Bringing Our "A" Game: Acceleration and Getting to Higher Levels of Text

Jeffery L. Williams

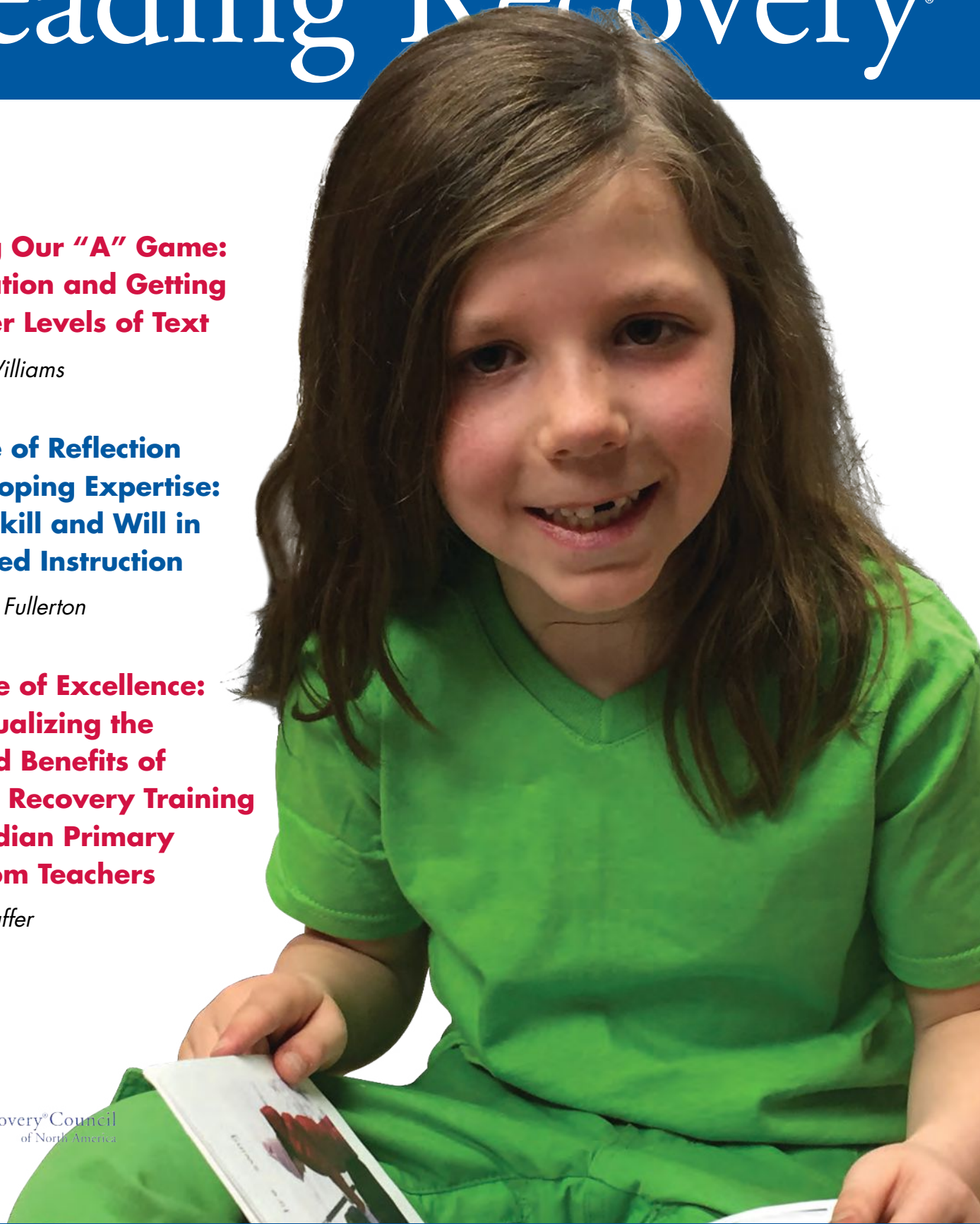**The Role of Reflection in Developing Expertise: Fusing Skill and Will in Scaffolded Instruction**

Susan King Fullerton

A Palette of Excellence: Contextualizing the Reported Benefits of Reading Recovery Training to Canadian Primary Classroom Teachers

Joseph Stouffer

Reading Recovery® Council
of North America

Plus the IDEC Annual Evaluation Report for 2014–2015

The Journal of Reading Recovery

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Spring 2016

Reading Recovery® Council
of North America

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Connie Briggs, Editor-in-Chief

The joint mission of the North American Trainers Group and the Reading Recovery Council of North America is *to ensure that children who struggle in learning to read and write gain the skills for a literate and productive future.* While several components contribute to the success of this mission, at the heart of all the work is an effective, highly skilled teacher sitting beside a child.

Every child deserves an exemplary teacher, but for a child who struggles it is even more critical that he is taught by a knowledgeable, skillful, reflective teacher. Reading Recovery training provides this. Reading Recovery's success around the world can be attributed to the rigorous, intensive training models and ongoing professional learning of teachers who learn to successfully accelerate the learning of children who struggle to read and write.

This edition of *The Journal of Reading Recovery* celebrates the strong investment in teacher knowledge, skill, and reflection that is provided by Reading Recovery training. In the lead article, Jeff Williams shares his reflection about classroom expectations for children who are served by Reading Recovery and Marie Clay's writings on this topic. He further shares insights about how teachers teach for acceleration by being deliberate and dexterous in the quest for producing independent learners rather than focusing on preset text levels.

Mary Lose contributes the story of the rebirth of an urban implementation of Reading Recovery in Detroit Public Schools (DPS). Through the efforts of DPS administrators and literacy leaders, and partial funding provided by the federal i3 scale-up grant, Detroit was able to revive the intervention by adding an additional 61 Reading Recovery teachers in 24 high-needs schools. Testimonials of teachers who were trained and children who benefitted from this opportunity make this article even more special.

Two research articles are included in this edition. In the first, Susan King Fullerton, shares a multicase research study about the role that reflection plays in expert or advanced knowledge acquisition. This study provides an example of how an expert teacher analyzed, problem solved, and reflectively learned from her own teaching, building mental models so that new learning could be applied to subsequent teaching situations. The importance of reflection and discussion with a colleague in building shared knowledge and decision-making capacity is also a lesson learned.

A second research article from our Canadian colleague, Joe Stouffer, queries the idea of the potential transfer from training in Reading Recovery to small-group or whole-class classroom settings. Anecdotally, Reading Recovery professionals would say there is definitely transfer of knowledge from one setting to another, but there are few studies that document these viewpoints. This study reveals surprising self-reported teacher beliefs, procedures, and language that extended from their training in Reading Recovery to their classroom practices.

While celebrating the highly skilled and dedicated teachers, we must also acknowledge the amazing students who are taught by these teachers. I'm certain you will enjoy these touching articles about an International Read Aloud between Irish and American children, the reunion of teacher and student after 25 years, and a letter from an appreciative mother. All three articles illustrate partnerships involving parents, classroom teachers, and Reading Recovery professionals that support student achievement.

The strongest evidence that Reading Recovery training and ongoing professional learning provides strong learning outcomes for students is based on the information provided in the annual summary. Jerry D'Agostino and Katherine Brownfield report the 2014–2015 data revealing that despite the fact that there are currently more teachers with less years of experience offering the intervention nationwide, student results are stronger than ever. In fact, the average discontinued student surpassed the average of the random sample. These data are worth celebrating!

A personal note
This is the last journal that I will oversee as editor-in-chief. I want to thank Vicki Fox and the RRCNA staff for their support and work on the journal over the past 4 years. I also want to thank the section editors for their considerable time and effort to put together strong editions of *The Journal of Reading Recovery* that benefit readers in so many ways. Finally, I would like to thank the authors of articles that have been published in journals during my tenure. Thanks for sharing your insights, research, teaching, and learning with our international community of Reading Recovery professionals.

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Bringing Our "A" Game: Acceleration and Getting to Higher Levels of Text

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The teacher in early intervention must help her students to gain the same competencies as the successful children in the school and to achieve at the same level, so she needs to know how the successful children in her school work on the literacy tasks of their classrooms. Sensitive observation of the children making slow progress must take into account what is being learned by the children making satisfactory progress in classrooms. (Clay, 2005a, p. 29)

Since the implementation of the Common Core State Standards, numerous districts and Reading Recovery® professionals have been asking about increased expectations for Grade 1 students and about whether Reading Recovery should push for increased mid-year and year-end exit text levels. Reluctant to fall into conversations about an inflexible or arbitrary level, my fall-back answer always went something like this: Because we have no such thing as an "American educational system" where one level would constitute competency for all settings and because children come and go at different times of the year, our goal in Reading Recovery cannot be about a universal exit level for everyone. Instead, districts should look at local data, alongside their teacher leader, to set district guidelines to ensure that students demonstrate effective, strategic processing in reading and writing and not just focus on setting a particular exit level.

I am not saying my answer was especially solid, but it generally worked in helping to guide the answering of these questions back to a more-local context. But the recent volume of these inquiries about exit level pushed me to reexamine the concept of exit levels and acceleration within my own district and site settings. Are classroom expectations on the rise? If so, how should Reading Recovery respond? Was my thinking sound about not having a set exit level for all students?

These questions led me to study and reflect on this issue, both alone and with colleagues, and ultimately to write. In this article, I briefly explore shifts in expectations within local school districts and examine what Marie Clay wrote about expectations within Reading Recovery. The article then examines teaching for acceleration and develops the importance of being "deliberate and dexterous" (May, Sirinides, Gray, & Goldsworthy, 2016), simultaneously building the case that we aim not for particular text levels but for producing independent learners who improve their reading and writing every time they read and write (Clay, 2005a, 2005b, 2015a, 2015b). Although the focus, discussions, and examples presented pertain exclusively to reading, an article of equal length and depth would be warranted for the important and reciprocal role that writing also plays in acceleration.

The daily time spent on familiar reading may not be commonly recognized as contributing to acceleration or developing a self-extending system, but it does so immensely. Because the material is familiar, the child is most likely to be fully in control and in self-tutorial mode.

Examining Expectations: Outside and Within Reading Recovery

Because of the questions I was being asked about how changes in classroom expectations would or should influence Reading Recovery, I first pondered this: What may be causing such changes in classrooms? Perhaps the increase in expectations was due to implementation of new state or federal standards. Or was it that legislated policy changes, reflected by the fact that 36 states now have high-penalty third-grade reading laws in place (Loewenberg, 2015, p. 5), have placed more emphasis on primary classrooms? Perhaps children are doing better in general because of classroom teachers' increased use of evidence-based early literacy teaching and assessment practices. More likely, it is due to a combination of these factors. Marie Clay aptly advised about this possibility:

> It is important to think clearly about today's school improvement programs which aim to raise the general level of achievement. Lifting the average scores in schools will increase rather than decrease the need for early intervention. School improvement programs designed for success will unquestionably create larger gaps between those who can easily meet the challenges and those who have several counts against them when it comes to school learning. Higher general levels of achievement will create larger gaps between the average and the lowest achievers in literacy acquisition unless special measures are put in place. (2015b, p. 216)

This statement led me to reexamine Clay's writings about discontinuing decisions in *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals Part One*, where I read, "The child should be working at or above Level 16 of an approved list of text levels that has been field-tested" (Clay, 2005a, p. 53), with some countries setting higher exit levels. Reading on, Clay added, "…children who exit at low levels face a high risk of not maintaining average progress. If a child's program is discontinued at or below Level 12 *one cannot be confident about his subsequent progress* [emphasis added]" (p. 53). To my vexation, nowhere did Clay qualify her statements in regard to whether these text levels applied to children exiting mid-year or year-end, which left me tentative. On the surface, one could read this to mean exit testing levels but we have often interpreted this otherwise because there is a difference between "working at" and "testing at." In essence, perhaps Clay was calling us

to work with students above Level 12 in order to better ensure they would develop a self-extending system.

Intrigued by Clay's specificity in naming these two levels, I further analyzed the relative differences between Level 12 and Level 16 narrative texts using books in my Reading Recovery collection. Figure 1 illustrates my findings. Reading Recovery-trained teachers have long been accustomed to using a gradient of text, each level representing shifts in complexity, to help us move students steadily upward in their abilities to process texts efficiently and effectively. Generally though, we are more aware of the subtle shifts between consecutive levels and rarely think about the larger shifts that exist between larger jumps. The relative differences in complexity between Levels 12 and 16 are substantial when viewed side-by-side and may help to qualify Clay's thinking. For students to read higher-level texts they must have a variety of well-developed and flexible working systems. Readers encounter longer, more-complex sentences using structures that differ from the way they speak. They deal with unfamiliar vocabulary, more multisyllabic words that must be solved on-the-run, and with content that might be far from their realm of experience. In short, the reader able to process Level 16 or higher texts would thus be more equipped to be our express target — that of developing a self-extending system.

The questions about increasing expectations were contextualized for me now, and a clearer understanding emerged from this analysis of the two levels. For me, the way a Reading Recovery teacher should respond to classroom shifts is probably not about increasing or setting exit levels. Our goal is to ensure the beginnings of a self-extending system are in place so that we can confidently predict students will continue to learn from their own efforts alongside their classmates after the lesson series has ended. Rather than our destination being a specific level, Clay describes our target as a destination about the reader:

> Once a reader is using a set of strategies which enable him to monitor his own reading and check one source of information with other sources in a sequential solving process then engaging in these activities serves to extend the potential of the reader to engage in more difficult activities and he assumes the major responsibility for learning to read by reading … (2015a, p. 317)

Figure 1.   Brief Analysis of Level 12 and Level 16 Narrative Texts

	Level 12	Level 16
Text Structure	• narratives with simple, often repetitive, sequence of events moving forward through time • characters that do not change • mostly familiar settings • realistic fiction, traditional literature and animal fantasy genre • mostly one or two paragraphs per page	• narratives with more elaborate episodes, moving forward through time • characters more developed that begin to show traits and change • settings sometimes unfamiliar • realistic fiction, traditional literature and animal fantasy genre • multiple paragraphs per page
Sentence Complexity	• more compound sentences and some complex sentences with phrases • embedded phrases often marked by layout in addition to commas • introduction of dialogue variety (tags in multiple places, or splitting dialogue) • full range of punctuation including periods, question marks, exclamation marks, quotation marks and some ellipses	• mostly compound and complex sentences, many longer than two lines, with embedded phrases • phrases, marked only by commas rather than layout • variety of dialogue structures including some untagged dialogue where speaker is unidentified • full range of punctuation: periods, question, exclamation and quotation marks, including ellipses and dashes
Idea Complexity	• simple concepts supported directly by illustrations • beginning to move away from typical family, playground or school-based problems • easy to understand ideas or themes	• some abstract ideas supported by text and illustrations • many texts beyond typical family, playground, or school-based problems • ideas or themes that may be new to children
Words and Language	• vocabulary closely matches the way many children talk • some traditional literary language (once upon a time…) • increased use of pronouns to replace character names • variety of words to tag dialogue (cried, shouted, asked vs. said) • mostly one or two syllable words, high-frequency words and range of inflectional endings • simple plurals (boxes), contractions (wasn't) and possessives (Mom's)	• vocabulary matches book language more than the ways children talk • more traditional literary language (once again, suddenly) • pronouns routinely used to replace character names • variety of words tagging dialogue with addition of adverbs (quietly) • mostly two/three syllable words with useful parts, and full range of inflectional endings • complex plurals (deer), contractions (would've) and possessives
Illustrations	• simple illustrations that support understanding • illustrations show action(s) in detail • illustrations closely match concepts in text • illustrations generally on every page	• complex illustrations not necessary to meaning • illustrations cannot convey all action(s) • illustrations do not depict many concepts • longer stretches between illustrations

As further support that these levels were meant as examples or guidance, Clay iterated a clarifying statement about exit levels:

> There can be no hard and fast criteria because the aim will be to have a child work with a class group in which he can continue to make progress, and this will differ from child to child and from school to school. (2005a, p. 56)

Clay always maintained that we must be aware of and adjust our own expectations keeping in mind classroom expectations within our sites, school districts, and individual schools. In the opening quote of this article, Clay promised that Reading Recovery would be well positioned for such adjustments when she said, "Higher general levels of achievement will create larger gaps between the average and the lowest achievers in literacy acquisition *unless special measures are put in place*" [emphasis added]. Clay was

saying that even if expectations change over time (which we should expect), Reading Recovery is the collective set of "special measures" that needs to be put in place. The purpose of the next section is to investigate acceleration as it pertains to helping students develop a self-extending system that will equip them to deal successfully with shifts in classroom expectations.

Reflective Questions: Classroom Expectations

How have classroom expectations changed in your school/site?

What do "average" classroom students need to be able to do in reading and writing, mid-year and at the end of the year?

What implications do these changes have for your teaching?

Anticipate and Teach *for* Acceleration

In *Literacy Lessons Part One*, Clay described the necessary components of early intervention. Chief among the foundational elements of Reading Recovery is the concept of acceleration. Both the amount of attention given to acceleration and its placement so early in her books set teachers on-course for expecting and teaching for acceleration from the start.

As with most of Clay's writings, every paragraph in this section is packed with conceptual importance giving the reader several things to consider. One paragraph particularly caught my attention:

> With problem readers it is not enough for the teacher to have rapport, to generate interesting tasks and generally be a good teacher. The teacher must be able to design a superbly sequenced series of lessons determined by the child's competencies, and make highly skilled decisions moment by moment during the lesson. The child must never engage in unnecessary activities because that wastes learning time. If the teacher judges that a child can make a small leap forward, she must watch the effects of this decision and take immediate supportive action if necessary. An expert teacher will help the child leap appropriately; she will not walk the child through a preconceived sequence of learning step by step. (2005a, p. 23)

This paragraph represents an underlying premise of teaching for acceleration and contains a challenge about how to support students' acceleration — it is not enough to be a nice teacher who makes learning interesting or just "delivers" lessons. The recently released Consortium for Policy Research in Education's report described many facets of the success of Reading Recovery and devoted an entire chapter to instructional strengths. Their conclusions supports this difference between delivering lessons and highly skilled teaching, saying, "Reading Recovery teachers' instructional strength ultimately rose above all other findings of the implementation study as the most important issue in the effectiveness of lessons…" (May et al., 2016, p. 90). Beyond close adherence to lesson structure and procedures, other factors were important:

> We find that those Reading Recovery teachers whom practitioners regard as strongest, and those whose lessons stood out to our researchers as particularly effective, demonstrate both deliberateness and instructional dexterity. In our conceptualization of instructional strength in Reading Recovery, deliberateness is understood as an encompassing commitment to thoughtful practice; instructional dexterity is defined as the flexible application of deep skill. These two components of instructional strength are complementary and interrelated, but manifest in different ways and at different times. For instance, deliberateness is manifested primarily before and after one-to-one lessons, whereas dexterity is evident within the lesson itself. (May et al., 2016, p. 91)

What these researchers termed as "deliberate and dexterity" is precisely what Clay called us to do — be deliberate about how to design lessons based upon individual student strengths and needs and then to be dexterous in making moment-by-moment decisions in response to what children are doing. Clay's vision called us to design superb lessons. Not so-so lessons. Superb. To do this, we must bring all that we know to the table to design lessons that cause meaningful shifts for the learner. She called for a "series of lessons," challenging that we cannot have the occasional superb lesson, but must do so consistently, working constantly from the child's competencies. To this end, we must then be diligent in analyzing our lesson records and running records to avoid the unwanted wasting of time. And, on top of all that, Clay prompted us to remain flexible and tentative enough to make highly skilled decisions in the moment as well. In short, she

told us to "bring our 'A' game." Every lesson. Every child. Every day. Being deliberate and dexterous sets the conditions necessary for acceleration, the conditions for developing learners who will be primed to continue their own learning at any level expected in the classroom.

Teaching Considerations: Being Deliberate

Enumerating a complete menu of specific teaching procedures, text choices, or prompts needed to help achieve acceleration is not practical or possible. Instead, I will attempt to illuminate some specific considerations for sites, schools, or individuals to ponder and explore.

One key to acceleration is something we do deliberately as children read both familiar and new texts. More than just a structural element, Clay reminded us that familiar reading is built into the lesson framework purposefully to address acceleration. While some may interpret teaching for acceleration as a call to spend more time working on new text, Clay (2005a) clearly did not intend this, saying instead:

> Two kinds of learning must be kept in balance: on the one hand performing with success on familiar material strengthens the decision-making processes of the reader, and on the other hand independent problem-solving on new and interesting texts with supportive teaching extends the ability to problem-solve … Working with both familiar and new material contributes to acceleration. (p. 23)

The daily time spent on familiar reading may not be commonly recognized as contributing to acceleration or developing a self-extending system, but it does so immensely. Because the material is familiar, the child is most likely to be fully in control and in self-tutorial mode, noticing new elements about words or letters, how sentences or whole texts are constructed, all the while confirming or discounting responses fluidly, solidifying existing and new knowledge effortlessly. "Integration, independence and flexibility are possible when children have wide-ranging chances to read texts that are well within their competency, in addition to working on unfamiliar texts at the edge of their working knowledge" (Clay, 2015b, p. 135).

Reflective Questions: Familiar Reading

How much time am I allotting for daily familiar reading?

Am I thoughtful about selecting and changing out familiar texts to assist in growing a child's competency?

Are the familiar texts used **too challenging** so that fluent orchestration is not possible?

Are the familiar texts used **too familiar**, offering no opportunities for the child to monitor or extend his ways of working?

Teaching Considerations: Being Dexterous

Another factor critical to acceleration involves the concept of integration — in one sense on a design level and in another sense as a necessary strategic action from readers. As stated previously, a Reading Recovery teacher is challenged to design lessons that do not waste time to ensure that children close the gaps between them and their peers on all sorts of literacy knowledge in less than 20 weeks. Designing such lessons requires a great deal of coordination and thoughtful pursuit of creating what Clay termed "…echoes from one part of the lesson to another part" (2005b, p. 40). Making these echoes entails that the teacher is dexterous — being observant to notice various productive and unproductive behaviors and trials and then to judiciously choose a few things to bring into teaching or demonstration. One example of an echo stemmed from the writing portion of a lesson. The child had composed the sentence: "I like to roll smaller snow balls into big snow balls." While working out the word smaller on the practice page, the teacher made a link to the known word *her* to assist the child's use of parts of known words. Knowing that this was not enough, later in the lesson during the reading of the new book, the teacher made a point to have the child take note of words like faster and better in order to "… help settle what is new amongst what is old" (Clay, 2005b, p. 139).

Of course, linking from one part of the lesson to another is happening serendipitously on the run, which can be taxing for the teacher to think quickly for such links.

Devising a system of note taking helps and is one reason we are required to notate lessons. Lesson forms used in Reading Recovery are intentionally open-ended to allow for individual teachers to develop ways of both capturing and indicating important information to return to later for teaching or analysis. Any teacher demonstrations around particular words or word parts and how they work may be referred to later in the lesson or in subsequent lessons, following Clay's advice about acceleration:

> In addition, whenever possible the child will read and write text. He will not be diverted from printed texts…but will be taught what he needs to learn in the context of continuous text…Any new letter or high-frequency word or a spelling pattern attended to in isolation is also used in the same lesson in text reading and text writing… (2005a, p. 22)

Reflective Questions: Creating Echoes

What methods do I have for recording what might be important to attend to later in the lesson or in subsequent lessons?

How do colleagues take notes for teaching and analysis?

Besides word work, what other echoes can be created?

How deliberately do I link up the child's reading and writing knowledge?

Echoes should be purposeful —how can I analyze lesson records and the child's needs to narrow the scope?

Beyond creating echoes across lesson components, another form of integration critical to acceleration involves how students process text at difficulty. Descriptions across Clay's writings of what successful readers and writers look like towards the end of a series of lessons invariably include reference to integration and the child's ability to use multiple sources of information to solve at difficulty (Figure 2.)

Each column of Figure 2 contains direct statements which indicate the child's integration of several sources of information is a critical marker of proficient readers — thinking that is supported by another recent research study on early reading behaviors. A remarkably thorough and detailed 2015 study (McGee, Hwewon, Nelson, & Fried) examined nearly 6,000 actions from first graders' running records to classify and analyze behaviors. Then, in a second layer of analysis, student actions were further examined at similar points in time and analyzed in terms of students who went on to become proficient end-of-year level readers and those who did not. Among several interesting and important findings, one seems particularly relevant to this article: "Additional results of the current study showed that students who become first-grade-level readers also had a superior ability to coordinate the use of both graphic and contextual information in the same error episode" (p. 289).

Furthermore, the authors of this study went on to recommend, "Thus, teachers should focus on teaching students to monitor both the print and the context and, when a problem is detected, to employ multiple actions drawing on what is known about print using letter sounds, word parts, and context" (p. 289). In effect their research confirmed that children who are proficient end-of-year readers in first grade do take multiple actions and integrate multiple sources of information. Furthermore, McGee's research suggests that by Level 12, the presence (or lack) of multiple actions using multiple sources of information is indicative of end-of-year proficiency, so learning to recognize these characteristics may be imperative to Reading Recovery teachers. In other words, teaching children to do these things all along and being especially watchful near Level 12 is highly important. As Reading Recovery professionals, we recognize integration as entirely aligned to the procedures outlined in *Literacy Lessons Part Two* in general but we may not yet be fully cognizant of the important role it may play in acceleration and building self-extending systems.

