which categories of children best benefit from the intervention, how long it takes for different categories of children to benefit from the intervention, if those gains are sustained, and if so, under what conditions.

2016–2017 Data Analysis

The next sections address the Literacy Lessons data collected during the 2016–2017 school year. A summary of the characteristics of the participants is followed by analyses of the outcomes (means and effect sizes)
for the ELL and special education (SPED) subsamples of Literacy Lessons children.

An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement (Clay, 2013) is used as an assessment for the intervention. As detailed in the current data report, students who were identified for Literacy Lessons instruction at the beginning of the school year with the Observation Survey were reassessed at the end of the school year to determine each student’s acquisition of an effective literacy processing system. Unlike Reading Recovery, with an endpoint of 20 weeks, students may stay in the Literacy Lessons intervention until they meet the goal of obtaining an early literacy processing system. The range of students typically served in Literacy Lessons is Grades 1–4; a few students in Grades 5–6 were served during the 2016–2017 academic year. The decision to include these older students was based on careful consideration of students’ needs by the teacher leader, teacher, and school team, and by examination of their performance on the Observation Survey.

The goal of Literacy Lessons instruction is to build an early literacy processing system as a foundation for further learning. Students considered successful demonstrate an early literacy processing system even if they are not reading at grade-level expectations. For example, a successful fourth-grade Literacy Lessons student, who has obtained a strong early literacy processing system, may not be reading on a fourth-grade level at the end of his series of lessons.

How many students were taught in Literacy Lessons, what were the student characteristics, and what was their end-of-year status?

Characteristics of participants
In 2016–2017, Literacy Lessons was implemented by 13 UTCs responsible for overseeing the intervention in schools located in 17 states (as shown in Table 1). There were 223 teachers trained to deliver the Literacy Lessons intervention, with support from 70 teacher leaders in 56 training sites serving 191 schools in 70 school districts. These teachers taught 382 Literacy Lessons children (237 SPED and 145 ELL). The teachers-in-training additionally taught Reading Recovery lessons to 270 first-grade children as part of their training experience, and hence the reported Reading Recovery eligible students.

The category RR Eligible Students refers to children who were identified as needing Reading Recovery and were taught by Literacy Lessons teachers-in-training. As detailed in the Standards and Guidelines of Literacy Lessons in the United States (2013, updated 2015), Literacy Lessons teachers-in-training begin their training studying Reading Recovery theory and procedures and instructing first-grade children qualifying for Reading Recovery. There is one additional stipulation in the standards: During training, Literacy Lessons intervention specialists select their Reading Recovery eligible students after the Reading Recovery teachers have selected the lowest children in the first-grade cohort for their caseloads. Therefore, the next-lowest children are assigned to the Literacy Lessons teachers-in-training. Data for these Reading Recovery eligible students are submitted by Literacy Lessons teachers-in-training and are analyzed separately.

What follows are student demographics for the 2016–2017 Literacy Lessons students. Of all participants, 73% of the SPED students and 53% of the ELL students were boys; 74% of SPED students and 83% of ELL students were eligible for free or reduced lunch. As shown in Table 2, children were mainly from Grades 1 and 2 and represented different ethnic backgrounds and a variety of disability groupings. Additionally, the majority of both groups were in regular classrooms, although 13% were in self-contained SPED classrooms and 4% were in bilingual classrooms. In addition to regular classroom instruction, 51% of the SPED students also received additional SPED services and 30% of the ELL students had additional English as a second language (ESL) services. The most-prevalent disability descriptors reported for this group of SPED students are a specific learning disability (36.7%) and developmental delay (13.8%). Fifty-seven percent of these ELL students are categorized with a speech and language impairment.

End-of-year status
For the purposes of the current data collection, report, and analyses, five

| Table 1. Participation in Literacy Lessons in the United States, 2016–2017 |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Entity                      | n   |
| University Training Centers | 13  |
| Teacher Training Sites      | 56  |
| States                      | 17  |
| School Systems              | 70  |
| School Buildings            | 191 |
| Teacher Leaders             | 70  |
| Teachers                    | 223 |
| LL SPED Students            | 237 |
| LL ELL Students             | 145 |
| RR Eligible Students        | 270 |
status categories for Literacy Lessons students were applied. Defined below, three categories indicative of literacy performance were determined by Observation Survey testing and Literacy Lessons teacher judgement at the end of the school year. The five status categories:

- **Literacy Lessons No Longer Needed**: A student who has reached the goal of Literacy Lessons by demonstrating an effective early literacy processing system as documented by Observation Survey scores and Literacy Lessons teacher observations. This may or may not indicate that a student is performing at grade-level literacy expectations.