What might it look like when we are teaching students to use multiple sources of information and to take multiple actions? Consider the examples, begining on page 12, from the same teacher and child over time:

Figure 2. Selected Clay References About Proficient Readers' Behaviors and Expectations for Readers at the End of Their Lesson Series

Clay, 2015b, pp. 84–85 *Hypotheses about possible progressions in acts of processing occurring in early reading and writing for tentative and flexible discussion*	Clay, 2005a, pp. 57–58 *Observable behaviors to look for when withdrawing individual lessons*	Clay, 2005a, p. 53 *The decision to end individual support*
5. Fast processing with accuracy on more advanced texts Any of the following in any order or combination • Takes ownership for solving new words. • Problem-solving new and difficult words, and correcting many errors. • Integrates information from different knowledge sources: visual, phonological, meaning and structure information. • Uses any information sources effectively on well-chosen texts but easily thrown by a challenging text. • What is read is processed quickly and is mostly correct. • Effective processing deals with chunks of information. • Has reached high scores on knowledge sources (or the Observation Survey). • Controls links between visual/aural, left/right, first/last, semantic/syntactic, and picture/story information. *Combining some of these may lift processing out of this group.*	If the child is ready for the lesson series to end he will be able to control these things: • Directional movement: The child will have control over this without lapses, or he will be aware of his tendency to lapse and will be able to check on his own behavior. • One-to-one matching: The child can adopt a controlled one-to-one matching of spoken to written words (and sequence of sounds in words) for checking purposes. • Strategic actions: He can demonstrate a flexible control of strategic activity on new instructional texts at higher levels of difficulty. He will try to solve new words and new language structures in new texts. • Self-monitoring: The child checks on himself (often unprompted). This can be seen when an error is noticed whether or not it is corrected. It is also observed as the child assembles a cut-up story. • Cross-checking: The child notices discrepancies in his own responses by cross-checking one kind of information (say, visual) with a different kind of information (such as meaning). This is seen less often during later lessons. • Use of multiple sources of information: Check self-corrections. It is sometimes clear that the child finds it easy to combine meaning, and structure, and letter-sound cues, and a sense of how words are spelled, and tries to achieve a match across all kinds of information. • Self-correction: Effective self-correction follows from using self-monitoring, searching for solutions in flexible ways, and cross-checking information. However, even unsuccessful attempts at self-correction are indicators that the child is aware these activities can be helpful. In good readers self-correction may occur without much evidence that you can observe and record!	If the student is nearing the end of his lesson series he should be able to • monitor his own reading and writing, • anticipate a possible syntactic structure, • search for different kinds of information in word sequences, in meaning and in sound-letter sequences, • discover new things for himself, • cross-check one source of information with another, • repeat as if to confirm his reading or writing so far, • use several sources of information together on the first attempt, • self-correct taking the initiative for making decisions or getting words right in every respect, • solve new words by these means.

Example 1–Text Level 12
The Clever Penguins
(Randell, 1996)

Text: Two baby chicks!" said Mother Penguin.

Student: Two baby… (pausing at the word *chicks* and says ch— ch— i— ck? indicating he wasn't sure.)

Teacher: You tried looking at the parts. Now think about rereading to check.

Student: Rereads…Two baby chick. Nope. It has to be chicks! Two baby chicks! (teacher says nothing and lets student continue to end of the book)

Teacher: You knew chick wasn't right. What happened when you reread?

Student: It didn't sound right so I knew it had to be *chicks*.

Teacher: Good. Now check to see if it looks right. (child locates word and quickly sees the /s/ ending.) And look at the picture … are there two baby chicks?

Student: Yep!

Teacher: You had to look at the word, reread, and then check to see if you were right.

Example 2–Text Level 15
The Hungry Giant's Shoe
(Cowley, 2009)

Text: The people looked in every street. They looked in every shop.

Child: The people looked in every … (pauses) Store. No. St—r—eet. *Street*.

Teacher: Are you right?

Child: Rereads and seems satisfied and continues. They looked in every sh-op. Shop. (pauses)

Teacher: You were checking something. What is it?

Child: This is *shop* (pointing to the word *shop*) and they wouldn't say store and *shop* so that word (pointing to street) *is* street.

> The questions surrounding acceleration are complex and will not be answered simply. Reflective conversation with colleagues is warranted, conversations that include classroom teachers and examples of what is considered average.

Teacher: You looked at the word and also thought about how stories work to check yourself.

Child: And there's two ees in *street*.

Teacher: Good checking!

In Example 1, the child tried a visual analysis of the word *chicks* and monitored that his response came up short and appealed for help. The teacher prompted the student to reread, confirming what the child tried but not the outcome. Instead, she nudged him to draw upon another source of information by calling for rereading. At this point the structure helped the child to confirm, but the teacher did not leave it at that. After letting the child successfully finish the book, the teacher went back to the corrected error to connect to yet another source, meaning, by prompting him to check the picture as another means of confirming. This subtle exchange prompted the reader to take multiple actions at difficulty and to use multiple sources of information to solve and to check. Dexterity in selecting examples to attend to as well as which things let go are also critical to acceleration. "Acceleration depends upon how well the teacher selects the clearest, easiest, most memorable examples with which to establish a new response, skill, principle or procedure…" (Clay, 2005a, p. 23).

Similarly, in Example 2, the child attempted the use of visual information and again monitored. This time the teacher simply asked, "Are you right?" which left the child more independence in selecting what action to take to check. This interaction is different than in Example 1 from earlier in the child's lesson series. "Acceleration is achieved if the child takes over the learning process and works independently … therefore what the teacher attends to and how she interacts with the child changes notice-

ably across the lesson series" (Clay, 2005a, p. 23). The child reread to search for more information but probably was not quite certain because the phrase "looking in every street" was not a usual structure to him. However, he continued reading and then, when solving the word *shop* in the next sentence, he paused, as if confirming that decision (or something else). The teacher, who is a careful observer and who had been working hard to foster multiple action/multiple source interactions since the Level 12 exchange, probed by asking what the child was checking. With quickness the child replied that the previous word had to be *street* (which confirms that he was not yet sure!) and then used a more-sophisticated analysis of story knowledge to infer that the text probably wouldn't use two similar terms, in this case, *shop* and *store* in proximity to one another. Finally, as the proverbial icing on the cake, when the teacher restated what the child did with using meaning and structural information, the child looked again at visual information to confirm on his own with yet another information source.

As we know, teaching children to take multiple actions and use multiple sources of information begins early and continues throughout a series of lessons, but there may be other hidden considerations to getting children into higher levels of text. Clay cautioned: "Towards the end of the lesson series [the teacher] will be under pressure to have the child reading the same texts as those used by his average classroom peers with a high degree of independence. During this time there is a risk that the child may not be given sufficient time to consolidate new learning" (2005a, p. 53). In the recent book, *Visible Learning for Literacy: Implementing the Practices that Work Best to Accelerate Student Learning* (Fisher, Frey, & Hattie, 2016), considerable attention is devoted to the concept of *consolidation* as it pertains to learning theory and in its role in shifting from surface to deep learning. The authors report that surface and deep learning are constructs internal to individual learners that are highly influenced by teachers and contexts. Surface learners rely on memory and are more concerned about correctness while deep learners are risk-takers who grow from interactions with content and ideas. The express goal of deep learning is self-regulation.

> The pedagogical goal…is for students to assimilate knowledge, especially through integration with existing knowledge. This isn't merely an additive process. It's also subtractive, in the sense that new understanding may not jibe with previously held positions. The

cognitive dissonance that results from being confronted by two contradictory ideas can be uncomfortable, and in that search for meaning, the learner has to make some decisions about how he or she will restore consistency. There's a higher degree of self-regulation that needs to take place, as students need to wrestle with ideas and concepts. (Fisher et al., 2016, p. 77)

Teaching children to take multiple actions and use multiple sources of information begins early and continues throughout a series of lessons, but there may be another consideration to getting children into higher levels of text earlier that have nothing to do with rising classroom expectations but are more about allowing ample opportunity to consolidate for deep and self-regulated learning. "The child must have enough practice on texts at each higher level to consolidate new learning, and yet the teacher will be lifting the difficulty level of the texts she is selecting for him to read" (Clay, 2005a, p. 53). Having time to develop and consolidate learning needed to build a self-extending system is probably not possible if we are just approaching Level 12 at the end of a series of lessons; we may not be able to create enough experiences within these complex contexts to teach for and give feedback about taking multiple actions and using multiple sources of information. It would be important, then, to plan deliberately and to remain dexterous so that children make gains in lower levels of text early, so that there is sufficient time to work and consolidate within the complexities of higher texts.

Reflective Questions: Multiple Sources/Actions

What evidence can I see that children are taking multiple actions at difficulty?

Beyond the analysis of the sources of information used and neglected, how else might I analyze the integration of all sources of information to describe the literacy processing?

How vigilant am I to prompt towards helping students use more than one source of information to solve and check?

What unique qualities do text Levels 12–16 seem to have that make them rich contexts for helping children consolidate strategic action?

Final Thoughts

While opportunities for developing a self-extending system exist at all text levels, the combination of McGee's research findings, Clay's thoughts on being unsure about future success if students do not make it beyond Level 12, combined with understandings about deep learning and the gradient of text in general, may suggest that there are unique opportunities in these higher levels of text that help with consolidation. Achieving acceleration is not easy and we cannot produce or induce it directly (Clay, 2005a). Instructional strength in Reading Recovery may be defined as the extent to which a teacher instructs for maximum learning in every lesson (May et al., 2016, p. 83). Being both deliberate and dexterous, Reading Recovery professionals create the conditions under which acceleration is possible—a balance of familiar and new text experiences, using data to make teaching decisions that do not waste time on things already known, providing echoes and links, and simultaneously lifting the level of challenge over time—all in the service of supporting learners to develop a self-extending system. The questions surrounding acceleration in general, and specifically concerning text level, are complex and will not be answered simply. Reflective conversation with colleagues is warranted, conversations that include classroom teachers and examples of what is considered average.

Author's note
For additional resources about teaching and working at higher text levels, see "Keeping it Easy to Learn at Higher Levels of Text Reading" by Kelly and Neal in the spring 2009 issue of *The Journal of Reading Recovery.*

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About the Author

A literacy teacher for 28 years, Jeff Williams is currently a teacher leader and K-12 literacy coach in Solon, OH. Jeff has served on the RRCNA Board of Directors as presidential appointee and teacher leader representative and was recently elected vice president. He is a frequent speaker for local and national literacy organizations such as the annual ILA, NCTE, and Reading Recovery conferences, has authored or co-authored many articles about literacy education, a book for NCTE, and most recently authored a series of little books for Hameray.

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Students Shine in International Read Aloud

Last year, the UCL Institute of Education's International Literacy Centre in England launched a very successful event to raise the profile of Reading Recovery® and celebrate the success of Reading Recovery children by arranging for them to read to "someone special."

This February, RRCNA partnered with our United Kingdom colleagues for an international Reading Recovery Read Aloud. In December, we asked trainers and teacher leaders to spread the word to their teachers. And even though there wasn't much time to prepare, the response was enthusiastic!

A Read Aloud webpage provided downloadable resources — suggestions for how to organize the event, a template letter and fact sheet, a postcard to send to a celebrity with a video clip of the child reading, and a certificate for each child. We asked teachers to send us photos and stories, invite local press to celebrate some good news, and post the achievements on social media. We also asked teacher leaders to email a list of teachers who were interested in setting up a Skype session with fellow students overseas.

RRCNA posted, shared, tweeted, and retweeted dozens of photos of students reading to law enforcement officers, bus drivers, former teachers, U.S. congressmen, school principals, and more — including fellow students.

Kelly McDermott, a teacher leader in Boston Public Schools, said several schools participated, with some children reading to fifth graders in their buildings and others visiting their former kindergartens as guest speakers. On March 14, just in time for St. Patrick's Day, students did a 40-minute Skype session with first graders in Ireland. Colleen Mitchell, reading specialist and Reading Recovery teacher at Henderson Inclusion Lower School, organized the event with Aoifre O'Malley, a Reading Recovery teacher in County Clare, Ireland.

"The call went great! The whole first-grade class in Ireland was a part of the call and the classroom teacher has been to Dorchester and stayed with friends on Dorchester Avenue, which is the street we are on," Colleen said. "The Irish students [the whole first grade] sang a song for us in Irish, which was awesome!"

Colleen Mitchell and her Reading Recovery students in Boston–Leo, Samuel, Saoirse, and Violette–shared stories with students in Clare County, Ireland. Below, Candise from St. Senan's takes her turn at reading while Leah and Joseph (and teacher Aoife O'Malley who is not pictured) watch the Boston students react and listen.

Students introduced and told a little about themselves. They took turns reading—American then Irish—and gave positive feedback to each other. A Q&A session followed, where the conversations explored differences of Boston and Clare County geography, climate, favorite foods, sports, and more.

"It was great to hear our students taking teacher prompts, used universally, and turning them into positive feedback statements. For example, 'You read that story like a story teller' and 'I liked how you read that story so smoothly. It was a story I loved listening to.' …The opportunity to read to each other was so special, but the greater piece of allowing the kids to learn about each other's similarities and differences through their student-led conversation was paramount," Colleen noted. "It took our reading work at our small schools and connected it to a far greater concept."

Where Are They Now?

Teacher and Student Reunite to Share Reading Recovery Journey

1991 was a memorable year for me as a teacher in Denton ISD! It was the first year of implementation of the Reading Recovery intervention, my first year as an in-training Reading Recovery teacher, and my first time to experience working side-by-side with a first grader who needed a boost on his journey to becoming a reader and writer. It was a year of firsts!

— Marcia Kellum, teacher leader

Now a working father with an infant daughter, that first grader and his Reading Recovery® teacher, Marcia Kellum, were reunited 25 years later to share the recollections of their journey.

Tristan Bynum was in first grade at Newton Rayzor Elementary School in 1991. His mother, Lilia, remembers that he was a shy, sensitive, and very creative child, and socializing was hard for him. Recess was stressful, and many times he would just play alone.

"He always seemed bored when we tried to read to him. He was, in fact, much more interested in the stories he had in his head," his mother said. "He loved playing with his action figures and the storylines he made up for them to play were of much greater interest."

Lilia and her husband, Scott, both love to read and couldn't understand why Tristan wasn't interested in reading. Looking back on it now, Lilia said, Tristan remembers being frustrated.

"Although he could recite the alphabet, he had a hard time identifying the letters or remembering what they were supposed to sound like. "Often times he would just look at them and they just seemed to be these indecipherable shapes. So trying to read was completely overwhelming. He would just shut down."

His first-grade teacher, Waynette Wallace, recognized Tristan's reading difficulties when he refused to do his writing homework. Every day she would ask to see his homework, and every day he had a very interesting story to tell about why it wasn't done.

Because the intervention was new to Denton, the Reading Recovery teachers were working very closely with the first-grade teachers to communicate and explain the purpose, structure, and intent of the intervention and how it would provide supplemental support for children struggling to acquire literacy skills.

"Waynette was a very experienced first-grade teacher and highly regarded by fellow teachers, parents, and students," Marcia said. Waynette felt that Tristan would be an exact fit for the new intervention and that with a little extra help he would quickly accelerate to the average range of the classroom. She recommended Tristan for assessment, and he began his Reading Recovery lessons in September.
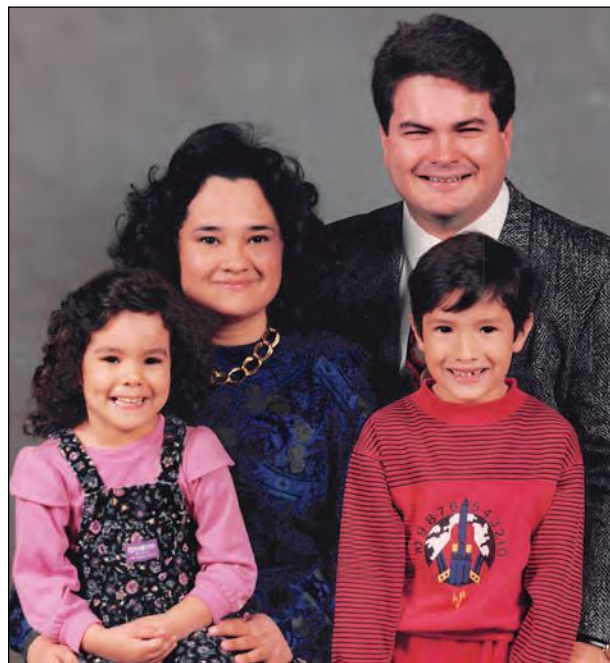
The Bynum family's support of Reading Recovery began with Tristan's lessons in 1991, about the time this photo of Lilia and Scott, Tristan, and daughter, Katherine, was taken.

Marcia and Tristan had much to smile about when they reunited in 2014. The teacher and student were invited as special guests of the 25th anniversary of Reading Recovery at Texas Woman's University celebration.

"Waynette and I also knew that he had another vital piece in place to insure his ongoing success — supportive parents who were dedicated to helping him succeed," Marcia added.

Lilia remembers that Tristan was reluctant to go to Reading Recovery lessons, but that Marcia encouraged him in a very gentle and positive way. Tristan remembers that writing letters was hard for him and that he worked very hard to write exactly as things should be written.

"Tristan had a bit of a perfectionist streak which explains why he has always been cautious in learning new things," Lilia said. " He wants to get things exactly right, and preferably the first time!" She remembers the very first book he enjoyed in his lessons was *George and Martha* by James Marshall because he could read it, understand it, and it made him laugh. "He loved reading from that point on," Lilia said.

Tristan was not only the first Reading Recovery student in the district to discontinue from his series of lessons, but he was the first student Marcia asked to go to Texas Woman's University for her first behind-the-glass teaching session. He remembers being nervous and slightly embarrassed when he later realized others could see him read, but he was already feeling confident in his reading abilities. He remembered Marcia's smile and that she looked very proud of him. "I wanted to make her proud again and again," he said.

He had that opportunity in May of 1992, when the teacher leader was asked to give a report to the Board of Trustees to highlight the new intervention and the results. Tristan was asked to showcase his achievements by reading a book at a Denton Board of Trustees meeting.

"When Marcia asked us to consider having Tristan read in front of the school board, his father and I were somewhat nervous for him," Lilia said. "This reading and a presentation on Reading Recovery were going to determine the future of Reading Recovery in the Denton ISD." She remembers Tristan's initial response was a definite "no," but a week of reassurance finally convinced him. They decided he would read his favorite book from his lessons, *George and Martha*.

"He walked right up to the school board president without any hesitation, sat on his lap, took a deep breath, and began to read," Lilia said. "He not only read, but he would show the audience the pictures after he read a page," which drew laughter and bolstered his confidence. "We talked about that meeting for weeks afterward," Lilia continued. "He really enjoyed it and was glad that he finally agreed to do it. As I would come to find out, it was one of the many times that I would be incredibly proud of my son."

About 3 months ago, Marcia found a little box tucked away in the top of a closet. Inside she found about 20 floppy discs and among them a folded yellowish index card — the actual introduction she had written for that May 1992 report.

Something else Marcia saved is Tristan's Reading Recovery folder that has all of his lesson records, running records, assessment results, and writing notebook — the only artifacts she has kept from her first years in Reading Recovery.

"I will not part with them because of what is represented there about my time working with Tristan and what it meant to me as a beginning Reading Recovery teacher," Marcia said. "And still, 25 years later, I regard this training and the opportunity to work one-to-one with students such as Tristan a gift."

Marcia shared that folder and memories with Tristan and his parents at a 25th anniversary reception during the 2014 Billie J. Askew Reading Recovery & K-6 Literacy Institute in Dallas. "Now with a wife and a first baby on the way, it was so special to catch up and hear about his continued success and to learn that he is still an avid reader," Marcia remembered.

And this time, Tristan didn't hesitate to accept the invitation. He was 29 years old, married and about to become a father. He and Marcia had come full circle. Teacher and pupil were reunited. And as Lilia recalls, "there were a few tears in the room. It was a wonderful evening, and I was so very proud of the boy who had become such an amazing man."

The Bynum family is still closely tied to TWU. Lilia, who graduated from TWU in 1995, is now the Reading Recovery program coordinator; husband Scott is the university's webmaster. And their support for Reading Recovery continues as well.

"I have nothing but the greatest respect for Reading Recovery teachers, teacher leaders, and trainers," Lilia said. "We have seen firsthand what Reading Recovery can do for a child and for our family, and we want to continue to see this happen for many more children and their families in years to come."

Special thanks to Marcia Kellum, Lilia and Scott Bynum, and of course, Tristan, for taking time to remember their journey and share it with us!

Now the assistant operations manager for Little Guys Movers in Denton, Tristan and his wife, Amanda, are the proud parents of 11-month-old daughter, Emma Louise.

About the Cover

Connor Tyler was a shy and reluctant reader when he began his series of lessons at Summit Cove Elementary School in Colorado. His Reading Recovery teacher, Pam Minard, remembers that he showed a lack of confidence and didn't want to say the words too loud in case he was wrong. After 20 weeks of daily lessons, Connor is reading first-grade books in the classroom, taking on unknown words with confidence. The outdoor enthusiast loves dinosaurs, skateboarding, snowboarding, and biking, and you might guess from the photos that his favorite color is green. *Cooking Pot*, a rhyming book Pam introduced to help Connor with fluency, is still one of his favorite books.

Reading Recovery teacher Pam Minard and Connor

Connor's mom, Jennifer, credits Pam and Reading Recovery for easing her son's struggles and changing his future. She shares her thoughts in a Parent Voices letter on the next page. Pam is thankful to Principal Crystal Miller for bringing Reading Recovery to the district and to teacher leader Hollyanna Bates for helping her find a way to make a difference every single day in the reading lives of her students.

Parent Voices: Jennifer Tyler

Connor Tyler is a snowboarder. His mom is a champion. She wrote the following letter, and when Assistant Superintendent of Student Learning Cathy Beck received it, she invited Jennifer to share it at a Summit (Colorado) School District Board of Education meeting.

March 15, 2016

I've never felt that I had failed my children until I found Connor curled up in his bed sobbing because he was having trouble reading. While he could read some words, he couldn't sit down and read me a book—even a short one—without some struggle. It broke my heart. I told him we would work on it over the summer, which we did, but he would give up so easily. In his mind he just couldn't do it. After speaking with some other parents, I was beginning to research reading/learning disorders and what I had to do in order to have Connor tested.

Once the school year began and initial testing through the school was completed, we were told that Connor would be enrolled in the Reading Recovery program. The change in Connor was seen almost immediately. Within two weeks we were sitting down at night to read and he wasn't in tears by the end of the book. He was excited to show us that he could read. He could figure out these words on his own. He looked forward to going to Reading Recovery so he could "get better" at reading.

A big part of our success at home was the constant communication we had with Pam Minard, his Reading Recovery teacher. I was able to tell her what I saw with Connor, including that I thought he was an auditory learner, and she used that in her teachings with him rather than discounting it and continuing on with "standard" methods. She provided us with the strategies and tools to use at home when reading with Connor to help him figure out the words on his own rather than waiting for us to give him the answers. She encouraged my questions and had real solutions to offer for any issue we encountered as his reading progressed. I feel like she really cares about Connor's progress. The excitement she has for his continuing improvement is evident every time I speak with her. Even now, with his program being finished. I'm thankful that she will be there to closely monitor his progress for the next two years.

Not only has Reading Recovery improved Connor's reading and writing skills tremendously, it has positively improved his self-esteem as a person. His confidence levels in all aspects of his life have soared as a result of this. He's now one of the leaders in reading group rather than the one struggling to understand what's going on. I had another mother tell me her son asked if he can go into the Reading Recovery group because he recognized that these kids are "going in there not knowing anything and coming out knowing how to read." I love that it is viewed as a positive with the other children in school.

I believe Reading Recovery is absolutely essential for students like Connor who need the individualized attention of this type of program in order to recognize their potential. Without this added benefit I can only imagine the constant struggles Connor could have faced this year and into the future in all aspects of his learning. I hope this program is continued for the benefit of any child and family that has struggled with reading.

Very Best,
Jennifer Tyler

Reading Recovery in the Detroit Public Schools: Voices of the Stakeholders

Mary K. Lose, Trainer, Oakland University

The Reading Recovery training has been like no other training I have had during my teaching career. Even after teaching for 22 years and receiving National Board Certification, I am learning ways of teaching reading that are new and that work.

Shelly Doughrity
Durfee Elementary-Middle School

Reading Recovery has made a huge impact on my teaching because it has made me a better teacher in every way. I love the 'aha' moments and my parents love that their children can read… One of my parents can't thank me enough for helping her daughter learn how to read. I've learned so much from the training class and look forward to class every week.

Renee Chown
Clark Elementary School

At the end of the 2010–2011 school year, Reading Recovery® in the Detroit Public Schools (DPS)—one of the nation's most economically challenged urban school districts—had reached a low of one teacher leader and only three teachers. However, with the support of DPS administrators and literacy leaders, action was taken to bolster literacy intervention services and implement Reading Recovery in the district's highest-priority schools beginning in fall of 2011. Budget allocations from the district's Office of School Turnaround and funds from Oakland University's $4 million share of the i3 federal grant to scale-up Reading Recovery spurred the expansion efforts. In only 5 years, DPS and its Reading Recovery team—led by new teacher leaders Richelle Barkley, Jacqueline Mitchell, and Jan DeRossett, and Dr. Deborah Winston, the district's deputy executive director of literacy and Reading Recovery site coordinator— has extended the reach of Reading Recovery to 64 teachers providing the one-to-one daily intervention to children in 24 priority schools.

Adding to the momentum achieved by the i3 grant funding in Detroit is the Reading Recovery Expansion Grant awarded to the Reading Recovery Center of Michigan at Oakland University in the summer of 2015. The goal of the grant, valued at approximately $42,450 in support of the DPS implementation alone, is to assist in covering the costs of initial

training of new Reading Recovery teachers that expand the implementation in one or more school districts that the university training center oversees.

Numerous testimonials from DPS administrators, teachers, Reading Recovery children and their parents, explained the power and impact of Reading Recovery in Detroit. Among these is the acknowledgment of the investment in teachers afforded by the Reading Recovery teacher training. As stated by Dr. Winston:

> Since the scale-up of Reading Recovery in Detroit, many of our teachers have had the opportunity to receive unparalleled training with a firm theoretical base. Our newly trained teachers and teachers-in-training work collaboratively with their colleagues and administrators as the literacy experts in their schools. Last year alone, our 45 teachers impacted almost 500 Reading Recovery students and supported hundreds of additional students in small-group literacy intervention during the rest of their day. This year their impact will be even greater, given that there are 18 additional teachers-in-training.

Likewise, each of the teacher leaders expressed gratitude for their recent training and the funding provided by the i3 grant. "It has been a great honor and privilege to be able to train as a Reading Recovery teacher leader

Teachers and teacher leaders from the Detroit Public Schools 2015–2016 Reading Recovery site gathered at the 24th Annual Reading Recovery Council of Michigan Institute in Troy.

under the i3 grant," states Jacqueline Mitchell who trained in 2014–2015. "The training provided an amazing opportunity for growth as a teacher of children and teacher of teachers. Through the intense training, I have gained a deeper theoretical understanding of the literacy processing system. This training has also enabled me to become a stronger supporter of and spokesperson for Reading Recovery throughout the Detroit Public Schools. Also, because of the i3 grant, Reading Recovery has expanded rapidly, and we continue to train new Reading Recovery teachers for the district each year. Seeing the lives of young children changed forever because of Reading Recovery has been an especially rewarding experience."

Richelle Barkley, who also trained as a teacher leader in 2014–2015, echoes Mitchell's statements and adds, "This has had a tremendous effect on me in terms of my growth as a literacy professional. The training as a teacher leader last year has expanded my theoretical knowledge about literacy teaching and learning and has allowed me to become an effective advocate for Reading Recovery. As a teacher leader for my site, I meet and collaborate with district leaders and stakeholders. I am now better equipped to impact district

decisions for the benefit of early readers and first-grade teachers. Without the i3 grant, my role in this dynamic reading and writing intervention, professional development program for teachers, and my continued impact within my district would not be possible."

Their colleague Jan DeRossett, who trained in 2013–2014, shares similar remarks. "My Reading Recovery teacher leader training was by far the most-challenging experience in my 18 years in education. Not only did the training provide me the opportunity to develop as a stronger Reading Recovery teacher, it prepared me to help teachers lift their own competencies well beyond their work with children in Reading Recovery." DeRossett also praises the district's teachers stating, "I am very fortunate to support such dedicated Reading Recovery teachers in the Detroit Public Schools. Together we are changing lives!"

DPS Reading Recovery teachers also explained the impact of Reading Recovery on their professional lives. For example, Cari Chagnon from Fisher Magnet Lower Academy reflected on her training in Reading Recovery in 2014–2015 under the i3 grant. "… This has been a challenging and rewarding year … I will

always be grateful for the enjoyment of being professionally and intellectually challenged and the sheer delight in watching children as they became more-capable readers and writers."

This year's teachers also expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to train in Reading Recovery and commented on what the training has meant to them. Kimberly Joyce Morrison of J. E. Clark Preparatory Academy states, "Reading Recovery and the theory and philosophy of Marie Clay has affected me as an educator in a very positive way and has shifted my view of how children learn and use the strategies that will impact their lives and the future of literacy in our country." Crystal Coburn, teacher at Dossin Elementary-Middle School, observes, "The training classes along with the demonstration lessons and the discussions following the lessons are extremely powerful. The sessions make me look deeper into my teaching decisions and what I could have done differently. The entire thought-provoking process constantly informs my views of what good literacy instruction looks like."

Similar comments from the teachers-in-training this year add to these sentiments. "Reading Recovery has renewed my perspective of the reading process and how children look at

Positive responses to Reading Recovery resonate from many DPS parents, including those of George Shade who observed his son's lesson at one of the teacher training classes: "Our family loves what she [Reading Recovery teacher Nichola Johnson] has done for our son and now he is reading well above average." Nichola and Jacob are shown here during a recent lesson.

and learn language" observes Piper Herbert of Ronald Brown Academy. "As a teacher of over 20 years and being a part of the Reading Recovery training program, I now see the teaching of reading through a different lens and would hope that all teachers of primary grades children would have the opportunity to do the same. For [struggling first graders], Reading Recovery is the springboard to literacy." Kathleen Vitale, a veteran teacher at Burton International Academy, adds, "The Reading Recovery training has greatly impacted my teaching career. … After 27 years of

teaching, I have seen many students struggle to learn to read. … it is both heartbreaking and discouraging. I am proud to be part of the DPS Reading Recovery program."

Many of the teachers commented on the affective changes observed in children who receive the intervention. "Hearing one of my students say things like, 'I can read!' and 'I am a good reader!' warms my heart," says Quintaunia Charles, a teacher-in-training at Sampson Elementary School. "[He] had such a low self-esteem in regards to reading before

Reading Recovery, but then he became much more confident. Even his mother and classroom teacher noticed a difference in how his reading improved. His mother has told me on several occasions how grateful she is for her son to be a part of Reading Recovery."

Lakiesha Conley of J. E. Clark Preparatory Academy also expresses the emotional satisfaction brought about by seeing her Reading Recovery students progress and hearing about the changes noticed by their teachers and parents. "The joys of the training come when I hear how well my students are doing in their regular classrooms. For example, Ava's first-grade teacher shared 'I am very impressed with Ava's reading and writing skills. She has come a long way from the beginning of the school year.' And, Ava's parents proudly add, "We cannot get Ava to stop reading. She wants to read anything she can get her hands on. We are so proud of her."

Classroom teachers and the students themselves add to the statements about Reading Recovery in Detroit. DaJuan, a Reading Recovery student sharing his thoughts on becoming a skilled reader and on working with his teacher, Shelly White, at Burton International Academy remarks, "I love reading now! Do you remember when I couldn't read, Mrs. White? Thanks, I'm going to miss reading with you. I'll remember what you taught me, I won't forget." His classroom teacher adds, "DaJuan is a great example for the Reading Recovery program. In September, he was a slow, low reader at the bottom of the class. Now he is a fluent reader in the top 10% of his class. He loves to read and write. He is a leader who enjoys helping struggling

students read." DaJuan's mother expressed her gratitude as well. "My son is so excited about reading now. I am forever grateful to her for helping my son read. I was so worried that he wouldn't be on grade level when he entered first grade, but after being in Reading Recovery, he is now one of the top students."

Positive responses to Reading Recovery resonate from many DPS parents, including those of George Shade, whose son received Reading Recovery this year at Gompers Elementary-Middle School. Shade, who recently observed his son's lesson at one of the teacher training classes, shared this. "Jacob has accomplished a lot with Reading Recovery. It has helped him to not be afraid to pick up a book even when he doesn't know some of the words. Our family loves what she [Nichola Johnson] has done for our son and now he is reading well above average. If I were to tell another parent about Reading Recovery, I would say, 'Please sign your child up. This will help motivate your child and give them hope'."

Responses like the ones conveyed in this article are very familiar to those of us who work in Reading Recovery. Each day, educators, administrators, parents, and children express the extraordinary difference Reading Recovery has made to the lives of so many. Clearly, funding from the i3 federal grant and the expansion grant has enabled DPS to fully implement Reading Recovery in its priority schools and impacted children's lives as described in the previous testimonials from district administrators, teacher leaders, teachers, and parents.

Perhaps the joy and feelings of accomplishment experienced by so many Detroit children are best captured by one initially shy first-grade student, Jaden, who proudly proclaimed to his Reading Recovery teacher in the midst of one of his recent lessons: "My reading is amazing!"

Editor's Note:
The Reading Recovery Expansion Grant awarded to Oakland University provided funding for training of 18 Michigan Reading Recovery teachers, including 15 teachers from the Detroit Public Schools. Funds from the grant covered a portion of the tuition costs at $1,000 per teacher. Each teacher also received supplies and a starter set of books for children's instruction. The grant was part of a $127,000 initiative by associate members of the Reading Recovery Council of North America. Pioneer Valley Books, Kaeden Books, and SongLake Books provided grant funding and materials, with additional teaching materials and resources provided by Blueberry Hill Books, MaryRuth Books, Reading Reading Books, Resources for Reading, and Richard C. Owen Publishers, Inc. In addition to Oakland, grants were awarded to Georgia State University, National Louis University, and The Ohio State University.

An associate professor and director of the Reading Recovery Center of Michigan, Mary K. Lose was the principal investigator for both the expansion grant and for the i3 federal grant to Oakland University.

IDEC Evaluation Report 2014–2015

Annual Results Confirm Strength of Reading Recovery

Jerome V. D'Agostino and Katherine Brownfield, International Data Evaluation Center

The 2014–2015 school year represents the beginning of the fourth decade of data collection and evaluation of Reading Recovery® in the United States. For Descubriendo la Lectura, 2014–2015 represents the 22nd year that it has been evaluated by IDEC. The school year also was critical for both interventions in that it was the last cohort of i3-funded teachers and schools. Over the 5-year grant period, university training centers recruited more urban high-need schools, more rural schools, and schools with large proportions of English language learners. About half of the active teachers in Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura were recruited with the support of the i3 grant, which means that not only are there more Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura teachers and schools that serve at-risk students, but there are more teachers with less years of experience offering the interventions nationwide.

One may suspect that a greater proportion of new Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura teachers serving greater proportions of at-risk students may lower the outcomes for Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura compared to prior years. The 2014–2015 outcomes, however, do not support such hypotheses — the results were maintained even with the demographic changes, revealing the strength of Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura in getting students back on track toward successful literacy learning.

Summary of Reading Recovery Outcomes

Characteristics of participants

Reading Recovery was implemented by 19 university training centers in schools located in 42 states nationwide (see Table 1). There were over 46,000 children who were selected and participated in the one-to-one intervention. The 5,875 teachers trained in Reading Recovery also on average worked with an additional 40 students during the school year. These teachers were supported by 298 teacher leaders from 243 training sites that served just over 1,200 school districts. Reading Recovery was implemented in 3,735 schools, for an average of 1.60 teachers per building.

The Observation Survey was administered to Reading Recovery, random sample, and tested-not-instructed (TNI) students in fall, mid-year, and spring. As can be seen from Table 1, 3,118 random sample and 6,175 TNI students were tested.

Among the Reading Recovery participants from 2014–2015, 56% were boys and 69% were eligible for free or reduced lunch. Children were from a diversity of ethnic backgrounds, including 56% White, 17% African American, 19% Hispanic, 2% Asian American, 1% Native American, and 4% that represented multiple races or other ethnic backgrounds.

Among the Reading Recovery students:

- 17% (*n* = 8,107) were still in lessons at year-end without enough time in the school year to complete the intervention.

- 4% (*n* = 1,876) moved during the school year while they were enrolled in lessons.

Table 1.	Participation in Reading Recovery in the United States 2014–2015
Entity	**n**
University Training Centers	19
Teacher Training Sites	243
States and Federal Entities*	42
Districts	1,205
Schools	3,735
Teacher Leaders	298
Teachers	5,875
Reading Recovery Students	46,849
Random Sample for RR	3,118
Tested-Not-Instructed for RR	6,175

*including Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of Defense Domestic, and Department of Defense Overseas

- 3% (*n* = 1,344) were removed from the intervention by someone other than the Reading Recovery teacher.

Of the remaining students who had a complete intervention (*n* = 35,488):

- 72% (*n* = 25,718) reached average levels of reading and writing and their programs were successfully discontinued.

- 28% (*n* = 9,770) made progress but not sufficient enough to reach average levels of reading and writing. They were recommended for consideration of a more-intensive intervention.

Observation Survey results

The comparison groups, random sample and TNI, served to address two fundamental questions regarding the effectiveness of Reading Recovery. One key question is whether Reading Recovery students reach average levels of literacy achievement at the end of first grade relative to all other first-grade children who do not receive the intervention. The Observation Survey scores of all random sample students, including those that received Reading Recovery, were used to compute average achievement levels. A second key question relates to whether Reading Recovery students performed better than how they would have performed if not provided the intervention. TNI students' scores were used to address that research question.

The total score scale was created based on 2009–2010 random sample student data (including the random sample students who received Reading Recovery). Students' Observation Survey scores on all six subtests

from fall, mid-year, and spring were used to create the measure. Instead of using the Observation Survey scores of each student from the three time points, the random sample was divided into three randomly assigned groups. The fall, mid-year, or spring Observation Survey scores were chosen from each group, respectively, to represent a sample of students from the three time points during the school year. The six Observation Survey subtasks were treated as partial credit "items" in a Rasch-based IRT analysis to convert the total raw scores to log odd values that ranged from about -4 to 4. Those values were converted using a linear transformation to create the final 0 to 800-point scale. Because student scores were from various test points during the school year, the scale reflects yearlong growth. Hence, a score such as 500 indicates the same literacy achievement level at any time point.

Figure 1 presents the mean total scores for successfully discontinued Reading Recovery students who were served first (fall entry) during the school year, Reading Recovery students served second (spring entry), random sample, and TNI students. Only students with valid scores at all three tests points were included in the analysis. As expected, the TNI group had a slightly larger fall mean score relative to fall and spring entry Reading Recovery students, but less than the random sample students. By mid-year, fall entry Reading Recovery students had a significantly greater mean gain than spring entry students, TNI, and random sample students. From mid-year to spring, the average growth rate of the Reading Recovery fall entry students was less than the average random sample growth rate over the same period, but the two groups finished the year at about the same achievement level and both groups were considerably higher than TNI students.

Figure 1. Mean Observation Survey Total Score for Successfully Discontinued Reading Recovery (fall and spring entry), Random Sample, and Tested-Not-Instructed Students in the United States, 2014–2015
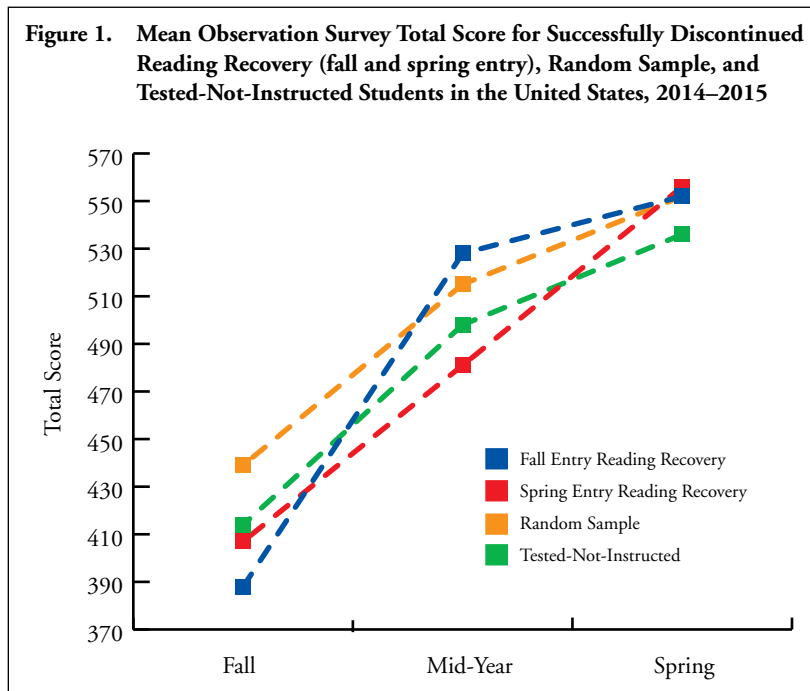
Note that spring entry students had a significantly smaller fall-to-mid-year mean gain than TNI students. This finding is critical to strengthen the inference that Reading Recovery is an effective intervention for three reasons. One, it may indicate that Reading Recovery teachers accurately identify and provide the treatment to the students most in need. On average, the students served in the second round are those who are falling behind the TNI group. Two, one possible explanation for the larger fall to mid-year gain for fall entry students is that their scores regressed more to the mean than TNI or random sample students. If that explanation were true, however, one would also expect the spring entry students to regress more toward the mean given their lower fall mean score. As can be seen from Figure 1, their growth rate in the first half of the year does not reflect greater regression. Three, spring entry students essentially serve as another (even more similar)

One key question is whether Reading Recovery students reach average levels of literacy achievement at the end of first grade relative to all other first-grade children who do not receive the intervention. The Observation Survey scores of all random sample students were used to compute average achievement levels.

comparison group for fall entry students at least in the first part of the year to address the question, "What would happen to the achievement levels of Reading Recovery students if they did not receive the treatment?" Clearly, the growth rate for fall entry students would be considerably lower without the treatment, as reflected in the spring entry student fall to mid-year growth. During the time of their intervention in the second half of the year, spring entry students had the largest growth rate.

Figure 2 presents the same group comparison method at three time points during the year (fall, mid-year, spring) on Text Reading Level. The general trends depicted in Figure 2 were similar to those for the total score, except for spring testing, where it is evident that Reading Recovery students whose lessons were discontinued did not entirely close the achievement gap between themselves and random sample students.

The magnitude of mean differences (effect sizes) in fall and spring between Reading Recovery and random sample or TNI students was examined. Tables 2 and 3 present the mean total and Observation Survey task scores of fall entry and spring entry Reading Recovery students whose lessons were discontinued pooled together, and random sample and TNI students, respectively. In both tables, the right columns provide the effect sizes in terms of standardized mean differences (positive values indicate that the Reading Recovery mean was greater than the comparison mean value) and the percentile standing of the average Reading Recovery child in the comparison-group distribution (in parentheses). As expected, the mean Reading Recovery scores in fall

Figure 2. **Mean Text Level Score for Successfully Discontinued Reading Recovery (fall and spring entry), Random Sample, and Tested-Not-Instructed Students in the United States, 2014–2015**
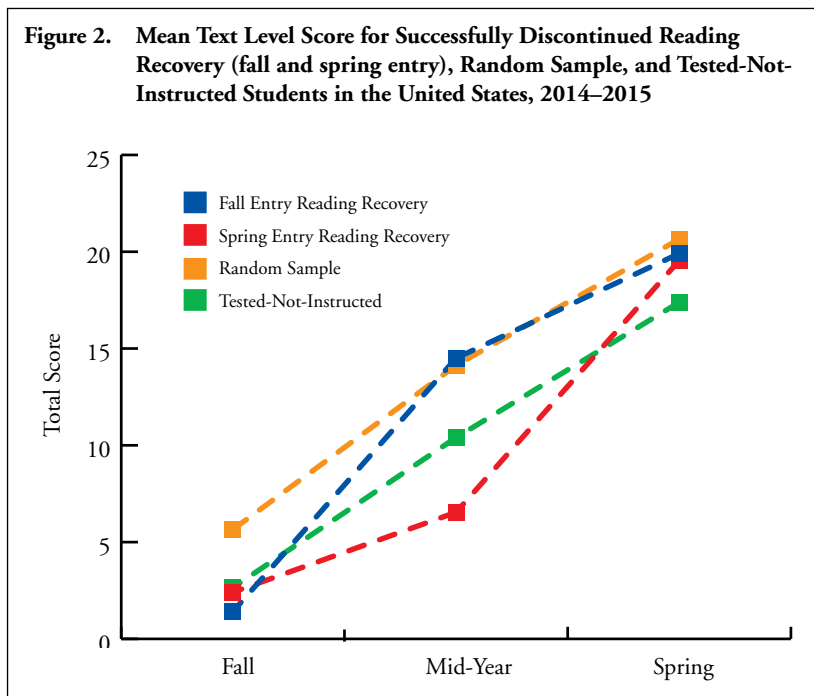
Legend:
- Fall Entry Reading Recovery
- Spring Entry Reading Recovery
- Random Sample
- Tested-Not-Instructed

Table 2. Mean Fall and Spring Total Scores with Effect Sizes for Successfully Discontinued Reading Recovery and Random Sample Students 2014–2015

Observation Survey Task	Discontinued (n = 18,158)		Random Sample (n = 2,756)		Effect Size Difference	
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
Total Score	395.76	553.79	440.44	552.62	-.30 (38)	+.03 (51)
Text Reading Level	1.70	19.76	5.79	20.73	-.65 (26)	-.14 (44)
Writing Vocabulary	13.00	56.63	21.20	56.01	-.69 (25)	+.03 (51)
Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words	23.63	35.97	29.13	35.65	-.69 (25)	+.11 (54)
Letter Identification	49.42	53.49	51.03	53.42	-.30 (38)	+.04 (52)
Ohio Word Test	4.63	19.18	9.88	18.87	-.86 (19)	+.12 (55)
Concepts About Print	13.13	21.98	15.31	20.68	-.62 (27)	+.12 (55)

ranged from the 19th to 38th percentile, with the latter value likely due to an apparent ceiling effect of Letter Identification in the random sample. By year-end, the effect size differences decreased significantly, indicating the closing of the achievement gap.

On the total score, the average Reading Recovery student performed at a level slightly above that of the average random sample student, indicating not only a complete closure of the achievement gap, but that the typical Reading Recovery student surpassed the average of the random sample group. In 2013–2014, the average

Reading Recovery student performed at the 50th percentile in the random sample distribution, and in 2012–2013, the average Reading Recovery student scored at the 47th percentile of the random sample on the total score. Thus, the spring outcome for Reading Recovery students is improving over time, which is remarkable given the demographic and teacher changes over the i3 grant period.

Also by year-end, on Concepts About Print, Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words, Letter Identification, the Ohio Word Test, and Writing Vocabulary, the mean Reading Recovery

score was slightly higher than the average random sample value. On Text Reading Level, the average Reading Recovery student was at the 44th percentile, and on Writing Vocabulary the average Reading Recovery student was at the 51st percentile, an increase of one percentile point over the 2013–2014 school year. Positive changes over the two years, particularly on Writing Vocabulary, on those two measures contributed greatly to the Reading Recovery group surpassing the random sample group on total score achievement in 2014–2015.

Table 3. Mean Fall and Spring Total Scores with Effect Sizes for Successfully Discontinued Reading Recovery and Tested-Not-Instructed Students 2014–2015

Observation Survey Task	Discontinued (n = 18,158)		Tested-Not-Instructed (n = 5,586)		Effect Size Difference	
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
Total Score	395.76	553.79	414.23	536.37	-.45 (32)	+.41 (66)
Text Reading Level	1.70	19.76	2.65	17.38	-.42 (34)	+.35 (64)
Writing Vocabulary	13.00	56.63	16.26	50.73	-.35 (36)	+.34 (63)
Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words	23.63	35.97	26.38	35.04	-.34 (37)	+.26 (60)
Letter Identification	49.42	53.49	50.32	53.23	-.17 (43)	+.14 (56)
Ohio Word Test	4.63	19.18	6.58	18.29	-.44 (33)	+.30 (62)
Concepts About Print	13.13	21.98	14.06	19.72	-.30 (38)	+.46 (68)

The fall and spring test scores for Reading Recovery discontinued students (fall and spring entry combined) and TNI children are provided in Table 3. In fall, the Reading Recovery total score mean was at the 32nd percentile in the fall TNI distribution, indicating the greater initial proficiency of the TNI group. The Reading Recovery and TNI students, on average, were the most comparable on Letter Identification, as indicated by the smallest fall effect size difference among the measures. By spring, Reading Recovery students outperformed the TNI students on all six tasks and the total score; in other words, Reading Recovery students started the year below the TNI group and surpassed them by the end of the year. The average Reading Recovery student scored at the 66th percentile in the TNI group distribution on the total score, reflecting a sizable end-of-year achievement gap in favor of Reading Recovery.

Summary of Descubriendo la Lectura Outcomes

Descubriendo la Lectura, the reconstruction of Reading Recovery in Spanish, is for first graders who receive their initial literacy instruction in Spanish. Table 4 provides basic descriptive information about Descubriendo la Lectura implementation in the U.S. During the 2014–2015 school year, 569 Descubriendo la Lectura children were taught by 82 teachers. The students were from 81 schools in 26 school districts located in 8 states. The teachers received professional development support from 28 teacher leaders. Fifty-seven percent of Descubriendo la Lectura students were boys, 98% were Hispanic, and 99% qualified for free or reduced lunch costs.