- **Continue with Literacy Lessons**: A student who is making progress in developing an early literacy processing system as documented by Observation Survey results and Literacy Lessons teacher observations. The student appears to need more time in Literacy Lessons to secure a strategic processing system that will allow him/her to continue to move forward without ongoing individual instruction.

- **Other**: A student who has been recommended for other literacy intervention support by the school team.

- **Moved**: A student who moved from the school before completing the intervention.

- **None of the Above**: A student whose lessons were ended for external reasons.

Across all grades, 49% of SPED students and 51% of ELL students demonstrated progress from fall to spring.
assessments in the acquisition of an early literacy processing system as assessed on the Observation Survey and confirmed by teacher judgment. Of this set of SPED students, 22% were found to have an effective early literacy processing system; and therefore, they were no longer in need of individual Literacy Lessons. Another 27% of the SPED students who demonstrated progress in Literacy Lessons were recommended to continue this individual treatment to allow them ongoing support to secure a firm literacy processing system.

Of the ELL students who demonstrated progress during Literacy Lessons instruction, 37% demonstrated they no longer needed individual lessons as they had acquired an early effective literacy processing system, confirmed by Observation Survey assessments and teacher judgment. Fourteen percent of these ELL students were recommended to continue with Literacy Lessons to allow them to receive ongoing individual lessons supporting their progress in acquiring an early literacy processing system. It is noted that among those students (SPED and ELL) whose Literacy Lessons were ended due to their success in securing a literacy processing system were students who may need additional literacy support to achieve grade-level expectations; however, individual instruction did not appear necessary to ensure their ongoing growth and achievement in early literacy.

Alternative/other recommendations for continuing services were made for 42% of SPED and 35% of ELL students. The intervention was stopped due to external reasons for 6% of the SPED students and 9% of the ELL students; and 3% of SPED and 6% of ELL students moved from the school before completing the inter-

![Figure 1. Intervention Status of SPED Literacy Lessons Students Served in the United States, 2016–2017](image1)

![Figure 2. Intervention Status of ELL Literacy Lessons Students Served in the United States, 2016–2017](image2)
viation. Percentages for these same categories are further subdivided by grade, as shown in Figures 1 and 2 (note that results are not shown in these figures for Grade 6 due to very small sample sizes; \( n = 2 \) in SPED and \( n = 1 \) in ESL).

If a Literacy Lessons student was recommended for an alternative literacy intervention (i.e., assigned the status category of Other), the Literacy Lessons teacher was asked to indicate the specific plan for ongoing instructional support. These recommendations are detailed in Table 3.

Results reveal that the largest percentages of both SPED and ELL students across all grade levels were assigned to small-group literacy instruction with an appropriate specialist (SPED or ESL teacher) or with another intervention specialist, e.g., 52.9% of Grade 1, SPED students; 61.9% of Grade 1, ELL students. These recommended actions were suggested rather than continuing with individual Literacy Lessons which had a positive impact on their literacy learning, as discussed further below. The data do not reveal why these recommendations were made and thus present questions for further exploration.

One additional finding reported in this data and presented in Table 4 was the loss of access to Literacy Lessons. In many instances, this was due

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3. Recommendations for Literacy Lessons Students Who Need Additional Support Toward Literacy Expectations in the United States, 2016–2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommended Action</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED</td>
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<tr>
<td>Small literacy group with LL teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Small literacy group with classroom teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small literacy group with a SPED/ESL teacher or another interventionist/specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual intervention with a specialist teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement in self-contained SPED class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small literacy group with LL teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small literacy group with classroom teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small literacy group with a SPED/ESL teacher or another interventionist/specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Table 4. External Reasons for Ending Literacy Lessons in the United States, 2016–2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reasons</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy Lessons no longer available in school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement or IEP change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
to the unavailability of Literacy Lessons in these schools (e.g., 35.3% for Grade 1) or a change of placement due to a student’s IEP. More often, Literacy Lessons was ended due to other, external reasons which are unexplained in the data, an additional focus of ongoing exploration.

What was the yearlong progress of Literacy Lessons students (SPED and ELL) on the Observation Survey?

Examining OS task performance
The means and magnitude of mean differences (i.e., effect sizes) in fall and year-end testing are considered next. Table 5 displays the individual task scores from the Observation Survey at fall and year-end for SPED and ELL children separately. Unfortunately, there is no appropriate comparison group for the Literacy Lessons intervention as there is in Reading Recovery (i.e., random sample or tested-not-instructed).

The right columns denote the effect sizes in terms of standardized mean differences (positive values indicate that the year-end mean was greater than the fall mean value). Note that the effect size measure utilized was Cohen’s $d$ (Cohen, 1988; Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012), which is in the metric of a standard deviation. Thus, a value of $d = 1.00$ would indicate that the children had a mean score increase from fall to year-end of one standard deviation. A common standard to judge $d$ is that .2 is a small effect size, .5 a medium effect size, and .8 a large effect size.