> On the total score, the average Reading Recovery student performed at a level slightly above that of the average random sample student, indicating not only a complete closure of the achievement gap, but that the typical Reading Recovery student surpassed the average of the random sample group.

Among all children served in Descubriendo la Lectura, 47% reached the average reading levels of their peers and their lessons were discontinued successfully. Another 29% were recommended for further evaluation, 2% moved, and 20% received incomplete interventions. Among the students who completed the intervention (discontinued and referred students), 62% were discontinued.

Two students per participating Descubriendo la Lectura school were administered the Instrumento de Observación in fall, mid-year, and at the end of year in half of the schools

Table 4.	Participation in Descubriendo la Lectura in the United States 2014–2015
Entity	**n**
University Training Centers	6
Teacher Training Sites	23
States	8
Districts	26
Schools	81
Teacher Leaders	28
Teachers	82
DLL Students	569
Random Sample for DLL	256

assigned at random. Those students combined represented the random sample. Descubriendo la Lectura schools had collected TNI data in 2011–2012, but due to very small samples and thus uninterpretable average scores, IDEC decided to forgo Descubriendo la Lectura TNI testing.

Descubriendo la Lectura random sample students' score on the six tasks of the Instrumento de Observación across multiple years were combined as was done for Reading Recovery to create a 0 to 800-point total score measure that reflected literacy development throughout the school year. Note that although this measure was developed using the same methods, a score of the same value on each measure should not be interpreted to indicate the same degree of literacy achievement (the tests contain different items and were scaled on different random samples).

Figure 3 presents the mean scores for both fall entry and spring entry successfully discontinued students and all Descubriendo la Lectura random sample participants on the total score at each time point, and Figure 4 provides the average scores for the same groups at the same time points on text reading level. The trends for Descubriendo la Lectura on the total

score were similar to the Reading Recovery results presented in Figure 1 with some differences. Descubriendo la Lectura students had considerably lower total scores than random sample students, on average, in fall, but by the end of year, the two Descubriendo la Lectura groups surpassed the random sample.

The greatest growth of any group was fall entry Descubriendo la Lectura students from fall to mid-year, followed by spring entry Descubriendo la Lectura students from mid-year to spring, indicating that gain was greatest during the intervention periods. Spring entry Descubriendo la Lectura and random sample students gained about the same amount from fall to mid-year, but from mid-year to spring, the spring entry Descubriendo la Lectura students outgained the random sample, indicative of a predictable growth pattern during the treatment period. The trend for text level (Figure 4) was similar to the total score trend (Figure 3) except for one difference; spring entry Descubriendo la Lectura students did not, on average, make comparable fall to mid-year gains relative to the random sample. Instead, the spring entry Descubriendo la Lectura students had considerably lower growth rates in the first part of the year without the intervention. During the second part of the year, they caught the random sample and the Descubriendo la Lectura discontinued students who received the intervention in the fall. Therefore, both Descubriendo la Lectura groups started the school year behind the random sample but caught the comparison group by the end of the year.

Figure 3. Mean Instrumento de Observación Total Score for Successfully Discontinued Descubriendo la Lectura (fall and spring entry), and Random Sample Students in the United States, 2014–2015
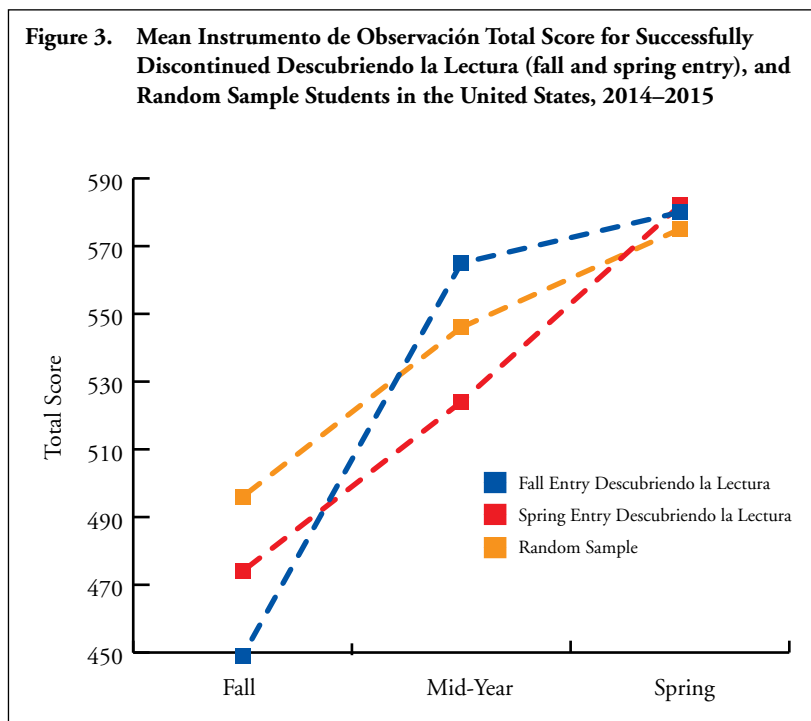
Figure 4. Mean Análisis Actual del Texto Score for Successfully Discontinued Descubriendo la Lectura (fall and spring entry), and Random Sample Students in the United States, 2014–2015
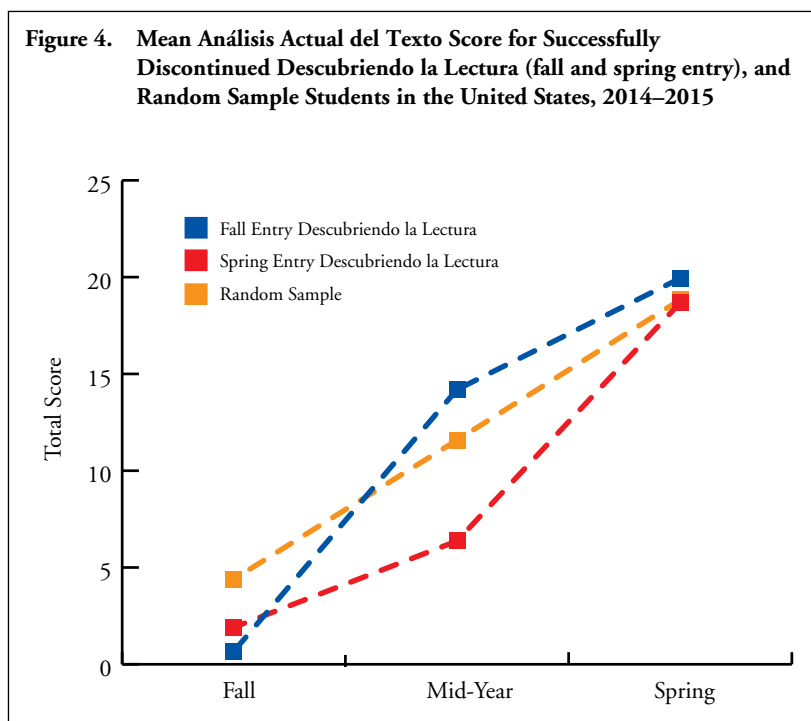
Table 5. Mean Fall and Spring Total Scores with Effect Sizes for Successfully Discontinued Descubriendo la Lectura (DLL) and DLL Random Sample Students 2014–2015

Instrumento de Observacíon Task	Discontinued (n = 221)		Random Sample (n = 265)		Effect Size Difference	
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
Total Score	**458.44**	**581.10**	**495.48**	**574.88**	**-.95 (17)**	**+.21 (58)**
Análisis Actual del Texto	1.14	19.59	4.49	18.78	-.70 (24)	+.12 (55)
Escritura de Vocabulario	10.47	49.60	18.13	47.94	-.72 (24)	+.10 (54)
Oír y Anotar los Sonidos en las Palabras	21.91	38.52	30.32	38.11	-.83 (20)	+.18 (57)
Identificacíon de Letras	43.72	58.63	52.01	58.49	-.93 (18)	+.04 (52)
Prueba de Palabras	6.90	19.62	12.60	19.08	-.84 (20)	+.22 (59)
Conceptos del Texto Impreso	9.69	19.95	12.48	19.03	-.73 (23)	+.30 (62)

Table 5 consists of the mean scores and effect sizes for fall and spring entry Descubriendo la Lectura discontinued students combined and random sample students in fall and at the end of year. It can be seen from the table that the average discontinued Descubriendo la Lectura student performed at the 58th percentile of random sample students on the total test in spring. Discontinued Descubriendo la Lectura students equaled or outperformed the random sample on all of the Instrumento de Observación tasks in spring. These average score differences reveal strong effects for Descubriendo la Lectura.

Conclusion

The list of educational interventions that have had the effect on student learning and program longevity in the United States compared to Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura is very small. In its 31st year of implementation during 2014–2015, students in the intervention posted perhaps the strongest outcomes experienced to date. On the total score for both Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura, the average discontinued student surpassed the average of the random sample.

These findings reflect the strong commitment of Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura trainers, teacher leaders, and teachers to persistently strive to improve their practices. Their hard work and engagement are paying off in terms of greater student literacy success.

About the Authors

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Dr. D'Agostino also served as director of the i3 project to scale up Reading Recovery.

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A Palette of Excellence: Contextualizing the Reported Benefits of Reading Recovery Training to Canadian Primary Classroom Teachers

Joseph Stouffer, Early Literacy Consultant, Brandon, Manitoba, Canada

Editor's note:
All names are pseudonyms.

Amidst charges that too many children are failing to achieve a satisfactory level of literacy development (Canadian Language & Literacy Research Network, 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Lacina & Collins-Block, 2011), there remains concerns surrounding the effectiveness of teachers. As well, debates of what is 'ideal' instruction that fosters reading and writing success for children (Pearson, 2004), all beg answer to the question, "What do we mean by an exemplary primary literacy teacher?"

To add to this ongoing discussion, I examined if and how the professional learning offered in the training of Reading Recovery® teachers held any potential for application in Canadian kindergarten, Grade 1, and Grade 2 classrooms (Stouffer, 2015). Throughout my findings, the majority of participants reported Reading Recovery was a positive influence on their classroom practice. Two overarching themes were common across the teachers' commentaries:

1. Reading Recovery training had significant value and application to their classroom context.

2. Incorporating procedures, language, knowledge, and beliefs they developed in Reading Recovery training made them more 'effective' literacy instructors (e.g., "My students are far more successful in reading and writing than they were before I was trained." Grade 1 teacher, urban Manitoba).

To contextualize participants' comments that Reading Recovery training made them more effective, I will compare my findings of reported transferred aspects of Reading Recovery to a synthesis of how exemplary primary literacy teachers (EPLTs) are profiled within recent studies.

Clay designed Reading Recovery as a one-to-one style literacy intervention, and vigorously defended its one-to-one instruction (2005a) and standardized implementations of the intervention (Canadian Institute of Reading Recovery [CIRR], 2014; Reading Recovery Council of North America, 2015). She believed that the intensity of Reading Recovery instruction was not required for most children, nor should classroom programs be designed based upon the needs of the most-struggling children. However, Clay's theories and the Reading Recovery intervention itself

were born from her seminal *classroom* observations of 100 New Zealand children (of varying abilities) learning to read throughout their Grade 1 year (Ballantyne, 2009). From these observations, Clay developed her theory of children's construction of a literacy processing system (2001), which applied to both average and non-average learners.

Additionally, because Reading Recovery has been positioned as a highly effective literacy intervention (D'Agostino & Murphy, 2004; Pinnell, 1989; Wasik & Slavin, 1993; What Works Clearinghouse, 2013), it seemed worthwhile to investigate if there were any mineable aspects of its professional development including Clay's theories (1991, 2001) that could potentially benefit classroom teachers. While there has been interest in exploring the classroom impact of Reading Recovery training, (Herman & Stringfield, 1997; Pressley & Roehrig, 2005), only a few studies have investigated the connection between Reading Recovery and classroom literacy instruction (Cox & Hopkins, 2006; Pressley, Roehrig, & Sloup, 2001; Smith, 2011). Cox and Hopkins found that Reading Recovery training provides teachers with "a conceptual understanding of the literacy process as it develops for diverse children" (p. 263). In their view, this

understanding comprised a critical element to successful intervention but also held potential transferability to classroom literacy instruction. Pressley, Roehrig, and Sloup observed Reading Recovery-trained kindergarten through Grade 2 teachers in their classrooms. They noted that all of the 10 observed teachers replaced teaching procedures with instructional procedures and teaching strategies that were typical of Reading Recovery. Similarly, Smith conducted case studies of Reading Recovery-trained teachers in the context of teaching guided reading in their classrooms. She found that those teachers used assessments, materials, and discourse similar to those employed in Reading Recovery. As well, she noted that the teachers planned and carried out instruction in a manner responsive to their students' immediate needs. However, questions of potential transfer to whole-class settings or in other types of literacy instruction were left unexplored.

Konstanellou pointed to a need for further investigation of the potential impact of Reading Recovery teacher training on classroom instruction:

> In my 17 years as a university trainer for Reading Recovery I have had numerous opportunities to discuss with colleagues how Reading Recovery may have influenced classroom teaching practices. There are a few articles and studies and much anecdotal information that have made the connection between Reading Recovery training and its impact on classroom instruction. However, there has never been extensive research that makes a clear case for the connection between Reading Recovery train-

ing and classroom teaching. (E. Konstanellou, personal communication, April 17, 2015)

The Classroom Impact of Reading Recovery: Inquiry Overview

To answer my questions as to if and how aspects of Reading Recovery teacher learning could be applied within classroom contexts, I surveyed 53 teachers across Canada who had completed the year-long Reading Recovery training within 3 years prior to the study. Additionally, three teachers from the survey respondents in western Canada volunteered for the case study phase of the research: Barb, a Grade 1 teacher in an urban school with 13 years experience; Laurie, a Grade 2 teacher in an urban school with 17 years experience; and Sarah, a Grade 1–2 teacher in a rural school with 25 years experience. I composed three case studies from weekly observations of classroom teaching conducted from March through May 2013 and semi-structured interviews (Seidman, 2006), which typically followed each classroom teaching observation.

I coded incidents of reported or observed transfers of Reading Recovery learning from the survey responses (N = 1,312) and case studies (N = 1,330) using ATLAS.ti (Muhr, 2007) categorizing each in terms of the classroom activity, the number of students the teacher was working with (i.e., one, two, small group, whole class), the modality of literacy (i.e., reading or writing or both), and the Reading Recovery concept/principle of instruction that was transferred, and if the transfer affected a participant's classroom procedures, language, knowledge, or beliefs.

The participants reported and I observed how teachers had incorporated aspects of Reading Recovery learning when teaching reading and writing in classroom settings, during whole-class, small-group, and one-to-one instruction. Because I did not compare teachers' practice pre- and post-Reading Recovery training, the findings are dependent upon the accuracy of the participants' reporting and perception of their learning. Additionally, it is possible that some participants provided classroom instruction similar to Reading Recovery prior to training and the training only reinforced or provided them language to better articulate the nature of their practice.

From my analysis, a particular finding interested me. Mainly based on their assessments of their own students and comparing their students' progress pre- and post-Reading Recovery teacher training, the participants often reported that post-training, they felt more confident teaching literacy and judged themselves as more effective:

> Yes, I feel I am a much more effective literacy teacher. I am more thoughtful about what is important and I take a closer look at the student and what they can do. (Grade 1–2 teacher, rural Manitoba).

The participants frequently referred to the apprenticeship and collaborative style of learning hallmark to Reading Recovery training as factors that led to growth in classroom practice:

> I think that training in Reading Recovery has only made me a better classroom teacher. It has really changed the way I think

about teaching students to read and write, as well as how I deliver my instruction in the classroom. Reading Recovery meetings continually challenge my thinking and help me to better understand the way students learn. (Grade 1–2 teacher, rural Manitoba)

At first, I was overwhelmed but as the [training] year progressed and we met in our contact group, it became easier as we all had our own experiences and difficulties we were trying to work through. It was so beneficial to watch other teachers complete lessons with their students. (Barb)

Because many of the participants stated the position that Reading Recovery training somehow made them a 'more-effective' literacy teacher, I offer the reader a review of recent research to operationalize what research has deemed more effective when describing literacy teachers. Through this lens, I will explore if and how the participants reported that Reading Recovery training influenced their classroom literacy instruction in similar ways to research that has depicted the characteristics of EPLTs.

Research on the Characteristics of Exemplary Primary Literacy Teachers

Foundational work by Michael Pressley and his colleagues (1996, 1998) pointed to a lack of research that described effective literacy instruction. I reviewed 24 recent studies since Pressley's call that were focused on describing characteristics of

highly successful primary teachers (Allington, 2002; Baker, Allington, & Brooks, 2001; Block, Oakar, & Hurt, 2002; Bogner, Raphael, & Pressley, 2002; Bohn, Roehrig, & Pressley, 2004; Cunningham, Perry, Stanovich, & Stanovich, 2004; Day, 2001; Lyons, 2003; Mather, Bos, & Babur, 2001; McCutchen et al., 2002; Medwell, Wray, Poulson, & Fox, 1998; Metsala et al., 1997; Morrow & Asbury, 2001; Morrow, Tracey, Woo, & Pressley, 1999; Pressley, 2001; Pressley, Rankin, & Yokoi, 1996; Pressley, Roehrig, & Sloup, 2001; Pressley et al., 1998; Ruddell, 1995; Taylor, Pearson, Clark, & Walpole, 2000; Taylor, Peterson, Pearson, & Rodriguez, 2002; Wharton-McDonald, 2001; Wharton-McDonald, Pressley, & Hampston, 1998).

In these studies, *effectiveness* or *success* as a literacy teacher are consistently defined, either explicitly or implicitly, as the teacher's capacity to lift their students' literacy outcomes above

those of other teachers. Interchangeably used terms such as *effective, best, excellent, good, high-quality*, etc., are somewhat problematic. These terms, when applied to teachers, I argue, are always defined relatively within specific contexts. They also seem to imply that there is a checklist-like, archetypal ranking system for literacy teachers, with 'best' implying an achievable, uniform, and static state of a master teacher. I gravitate towards using the term exemplary in this review and for my discussion, built from the examination of many successful teachers, each contributing a piece to a larger, multifaceted construct.

As I culled through the findings and discussions, it seemed as though the researchers seemed to talk about the exemplary teachers from three viewpoints: what they did, what they knew, and what they believed was most important in literacy instruction. To organize my profile

Figure 1.   Four Components of a Personal Theory of Literacy Instruction

KNOWLEDGE
What teachers know or understand

BELIEFS
What teachers attach importance to

PROCEDURES
What teachers do

LANGUAGE
What teachers say

PERSONAL THEORY OF LITERACY INSTRUCTION
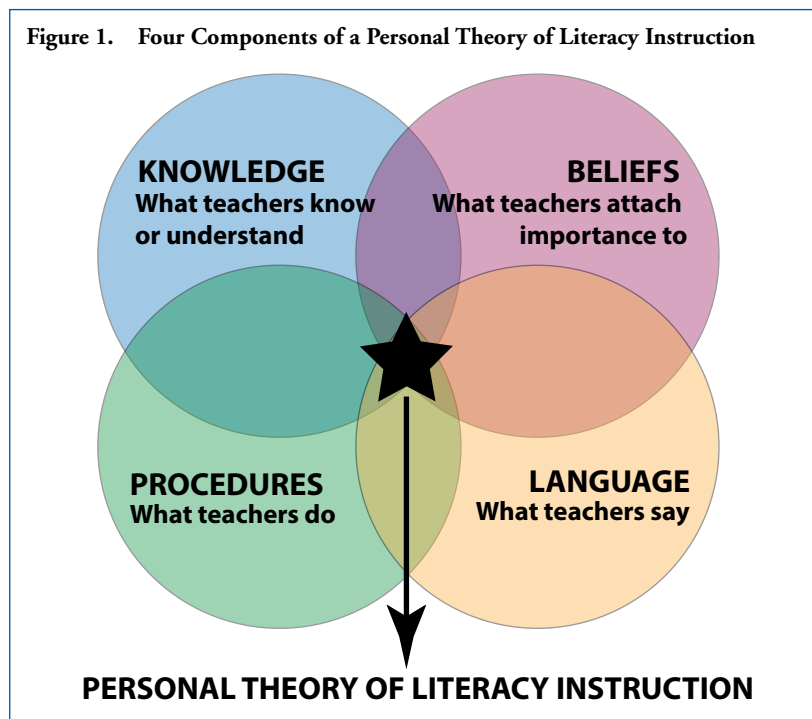
of EPLTs, I proposed three broad categories of description: procedures, knowledge, and beliefs. While none of the reviewed studies focused on teachers' discourse, in my study, I also examined if and how the case study teachers imported particular language (i.e., prompts, Clay's terminology, or teaching procedures/ principles) from Reading Recovery (Clay, 2005b) into their classroom instruction. I conceptualize these four dimensions: procedures, knowledge, beliefs, and language as interactive components of what I term a teacher's personal theory of literacy instruction (Figure 1). Over time, drawing from their training and experience, teachers construct knowledge and form beliefs about how literacy develops and how it should be taught. Teachers enact their personal theories through the procedures they select and language they incorporate into their instruction. Or, teachers' habitual practices, over time, may shape what they understand or believe about how reading and writing should be taught.

I used these three overarching categories as a means of sorting through various conceptualizations of EPLTs. Seeing no singular profile for an EPLT in my analysis, I was drawn towards the analogy of a painter's palette — in which EPLTs' teaching can be described as individual hues drawing from a range of effective procedures, knowledge, and beliefs. Using this palette analogy, I offer the most commonly reported characteristics of EPLTs in the reviewed research (Figure 2). Within this analogy, EPLTs may be seen as possessing some common traits but also having degrees of individuality, reflected within their own personal theories of literacy instruction, which grow and adapt over time.

Comparing Reading Recovery-Based Learning to the Characteristics of Exemplary Primary Literacy Teachers

Exemplary primary literacy teachers' instructional procedures

Teachers' actions—what EPLTs did in the course of teaching literacy— was the most-reported aspect within the studies I reviewed. The most-frequently described instructional procedures of EPLTs follow:

- Balancing whole texts and isolated skills – Teachers were described as purposefully dividing instructional time between working with whole texts or teaching isolated skills in reading and writing, recognizing advantages and disadvantages of either context.

- Connecting literacy skills across curriculum – The EPLTs made deliberate efforts to link literacy skills to other content areas across the school day.

- Differentiating teaching purposeful literacy and tools – Teachers made it clear to students when they were reading or writing for a larger purpose (e.g., to research a topic, to communicate a message to someone) versus when they were learning a skill or component of the reading or writing process.

- Managing classrooms effectively – Many of the researchers referred generally to the EPLTs as being excellent classroom managers, jus-

tifying such a label by noting students were typically engaged in their work, or the classroom environments seemed well organized.

- Encouraging self-regulation – EPLTs made efforts to foster their students' capacity to self-monitor, self-correct, and to increase their independence initiating and completing literacy tasks.

- Providing engaging activities – Teachers offered literacy instructional tasks that students found highly interesting and promoted active participation.

- Instructing reading and writing explicitly – EPLTs gave deliberate, clear directions and explanations of components of reading and writing processes focused on immediate tasks at hand.

- Arranging for extensive student reading and writing – Teachers provided their classes with large amounts of time and opportunity to practice reading and writing in a variety of formats.

- Modelling extensively – EPLTs provided numerous demonstrations of how and what they wanted their students to do in reading and writing.

- Applying formative assessment – Teachers based instructional decisions on the observed competencies of their students. As opposed to following a preset instructional sequence, they followed the lead of their stu-

Figure 2.   A Pallette of Excellence: Research-Based Characteristics of Exemplary Primary Literacy Teachers

PRIMARY CLASSROOMS

TEACHER BELIEFS

ELPTs place importance on …

- Encouraging all students, having positive attitudes
- Holding high expectations for all students
- Having personal interest in continuing their own education
- Reflecting on their own teaching

TEACHER PROCEDURES

ELPTs practice …

- Balancing whole texts and isolated skills
- Connecting literacy skills across curriculum
- Differentiating teaching purposeful literacy and "tools"
- Managing classrooms effectively
- Encouraging self-regulation
- Providing engaging activities
- Instructing reading and writing explicitly
- Arranging for extensive student reading and writing
- Modelling extensively
- Applying formative assessment
- Asking higher-level questions
- Integrating reading and writing
- Maintaining instructional density
- Matching texts to reading ability
- Scaffolding varying levels of support
- Stressing the creation of meaning in literacy
- Varying group sizes
- Applying a variety of instructional methods
- Offering a variety of texts

TEACHER KNOWLEDGE

ELPTs know or understand …

- Purposes behind their teaching actions
- Literacy development theory
- Literacy instructional methods
- Awareness of their literacy theoretical orientation
- Diagnostic viewpoints
- English phonology/phonics
- English grammar
- A wide scope of children's literature
- Curriculum/content expectations

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dents, providing next logical steps based on their students' immediate needs.

- Asking higher-level questions – Teachers asked deeper questions about texts beyond the literal. They invited chil-

dren to make inferences and think critically.