For all Observation Survey tasks and for both populations (SPED and ELL), mean scores substantially increased from fall to year-end, with medium to very large effect sizes (ranging from 0.6 to 2.7). More specifically, the effect sizes representing change from fall to year-end were as follows: Text Reading Level (SPED 2.4, ELL 2.7), Writing Vocabulary (SPED 2.2, ELL 2.5), Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words (SPED 0.9, ELL 1.1), Letter Identification (SPED 0.6, ELL 0.7), Ohio Word Test (SPED 1.5, ELL 1.8), and Concepts About Print (SPED 1.2, ELL 1.6). It should be noted that the smallest effect size (the only one not being in the larger and above range of effect sizes) was for Letter Identification. This task had a ceiling effect in this study as by year-end the mean was at the ceiling. In addition, the smallest effect sizes occur for basic items of knowledge (Letter Identification, Concepts About Print, Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words) as students from higher grades tend to already be near the ceiling. The largest effect sizes are for higher-level tasks (Text Reading Level, Writing Vocabulary) where there is still room for development amongst the older children. Overall, SPED and ELL children increased by about a standard deviation and a half, when averaged across the Observation Survey measures (SPED 1.5, ELL 1.7). Effect sizes in text reading level for SPED and ELL students respectively were 2.4 and 2.7 which shows that these subgroups of children were making excellent progress in orchestrating items in the service of developing an early literacy processing system.

By examining the means and effect sizes from fall to year-end for all participating SPED and ELL students, we find that on average, all students are benefitting from the Literacy Lessons intervention. However, we also observed many students (see Figures 1 and 2) referred for other literacy interventions after a series of lessons rather than continuing in this intervention to reach the goal of obtaining an early literacy processing system.

As stated above, this suggests further investigation to understand rationales for such recommendations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation Survey Task</th>
<th>SPED Fall</th>
<th>SPED Year-End</th>
<th>ELL Fall</th>
<th>ELL Year-End</th>
<th>Effect Size ($d$) SPED</th>
<th>Effect Size ($d$) ELL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text Reading Level</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Vocabulary</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>49.0</td>
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<td>2.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Letter Identification</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>52.3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio Word Test</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concepts About Print</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion and Conclusions

Any new innovation requires time to develop, implement, and validate. Because of the 30-plus-year history of Reading Recovery implementation in the U.S., there are structures in place, models to follow, and professionals knowledgeable about working with struggling readers and writers. Because Literacy Lessons may only be implemented in schools that implement Reading Recovery, school officials and teachers may already value the complex theory and one-to-one teaching for the lowest students.

It will be important to continue the reiterative research process to improve data collection processes, to yield information about implementation factors affecting outcomes, and to secure a better understanding of the impact of outcomes on both SPED and ELL students. An immediate revision to the data collection process for 2017–2018 will be changes to the student status categories in order to better reflect the outcomes for all participants. Additional questions to pursue are suggested by the observed numbers of students who no longer have access to Literacy Lessons, as well as clarification of the other services recommended for exiting Literacy Lessons students and why.

Marie Clay challenged Reading Recovery professionals to share what is known with other specialist teachers (see Konstantellou & Lose, 2009). As the data shows, the innovation, Literacy Lessons, is improving the opportunities for literacy learning for a wider range of children in need of an early literacy processing system. It is an intervention with promise.

References


RESEARCH BRIEFS

Literacy Lessons with English Language Learners

Richard G. Lomax, The Ohio State University, International Data Evaluation Center

Editor’s note: This is the first in a series of International Data Evaluation Center (IDEC) research briefs. Their purpose is to illustrate an interesting and different analysis of IDEC data, with the goal of initiating further discussion and analysis, and to share summaries of key published research that would be of interest to our readers.

In this research brief, the Literacy Lessons™ database was examined, aggregated across the 2013–14, 2014–15, and 2015–16 school years (to have a larger dataset), and two separate analyses are presented.

The initial subsample analyzed first-grade English language learners (ELL) eligible for Reading Recovery intervention, taught by Literacy Lessons teachers-in-training, and by year-end demonstrated acquisition of an early processing system as assessed on the Observation Survey and confirmed by teachers’ observations (n = 53). Such performance, evidence of a literacy processing system as documented by Observation Survey scores and teacher judgement, is indication of student success in Literacy Lessons. As there is no comparison group in Literacy Lessons, the random sample of the Reading Recovery database (2015–16) was used (n = 3,181 first graders).

Fall and spring Observation Survey individual task means and effect sizes for these two groups are shown in Table 1. The right-most columns denote effect sizes (standardized mean differences where positive values indicate ELL was greater than the random sample). The effect size measure utilized was Cohen’s d (Cohen, 1988; Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012) in the metric of a standard deviation. A value of d = +1.0 indicates an ELL mean one standard deviation above the random sample (.2 = small effect, .5 = medium effect, .8 = large effect).

Fall mean ELL scores on all measures were much lower than the random sample, with medium to large effects (from -.60 to -.96, with a mean of -.84). Spring mean ELL scores on all measures increased and sometimes exceeded the random sample, with small effects (from -.44 to -.21, with a mean of -.06). Thus, the ELL sample began the fall substantially below the random sample (by nearly one standard deviation) and by spring had approached or surpassed them. Additionally, effect size changes from fall to spring for the tasks were as follows: Text Reading Level (.52), Writing Vocabulary (.72), Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words (.84), Letter Identification (.60), Ohio Word Test (1.15), and Concepts About Print (.87). Thus, the ELL sample increased by about three-fourths of a standard deviation more than the random sample from fall to spring, when averaged across the measures (average effect size change of .78, a large effect).

A second set of subsamples of ELL students by grade was utilized. As shown in Table 2, the tasks were

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Mean Fall and Spring Scores with Effect Sizes for Successful First-Grade Literacy Lessons English Language Learners and Random Sample Reading Recovery Students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Observation Survey Task</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text Reading Level (TRL)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Writing Vocabulary (WV)</td>
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<td>Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words (HRSIW)</td>
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<td>Letter Identification (LI)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ohio Word Test (OWT)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concepts About Print (C.A.P.)</td>
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Table 2. Mean Fall and Spring Scores with Effect Sizes for Successful Literacy Lessons English Language Learners by Grade

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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</tr>
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</table>

broken down by grade with a display of fall and spring means and effect sizes. No comparison group is available beyond first grade, which is why fall and spring were compared. The sample sizes by grade were as follows: Grade 1 = 53; Grade 2 = 20; Grade 3 = 9; Grade 4 = 5; Grade 5 = 5. Thus, caution should be given to results beyond the second grade due to the small sample sizes. In addition, ceiling effects were experienced for the Letter Identification task for spring at all grades. For every task at every grade, there were large increases from fall to spring. Except for the Letter Identification task (due to ceiling effects), the effect sizes fell into the large and beyond effect size categories. The largest effect sizes occurred for the Text Reading Level task. Overall, the Literacy Lessons intervention was also shown to be rather effective for participating ELLs across the grades.

These results compare nicely to the most recent report comparing discontinued Reading Recovery and random sample students during 2015–16 (Lomax, 2017). In summary, the Literacy Lessons intervention for English language learners is quite effective in first grade and beyond and holds much promise for the future. It is hoped that this and other evidence will foster greater participation in the Literacy Lessons intervention.

References
Do you have a vision of teaching? What guides your approach? In their book, Growing as a Teacher: Goals and Pathways of Ongoing Teacher Learning, authors Clive Beck and Clare Kosnik suggest that your vision of teaching reflects the teacher you want to be and guides your initiatives within the ever-changing world of education. Confronted with distorted concepts of teaching, such as the simple transmission of a package of academic material, teachers need to develop a strong alternative vision so they can confidently teach in a complex, effective, and relevant way (Beck & Kosnik, 2014).

Reflecting back over my years in education, I am not the teacher I was 36 years ago; my vision is honed over many years and a variety of experiences. It guides my approach to academic instruction and other elements such as helping my students develop a viable way of life, building safe and inclusive learning communities, and establishing strong teacher-student relationships (Beck & Kosnik, 2014). My vision has also been strongly influenced by membership in Reading Recovery professional learning communities and by the exchange of ideas with other members of those communities.

During my training year as a Reading Recovery teacher, my teacher leader introduced me to the benefits of Reading Recovery Council of North America membership. That was 22 years ago, and I am continually grateful to RRCNA for the breadth of its offerings. Perhaps its greatest contribution to supporting my vision of teaching is the variety of choices for self-directed learning, and in particular, the annual National Reading Recovery & K-6 Literacy Conference. This outstanding opportunity to learn with colleagues can help you be the teacher you want to be in classrooms, early intervention, coaching, leadership, with English language learners, or as a specialist. The 2018 Conference will be held February 17–20 in Columbus, OH.

Keynote speakers Mary Fried, Ellin Keene, and Pat Cummings promise to inspire and challenge us. Featured speakers Jeff Anderson, Gravity Goldberg and Renee Houser, Jennifer Serravallo, Connie Briggs and Salli Forbes, Sue Duncan, and Lea McGee will explore some of the many complexities of literacy learning.

There are also options for how you want to learn. Study sessions encour-
age interaction with other educators in an in-depth investigation of a topic, and concurrent sessions take a more lecture-like format.

Saturday Preconference Institutes complement the Conference and provide full-day sessions in leadership, Reading Recovery, and classroom literacy.