- Integrating reading and writing – EPLTs viewed reading and writing as reciprocally developing processes and often drew links between

them. They clarified how knowledge in writing could assist reading and vice versa.

- Maintaining instructional density – Teachers provided children a steady diet of rich instruction. They were

seen frequently giving clarification and instruction in both group and individual settings. They were opportunistic and took advantage of teachable moments.

- Matching text to reading ability – EPLTs deliberately gave children frequent occasion to read texts that fell within their instructional reading level.

- Scaffolding varying levels of support – Teachers were described as masterfully adjusting the level of assistance needed between individual students, and withdrawing support as students become more independent.

- Stressing the creation of meaning in literacy – Strong emphasis was placed on reading and writing as message-getting and message-sending events. Comprehension and clear communication were portrayed as the defining outcomes of successful reading and writing.

- Varying group sizes – Throughout a school year as well as during a teaching day, teachers constantly reorganized the group size according to the instructional purpose and the matching needs of children in the class.

- Applying a variety of instructional methods – EPLTs deployed a large repertoire of instructional methods and were able to selectively switch to alternate approaches to accommodate a broad range of learners.

- Offering a variety of texts – Teachers gave children access to a wide variety of genres, authors, and forms. The classrooms showed diversity of texts in reading and writing.

Common instructional procedures
Looking at the instructional procedures that researchers associated with EPLTs, I found that many of the survey participants and all of the case study teachers deployed some similar procedures in their classrooms, which they directly attributed to Reading Recovery teacher training (see Table 1). For some procedures, (i.e., providing engaging activities, connecting literacy skills across curriculum, varying group sizes, and asking higher-level questions) I saw those kinds of activities in play in all of the case study teachers' classrooms, but did not have evidence that they attributed those procedures to Reading Recovery training.

Post-Reading Recovery training, the participants described their classroom as more intense and explicit. For example, a survey participant from urban Alberta stated:

> Efficiency and urgency are necessary in Reading Recovery given the limited amount of time you have with these students. This urgency has come with me into the classroom. The activities we do are purposeful, since we cannot waste time with activities that are not directly supporting our literacy goals.

Barb reported now being focused on teaching concepts of English print more explicitly early in the Grade 1 year. "Other years I haven't worried so much about it really being that

clear. But they need to know that we start on the left, we go to the right."

Laurie had adopted the practice of drawing on a conversation with a student to generate ideas for writing from Reading Recovery:

> That's definitely from my Reading Recovery training because [Reading Recovery students] do that little piece of writing and you have to talk first and get a conversation started so that they'll say something that they want to write. And that's definitely something that I do with all the kids. Even the kids before they leave the carpet, they have to tell me what [they] are going to write about.

Sarah felt that the language and procedures she had adopted from Reading Recovery enabled her to more clearly prompt and explain literacy concepts to her class:

> I've taught a lot of kids how to read, but the end goal was just they need to be able to read, right? And I never – it's not that I didn't understand but I wasn't specific on what they need to do to be able to read. You know, I gave them lots of opportunities and – but I never used the vocabulary. And I think that's the biggest thing, is the vocabulary that I now use.

Exemplary primary literacy teachers' knowledge
The most-common EPLT understanding was having an awareness of the underlying purpose of their instructional actions. Lyons (2003) found EPLTs "building case knowledge about how to teach a specific process to a specific child for a spe-

Research ▯▯▯

Table 1. Comparison of Research-Based Characteristics of EPLTs to Reading Recovery Instructional Procedures

EPLT Procedures (What EPLTs Do)	Reading Recovery-Influenced Classroom Teachers		Sample Comments from Participants
	Survey Responses	Case Studies	
Instructing reading and writing explicitly	• Early teaching of concepts of print • Encouraging phrasing and fluent reading • Practicing a word so that is added to known vocabulary • Using Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words	• Early teaching of concepts of print • Encouraging phrasing and fluent reading • Practicing a word so that is added to known vocabulary • Referring to strategic activity when discussing children's literacy ability • Teaching a variety of approaches to solve words • Using Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words	I teach all of the pre-reading skills much more explicitly such as what is a letter/word/number, left to right, return sweep, etc. (Kindergarten teacher, urban British Columbia) Mind you we always did punctuation, but [now] I think it's just making them more aware of why the punctuation is there. (Barb)
Arranging for extensive student reading and writing	• Providing a large number of experiences with text	• Providing a large number of experiences with text • Providing opportunities for rereading of familiar texts	More guided reading, more reading overall. (Grade 1 teacher, urban Manitoba) We write every day. (Barb)
Maintaining instructional density	• Referring to urgency/persistence in teaching	• Referring to urgency/persistence in teaching	I think time is the big thing and to utilize the time the best way that I can. (Barb)
Scaffolding varying levels of support	• Matching teaching decisions to observed behaviors	• Adjusting the level of support when children are solving words • Matching teaching decisions to observed behaviors	I scaffold each child as much as possible toward increased independent problem solving. (Grade 1 teacher, urban British Columbia) And I find too that working one-on-one you just have to be on the ball the whole time. Even in a small group, you're changing and you do need to, but with a child sitting right there right beside you, you have to respond quickly to whatever he's doing. (Sarah)
Encouraging self-regulation	• Fostering learner's independence	• Fostering learner's independence • Fostering self-monitoring	I gear my reading lessons toward developing strategic activity and independent problem-solving. (Grade 1 teacher, urban British Columbia) Just putting the responsibility on the child. You know, prompting them to solve problems independently and on their own, and giving them those skills so that they can do it independently when no one's there. (Sarah)

continues

EPLT Procedures (What EPLTs Do)	Reading Recovery-Influenced Classroom Teachers		Sample Comments from Participants
	Survey Responses	Case Studies	
Applying formative assessment	• Basing forthcoming instruction on running record analysis	• Basing forthcoming instruction on running record analysis • Basing forthcoming instruction on the child's present performance with a text • Spending time to get to know child as a learner	Whereas before I did running records, but I knew their reading level. I knew if they could understand it or not, but I didn't break it down more into what I needed to do. So, I think for me that was a big part, where do I go from here? (Barb) You were giving them worksheets and you were doing guided reading, but I just wasn't looking for those kind of things all the time, and now I am. (Sarah) And so I will after he's a new EAL [English as an additional language learner] student has had a chance to settle in, then I'll come and I'll do some individual reading with him. I'll start with some simple books, level one books, just with some simple vocabulary and then to see if he has any of that. (Laurie)
Balancing whole texts and isolated skills	• Referring to strategic activity when discussing children's ability to read and write • Using Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words	• Teaching items of knowledge drawn from the texts being read or written • Using Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words • Referring to strategic activity when discussing children's ability to read and write • Building on the known • Teaching features of text • Teaching items of knowledge drawn from the texts being read or written • Teaching structures of language found in text	I focus on strategies they are using, not necessarily the level of the text. (Grade 2 teacher, urban Manitoba) So, starting with something that they can do and helping them to work on the things that they're developing is another strategy that I picked up from Reading Recovery that I think is key, and not just in reading and writing, but that transfers to math. It transfers to things that we're doing in science, all the things that we're doing. (Laurie) Sarah: You're [teaching] it all though manipulatives and through literature. Author: Do you mean working with books, reading and writing texts? Sarah: Exactly, not in isolation. And through poetry, and then I was more confident. Then I was like, "Yeah, we can, we can cover all of this without having to go, everybody today we're doing [the letter] 'B'." Author: So, have you always thought about structure and language so carefully, or is that something that's changed? Laurie: No, that's something that changed when I was doing the Reading Recovery training, especially because I am dealing with more of the EAL* kids. And I think before I did the Reading Recovery I didn't really think much about the type of text that they had in the book. *English as an additional language learner

EPLT Procedures (What EPLTs Do)	Reading Recovery-Influenced Classroom Teachers		Sample Comments from Participants
	Survey Responses	Case Studies	
Offering a variety of texts		• Using texts from the Reading Recovery Book List	I don't use them as much for the kids that don't, that just sail and find reading easy but for your struggling readers those are the ones that I prefer. (Sarah)
Modeling extensively	• Using prompts from Reading Recovery	• Modeling the scanning of words left to right	I use specific language when modeling reading and writing strategies. (Grade 2 teacher, urban Manitoba) When I model writing, I think out loud to show the various strategies such as clapping syllables and pushing sounds in boxes. (Kindergarten teacher, rural New Brunswick)
Stressing the creation of meaning in literacy	• Orienting children to the new story before reading	• Orienting children to the new story before reading • Referring to Clay's definition of reading/writing	I spend more time building a background and language prior to reading a story. (Grade 1–2 teacher, rural Manitoba) Author: Do you find [Reading Recovery] is transferring when you're teaching in front of the whole class? Laurie: Absolutely, it does. Especially if we're doing reading at the carpet, reading stories and things. One of the things I'm careful to do is talk about the meaning of the story.
Matching texts to reading ability	• Designing individual instruction • Selecting texts based on children's instructional need and knowledge	• Designing individual instruction • Selecting texts based on children's instructional need and knowledge • Arranging for success • Basing forthcoming instruction on the child's present performance with a text	I noticed that not all children learn to read the same way. I have to change things around for the struggling readers. (K–4 teacher, rural Manitoba) I sometimes do small-group instruction based on strategy needs as opposed to levelled groups. I also look for opportunities to read more frequently with those students requiring additional help. (Grade 2 teacher, urban Alberta) I try to make sure that my students that are not as strong get a chance to respond to some of those things too and get a chance to participate in that. (Laurie)

cific reason" (p. 163). The researchers described EPLTs as very consciously making choices, anticipating their decisions' outcomes, and able to articulate why they selected one approach over another.

Several studies indicated EPLTs held a strong knowledge of literacy development theory. Morrow and Asbury (2001) described an EPLT as "well acquainted with the developmental processes of reading and writing. She knew what her students had to learn in order to become better readers and writers, and she purposefully created many opportunities for discovery and explicit teaching of those necessary skills and strategies" (p. 192). The EPLTs were aware of typical developmental sequences in reading and writing development and used those expectations as a general guide for some of their instructional decisions.

Related to their purposefulness and literacy developmental knowledge, some studies described EPLTs as aware and able to articulate their theoretical orientation. The exemplary teachers knew the ground upon which they stood well, or knew what they knew. These studies seem to argue that the EPLTs' metacognitive self-awareness was foundational to their purposeful teaching.

Other types of knowledge were discussed in fewer studies, which claimed EPLTs had knowledge of diagnosing reading and writing performance, English phonology/phonics, English grammar, curriculum content/expectations, and a wide range of children's literature.

Common knowledge
I also found some ways in which the participants described how their knowledge had shifted as a result of

Reading Recovery teacher training was similar to knowledge presumably held by EPLTs (Table 2). Similar to EPLTs, the Reading Recovery-trained teachers reported developing knowledge in developmental theory. They frequently referred to Clay's literacy processing theory (1998, 2001) and drew on her work to explain the purpose behind many of their teaching decisions. "I feel I now have knowledge and a foundation that I can confidently draw on to help me instruct reading and guide new and struggling readers that I didn't have before Reading Recovery" (kindergarten teacher, urban British Columbia).

Reading Recovery has been positioned as a bridge between opposing top-down and bottom-up views of reading development (Jones, 1995). Sarah described earlier in her teaching career feeling less certain that she would be able to effectively teach students to become readers. As well, she did not see how explicit instruction fit into a top-down approach to literacy instruction:

> But I don't think, I don't think anybody really understood, "OK, so what do you do?" . . .You know, we were never really – at least I was never really given the specifics that you – so that I could feel confident that kids were going to learn.

Sarah went on to describe how her Reading Recovery training helped her more confidently navigate tensions between teaching skills in the context of continuous text and teaching skills in isolation and arrive at a more-balanced approach to her literacy instruction:

> Unless I teach it all in isolation, how are they ever going to learn all this? It's scary because you

think . . . if it's not in worksheet format, they're not going to get it, but they do.

Sarah felt that there were skills she needed to teach explicitly to her students, but through her Reading Recovery training, better understood how to identify and capitalize on opportunities to teach skills in the context of the texts being read and written in her classroom. She had shifted to seeing teaching reading and writing skills in context not only effective, but more efficient:

Sarah: I never had time. [to see guided reading groups more frequently]

Author: So how do you have time now?

Sarah: Because . . .we're doing the sight word program and the phonics within what we're doing as whole class. Like, if we read a poem, that's when we do our phonics rather than worksheets.

The participants also described themselves taking a diagnostic viewpoint, drawing upon a better understanding of how to assess formatively and match teaching decisions to observed behaviors in their students. A Grade 2–3 teacher from urban British Columbia stated, "I think that I can make much quicker assessment of how children are learning to read and adjust their lessons on the spot in order to help them grasp new reading skills."

Barb felt not only more competent in taking a running record, but that she better understood how to analyze running records and infer a student's current strengths and weakness in problem solving when reading a

Table 2. Comparison of Research-Based Characteristics of EPLTs to Reading Recovery-Influenced Knowledge

EPLT Knowledge (What EPLTs Know or Understand)	Reading Recovery-Influenced Classroom Teachers		Sample Comments from Participants
	Survey Responses	Case Studies	
Purposes behind their teaching actions	• Matching teaching decisions to observed behaviours	• Matching teaching decisions to observed behaviours	Yes, I think I know more clearly what to look for in students who are struggling and can more adeptly choose a teaching direction to support those children. (Grade 2 teacher, urban Manitoba) I hate to even admit that, [before training in Reading Recovery], when you're trying to do four guided reading groups in 45 minutes, often I would just give the kids the words because, first of all, time, and second, I didn't really know what kind of prompts to give them. (Sarah)
Literacy development theory	• Referring to Clay's general theory of literacy processing	• Referring to Clay's general theory of literacy processing	I have a better understanding of how the reading process works and how a child learns to read. (Grade 1–2 teacher, rural Manitoba) I have a better understanding of how to teach students reading skills. . . It breaks it down so much, and it's so structured – exactly what you have to do. (Barb)
Literacy instructional methods	• Using Reading Recovery activities (unspecified) • Designing individual instruction • Basing forthcoming instruction with child's present performance with text	• Designing individual instruction • Basing forthcoming instruction with child's present performance with text • Building on the known • Using Reading Recovery instructional activities (unspecified) • Teaching structures of language found in text	I think I have a greater repertoire of ideas to help students to read. (Kindergarten teacher, urban Alberta) I feel I have more effective strategies to share with the students. (Kindergarten teacher, rural New Brunswick) I am getting my kids farther, but I think because I know more what to do with them, and when they are stuck in one spot, then I'm able to get them further, help them to figure out a strategy. (Barb) Author: So, have you always thought about structure and language so carefully, or is that something that's changed? Laurie: No, that's something that changed when I was doing the Reading Recovery training, especially because I am dealing with more of the EAL* kids. And I think before I did the Reading Recovery I didn't really think much about the type of text that they had in the book. *English as an additional language learner

continues

Reading Recovery-Influenced Classroom Teachers			
EPLT Knowledge (What EPLTs Know or Understand)	Survey Responses	Case Studies	Sample Comments from Participants
Diagnostic viewpoints	• Designing individual instruction • Basing forthcoming instruction on child's present performance with text • Analyzing a running record • Basing forthcoming instruction on running record analysis	• Designing individual instruction • Basing forthcoming instruction on child's present performance with text • Analyzing a running record • Basing forthcoming instruction on running record analysis • Discussing children/practice with other Reading Recovery-trained teachers	Knowing how they made their mistakes helps guide me to what to teach them and where to go next. (Kindergarten teacher, urban British Columbia) You have to be listening and anticipating. And it takes, first of all, I think it takes experience – because I've listened to a lot of kids read before through my teaching career. But it's also interpreting what they're doing in a different way. When do you step in? When do you not? What prompt should I be giving them? I know this child uses lots of visual information but doesn't necessarily always use the meaning and structure of the language. And you just have to know that and you just have to be listening in those terms. (Sarah)
Curriculum/content expectations	• Stating a belief that they are a more-effective teacher after Reading Recovery training	• Stating a belief that they are a more-effective teacher after Reading Recovery training	I have a master's degree in elementary literacy and feel very strongly that I learned more from my Reading Recovery training than I did in the entirety of my after-degree. (Grade 2 teacher, urban Alberta) I am much more confident in my ability to help all students learn to read. There is a lot of pressure on Grade 1 teachers to get their students to an end of Grade 1 level and I feel that Reading Recovery training will assist me in getting more of my students to that level. (Barb)

text. "Because before, I mean, MSV [meaning, structure, and visual information sources available to readers], it's like confusing and sometimes still you have to really think, 'What are they using and where are they going?' Reading Recovery really helped with that."

In both their case studies, Laurie and Sarah described having developed an automatic, continuous analysis of children's reading that steered their instruction:

> I mean I sort of do that in my head as I'm going along anyway, but because I'm noticing, "Oh yeah she self-corrected here, oh she's just looking at the beginning of the text here, she's using meaning here but not those other things." So I kind of do that in my head all the time just as a regular habit even if I'm not writing it down. (Laurie)

> I think that's one of the most tiring things with this job is that you're constantly thinking. You're constantly observing and you're constantly processing what you see and then making the next steps and doing it immediately. And you can't stop, so you go into a whole class you keep doing it. It just becomes one of these things you do. (Sarah)

Both teachers seemed to attribute what they considered an improvement to prompt readers more appropriately on-the-spot based on an increased understanding of Clay's (2005b) strategic processing theory. Sarah further described noticing how her Reading Recovery-born knowledge drew the attention of some nontrained colleagues:

> When I talk to other people who haven't had the training and then

you're talking about all of these like the zone [zone of proximal development] or all the strategic activity and they are sitting there looking at you like, "Oh, OK wow! I got to write this down." Then you realize, I do know what I'm talking about.

Exemplary primary literacy teachers' beliefs

While teacher actions can be observed, and teacher knowledge measured in various forms, it is important to consider what other qualities successful teachers are bringing to the task of literacy instruction. A majority of the studies described EPLTs as holding visibly positive and encouraging attitudes towards children. "Georgia's belief in a learning environment that encourages respect, kindness, tolerance, sharing, and growth produces a community of learners where virtually all children are engaged in productive academic work all day" (Baker, Allington, & Brooks, 2001, p. 155). The positive attitude expressed by EPLTs was perceived as highly motivational for their students and was credited towards the high degree of student engagement often observed in the EPLTs' classrooms.

The EPLTs were also often portrayed as holding high expectations for all of their students. Lyons (2003) described this as an intangible quality, saying "They convey through their actions and words that these very low-achieving children can and will learn and that they will find a way to teach them" (p. 168). Overall, researchers implied two related benefits of the EPLTs' high standards: (a) The teachers worked harder to ensure that every child met their goals; and (b) Children came to see themselves through the teacher's eyes as being

capable and, as a result, approached literacy tasks with more confidence and enthusiasm. Bohn, Roehrig, and Pressley (2004) capture this viewpoint in one such teacher's comment, "If you set the bar high, they can reach it. If you set it even higher, they can still reach it." (pp. 280–281).

EPLTs were also frequently described as continuing, active learners. They expressed interest in or had completed graduate education, and they regularly self-assessed their needs and attended professional development to enhance their teaching practices (Morrow, Tracey, Woo, & Pressley, 1999). Allington (2002) described EPLTs as highly motivated to better craft their practice and empowered to make professional judgments versus following scripted programs. "These teachers accepted the professional responsibility for developing high levels of reading proficiency but insisted on the autonomy to act on their expertise" (p. 746).

The EPLTs were also described as being reflective of their teaching. They were critical of themselves and identified their strengths and weaknesses as literacy teachers.

Common beliefs

I also found commonality between the beliefs of EPLTs and changes in attitude that many of the participants attributed to training in Reading Recovery (Table 3). Both the survey and case study teachers described becoming more encouraging and carrying a positive attitude towards all of their students — not only towards the students who were successful in reading and writing. For example, a Grade 1–2 teacher in rural Manitoba reported, "[My attitude] has changed because now I see all children as being capable of reading and writing."

Laurie added that her Reading Recovery training had brought her to look at student difficulties in a new light:

I think it's more of a mindset thing because one of the key things of Reading Recovery, of course, is that every child can learn more than they know right now, and I don't think I really thought about things that way before I had the Reading Recovery training. . . Because you always identify kids that have problems, you know, kids that are struggling. But, you sort of view it from being a problem. It's a different thing from saying, OK, now what can this child do and how can I help him move on to the next part? That's, it's like a different, a different view of how to address things, and I think that's a crucial thing in everything that we do with our kids. . . . and not just in reading and writing, but that transfers to math. It transfers to things that we're doing in science, all the things that we're doing.

As well, the participants described having a higher set of expectations for their students, in particular, that they expected children as young as kindergarten and Grade 1 to develop independence in their learning. Barb described having raised her expectations for all her students: "I've put more into my writing with the kids and to expect they can do more."

Sarah felt that she had become more deliberate in fostering her class' independence. Something she had gleaned in Reading Recovery was being more mindful in how to bring students' independence to fruition:

I think independence was there, but I think it was more, "I've

Table 3. Comparison of Research-Based Characteristics of EPLTs to Reading Recovery-Influenced Beliefs

EPLT Beliefs (What EPLTs Place Importance on)	Reading Recovery-Influenced Classroom Teachers		Sample Comments from Participants
	Survey Responses	Case Studies	
Encouraging all students, having positive attitudes	• Stating a belief that all children will learn to read and write	• Stating a belief that all children will learn to read and write • Referring to an emergent literacy theory versus a reading readiness theory • Stating a belief teaching quality outweighs deficits of child	I used to think some students were not ready to learn to read or write but now I know they can be assisted no matter what level they are at. (Barb) Yes, I feel I am a much more effective literacy teacher. I am more thoughtful about what is important and I take a closer look at the student and what they can do. (Grade 1–2 teacher, rural Manitoba)
Holding high expectations for all students	• Fostering learner's independence	• Fostering learner's independence • Stating a belief teaching quality outweighs deficits of child • Stating raised or high expectations • Referring to letting go of assumptions	I don't even know if the word 'independence' ever entered in my brain before the Reading Recovery. I don't think, it was just, I think it was there but I don't really think was a goal and now it's definitely a goal to just keep fostering. (Sarah) I gear my reading lessons toward developing strategic activity and independent problem-solving. (Grade 1 teacher, urban British Columbia)
Reflecting on their own teaching	• Reflecting on own practice after teaching	• Reflecting on own practice after teaching	But I mean all my students just looking at them and think, okay, what can I do to help them be successful, and then try to change the way I teach. (Barb) Just very intense, a lot of learning, and over a longer period of time. So you're constantly going back and reflecting on what you've done in the classroom. (Sarah)

told you what to do now do it." I didn't foster the behavior of independence. I just expected it, out of the blue, here, now.

All of the teachers reflected on their teaching and reported seeing improvement post-Reading Recovery training. Some of the participants questioned how they had delivered literacy instruction in the past, feeling that they had shifted significantly in their knowledge and practice. For example, Sarah described looking back on her practice before training in Reading Recovery:

> . . . but I know definitely you would not have seen this kind of guided reading 5 years ago. In fact, I know I was doing round robin 5 years ago, one would read and [they would take turns] now I look back at that and go, "Oh, what was I thinking?"

Discussion

While classroom instruction was not Clay's intended benefactor, there are strong suggestions from this inquiry that imply Reading Recovery training could enhance some teachers' classroom practice in many positive ways, similar to the researched-based descriptions of exemplary teachers. According to participants, Reading Recovery training expanded or reorganized their personal theories of literacy instruction and, in their minds, improved their classroom instruction more than other types of professional development. Some participants also reported that Reading Recovery training filled gaps in their pre-service education making them more-confident teachers of reading and writing.

I temper this comparison of my findings with the research-described qual-

ities of EPLTs with the statement that to attribute causation or correlation of the appearance of these characteristics to Reading Recovery training goes well beyond the scope of my inquiry. Because I did not observe the teachers' classroom literacy instruction prior to Reading Recovery training, I cannot make claim that Reading Recovery conclusively fosters the attributes research has claimed common to EPLTs.

However, citing research that describes EPLTs to contextualize comments made by the participants (i.e., that Reading Recovery 'improved' the quality of their classroom instruction) may assist the reader in assessing if and how there are benefits of Reading Recovery training to school systems beyond the intervention itself. For this study's participants, training in Reading Recovery reportedly enhanced their classroom practices in ways that research has deemed more effective.

If other Reading Recovery-trained teachers apply their learning in ways mirroring how research has described exemplary instructors, then perhaps questions towards the cost-effectiveness of implementing Reading Recovery (Iversen, Tunmer, & Chapman, 2005; Tunmer, Chapman, Greaney, Prochnow, & Arrow, 2013) could be addressed considering students in classrooms being instructed by Reading Recovery-trained teachers. The participants regularly reported and I observed how Reading Recovery learning was applied in classroom literacy instruction, serving a far greater number of students than Grade 1 children taken into Reading Recovery lessons.

This finding adds needed credence to the statement in the Canadian Standards and Guidelines that teachers

should "return to regular classroom teaching after 4 to 5 years teaching Reading Recovery" (CIRR, 2014, p. 16). While this guideline has long suggested that school systems should incorporate cycles of Reading Recovery training as an apparent measure towards increasing the effectiveness of classroom literacy instruction, sparse research has been previously undertaken to justify such action.

Conclusions

The participants reported that in their view, Reading Recovery had enhanced their classroom literacy instruction. The professional learning that teachers reported seemed to extend well beyond a set of instructional tips and tricks, and for some, deeply influenced their personal theories of literacy instruction in terms of their knowledge and beliefs in addition to the procedures and language they used in their classroom instruction. By their reports, the participants felt Reading Recovery had improved the quality of their classroom literacy instruction by adding or enhancing their capacity to

- understand how children construct systems of literacy processing,
- match teaching decisions to observed behaviors,
- foster independence and self-monitoring,
- provide explicit instruction,
- teach for problem solving in a variety of ways,
- interrelate reading and writing, and
- teach with a sense of urgency and raised expectations for all students.

Arguably, these exemplary qualities that the participants reportedly gained from Reading Recovery are not professional learning that can be lifted out of a kit or a 1-day seminar. The participants seemed to come away from Reading Recovery training with a greater teaching repertoire and vocabulary, but more importantly, had a deeper understanding of literacy development that they used diagnostically to make instructional decisions. The Reading Recovery-trained teachers reported becoming more confident — they felt they had improved in their capacity to design and deliver literacy instruction that was more effective and that they could and would reach a wider range of learners in their classrooms. Despite individual differences in how they organized their classroom literacy instruction and the variety of materials they used, the participants adapted Reading Recovery learning to assist many children beyond those served in the one-to-one intervention. The participants described how the apprenticeship and collaborative style of learning of Reading Recovery professional development influenced their personal theories of literacy instruction—not only to serve children in Reading Recovery—but in a far wider circle when they considered how they had applied their learning in classroom settings.

With this article, I am not suggesting that Reading Recovery training be seen as a panacea to ongoing concerns over the quality of classroom instruction or that every teacher could or should be trained in Reading Recovery. However, this study suggests Reading Recovery's rich potential to model and contribute to the training and professional development of literacy teachers. Additional research is still needed to investigate and

> The Reading Recovery-trained teachers reported becoming more confident — they felt they had improved in their capacity to design and deliver literacy instruction that was more effective and that they could and would reach a wider range of learners in their classrooms.

describe approaches to pre-service primary literacy education programs and their effectiveness and what in-service teachers are bringing to the task of teaching children how to read and write (Falkenberg, 2010; Purcell-Gates & Tierney, 2009). But, to continue to improve how we prepare and empower literacy teachers to become knowledgeable decision makers who can meet the needs of all the students in their classrooms seems a very worthwhile cause.

> I know that I am a much more competent teacher.
>
> I am a more knowledgeable teacher.
>
> I am a teacher always learning.
> (K–Grade 1 teacher, rural Manitoba)

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The Role of Reflection in Developing Expertise: Fusing Skill and Will in Scaffolded Instruction

Susan King Fullerton, Clemson University

Editor's note:
All names are pseudonyms.

Best practices in literacy instruction are heavily debated, but almost everyone agrees that teaching children to read is a complex endeavor (Allington, 2005; Pressley, Allington, Wharton-McDonald, Block, & Morrow, 2001) and that highly capable teachers are critical. Teacher decision making and reflection are important aspects of this complex process. In fact, Berliner (1988) posited that teacher competency is achieved more through reflection than experience. Much research has focused on preservice teachers' knowledge and development of reflection, but we know far less about expert or advanced knowledge acquisition (see Gallant & Schwartz, 2010) and the role that reflection plays. In one-to-one instruction, expertise is even more critical in order to reduce the numbers of students who fail to learn reading and writing (Allington & Walmsley, 1995).

Reading Recovery® is an example of a one-to-one intervention that has documented strong results; its effectiveness is attributed not simply to a single factor but to the interrelated factors that characterize the teaching provided to first graders. For example, the extensive training and development of theoretical knowledge has been cited by Strickland (2001), and the attention to phonological awareness and letter-sound relationships described by Adams (1990). Wasik & Slavin (1993) attributed Reading Recovery's success to its highly qualified teachers and noted that the design of the lessons includes a range of components related to the reading process, what Bryk (2009) referred to as "a common set of pedagogical practices and materials that are conceptually integrated around a working theory of how students learn to read" (p. 18). Recently, Reading Recovery has been characterized as an "epistemic community" in which teachers, teacher leaders, and trainers, through a three-tiered approach, "collaborate to produce, use, and refine the practical knowledge need-

ed to support and sustain success among large numbers of struggling readers" (Peurach & Glazer, 2016, p. 1). Slavin (2016) also emphasizes community, stating it is "intentionally built" and members "are engaged in a process of learning and contributing intellectually to a whole that is bigger than themselves" (p. 62).

Teacher professional development, communities of practice, explicit teaching of essential components of literacy processes, and one-to-one tutoring are certainly important, but still fail to take into account an additional factor in the Reading Recovery design — the interactions and critical decision making that characterizes each lesson for each child. While all teaching requires on-the-spot decision making, one-to-one teaching requires quick decisions in response to each child's idiosyncratic moves. Progress in literacy occurs as the teacher observes and gleans critical factors in the development of this particular strategic learner. In other words, teachers construct knowledge of the child as well as knowledge of effective teaching as they simultaneously work with children (Shulman, 1986), clearly not a simple task. Grossman & Shulman (1994) suggest that much like researchers working in the field of knowledge acquisition, those who work in fields such as education and medicine work in ill-structured domains (Spiro, Coulson, Feltovich, & Anderson, 2013). Reading Recovery teaching may certainly fall into this category, given that teachers must apply what they learn in professional development to novel and unique contexts. Furthermore, when working with at-risk learners in one-to-one settings, the tailoring of instruction is even more challenging; the teacher must flexibly adjust expert decisions and scaffolding to the needs of diverse learners by drawing upon and integrating knowledge in multiple areas or domains under conditions of uncertainty and novelty. "Classroom events rarely unfold the same way twice" (Grossman & Shulman, p. 14). That is, interactions, responses, and understandings are likely to be incon-

stant, variable, and sometimes unpredictable. With the most-difficult-to-teach children, what does it take? Much depends upon the skill and will of the teacher, but what must happen to enable the teacher's understandings to move forward so that skill and will grow, so that in turn, the child's learning develops? How do expert teachers analyze, problem solve, and learn from their teaching? What is the role of reflection, and how does reflecting influence subsequent teaching? These are compelling questions for educators who provide professional development and for teachers of children at risk of literacy failure. This interpretive investigation explored these questions.

Theoretical Foundations

Knowledge develops through interaction with others (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986), and subsequently, such knowledge is reflected upon and expanded. The ability to reflect is a critical aspect of teaching effectiveness (Dewey, 1933) and is elemental to effective teacher decision making and growth (Roskos, Vukelich, & Risko, 2001). Reflection is defined as "deliberate thinking about action with a view to its improvement" (Hatton & Smith, 1995, p. 4). Through reflection on decisions, language, and interactions, teachers develop stronger understanding of theories of learning and teaching. In other words, there is a sociocultural view toward learning that is linked to Schön's (1983, 1991) reflective practitioner theory. Schön suggested that teachers must learn how to reflect in action (while teaching) and on action, (reflecting upon teaching). The motivation and ability to do both bring about learning that is continuous and essential to effective decision making and professional practice.

This study describes a Reading Recovery teacher leader (primarily referred to as a teacher here), characterized by peers and university educators as having exemplary levels of performance or expertise in supporting teachers and in her own teaching of children. On the other hand, it describes a teacher who perceived herself as faltering, of not demonstrating her typical competence in the context of teaching one particular learner. In contrast to her perception, her request for assistance represented her ability to make expert decisions based on her awareness that the context was not like others she had experienced, and as a result, she acknowledged that she needed another pair of eyes and dialogue with a colleague. I became that colleague; taking on that role provided the impetus for this investigation of two struggling students that she taught during two different, back-to-back periods of instruction.

Most studies of experts have primarily focused on successes; however, others have suggested that studies of "lost sheep" (Calfee, Norman, Trainin, & Wilson, 2001) may help inform our work in Reading Recovery (see Trainin & Easley, 2003). Clearly, the reality of everyday teaching and learning suggests that the nature of instruction, particularly with those who are at risk, is not always straightforward and may result in misleading or mended scaffolds rather than continuous or expert scaffolds (see Rodgers, 1998, 2000). Likewise, one-to-one instruction in contexts such as Reading Recovery can be complex, challenging, and even perplexing (see Fullerton, 2001). Such instruction involves moment-by-moment decisions that, by their very nature, are imperfect; therefore, we need to study "interactions that do and do not result in rich teaching-learning episodes, moving both instruction and learning to higher levels" (Meyer, 1993, p. 52). Sorting through the complexity to provide detailed analyses of teaching-learning interactions and reflections may be especially informative for teaching at-risk children who seem to display more-idiosyncratic behaviors during literacy acquisition (Clay, 1998). The ability to teach several first graders individually while maintaining recall of their unique literacy processing characteristics requires cognitive flexibility. In other words, Reading Recovery teachers must be able to represent and connect understandings from "different conceptual and case perspectives." Later, when using this knowledge, they must acquire "the ability to construct from those different conceptual and case representations a knowledge ensemble tailored to the needs of the … problem-solving situation at hand" (Spiro, Feltovich, Jacobson, & Coulson, 1992, p. 58).

In relation to both teacher and child, this study also draws upon self-efficacy constructs (Bandura, 1997). With a view towards problem solving and improvement, teachers and learners must perceive themselves as efficacious. Thus, self-efficacy intersects with reflection as a "continual process of being and becoming — a process no one can create for us regardless of how we frame practice but one we must create for ourselves through self-critical questioning, self-conscious awareness, and continual (re) evaluation" (Brunner, 1994, p. 43). Together, self-efficacy and reflection support a "fusion of skill and will" (Garcia, 1995, p. 29) as teachers increase their expertise.

This study responds to the need for detailed analyses of processes of learning and teacher-student interactions (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000) while also providing insights into the ways that reflectivity, teacher

While all teaching requires on-the-spot decision making, one-to-one teaching requires quick decisions in response to each child's idiosyncratic moves. Progress in literacy occurs as the teacher observes and gleans critical factors in the development of this particular strategic learner.

knowledge, cognitive flexibility, and self-efficacy intersect. The specific questions that guided the study are: (a) What is the nature of teacher-child interactions during writing? (b) How is teacher scaffolding and talk used to support the learners' developing abilities? (c) How do teacher-child interactions change in relation to each child's literacy development? and (d) How do the reflections, reasoning, and new understandings influence subsequent skill, decision making, and interactions?

Methods

This article focuses on particular aspects of an instrumental multicase study (Stake, 2006) that describes teacher-child interactions and decision-making during the writing portion of Reading Recovery lessons as well as subsequent teacher reflections on teaching and learning. Writing was the focus because the teacher leader determined that it was most often at this point in the lesson that things became

difficult. Both comparative (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) and interpretive (Erickson, 1986) forms of analysis were used to describe the interactions that occurred between the teacher and each child and to provide conceptualizations of the teacher's reflections in relation to her own decision making and each child's progress. Such connections, as a result of case comparisons and reflections, involve analogical reasoning. Fundamental to cognition, we perceive and use similarities or relationships between two contexts (Gentner & Smith, 2012). In teaching and coaching, reflections and analyses may potentially invoke learning exemplars or cases that can be used in new or similar teaching situations (Dunbar, 1995). Moreover, these exemplars must be viewed and analyzed flexibly and reliably in the context of multiple analogies or exemplars (Spiro et al., 2013) that are sifted and sorted to provide several possible avenues for problem solving and teaching. Analyses of such exemplars provide the foundation for this multicase study.

Participants and context

A Reading Recovery teacher leader and two first-grade boys, both Caucasian, participated in the study. Lisa, the teacher leader, was defined as an expert Reading Recovery teacher based on recommendations and observations by the researcher, university colleagues, and district personnel. At the time of the investigation, Lisa had more than 20 years of experience as an early literacy educator, with 10 of those in Reading Recovery. Each year, as a teacher leader, she provided professional development and coaching to Reading Recovery teachers while also teaching Reading Recovery students.

Lisa suggested Ian for the study based on her initial observations and work with him. While qualifying for Reading Recovery at the beginning of the year, there were six other children who scored lower than Ian on Observation Survey assessments (Clay, 2013), so he did not receive instruction in Reading Recovery until the second half of the school year, as lowest-performing children are always served first. Thus, Ian had spent approximately half the school year as an at-risk student in his classroom. In Ian's case, this was serious cause for concern — he attended a high-performing school. At the time of this study, the average level for first graders mid-year was 14–16, closer to typical end of first grade in many schools. In contrast, Ian's text reading was Level 2 (preprimer) at the beginning of the year. By the time he came into Reading Recovery in February, he had gained only four levels and was lag-

Table 1. Observation Survey Scores for Two Students, Ian and Lyn

Observation Survey Task	Fall	Ian Entry (Jan)	Exit/End of Year	Lyn Fall/Entry (Sep)	Exit	End of Year
Letter Identification	51/54	53/54	54/54	49/54	54/54	54/54
Word Reading / Ohio Word Test	2/20	14/20	19/20	1/20	18/20	18/20
Concepts About Print	15/24	18/24	23/24	15/24	20/24	22/24
Writing Vocabulary	11	28	51	8	44	60
Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words	17/37	32/37	34/37	26/37	35/37	36/37
Text Reading Level	2 (preprimer)	6	18	2 (preprimer)	14	18

NOTE: Ian is a second entry Reading Recovery student and Lyn is a first entry (fall) Reading Recovery student.

ging far behind his peers, reading at Text Level 6, still a preprimer level. The teacher's work with Lyn, the second student, began in the fall of the following year, and continued into January. Lyn was one of the four lowest students in first grade. Table 1 provides the entry and exit scores of both students.

Data collection

Data collection began for the first case, Ian, in February and continued to the end of the year. For the second case, Lyn, data was collected beginning in the fall and continued through January. Data sources were chosen for triangulation and documentation of the teacher-child interactions and to promote teacher reflections about the child, her practice, and her decision making.

Audiotaping and videotaping. All Reading Recovery lessons were audiotaped. Sessions were videotaped at three intervals across each child's program with two taped sessions at each interval. These taped lessons were transcribed for 5–7 consecutive days at three points, beginning, midpoint and end of lessons. Of the 56 total lessons for Ian, 17 were transcribed (30%) and 15 of the 60 lessons (25%) were transcribed for Lyn.

Observations and unstructured interviews. At three intervals across each child's series of lessons, the researcher observed lessons and took field notes. Unstructured interviews occurred at the beginning, at approximately midpoint, and at the end of lessons.

Retrospective reflection and stimulated recall. After each child's Reading Recovery completion, the teacher

provided a retrospective reflection and stimulated recall (Smagorinsky, 1994; DiPardo, 1994). In the first case, the teacher was asked to reflect back on her work with Ian, then three transcribed lessons were chosen by the researcher for stimulated recall. The same procedures were followed for Lyn. Each of these different reflective conversations focused on gaining insights into Lisa's theoretical orientation, to provide opportunities to describe each learner's strengths, needs, and progress in relation to the teacher's understandings, reasoning, and decision making based upon analyses and reflections.

Document analysis. All lesson records were collected and photocopied. Records included information about books read, notes about writing progress, and letter or word work. Daily writing and entry and exit data on the Observation Survey (Clay, 2013) were also collected.

Data analysis

Data analysis began with the first lesson and continued through the final transcriptions and stimulated recall. Comparing instances (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), I looked for similarities and differences within the data, across transcripts, field notes, interviews with the teacher, lesson records, the child's daily writing in Reading Recovery, lesson records, and the transcription of the retrospective reflection and stimulated recall. Tentative patterns were noted, and data were reread and re-analyzed for confirming and disconfirming evidence, continuing throughout (Merriam, 1998). After completion of the second case analysis, cross-case analyses were conducted in the same manner. The interviews and conversations with Lisa,

along with the retrospective analysis, became particularly important in describing her decision making and the changes that appeared in interactions within and across these two cases.

Findings and Discussion

The nature of teacher-child interactions during writing
In the interactions of Lisa and Ian, there was much negotiation and at times conflict, in selecting ideas for writing. At times, early in his program Ian seemed to circumvent the process by not talking or by changing topics, interfering with Lisa's efforts to scaffold topic development. In these beginning lessons, Ian would question whether he had to write. What followed were numerous exchanges in which Lisa asked questions to elicit a response and Ian balked or expressed dissatisfaction in the direction of conversation. As a successful teacher, Lisa had not previously encountered such issues. Wells (1997) noted that, "Every situation is to some degree unique, posing challenges that in some respects require the participants jointly to construct solutions that go beyond their past experiences" (p. 55). Puzzling over the root cause of this difficulty in topic negotiation, Lisa searched for an explanation, pondering whether Ian was forgetful, "whimsical" (in terms of changing his mind), or testing to see if she would hold firm. Eventually, her reflections seem to suggest other possibilities: "The conversation is good, but still, when we get down to do the writing, he doesn't want to do it. And that's when he tries to change it. Or that's when I realize and I try to talk to him about the rule that once we get going into this … [he has to stay with the topic established]."

Lisa's concerns echoed the cycle of interactions that occurred before writing. A cycle of interaction was designated by topic initiation and expansion focusing on a single topic or idea. If a participant rejects the topic and the conversation moves forward, another cycle has begun. (See Fullerton & DeFord, 2001.) In two of the seven lessons in the beginning phase of lessons, when Ian opened the conversation before writing with his topic of interest, Lisa accepted Ian's topic of choice, resulting in one talk cycle and fewer exchanges with totals of 14 and 33 turns respectively for the two lessons. In the other five lessons, Lisa opened the conversation with an experience of Ian's or a book read, and in four of these five interactions, Ian balked or rejected the topic, initiating a second and sometimes third cycle of talk. The number of exchanges sub-

stantially increased as well, ranging from 36 to 64 turns of talk.

This difficulty in negotiating topics set the stage for an anxious teacher and child during writing, as there were other components of the 30-minute lesson remaining. Perhaps in part because of time spent on topic development, during the subsequent interactions, numerous comments from Lisa focused on time, speed, and fluency of word writing along with attention to letter details. While Elkonin boxes (Clay, 2005) were used to hear and record sounds in words, the task seemed difficult for Ian because he had not learned to coordinate the movement with visual and auditory input; thus, the payoff for hearing and recording sounds was initially limited.

On the other hand, despite concerns for time, Lisa maintained the language of scaffolding, anticipating the child's responses and providing feed-forward prompts: "What we're going to do today is think about your spacing," demonstrating the spacing, "Put it right there" and providing feedback, "I notice that you're making capital letters … We won't worry about that one, but we'll think about it the next time we write." Within other interactions, Lisa valued Ian's attempts. Responding to his partially correct response (Clay & Cazden, 1990) for *they*, she said, "That is nearly right …It sounds like it should be A-Y, but it really is E-Y." Such teacher talk marks "critical features of discrepancies between what the child has produced and the ideal solution" (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976). In an attempt to explain the complexity of visual and sound analysis, calling for the child to attend to the orthographic pattern, she further clarified, "Just the A was wrong … ; it sounds right but this is the way that word looks. You just have to know it." Less common, but present in interactions with Ian, was teacher support through simplifying the task in order for the learner to manage component processes — "*fixed*, you start it and I'll finish it." As can be seen through this transcript example, effective interactions were common; regardless of concerns about time and a marked decrease in the child's engagement, the teacher was able to retain many aspects or markers of expert interactions.

Scaffolds are present, but what type of learning is supported?
When we came together for observation and discussion midway through the child's selected lesson intervals, I was somewhat puzzled by Lisa's difficulties with this particular

child. As a Reading Recovery trainer of teacher leaders, my previous observations and interactions around Lisa's teaching obscured my own analysis. What the examples in the previous section hint at is an underlying attention to accuracy and detail that obfuscated the "pursuit of the goal through motivation of the child" (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976). The transcription and discussion of a portion of Lesson 3 provided further elaboration of this point. Ian and Lisa discussed an experience that occurred right before Ian came to the session.

Ian: Well, nobody wants to play Hangman.
Lisa: Why doesn't anyone want to play Hangman?
Ian: I don't know.
Lisa: They just don't like to play Hangmen? Do you like to?
Ian: Hang*man*, not Hang*men*.
Lisa: Hangman. Do you like to play Hangman?
Ian: Okay.
Lisa: When nobody else does? Why don't we write about that?
Ian: Oh, great! (said with a negative tone)
Lisa: Let's write about that.
Ian: Everyday I come, I have a story, right?
Lisa: Oh, yeah. That's how we get better with our reading and our writing. And you've got such great stories to tell; it's fun to write them. What part of that shall we write?
Ian: I don't know. Nobody wants to play Hangman with me?
Lisa: That would be a great thing. Nobody wants to play Hangman with me.
Ian: That's what I'm going to write.

While there is some reluctance, the comment, "Everyday I come I have a story, right?" indicated that Ian understood what was required of him during this part of the lesson, and perhaps he was checking again to see if Lisa would hold firm. He began the conversation himself, and Lisa's decision to follow his lead allowed a conversation to take place around a classroom concern of Ian's. No agenda was put forward by the teacher. Ian seemed engaged until he was invited to write what he had said. At that point, he balked, and Lisa persisted with a positive stance, "Let's write about that." Ian seemed to arrive at a realization about the lesson framework and the teacher's level of persistence. "Every day I come, I have a story, right?" Lisa's move at this point seemed to clinch the deal; her upbeat

tone and praise for his good ideas and comments on the enjoyment of writing (what Lisa herself often referred to as a "feed forward") seemed to shift Ian to a more-efficacious attitude. While he started somewhat hesitantly with an "I don't know," he then repeated his sentence, seeming to question whether it was the right choice, "Nobody wants to play Hangman with me?" Picking up on his lack of assurance, Lisa affirmed his idea by telling him, "that would be a great idea." Her next move, repeating his sentence, provided support in several ways — the teacher's scaffolding move functioned as a type of placeholder, helping the child hold his idea in memory as he continued to think and talk. Such repetition can also help the child clarify an idea. In this case, the repetition of his idea seems to signal to Ian an acceptance of his composition, because his next response conveyed more assurance — "that's what I'm going to write." Such interactions and examples of talk may be overlooked as teachers grapple with larger issues in instruction, but this interaction suggests that ways teachers use talk and respond to the hesitancy or passivity of students may make a difference in affirming students' ideas and knowledge, thereby bolstering self-efficacy.

Lisa's decision not to extend the talk in order to develop a lengthier story or more-complex idea was most likely a good one, supporting Ian and making the task less daunting. Her question, "What part of that shall we write?" allowed him to take ownership and decide the topic. This transcription suggests that Ian's confidence and engagement in the task shifted, providing an example of greater receptivity from Ian than was typical in several other lessons during this phase. A possible explanation for this change in engagement was Lisa's "choice words" (Johnston, 2004) and giving over the control of the task to Ian.

During the message transcribing, Ian clearly began to take the initiative. In fact, a common pattern was that Ian increasingly made the first move beginning each word cycle (the talk and action that takes place around the writing of a word; see Fullerton & DeFord, 2001; Hobsbaum, Peters, & Sylva, 1996), demonstrating independence in rereading and figuring out what he would write next. Ian began by writing the known word no, reminding himself "This time upper case N," followed by Lisa praising. Next, Ian said the word slowly — "No-body" and Lisa decided to support the message progression by writing body for him. Ian took up the task again, repeating the word "Nobody," perhaps to confirm what Lisa said and

then he reread and said the next word, "Nobody wants" resulting in a praising move for spacing from Lisa. Then Ian attempts a sound analysis of *wants* by saying it slowly, suggests the W, then hypothesizing U-T next with Lisa valuing this approximation by stating, "Sounds like a U. That's a very good guess." Ian then suggests A, writes A-N with Lisa again praising, "It's A-N, that's right! You have to think about the way it looks, don't you?" For the end of the word, Ian suggests S as the next letter, and Lisa comes in to support by saying, "I'm going to finish it for you. This is the word *want*. Nobody *wants* needs an S. There you go."

In the example just presented, several different teacher and child moves are illustrated. Lisa used language and non-verbal actions in varied ways to support learning. There is a give and take here with Lisa valuing Ian's work and Ian participating willingly to accomplish the goal.

In the next excerpt, Elkonin sound boxes are used to help Ian write *play* (see Clay, 2005). In this example, Lisa first provides a demonstration (which the child has seen before) and then calls for the child to take a more active role, so there is an assumption that the child is now ready to be guided through the task. Such guidance, or "proleptic instruction" (Wertsch & Stone, 1979, in Rogoff & Gardner, 1984, p. 101) is a way of helping structure the task. "By actually performing the task under expert guidance, the novice participates in creating the relevant contextual knowledge for the task and acquires some of the expert's understanding" (p. 101). Rogoff and Gardner make an important distinction: "Proleptic teaching is different from explanation" (p. 102). It is also different from demonstration, where the teacher performs the task rather than encouraging the child to take part in the action. Proleptic instruction "integrates explanation and demonstration with an emphasis on the learner's participation" in the activity (p. 102).