If you are in leadership, imagine a full day learning and talking about the latest research on leadership actions and student achievement with Dr. Douglas Reeves at the Leadership Institute. Also, imagine how conversations with the speaker and fellow attendees can begin even before and carry on after the Institute via Twitter, Facebook, and by email using the Conference Mobile App.

For Reading Recovery educators who always crave more time for discussions, two full-day Institutes provide that opportunity. James Schnug, Lisa Patrick Pinkerton, and Maryann McBride bring together the challenge of acceleration and the crucial early lessons during Roaming Around the Known. Or, Elizabeth (Betsy) Kaye will lead you through a day-long exploration into the idea of reciprocal gains from linked reading and writing processes.

Two additional full-day Institutes that are open to all attendees address current and unique topics that promise to take your learning into new territory. Drawing on their book, *Disrupting Thinking*, Kylene Beers and Robert Probst will pursue questions such as how to encourage responsive and responsible reading of texts, especially nonfiction, and how to help even our youngest students identify fake news. Or, you can join Tanny McGregor to explore what it means to make your thinking visible and learn more about her approach to weaving visual literacy practices into instruction.

High-quality professional learning inspires us and drives our vision forward. As a 2017 Conference attendee shared,

“The conference validated my vision for my school and fueled me to move forward as a new administrator with a reading and literacy focus.”

Whatever path you are on, I encourage you to actively pursue the professional learning that will hone your vision of teaching and expand your network.

**Reference**

Executive Director’s Message

Responding with the Truth

RRCNA Executive Director Jady Johnson

One of RRCNA’s key functions is to assure that the educational context in which you work is well-informed about Reading Recovery and the important work you do. We know that Reading Recovery is specialized, complex, and not easily communicated in our soundbite culture. Under the best of circumstances, it is challenging to explain Reading Recovery to school decision makers, teacher colleagues, community leaders, and parents. When erroneous and misleading charges against Reading Recovery are publicized, our jobs—as well as your jobs—become more difficult.

In August this year, an article appeared in Learning Disabilities: A Multidisciplinary Journal by authors Cook, Rodes, and Lipsitz titled, “The Reading Wars and Reading Recovery: What Educators, Families, and Taxpayers Should Know.” The sole purpose of the article was to attack Reading Recovery. The Learning Disabilities Association of America chose to publish the article, which contains half-truths, misinformation, and gross inaccuracies. It is an affront to researchers, scholars, educators, and others who know the facts and a disservice to parents of children with reading difficulties.

While attacks like this are not new for us, the claims in this article are so numerous and egregious that we were compelled to act to protect the integrity of Reading Recovery. Our response, “The Truth About Reading Recovery,” provides accurate, current, and evidence-based information about Reading Recovery. This response and other related resources were posted on a new webpage in September, and I encourage you to share them with colleagues and school decision makers.

I’d like to share a portion of the introduction:

“The rhetoric of the Cook, Rodes, & Lipsitz article continues to conflate ideology with student outcomes. The truth is that the authors’ notions that Reading Recovery does not use contemporary scientific research or that contemporary scientific research does not show Reading Recovery as successful are false on both counts. The challenges aimed at Reading Recovery in this article have been repeated over several decades in similar fashion — always lacking detail and data to support such claims and always with misconceptions. Ironically, what is actually dated and out of sync are the authors’ own arguments. Until these and other critics put their ideology into practice and validate their instructional theory through rigorous methodology under scientifically controlled conditions, it is time to stop criticizing an intervention that has demonstrated effectiveness in multiple countries, and thousands of districts and schools under the conditions required to address the literacy concerns of parents, taxpayers, educators, and the children who need this early intervention support.”

“The Truth About Reading Recovery” addresses the most-damaging claims made by the authors:

• Misrepresentations of decision-making evidence
• Attempt to reject The Observation Survey
• Misleading conclusions about sustained gains and the i3 report
• Confusions about the selection of students for Reading Recovery
• Failure to recognize distinctions of Reading Recovery, Literacy Lessons, and the Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals text
• Erroneous challenges to the focus of Reading Recovery instruction

We know that Reading Recovery professionals are devoted to struggling students, sensitive to the concerns of their parents, and deliberate in their advocacy for truly effective literacy instruction. RRCNA is here to assist you with your work.

Just click What’s New in the menu bar on the RRCNA website to find this page and other updates.
https://readingrecovery.org/news/

Shop Amazon? Use Smile and Help Support the Council!

Visit smile.amazon.com, sign in to your regular Amazon account, and designate RRCNA as the charitable organization you’d like to support. Every time you shop, The Amazon Smile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases.

Go to www.smile.amazon.com and start shopping!
Donors Help Fund Training for Three New Teacher Leaders

Three new teacher leaders are in training thanks to generous Reading Recovery donors and advocates whose contributions totaled $45,000. Teacher Leader Scholarships are granted to school districts that have demonstrated a commitment to Reading Recovery and selected a suitable teacher leader candidate. Hameray Publishing Group/Yuen Family Foundation, Pioneer Valley Books, and MaryRuth Books each donated $15,000 this year for the scholarships. In addition to the funding to support their training, each publisher will provide $1,000 worth of books to their recipient.

Hameray Publishing Group and the Yuen Family Foundation
The Hameray Publishing Group is dedicated to publishing innovative literacy materials for today’s educators. Combining a sound research-based approach with cutting-edge classroom solutions, Hameray has developed literacy materials for struggling readers as well as those reading at grade level.

Farmington Public Schools, Farmington, MI
Erin Nock is training at the University of Connecticut. Her 17-year teaching career includes 11 years in Reading Recovery. Erin is an active advocate for Reading Recovery and plans to be an accessible teacher leader who will train new teachers and support and expand the program.

Farmington Public Schools has implemented Reading Recovery for 24 years. In 2017–18, 2,874 students were enrolled in K-8, with 440 students qualifying for free and reduced lunch.

MaryRuth Books
MaryRuth Books, Inc., is a publishing company committed to helping children become happy, successful readers. Leveled titles help teachers and parents choose books that offer the right amount of support and challenge to enable young readers to continuously progress. Loved by children and endorsed by educators worldwide, the titles are staples in reading libraries, used by Reading Recovery programs, and favorites of elementary school classroom teachers.

Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative, Hazard, KY
Pamela Slone is training at the University of Kentucky. Pamela brings 25 years of teaching experience to her training and is a member of the Kentucky Reading Association. She is ready to share her learned knowledge and build a network of strong, driven, and motivated Reading Recovery teachers. She plans to advocate for Reading Recovery by inviting school leadership to behind-the-glass lessons, as well as keeping testimonials throughout the year from parents, students, and teachers to share with leaders in the state capital.

Kentucky Valley Education Cooperative has implemented Reading Recovery for 20 years, currently serving 22 school districts in the Appalachian Mountains in Eastern Kentucky.
Pioneer Valley Books

Pioneer Valley Books is dedicated to producing the highest-quality books for early literacy learners. Their books have been carefully written to support students in gaining control over early reading behaviors and in becoming strategic in their approach to print. Books have highly supportive pictures, carefully selected reading vocabulary, and easy sentence structure, and they are specifically designed to help children gain fluency and independence in their reading.

Bricolage Academy, New Orleans, LA

Allison Cummins is training at Texas Woman’s University. Allison brings 5 years of teaching experience to her training and has a master’s degree in early childhood education from the University of New Orleans. She is eager to share her learning experiences with colleagues and students and describes herself as both a child-first educator and a creative problem solver.

Founded in 2013, Bricolage Academy is its own Local Education Agency within the Orleans Parish School Board. Their student population is intentionally diverse and created to reflect the rich diversity of New Orleans. Plans for a newly renovated facility include a behind-the-glass room to facilitate Bricolage as a new Reading Recovery site.

21 Grants Defray Conference Costs

Generous donors have contributed 21 grants of $1,000 each to help offset the cost of registration, travel, meals, and hotel for the National Conference in Columbus. This funding is available through the generosity of the Tenyo Foundation (12 grants), KEEP BOOKS (2 grants), Teacher Leader Professional Development Grants (2 grants), RR Books, SongLake Books, Blueberry Hill Books, Debby Wood Professional Development Grant, and the Rose Mary Estice Memorial Fund. Watch the website for recipients.

Five Geri Stone grants were also awarded to help offset the cost of attendance at other professional development conferences, books, and more.
RRCNA members have an opportunity to offer ideas for new and improved benefits and services in the Membership Survey each spring. In recent years, the most frequently requested member benefit has been “more video recordings.” In response, RRCNA has created the Learning Library. Now, in addition to the nearly 90 audio recordings offered in the Members Only Resource Center, you’ll find video recordings on dozens of topics pertaining to Reading Recovery, early literacy, and leadership. New recordings are added each month, so check back frequently to see what’s new!

Join the Twitter Conversation!

If you haven’t joined one of RRCNA’s monthly Twitter chats, you’re missing out on a great PD opportunity! Dozens of literacy and education professionals come together one Sunday a month at 7 pm Eastern for a lively 1-hour conversation on a variety of topics. If you’re new to Twitter chats, it’s easy to jump into the conversation stream. Or if you’d rather “lurk and learn” by just observing that’s fine, too!

Earlier chats have focused on leadership decisions to improve student reading, reciprocity in reading and writing, roaming around the known, teaching reading and writing vocabulary, and effectively using job-embedded PD. All of our Twitter chat conversations are archived and can be found in the Members Only Resource Center.