Lisa: (referring to the word, *play*) Let's put it in the box, okay? … … . I'm going to say the word slowly, aren't I?

Ian: (unclear word spoken) (Child begins to attempt the task.)

Lisa: Wait a minute. All these fingers back, remember how, just one finger. And you put a sound in each box. Go ahead, you want to do it or do you want me to show you?

Ian: pl…a…y

Lisa: All right, you've got it. Let me do it one more time. I'm going to have to say the word slowly so I can hear all the sounds. P…l…a…y. Now you do it.

Ian: pl…pl…a…y.

Lisa: All right.

Ian: This one has, this one has an A.

Lisa: Let's do the first one, you heard the first one, go ahead and put them in there, you're absolutely right. What was it?

Ian: P

Lisa: Okay, put it in the box. Write it in the box first sweetie.

Ian: A-L-P-L (saying the letters that go in the boxes, corresponding to the sounds that he heard)

Lisa: Well, let's push them in and see, I think you might be right. Push them in and see if that's what you hear there.

Ian: pl…

Lisa: Oops, wait a minute. One hand. Let me show you again. These fingers are back, one hand. There you go.

Ian: pl…pl…a…y. L-A

Lisa: All right. Good job. Mmm hmm. Now there's another letter with that A. It's a Y. That A-Y together makes that /a/ sound.

Ian: It's … So it's pl-ay. It's kind, this is kind of like highlighting.

Lisa: It is highlighting, isn't it? There you go. Put it in your sentence please.

In this example, Lisa worked toward guiding the learning of the task so that Ian might use sound boxes as a cognitive structuring tool (Rogoff, 1990) to eventually support his own learning. The child's performing of the task was not entirely smooth, and Ian may have benefitted from more time learning to coordinate the task of hearing and recording sounds as he pushed his finger into the boxes. Lisa and I did not discuss this particular interaction, but based on analysis of prior lessons and what occurred here, it is also possible that Ian's actions were influenced by his prior knowledge about the word, play, and his resistance to slowing down and using the box. He even indicates at one point that he knows the letters in the word, by spelling, A-L-P-L. Although more challenging, Lisa's teaching decisions and their related moves were facilitative in helping Ian hear and check the letter sequence of a word he thought he knew. As a result, Lisa's language successfully guided Ian, and he took on new levels of awareness. In the

next excerpt, Lisa again demonstrated skill in choosing appropriate procedures from a Reading Recovery theoretical foundation, using language to guide Ian.

Lisa: Do you know *man*?

Ian: M-E-N

Lisa: Okay, stop for just a minute … Do you know how to write *ran*?

Ian: No.

Lisa: All right, let's do *man* up here (on the practice page above the page for writing the story).

Ian: M-A-N

Lisa: You've got it! (5 sec.) Oops! You didn't think about your N.

Ian: It's an M/ M-A-M

Lisa: Try it up here and when you get to your N you'll need to think about it. (break in transcript) Write *man* up here again. (break in transcript) All right. Do *man* quickly. Oops, wait a minute. Think about your M. It's the same as the N, isn't it? Down / up /

Ian: / up / over, over, M.

Lisa: Tell yourself.

Ian: Down, up, over and

Lisa: There. Nice M and nice N. Put them in your sentence quickly.

Ian: (unclear word spoken)

Lisa: It doesn't do us any good to practice those Ns if we don't use them when we write words the right way. Now, your job as a writer is to reread as quickly as … soon as you finish a word.

Ian: Nobody wants to play Hangman with W?

Lisa: Mmm hmm. I want to finish with – w…i…t…h.

Ian: *me*. Nobody wants to play Hangman with *me*. Do I add a period?

Lisa: Mmm hmm.

Ian: Can I write the period on that?

Lisa: I already wrote the period, so are you done?

Ian: Yep.

Lisa: All right. Why don't you go up there and practice a couple of N's quickly …

The transcript was presented in parts to allow discussion of the scaffolding and interactions; however, viewing the segments in this way may not fully convey the overall task demands, both cognitive and motor, that were placed on the learner with substantial amounts of talk and problem solving within most word cycles, possibly too many task demands from the perspective of the child. Clearly, each of the interactions (in isolation) represented a knowledgeable teacher who used language as a tool to scaffold, but in their entirety, the sheer number of interactions and teaching points diminishes the ability to control frustration and risk in problem solving (Wood et al., 1976).

Too much teaching around too many points of learning has the potential to interfere with what the child can attend to and learn. Furthermore, the teacher runs the risk of interfering with the child's sense of efficacy and motivation. It is in the best interest of the teacher to be mindful of the child's role in instruction (Meyer, 1993) and to consider possible limitations of scaffolding. The child's affective response and interpersonal relationships have been noted as a missing ingredient in Vygotskian theory and the scaffolding metaphor (see Fullerton, 2001; Lyons, 2003; Stone, 1993, 1998). During the retrospective reflection, Lisa, herself, noted this concern:

> When I think back about it, even … getting feedback and having people come in and watch … what everyone was saying and what I kind of knew, but I just couldn't seem to get a handle on it, was how to make the writing easier for him. And I think what caused … the block for me was that he had so many [letter] formation problems, had … high frequency words but he didn't have a large core of them, and if he knew them, they weren't fast, but they weren't fast because formation was the trouble … He could do a sound analysis but as I recall, it wasn't extremely strong to begin with. … I couldn't make it easy enough. I was having him do too many things. It might have been just because he was a second round [second entry] child … But what I kept feeling … was the writing was hard and I should have been able to make it easy enough that it didn't seem hard to him.

As Lisa came to recognize, such intensive literacy efforts by the child, even though scaffolded, may interfere with critical factors such as attention, memory and motivation. (See also Fullerton & DeFord, 2001.) Lisa deserves much credit in terms of her teaching, but also in continuing to work toward growth in pedagogical knowledge and decision making. Through her hard work and struggles with this child, we both benefitted and developed new understandings. Lisa was a highly skilled and engaged practitioner who was dissatisfied with her interactions

with this particular learner. While there are clearly aspects of the teaching that Lisa felt needed improvement, it is important to note that Ian made strong progress and that his reading and writing skills were well within the range of average first graders when he exited from the intervention. (See exit scores in Table 1.)

Change over time in Ian's lessons
The earlier discussions of interactions during writing focused on the first seven lessons. What follows is a discussion of the nature of the interactions and the changes that occurred in the middle and final lesson intervals. By mid-program, the negotiation of topics became smoother. Within each lesson at this interval, there was only one cycle of talk, with the teacher becoming more flexible in conversing with the child. At times, Lisa starts the conversation; at other times, Ian starts, and on one occasion, she asks Ian if he has an idea he would like to write. Given the time spent on topic development during the first lesson intervals, this seems a logical and appropriate response at this point. In the beginning of lessons the average number of exchanges was 39 compared to the midpoint when the average number of exchanges was 26, with the range quite varied from 6–50 exchanges. Also of note is that within the middle interval of lessons, Ian was writing much of the story independently, as much as 90% (e. g., lesson 32). His stories had also expanded in length. Perhaps, not coincidentally, as Ian was able to contribute more during the writing, he gradually came to feel more in control of the process and was willing to take risks in developing the topic himself or coming up with a topic based on parameters established by Lisa. As a result, the cycles of talk and number of exchanges decreased as the percentage of his independent message construction increased.

In the final interval of lessons, the writing product and the nature of the interactions were less straightforward. In these lessons, Lisa more often steered the conversation toward books read, and Ian seemed reluctant to write about what she suggested. While he did not balk, during four of the five transcribed lessons, he expressed interest in a different topic. Yet, often, as the conversation continued, he changed his mind and accepted the topic the teacher began. Each of the final sessions had at least two talk cycles; one had three. Because of these responses, and the independence and flexibility that were a part of the previous lessons (midpoint), at first pass, Lisa's return to more control of the conversation seems puzzling. Through her reflections, however, it became clear that the intent

was to increase the complexity of his compositions. Such scaffolded interactions in writing at high levels are likely to parallel those that keep it easy to learn at higher levels of text reading (Kelly & Neal, 2009). As a result, within this third segment of lessons, the number of words written independently decreased somewhat, and more sharing of the task by the teacher occurred (although no contributions were solely provided by Lisa). This is not necessarily surprising as the number of words within Ian's stories increased as well. Because Lisa had upped the ante in terms of complexity, it seems logical that she responded accordingly to support the solving of words and the writing of the message. The transcription excerpt that follows is from one of the final lessons. As acknowledged in reflections, Lisa scaffolded to support reading-writing connections — writing about a book read previously, calling for greater orthographic awareness as well as increased story length and sentence complexity:

Lisa: What was the problem she was having with the wishing well?
Ian: It kept saying ouch.
Lisa: It kept saying ouch every time she what?
Ian: Threw pennies.
Lisa: Threw pennies. What'd she do?
Ian: She threw a pillow down.
Lisa: Mmm hmm. Let's write that. Let's write that in two parts. The first part was what?
Ian: Threw a penny down, the well said ouch.
Lisa: Okay, let's write that part first.
Ian: Then we're going to write one more?
Lisa: Well, that's what we're going to write first. Tell me again. Every time …
Ian: she threw a penny down, the well said ouch.
Lisa: Okay, say it one more time.
Ian: Every time she threw a penny down, the well said ouch.
Lisa: You start *Every* and I'll help you with it.
Ian: Every (he says word)
Lisa: Okay, Ian, when you're writing the word *Every*, you say it slowly and you think about what it's going to look like.
Ian: (writes the first two letters)
Lisa: Every. I'll finish it for you. Ev-ery
Ian: Every ti- time (saying it slowly as he writes the first three letters, then waits)
Lisa: You know what time is! [how to write] You're right, there's one more letter in there. What would it be?
Ian: E

Lisa: That's right. How nice! Look how nice that looks, doesn't it? You're not on top of each other and it's a nice size. All right.

Ian: *Every* time she – she threw

Lisa: Let's go up here (practice page).

Ian: th-rrr-ew (saying it slowly)

Lisa: Do not guess.

Ian: I know.

Lisa: Say it again and think what would be at the beginning.

Ian: thuh (saying the first sound)

Lisa: threw (teacher says it)

Ian: thuh

Lisa: That's it. You know what it is.

Ian: T – H? (saying the letters)

Lisa: Absolutely! So, see, you could get it. You had to just think for a moment. You had to say it, you had to listen to it. You had to think.

Ian: Ooo, ooo

Lisa: What did you just tell me *threw* starts with? What did you just tell me it started with, honey?

Ian: T-H

Lisa: Did you make T-H?

Ian: No, I made T-T

Lisa: All right, that's what I'm saying. You've got to be thinking and checking on yourself.

Ian: (5 sec.) thuh – rrr - rew

Lisa: rew What's the word?

Ian: *threw*

Lisa: All right

Ian: /thuh/, /r/, /ew/, /ew/

Lisa: The word is *threw*. (assisting him so that he is not overenunciating the sounds)

Ian: /threw/thuh/oo/

Lisa: *threw*

Ian: /oo/

Lisa: That's an R there. I'm going to finish it for you. It looks a lot like this word that you read all the time. What is that word that you read all the time?

Ian: *knew*

Lisa: *knew*, yeah, see it was like *knew*. What we have to do is think about what we know in reading to help us when we write. Cause you are an absolutely wonderful reader!

Ian: I got the R.

Lisa: I know.

Ian: (rereading) Every time she threw a *penny*. Is that for *penny*? (referring to letter box teacher is putting on the practice page)

Lisa: Mmm hmm.

Ian: peh –eh eh- nee (saying it slowly)

Ian: an E

Lisa: Yeah, it's an E. I knew you knew that.

Ian: E - A

Lisa: Just an E

Ian: peh -nnn … *penny* (sliding his finger under the box)

Lisa: You're thinking of what letter you'd expect to see, aren't you? You're right. It's a *y* isn't it? Absolutely. Very good. Now this does look, this does sound a bit like *n* in there, but if you clap *penny*, it'll be pen-ny. You know sometimes how we see two letters in the middle of a word?

Ian: two Ns? (their speech overlapped – at the same time she says word, he says two Ns)

Lisa: Two Ns, all right.

(There is a break in the transcript. She guides him as he writes *well* and *said*.)

Ian: (rereading) Every time she threw a *penny* in to the well, the well said *ouch*.

Lisa: *Ouch*, now you saw that in the book a lot. Here, let me put boxes. Run your finger under it.

Ian: I was gonna, I …. o…w. Ouch- ch, ch (writes owch.)

Lisa: Okay, you are nearly right.

Ian: /ou/ (perhaps monitoring which part was not correct)

Lisa: It could be O-W. You're absolutely right, but do you know what it is? O-U

Ian: /ou/

Lisa: You are thinking. That was wonderful. That is the word *ouch*. Okay, go ahead and put it in your sentence. I like the way you're doing it. Your letters aren't too close. You're really thinking about this. Say *ouch*. It helps when you say the word and you think about it as you write it. *Ouch*.

Ian: *Ouch*. (rereading) Every time she threw a penny into the well, the well said *ouch*.

Lisa: So what did she do? What did she do?

Ian: She put a pillow, so she *put* a pillow in the well.

Lisa: All right, so she *put* her pillow in the well. Great sentence!

Ian: So/sh/ she put (writes *put* as he says it). That looks like *put* to me.

Lisa: That looks like *put* (confirming). I'm glad you went up there and tried it. That looks like *put* to me too… Keep going.

Ian: a *pillow* (attempts *pillow* in his sentence)

Lisa: You are so close. Let me put it in boxes and see if that helps you think about it. That is so good. You've got this part right and you've got this part right, and you've got this right. What do you think?

Ian: Maybe this could be another L.

Lisa: Oh, could be another L, couldn't it? Put it in. Because you saw that didn't you? You saw that in the book.

Ian: pill, /eh/ /eh/

Lisa: pill /ill/ /ill/

Ian: I?

Lisa: Mmm hmm. All right, does that look like *pillow*?

Ian: Mmm hmm.

Lisa: See, here's the word you read in the book, isn't it. So you did know there were two Ls and you knew there was an O-W. Good for you! You're using your mind and thinking about what you read. 'Cause you read these words so it's not going to be so hard to write them.

(He writes *into* and then *the* and *well* without assistance. There is a break in transcript as he asks to write another sentence, "And she made many wishes" and they negotiate adding it tomorrow.)

Lisa: Did it help you to think about the words like *pillow* that you saw in the book? And the word *ouch* that you read in the book? And the word *penny* that you read in the book. See you've already read those, so if you think about the way they look in the book, that helps you, doesn't it, then you have to listen to how they sound and think about the way they look. Good for you!

Ian: Can I try that W again?

Lisa: You fix that W cause it looks a little like U, doesn't it?

When reflecting on the lesson, Lisa discussed her realization during interactions that she had initially misled Ian in her scaffolding, allowing him to overenunciate the sounds in *threw*. Ian had inserted extra sounds along with the first two letters, th- and then was adding the sounds for –ew. After his multiple attempts to say the word failed, she adjusted, or mended, the scaffolding to align with the goal of developing Ian's orthographic/spelling pattern awareness. She discussed how the word looked as she showed him the word, *knew,* on the practice page. In our retrospective conversation, we both noted that during subsequent interactions during the lesson, she was mindful of helping Ian to think about what he knew and how the word might look. Likewise, Lisa commented on Ian's

changing participation in writing tasks as he began to monitor and use what he knew in one context and apply it to novel contexts, a critical awareness for a learner near the end of Reading Recovery lessons. Additionally, at several points, she commented on changes that she saw in his writing of letters, words, and his story/sentences.

Reflections of the past serve the present: Constructing understandings tailored to the needs of a new student
After her teaching of Ian in the spring and our analysis that ended late spring, Lisa taught Lyn in the fall. The description and interpretation that follows focuses on Lisa's instruction of Lyn using the reflections and decision making that occurred with Ian as a point of comparison. These comparisons suggest ways that Lisa's reflections and new understandings influenced subsequent skill, decision making, and interactions with Lyn.

 "All human beings—not only professional practitioners—need to become competent in taking action and simultaneously reflecting on this action to learn from it" (Argyris & Schön, 1974). This notion of reflecting *on action* to learn may be representative of the change that occurred across these two cases. The teacher's skillful articulation of theoretical and procedural knowledge became apparent within the first case. In interviews and the retrospective reflection, she seemed to have awareness of her decision making and teaching moves, but the result was a teacher who felt she had not done her best work in the teaching of Ian, leaving her with unresolved questions and concerns. This reflection and recognition became an impetus and "touchstone" for her work with Lyn in the fall. As Lisa discussed other students that she taught in the spring while working with Ian and afterwards, she often referred to her work with Ian, comparing her present actions with actions in the past:

> I try hard not to do that, [allow things to be hard] but that doesn't mean I wasn't doing it with Ian, because so many things were hard for him, and I think I see that as I work with teachers because [when] things are hard, we're sucked in to doing that part [that they cannot do], which really doesn't help them… . I'm probably … better with Lyn … .

Similar to the patterns of interaction and talk within the other case, there were no drastic changes within the interactions or scaffolding during Lyn's lessons. This is not particularly surprising since the teacher, throughout the child's lessons, selects texts and encourages writing tasks

Table 2.	Stories/Sentences Written Across Three Points for Two Learners, Ian and Lyn	
Time Period	**Ian**	**Lyn**
Early Lessons	My kite did a flip in the air.	I have to buy a new Bionical. I have to exchange the red Bionical for a white one.
Mid Lessons	I ran into the room that the basket was in.	The next day of Indian Guides I went to look for animal bones with my friends.
Late Lessons	I caught a centipede at school and I put it in to a butter container. I put it in to my mailbox so I don't forget it.	I was wrestling with my brother and I pulled him off the couch.

that place increasing demands on the learner so the "scaffold of teacher support continues" (Clay & Cazden, 1990, p. 219).

Cross-case examination of the data suggests that Lisa's learning as a result of teaching Ian influenced her future interactions and decision making. Another explanation, possibly working in tandem with the first, is that in working with fall entry children, Reading Recovery teachers are working on steadier ground — the repertoire of what is known seems somewhat clearer when starting with a first grader at the beginning of the year. As Lisa noted, it is more difficult to ascertain what knowledge is firm for each second-entry student, not to mention that the view toward learning and capabilities may be more negative as the child experiences classroom peers surpassing him. Examination of Ian's and Lyn's scores on the Observation Survey within Table 1 highlight this point. The entrance scores for Ian at mid-year are not that different than the exit scores for Lyn with two exceptions — the subtests of Writing Vocabulary and Text Reading. In each of their respective years, both boys were reading a Level 2 (Scott Foresman) text, a preprimer level. By mid-year, however, Ian had gained only four levels and was seriously behind the rest of his peers. Lyn, on the other hand, completed Reading Recovery at mid-year reading Level 14 text, a level commensurate with his classroom peers. This suggests that Ian needed to be able to read at least eight levels higher to be in the average range. It is important to note that both learners, at the end of the year, were reading Level 18 texts and Scott Foresman texts.

Reflective comments suggest Lisa was mindful of keeping learning in balance while teaching Lyn. Table 2 presents examples from three periods of each child's lessons: early,

middle, and late. These representative samples suggest that the range of length and complexity did not differ a great deal across their series of lessons. The sentences provided within Table 2 correspond to Table 3 results where there is a breakdown of the numbers and percentages of words that were written independently, jointly shared, or written by the teacher across the same three points in each child's program. (Each lesson chosen was the last lesson transcribed within each of the segments designated as early, mid, and late.) Figure 1 provides an example of writing for each child showing how they were analyzed to arrive at the numbers in Table 3.

These results, as well as the analysis of interactions that occurred with Lyn, suggest that while there were increased teacher expectations for story productivity and independence across each child's lessons, Lisa seemed to be more aware of keeping the tasks manageable and the child motivated to write in the case of Lyn. Within early lessons, the sharing of the task was quite different with 67% of the work shared between Lisa and Lyn, as compared to 25% of the story jointly written through efforts of both Lisa and Ian. Keeping in mind that the timeframe and therefore the item knowledge for each child was different, the contrast is substantial but may again indicate Lisa's desire to learn from her work with Ian by ensuring that she was not creating task demands that were too great for Lyn. As indicated in Table 3, by midpoint in his lessons, Ian wrote 90% of the message independently, so again, he wrote substantially more than Lyn. On the other hand, it is important to consider the time of year and that the numbers for Lyn at this point in lessons fall within an acceptable range. In an analysis of writing, DeFord (1994) found that higher-outcome children in Reading Recovery

Figure 1.   How a Sentence Was Written and How the Task Was Shared for Lessons with Ian and Lyn

Ian (Lesson 49)
I caught a centipede at school and I put it in to a a a butter container. I put it in to my mailbox so I don't forget it.

C: I c   a c   at school and I put it in to a
T: aught   entipede

C: b u t t e r   c o n t a i n e r . I put it in to my
T:

C: m a i l box so I don't forget it.
T:

Lyn (Lesson 58)
I was wrestling with my brother and I pulled him off the couch.

C: I was   with my Brather and I p u l l e d him off The couch.
T: wrestling   o

The chart indicates what the child (C) wrote as designated by the top line and what the teacher (T) wrote is below. When the child was supported in some way by the teacher, the letter is circled. The boxes around letters indicate that Elkonin boxes were used to assist the child in hearing and recording the sounds or determining the orthographic pattern in particular words. Technique for representing adapted from Clay & Cazden (1990).

had percentages that ranged from 50–79% of the words written, with a mean of 56–66%. Even during the early portion of their program, the students in her study wrote 51–59% of the writing text. By the end of Ian's and Lyn's lessons, the independent writing and joint problem solving were fairly comparable.

In relation to scaffolding for independent problem solving, Lisa often questioned Ian about his word knowledge, or she misled or went in an unhelpful direction — assuming that he knew how to write a word and prompted him to do so, but subsequently came in to support as he faltered. In contrast, analysis of interactions with Lyn conveyed that she suggested he start the word and then she finished it (as she began to do more frequently with Ian as lessons progressed) or in later lessons, he took action by writing what he knew and she provided just a bit of feedback on a particular word,

Table 3.   Numbers and Percentages Representing How Words in Story Were Written Across Three Points for Two Learners, Ian and Lyn

Time Period		Child Independent	Child Assisted Child/Teacher Primarily	Teacher	Total Words Written
Ian					
Early Lessons:	Number	5	2/0	1	8
	Percentage	63%	25%	13%	—
Mid Lessons:	Number	9	1/0	0	10
	Percentage	90%	10%	0%	—
Late Lessons:	Number	20	5/2	0	27
	Percentage	74%	26%	0%	—
Lyn					
Early Lessons:	Number	5	5/7	1	18
	Percentage	28%	67%	6%	—
Mid Lessons:	Number	8	1/4	1	16
	Percentage	50%	44%	6%	—
Late Lessons:	Number	9	2/1	1	13
	Percentage	69%	23%	8%	—

by showing him the final E on a word, or assisted with some irregular patterns such as –ight as indicated below. An example from an *early* lesson follows:

Lyn: (writes the W for the word *white* in his second sentence – The story is "I have to buy a new Bionical. I have to exchange the red Bionical for a *white* one.")

Lisa: I'm going to finish *white* for you. Listen to it. wh…i…te (saying it slowly as she wrote) Is that an I in there? White. You are so good about getting that first sound.

Lyn: O (stating then writing the first letter in the next word, *one*)

Lisa: (she finishes writing *one*) You wrote such a long sentence, or such a long story. That's a wonderful story!

At *midpoint* in Lyn's lessons, we see this interaction pattern continuing with Lisa providing feedforward comments before Lyn begins writing and then modeling words that do not have consistency or regular patterns in terms of hearing sounds in words.

Lyn: Last night I tricked my mom (indicating what he plans to write).

Lisa: Last night I tricked my mom. Go. And you're in charge of your spacing.

Lyn: L…a…s…t

Lisa: You've written *last* quite a few times, haven't you?

Lyn: Last (wrote *last* and then paused) night

Lisa: You start it. I'll finish it.

Lyn: (writes N)

Lisa: I'm going to write the rest of it for you 'cause it's kind of a funny word. Watch. (says the word as she finishes writing) We don't hear that G H, do we? It's kind of like the word *fight* and the word *right* … They all have that GH that we don't hear in the middle. Doesn't it?

Lyn: But remember how I used to write it? I used to write N T.

Lisa reflects on this, stating, "[fall entry] Kids don't come in at higher levels with … holes like Ian did. His oral language was so high, so he had a lot of strengths. He wanted to write a lot, but there were all these holes." Lisa acknowledged that by carefully attending to Lyn's known and unknown word knowledge, she was able to make better decisions and scaffold more effectively in her instruction with Lyn.