#RRCHAT

Sundays
7pm, EST | @rrcna_org

Develop Truly Independent Readers
December 17 with Gravity Goldberg

Visual Literacy
January 21 with Tanny McGregor

Featuring Two of Our
2018 National Conference Speakers
‘Dear Principal’ Letters Address i3 Report Findings

The first of a series of letters that address implementation topics are now available in the Members Only Resource Center.

Written by trainers, the letters cover these topics:

• The Importance of Teacher Selection by Lindy Harmon
• Beginning and Transitioning Lessons by Connie Briggs
• The Importance of Daily Lessons by Lori Taylor
• Utilizing Literacy Expertise by Lisa Patrick Pinkerton
• Beyond One Year—Cost Effectiveness by Garreth Zalud

The idea for the letters grew from NATG discussions about the i3 scale-up report that made clear the importance of fidelity in Reading Recovery implementation. While anyone trained in Reading Recovery already understands the importance of fidelity, administrators may not.

These ‘Dear Principal’ letters are the newest online resource for outreach to decision makers. They join the enewsletter PDFs for administrators on a range of topics, the updated Reading Recovery Works Overview brochure, fact sheets, case studies, templates for customizable intro letters, personalized note cards, and more.

Watch for new PowerPoints, administrator videos, and more in the upcoming months as we continue to update these very helpful resources. And, as always, we welcome your suggestions and comments.

Want to share your ideas with the Reading Recovery/early literacy community? RRCNA’s new blog might be the perfect opportunity!

RRCNA’s new blog will provide a platform for writers to pool their collective knowledge, share best practices, offer advice, anecdotes, reflections, or commentary on any topic relating to Reading Recovery, early literacy, or education in general.

So, if you enjoy writing and are passionate about Reading Recovery and early literacy, consider submitting a post. All posts are subject to review and approval; 500–800 word length is ideal. Visit the website for details and submission form.
RRCNA’s Annual Membership Meeting is an opportunity to meet your representatives to the Board of Directors, standing committee chairs, and RRCNA staff. This year’s meeting will also include a presentation on all of RRCNA’s social media channels as well as a live Twitter chat demo, plus snacks and tons of door prizes. Be sure to join us on Monday during the February 18-21 Conference.

And while you’re browsing the Exhibit Hall at the Conference, don’t forget to thank our earlier Associate Members for supporting Reading Recovery through their memberships, scholarships, sponsorships, and generous contributions to RRCNA, as well as exhibiting and support at numerous regional conferences. Learn more about them online in our Associate Member Guide.

Don’t miss the fun!

2018 Annual Membership Meeting
Monday, February 19 at 4:45 PM
During the National Reading Recovery & K–6 Literacy Conference
in Columbus, OH
Reception with opportunity to meet RRCNA elected representatives and a chance to win door prizes!

Special Offer for Retired Members
On Sunday only, all current retired members (who have joined or renewed at the retired member level) may attend sessions, browse the Exhibit Hall, and enjoy a boxed lunch — all for only $50. If you didn’t receive the email invitation in late October one and would like more information, please contact membership@readingrecovery.org.

Partners in Excellence — Our Associate Members
RRCNA offers a special associate membership level to companies that provide top-quality goods and services to the Reading Recovery community. Associate members support Reading Recovery through generous sponsorships, grants, donations, and by exhibiting at Reading Recovery conferences throughout North America. When you visit their booths at the next conference, be sure to say “thank you for all you do for Reading Recovery!”
Teacher leaders prepared for the upcoming school year during the 2017 Teacher Leader Institute held June 20–23 in Orange, CA. It provided an intensive study of Marie Clay’s theory in literacy processing and visual processing in early literacy, leadership, implementation, teaching and learning, and technology. The content also focused on the second edition of *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals* and the new resource to accompany it. Teacher leaders shared their enthusiasm for applying the new learning in professional development sessions with their teachers.

**Highlights**
- Sessions focused on the many facets of the teacher leader’s coaching role, the second edition of *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals* and the TL resource, leadership, data, technology, and more
- IDEC update
- Session for new teacher leaders
- Session for DLL teacher leaders

**Who Should Attend**
- Required professional development for Reading Recovery teacher leaders
- Reading Recovery trainers

Questions? Email conferenceinfo@readingrecovery.org
National Reading Recovery & K-6 Literacy Conference
February 17-20, 2018 in Columbus, Ohio

Outstanding Professional Development for Reading Recovery Professionals | Classroom & ELL Teachers | Interventionists | Literacy Coaches & Specialists | Title I Teachers & Coordinators | Curriculum & Language Arts Specialists | Building & District Administrators

Learn with these and other outstanding speakers

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

SUNDAY

Mary Fried
Reading Recovery trainer, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH
Opening Doors to Early Literacy Teaching and Learning

MONDAY

Ellin Keene
Author, educator & director of research and development, Public Education and Business Coalition, Denver, CO
ALL IN: The Role of Engagement in Comprehension

TUESDAY

Pat Cummings
Author & illustrator, Brooklyn, NY
Growing Curious Readers

FEATURED AND INSTITUTE SPEAKERS

Kylene Beers
Robert Probst
Ellin Keene
Sue Duncan
Renee Houser
Renee Houser
Tanny McGregor
Douglas Reeves
Ellen Kaye
Connie Briggs
Salli Forbes
Lea McGee
James Schnug
Maryann McBride
Lisa Patrick
FEATURED SESSIONS

READING RECOVERY
Connie Briggs & Salli Forbes
Constructing Knowledge: Learning Through Language

Sue Duncan
Lessons Too Long, Something’s Wrong!

Lea McGee
From Simple to Flexible, Complex Problem Solving: Teaching Matters

CLASSROOM LITERACY
Jeff Anderson
Patterns of Power: Inviting Young Writers into the Conventions of Language, Grades 1-6

Gravity Goldberg & Renee Houser
What Your Student Readers Need Next

Jennifer Serravallo
Reading Strategies for Complete Comprehension

INSTITUTES

READING RECOVERY
James Schnug, Lisa Patrick, & Maryann McBride
Is Your Child Accelerating During Roaming Around the Known?

Elizabeth Kaye
Enhancing the Writing-Reading Connection

CLASSROOM LITERACY
Kylene Beers & Robert Probst
Disruptive Thinking: Ways to Create Lifetime Readers

Tanny McGregor
Everyday Visual Literacy: Teaching & Learning with Images for Deeper Thinking

LEADERSHIP - Bring your team
Douglas Reeves
High-Impact Leadership: How Leaders Improve Achievement, Enhance Creativity, and Redefine Accountability for 21st Century Schools

Flexible Registration Options
give you the ability to register for a Saturday Institute, the entire Conference, and/or a partial Conference on a weekday or weekend.

Register by December 15 and SAVE!

www.rrcna.org/conferences
TO REGISTER AND FOR MORE INFORMATION

Your Administrator Could Attend For FREE!

Building and district administrators qualify.
All you need is 5 or more paid Sunday–Tuesday Full Conference registrations from the same district.
(limit one free administrator per district)

— SEE WEBSITE FOR DETAILS —
The Last Word

Picture This
I was on a school visit with a trained teacher when the following interaction took place. The teacher was introducing the storybook *Photo Time* to the child and began the orientation to the new book by having the little boy attend to the illustration on the book cover.

Teacher: This is a story about doing things together as a family.
Child: I do things with my family, too.
Teacher: What is mom doing in this picture?
Child: She is taking a picture.
Teacher: Yes she is, but in this story they don’t call it a picture, they call it a …

The little boy interrupted her and said, “Selfie. They call it a selfie.”

*Ju Silva*
*Ontario, Canada*

Got Milk?
Destiny was asked to write the story from Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words by my colleague who was testing her at the end of program. When she asked Destiny to write *milk*, she replied, “Ya, I can’t write that word because I’m lactose intolerant!”

What’s That Again?
Xavier was struggling with the word *again*. After several attempts to break this word and stretch this word, he tried to reread the sentence and could not seem to get past the first letter. I gave him the “told,” which was “again,” so Xavier tried to use his strategies again and again until finally, he started to giggle and said, “Wait, Mrs. B! Is that word again?” We both laughed until our sides hurt.

*Elizabeth Banowsky*
*Richmond, TX*

Can You Hear It?
Yesterday while my Reading Recovery friend was reading, he said *cat* for *fat* so I masked all but the first letter and said, “Can you hear this letter?” He put his ear on the page and looked at me all serious and said, “No, I didn’t hear anything!”

*Bengie Gray*
*Springfield, MO*
Ignite learning with thousands of books, lessons, and resources for PreK–6 students across a cohesive system of multiple instructional contexts.

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Bring the literacy expertise of Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell to all students in your classroom with Fountas & Pinnell Classroom™ – a cohesive, multi-text approach to literacy instruction.
Give a gift that makes a difference!

This holiday season, consider giving your friends and colleagues a gift that makes a difference—membership in the Reading Recovery Council of North America!

Each new member brings RRCNA closer to ensuring that children who struggle in learning to read and write gain the skills for a literate and productive future.

Recipients of gift memberships receive a full year of annual membership benefits including:

- 2 print issues of The Journal of Reading Recovery
- Members-Only online services and resources
- Discounts on RRCNA products, publications, and conferences
- Membership certificate and ID card
- Personalized gift card

Share the joy of the season and make a difference with gift memberships in RRCNA.

Visit the website now and start gifting!