As a fall entry student, Lyn's ability to write stories was not at the same level of independence as Ian's at early and mid-intervention, nor were Lisa's expectations as high (see Table 3). It is clear that Lisa made strong efforts to keep tasks more manageable for Lyn because of her reflections about Ian. As she points out after one of Lyn's sessions, "It's been easier for me to make it easy for him, take a little bit at a time, go in and do more of the writing, so, Ian's always in the back of my mind when I work with Lyn, and that's probably made lessons better." Lisa's level of reflective awareness is intriguing; it is clear from a number of her reflections that she recognized many of the patterns and resulting concerns in her interactions with Ian, but operating in the midst of complex and moment-by-moment decisions, she did not always accomplish the goals intended. "Building one's own theory of practice includes diagnosis, testing [theories and assumptions], and accepting personal causality" (Argyris & Schön, 1974, p. 158). From our discussions, it was clear that such diagnosis, testing of theories and assumptions about teaching, as well as Ian's learning, while taking responsibility for her decision making, were all evident in Lisa's reflections as she thought aloud about better ways to support Ian. What the data also suggest is that this was a gradual and time-intensive process. Because she took much time to sort through these challenges, by the end of Ian's lessons, Lisa seemed to be more aware of how to calibrate her teaching to better fit this particular child.

The same held true for Lyn. Lisa found a bit more time to look back across each week's lessons to consider what Lyn had learned and how she had prompted for learning still in process. In the excerpt that follows, Lisa capitalized upon Lyn's emerging knowledge and used it to quickly teach him things he needed to learn. In writing a story with several sentences, Lyn stated, "Then I created it with a scarf and a hat and carrots" and began to write. Because he wrote almost everything correctly, Lisa stated, "You're using the words you know that you write fast. Oh my gosh, *scarf* is perfect! You got all the parts of it. A *hat* and *carrots*. Oh very good! For *carrots* to look right it has two Rs, okay? We're going to add that." As Lyn writes in the second R, Lisa asks, "What else did you do with your snowman?" After no response, she adds, "You told me you made his mouth." He then adds, "And then I made the mouth using my finger." Lisa assists him with the E on *made* and then supports his writing of the word, *mouth*:

Lisa: A box for each letter. (Lyn begins to write *mouth* in letter boxes.) Does that look quite right to you? (Lyn says yes.) You're nearly right. You've got everything except an /ow/ sound, OW. Do you know what other chunk says /ow/?

Lyn: (unclear)

Lisa: Out does, doesn't it? OU. See if that looks right? Does that look like *mouth*?

Lyn: Yeah. (rereading) *mouth* using. I think you should put that (referring to *using*) in boxes.

Lisa: I think you can do *using*.

Lyn: (pauses, then says, US-ING)

Lisa: You're right!

Unlike the earlier example with Ian (in relation to *threw*), Lisa prompted initiation of an action quickly, providing the letter box that Lyn could use to work independently, then briefly following up to assist him with what he knew, using *out* to assist with the vowel pattern in *mouth*. Guided by theory, where Lyn was in his understandings, and what he knew that could be used to support, there was no need to regroup or mend teaching decisions — her interactions provided continuous scaffolding, with each interaction moving the learning forward as the child remained confident and engaged, reflecting the same fusion of skill and will evidenced by the teacher.

What is clear is that there was not one single moment or epiphany when all these understandings came together for Lisa; rather, it was about a series of moments and reflections that merged to bring about new understandings. Such moments were catalysts for a painstaking process that included the willingness to put aside ego and comfort as well as procedures that had worked in the past in order to reformulate teaching to meet the needs of one child's idiosyncratic and sometimes challenging responses. I understood the role that these past reflections played for Lisa because I had written a retrospective account of my own teaching; "Looking back provides further opportunity for analysis and recognition of changes or important moments in time with an awareness that may not typically occur in the throes of working with a challenging, at-risk child" (Fullerton, 2001, p. 43). For Lisa, the reflective learning that followed after teaching may have been just as fruitful as the learning that occurred during instruction, and the opportunity to trial these new understandings with other learners further solidified the teacher's understandings.

Conclusions

Echoing many professional colleagues and educators, Roskos and Vukelich (1998) ask, "How do teachers learn to get better as practitioners of pedagogy?" (p. 257). To answer this question, several important points suggested by this study connect with the work of others and provide possible suggestions for advanced teacher development:

1. Changes in literacy practices are built upon strong understanding of principles of learning and knowledge of reading processes, but must be grounded in actual experiences. In other words, "knowledge contributes to, as well as results from, the intellectual activities of teaching" (Grossman & Shulman, 1994, p. 10).

2. Change comes about slowly, and even in the case of an expert teacher, changes in the amount of talk and scaffolded tasks may take weeks rather than days.

3. Change occurs in collaboration with others. Beyond deep independent analyses, Lisa asked for and received observations and feedback from me, from fellow teacher leaders, and teachers. Through co-constructed collaborative talk about each child and her teaching, she arrived at stronger understandings that she then shared with others.

4. Future insights are built upon previous insights, and so time for reflection and deep analysis are critical.

5. Teacher knowledge is made up of a "repertoire of cases" (Grossman & Shulman, 1994, p. 15) or touchstones. Teaching many children over time offers Reading Recovery teachers rich opportunities to compare and contrast exemplars — in turn, further analyses and reflections of such cases help to integrate multiple schemas and perspectives, potentially resulting in enhanced cognitive flexibility.

For Lisa and many Reading Recovery teachers, the teaching and analyses of a variety of children at risk of literacy failure establish exemplars. We draw upon these exemplars, sifting and sorting to determine precedents for rationales, responses, and actions. The collegial visits around teaching and the discussion during a session behind a one-way glass provide the "impetus for the constant revision and renewal of what one knows and believes. Knowledge begets teaching, which in turn begets new knowledge"

(Grossman & Shulman, 1994, p. 18). Clearly, the changes in this already skilled teacher affirm this principle.

Tharp and Gallimore (1988) suggested that teachers develop stronger skills through a four-stage process. While Stage 1 begins with assistance from more-knowledgeable others, by Stage 2 the teacher moves into self-directed assistance. In Vygotskian terms, the necessary tools, including language, have been appropriated to guide behavior or practice. Hallmarks of Stage 3 are independence and automatization. Many aspects of practice have become internalized and are almost automatic. Yet, there is recursiveness and deautomatization within the model — at times, teaching contexts may influence discontinuity and create a disruption in performance. The terms discontinuity and disruption in performance seem to describe aspects of Lisa's work with Ian. As this study suggests, flexible thinking and flexible action are then necessary. Within Stage 4, "the goal is to reproceed through assisted performance to self-regulation and to exit the zone of proximal development anew into automatization" (Tharp & Gallimore, p. 187). In my view, the reflections and the interactions with other professionals that Lisa initiated were all Stage 4 efforts to recalibrate.

As conveyed in the case of Lisa's work with these children, teaching is not about applying a set of procedures or prompts. Rather, an "explicit theoretical framework" (Schön, 1991, p. 5) defines practice and is used to guide the observation and analysis of children and responsive, accommodating instructional interactions. When I last interacted with Lisa on a professional basis, she was still "looking back," reflecting upon and analyzing her work with Ian, attempting to calibrate her instruction with other children, constantly sifting and sorting, comparing and contrasting cases, while considering further the patterns in Ian's responding and her teaching. Linking these new understandings to her work with other learners remains an ongoing process.

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President's Message

Are You Up for the Challenge?

RRCNA President Craig Dougherty

Reading Recovery has once again been proven to be an effective intervention for struggling readers, as evidenced by the recently released final i3 evaluation by the project's external evaluators. The Consortium for Policy Research in Education found that Reading Recovery students (those who need reading intervention) had 130% more growth than the national average growth of first graders in the scale-up study. The gains made through Reading Recovery intervention are significant. Now where do we go from here?

While there is irrefutable research that Reading Recovery is effective, we still see our numbers declining. What really needs to occur (and I mentioned this in the fall issue of this journal) is for us to look beyond the children that we directly serve one-to-one. We all know that most Reading Recovery teachers work with 8–10 Reading Recovery students across a school year, and that 4 times as many other children benefit each school year from their expertise. We know that Reading Recovery-trained professionals are among the best-trained staff in the school. Yet, Reading Recovery is seen as too expensive, and principals are focused on what works best for the entire student body. It's time for us to take charge of that schoolwide narrative and provide school principals and superintendents reasons to appreciate the power of Reading Recovery. We're not just

talking about the power illustrated in the i3 evaluation. We are talking about what Reading Recovery-trained teachers and teacher leaders can do to change the narrative related to whole-school transformation.

At our February National Conference, we heard from Dr. Anthony Muhammad who is one of the most highly skilled educators of our time. He pressed us to rethink how schools look at learning, teaching, and school culture: Are we a culture that systematically ensures that all children learn at high levels through collaborative teams, or do we continue to rely on the individual teacher to figure out what to do with a class of 25 students?

Reading Recovery can be that change agent to affect the entire school through the professional learning community (PLC) process. Educational researcher John Hattie conducted a meta-analysis of hundreds of studies to ascertain what instructional practices and strategies had the greatest impact on student learning. He determined that an effect size of 0.4 or higher indicated a practice that had significant influence on student achievement. An effect size of 0.4 meant that a student would gain about 1 year of learning growth in 1 year of time. For example, one high-leverage practice—timely and specific feedback—had one of the higher effect sizes at .75 (Hattie,

Visible Learning for Teachers, 2012). In comparison, Hattie reported later that the impact of "collective teacher efficacy" on student learning was 1.57 (Hattie, *Festival of Education in New Zealand,* 2014).

One would be hard pressed to find any approach that is more effective in ensuring high levels of learning for all students than establishing and strengthening professional collaboration through PLCs. A schoolwide system of support for continuous school improvement that has, as its cornerstone, a focus on implementation. The continuation of effective PLCs in every Reading Recovery school would have a profound impact on learning across the country. Reading Recovery can, and should be, that catalyst for transformation.

Principals and superintendents are looking for models that impact the whole school, while increasing student proficiency in reading and writing. Reading Recovery needs to be at the forefront of schoolwide impact. Implementing Reading Recovery as part of a whole-school comprehensive model must be pursued with the same rigor, passion, and excellence that scaled up Reading Recovery from 1984–2001, when 150,000 children were served annually. I urge all Reading Recovery stakeholders to take on this challenge and create new life for Reading Recovery!

Executive Director's Message

Share the Good News!

RRCNA Executive Director Jady Johnson

Good news about Reading Recovery abounds! During the past few months, RRCNA has shared with you impactful information, some of which is highlighted here. Are you sharing all this good news with your colleagues and school decision makers?

i3 Final Evaluation Report

Findings from "one of the most ambitious and well-documented expansions of an instructional program in U.S. history" show the $55 million Investing in Innovation (i3) scale-up of Reading Recovery was "highly successful."

Reading Recovery: An Evaluation of the Four-Year i3 Scale-Up by the Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE) reports key findings on scale-up processes, challenges, and outcomes; immediate and sustained impacts; implementation fidelity, and implementation at both the lesson and school level. A total of 3,747 teachers were trained, serving 61,992 students in one-to-one lessons. In addition, these Reading Recovery-trained professionals taught 325,458 students in classroom or small-group instruction.
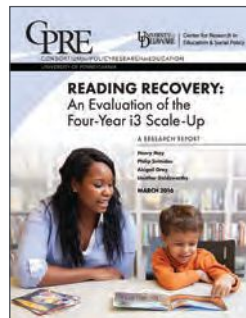
The randomized control trial (RCT) study of the immediate impacts in the scale-up schools—among the largest such studies ever conducted—revealed medium to large impacts across all outcome measures. Effect sizes at the end of 12 to 20 weeks of treatment ranged between 0.30 and 0.42 standard deviations.

> The growth rate we observed in students who participated in Reading Recovery over approximately a five-month period was 131 percent of the national average rate for 1st-grade students. Moreover, these results were similar in two subgroups of interest to the i3 program: English Language Learners and students in rural schools. (p. 3)

Much appreciation goes to Jerome D'Agostino (principal investigator) and Emily Rodgers (co-director) at The Ohio State University, as well as the 19 partnering university training centers and hundreds of teacher leaders!

JESPAR

A special themed issue of the *Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk*, released in January, focuses on advances in Reading Recovery research. RRCNA worked with the editors of JESPAR and journal publisher Routledge to provide free online access to this issue until June.

The articles examine student motivation and achievement, effectiveness, scaling, and sustaining Reading Recovery:

- Reading Recovery as an Epistemic Community
  – Donald J. Peurach & Joshua L. Glazer

- Scaling and Sustaining an Intervention: The Case of Reading Recovery
  – Emily Rodgers

- An International Meta-Analysis of Reading Recovery
  – Jerome V. D'Agostino & Sinéad J. Harmey

- Reading Recovery: Exploring the Effects on First-Graders' Reading Motivation and Achievement
  – Celeste C. Bates, Jerome V. D'Agostino, Linda Gambrell, & Meling Xu

- Getting to Scale: Evidence, Professionalism, and Community
  – Robert E. Slavin

JESPAR is published four times a year by the University of Cincinnati. The journal is dedicated to the improvement of the educational experience of at-risk students and assisting researchers, policymakers, and practitioners in identifying what programs work in our schools. Our thanks to the JESPAR editors and Routledge/Francis & Taylor Online for partnering with us to share the news!

What Works Clearinghouse

In October 2014, USDE's What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) conducted a single study review of the CPRE evaluation of the first year of the i3 Reading Recovery scale-up project. WWC confirmed the study's findings that Reading Recovery had significant positive impacts on general reading achievement and reading comprehension. While USDE hasn't yet merged these results with their updated 2013 beginning reading intervention report on Reading Recovery, RRCNA recalculated the ratings following procedures in the *WWC Handbook*.

The inclusion of the i3 Year One study findings increases the extent of evidence in the outcome domains for comprehension and general reading achievement to the category of 'medium to large,' and increases the effectiveness rating for comprehension from 'potentially positive' to 'positive.' You can download an updated comparison chart of beginning reading programs in the WWC review on our website at http://readingrecovery.org/reading-recovery/research/what-works-clearinghouse.

Resources on Dyslexia

I hope you have had an opportunity to read and use an RRCNA resource posted on our website titled "Early Literacy Matters: Dyslexia, Specific Learning Disabilities, and Reading Recovery." A number of states have passed legislation mandating that schools implement procedures to identify children with dyslexia or related disorders. These initiatives often require that teachers receive training and certification in the use of specific assessment and instructional procedures that show evidence of supporting the literacy learning of the most at-risk students. Our briefing paper provides further information:

> Compliance with this mandate is complicated by the ongoing research debate regarding the definition of dyslexia and the role of RTI procedures in this identification process. The literature includes numerous diverse and often overlapping concepts of dyslexia — ranging from anyone who struggles with decoding to a much narrower set of children whose decoding difficulties are unexpected relative to their other intellectual skills and life circumstances and, therefore, may be assumed to be biologically determined (Elliott & Grigorenko, 2014).

> Research suggests that since there is no adequate assessment to discern whether beginning readers' difficulties are biologically determined, practitioners focus on assessments that identify students for educational support and instruction tailored to the child's individual strengths and needs (Elliot & Grigorenko, 2014; Vellutino, Fletcher, Snowling, & Scanlon, 2004).

> Response to intervention (RTI) dispenses with a search for deficits in specific cognitive functions when difficulties are first presented and instead places the emphasis on gauging the individual's progress over time (Elliott & Grigorenko, 2014, p. 27).

(continues)

RRCNA Board of Directors Election Results

We are pleased to share results of the recent election for terms beginning July 1, 2016.

Vice President	**Secretary**	**Teacher Representative**	**Site Coordinator Representative**	**Trainer Representative**	**Descubriendo la Lectura Representative**
Jeff Williams	Maryann McBride	Kellie Ehlers	Steven Foreman	Yvette Hefferman	Kathryne Salinas
Teacher Leader Solon City Schools Solon, OH	Teacher Leader Clemson University Clemson, SC	Worthington City Schools Worthington, OH	Zanesville City Schools Zanesville, OH	CIRR Atlantic Division Nova Scotia, Canada	Teacher Leader Lamar CISD Rosenburg, TX

The International Literacy Association's Literacy Research Panel recently released a research advisory on dyslexia. The 17-member panel produced a straightforward, comprehensive synthesis of the current understandings of dyslexia.

Here are a few excerpts from this advisory:

- As yet, there is no certifiably best method for teaching children who experience reading difficulty (Mathes et al., 2005). For instance, research does not support the common belief that Orton-Gillingham–based approaches are necessary for students classified as dyslexic (Ritchey & Goeke, 2007; Turner, 2008; Vaughn & Linan-Thompson, 2003). Reviews of research focusing solely on decoding interventions have shown either small to moderate or variable effects that rarely persist over time, and little to no effects on more global reading skills.

- Assessment that gives us data on how to support instruction that is responsive to individuals' needs and comprehensive in scope is more useful in meeting students' needs than a one-size-fits-all process to determine dyslexia.

- Optimal instruction calls for teachers' professional expertise and responsiveness, and for the freedom to act on the basis of that professionalism.

- So it may be that not using the term dyslexia would, on balance, benefit the teaching/learning process.

As developments unfold, RRCNA will update you with news that affects early literacy and the future of Recovery Recovery. And please keep sharing the good news!

RRCNA Reaches Out to Elementary School Principals

In the ongoing effort to dialogue with school decision makers, RRCNA representatives met with the leadership of the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) on March 13 prior to the group's National Leaders Conference. NAESP President Robyn Conrad Hansen and Executive Director Gail Connelly voiced their support for Reading Recovery and interest in collaborating with RRCNA on common priorities in the implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), signed into law December 2015.

The focus group featured Karen Scott, director of elementary learning and federal programs, Ozark Public Schools, Missouri; Leslie McBane, Reading Recovery teacher leader, South-Western City Schools, Ohio; Nayal Maktari, principal, Walled Lake Consolidated Schools, Michigan; Jady Johnson, executive director, RRCNA; and Gerry Brooks, principal, Fayette County Schools, Kentucky.

This year, RRCNA celebrates 20 years of service to the Reading Recovery community. We're proud to be the only association dedicated exclusively to furthering the work of Reading Recovery-trained professionals in North America. You'll see more from the past 20 years later this summer.

But first, we wanted to recognize someone who has been with the Council since Day One—Director of Member Services Julie Reeves—who celebrated her 20th anniversary in January!

Regional Projects Generate Donations

Funds generated through regional conferences can help RRCNA reach more schools and do more to advance Reading Recovery. Two of the Council's affiliate organizations recently forwarded contributions to the Reading Recovery Fund.

The Southeastern Regional Reading Recovery Association contributed $8,000 from the proceeds of their January conference, designating $5,000 of it in memory of Floretta Thornton-Reid, retired trainer from Georgia State University, who passed away in 2013. Dr. Thornton-Reid's extensive work and impact on children's literacy is recognized in the U.S. and around the world.

The Reading Recovery Council of Iowa donated $2,420, the proceeds from the sale of T-shirts commemorating 25 years of Reading Recovery in Iowa. The shirts were presold at each of the Reading Recovery sites affiliated with the University of Northern Iowa so teachers could wear them during the "Parade of Sites" at

The Reading Recovery Council of Iowa donated $2,420, the proceeds from the sale of T-shirts commemorating 25 years of Reading Recovery in Iowa.

the October 2015 Iowa conference. An auction of themed baskets during the conference generated more than $700, which was also donated to RRCNA.

Contributions such as these provide necessary support for RRCNA to organize and act on behalf of members, thousands of educators, and school administrators, in our common vision "to ensure that children who struggle in learning to read and write gain the skills for a literate and productive future." RRCNA also uses these funds to advocate at the state and federal levels to support com-

prehensive literacy programs and for funding adequate to assure that every child reads and writes on grade level; provide a variety of publications, conferences, online learning, and resources to support Reading Recovery professional development and practice; and support research and scholarly work related to early literacy intervention to further academic advancement in the field. For more information about how your site or regional affiliate might organize fundraising events to benefit RRCNA, please contact Development Committee Chair Cathy Duvall.

Expansion Grants

After spearheading the challenge last year, Pioneer Valley Books is again funding Expansion Grants that will help schools fund training for 15 new Reading Recovery teachers in the 2016-17 school year. Each teacher trained with the grants will also receive a starter set of Pioneer Valley Books.

The grants are awarded to university training centers to assist in covering the costs of initial training of new Reading Recovery teachers that expand implementation in school districts the UTC oversees. Recipients will be announced in May.

Scholarship and Grant Recipients Attend 2016 National Conference

The Geri Stone Memorial Fund was established by family and friends in memory of Geri Stone's leadership and work as a Michigan Reading Recovery teacher leader. Grants and scholarships are awarded to Reading Recovery professionals to help offset the cost of training, professional development, or other literacy efforts. The 2016 National Conference grant recipient was (right) **Lisa Bradley**, Napoleon Community School, Napoleon, MI; pictured with Melani Paul representing the fund.

Hameray Publishing Group and the Yuen Family Foundation Scholarships

Two U.S. teacher leaders and one in Canada are in training thanks to Hameray Publishing Group and the Yuen Family Foundation whose contributions totaled $30,000. The Hameray Publishing Group is dedicated to publishing innovative literacy materials for today's educators and the Yuen Family Foundation is a private charitable organization. Pictured are (standing left-to-right) **Jenny Wilkins**, Effingham County Schools, Springfield, GA, training at Georgia State University; **Alissa Roe**, Oshkosh Area School District, Oshkosh, WI, training at National Louis University; and **Teri Turner,** York Region District School Board, Ontario, Canada, training at the Canadian Institute of Reading Recovery Central Division; with Ray and Christine Yuen of Hameray Publishing Group.

The Minnesota Professional Development Grant was established in memory of Reading Recovery teacher leader, Diane Holum. This award honors her commitment and passion for literacy and learning. The 2016 grant recipient was **Jill Johnson** (left), ISD #196, Eagan, MN; pictured with Tonya Person representing the fund.

Dr. Julie Olson Literacy Professional Development Grant was established in honor of Dr. Olson, a retired director of Independent School District #196 elementary education and Reading Recovery site coordinator. The grant supports Reading Recovery professionals from ISD #196 to attend the National Conference. Two $1,000 grants were awarded to **Sheila Trzynka** (left) and **Teri Townsend** (center) of Eagan, MN; pictured with Teresa Douglas representing the fund.

KEEP BOOKS are designed as a school/home book program that addresses the need for inexpensive, but interesting books for young children to read at home. KEEP BOOKS provided two $1,000 grants for National Conference attendance. Recipients were **Mary Schwartz** (left) Summit School District RE-1, Silverthorne, CO; and **Susan Thomas** (right), Cobb County Schools, Marietta, GA; pictured with Patricia Scharer representing KEEP BOOKS.

Tenyo Family Foundation provided 10 National Conference grants. The Foundation was founded by the late Sophie Tenyo to support charitable, religious, scientific, literary, and educational endeavors for the public welfare and well-being of mankind. Recipients were (left to right, standing) **Kelsey Moore,** Boulder Valley School District, Boulder, CO; **Mary Webster**, Rochester Community Schools, Rochester, MI; **Angela Wheeler,** Monroe County Schools, Tompkinsville, KY; **Kristin Kincaid**, Mundelein School District #75, Gurnee, IL; **Cynthia Listort**, Kingston City Schools, Kingston, NY; **Ellen Reiling**, Guilderland Central School District, Bennington, VT; (seated) **Kathryne Salinas**, Lamar CISD, Richmond, TX; **Aimee Sexton**, Metcalfe County Schools, Edmonton, KY; **Joyce Mol,** Mundelein School District #75, Lindenhurst, IL; and **Jennifer Wicklow,** Fargo Public Schools, Fargo, ND.

Reading Reading Books, LLC is an educational publisher located in Reading, PA. They offer a variety of fiction and nonfiction leveled books specifically designed for beginning readers. This year's grant recipient was **Mary Renfrow-Brown,** Elizabethtown Independent Schools, Elizabeth-town, KY.

MaryRuth Books offers instructional, clever books that provide reading practice using photos and illustrations to facilitate word recognition and engage the young reader. MaryRuth Books provided two $1,000 grants for National Conference expenses. Recipients were **Catherine Schoon** (left), New Haven Unified School District, Fremont, CA; and **Lori Dupuis**, Rochester Community Schools, Rochester, MI.

SongLake Books hand selects the best books from the best companies and organizes them into leveled book sets for guided reading and Reading Recovery. Book collections include fiction and nonfiction selections with a variety of genres at each level and are culturally diverse and gender fair. The 2016 grant recipient was **Kelley Weiss,** MSAD #31, Enfield, ME.

Grant opportunities for the 2016–2017 year and for the 2017 National Conference
will be posted on the Scholarships & Grants page of the RRCNA website later this summer.

Teacher Leader Scholarship Applications Accepted Until May 27

There's still time to apply for one of four $15,000 teacher leader training scholarships for the 2016-2017 training year. Funds are provided by the Hameray Publishing Group/Yuen Family Foundation, Kaeden Books, and MaryRuth Books.

The purpose of the scholarship is to provide support for the initial training of teacher leaders, which consists of a full time, one-year postgraduate course conducted by one of the Reading Recovery university training centers.

School districts located in the U.S. and Canada are eligible to apply for the scholarship. Teacher leader candidates must be members of RRCNA. See the Scholarships & Grants webpage for details.

Hameray and Authors' Royalty Donations Total $45,635

Since the first round of publication 5 years ago, the Hameray Publishing Group and authors of its Kaleidoscope Collection have contributed a portion of their sales revenue and royalties to RRCNA. Hameray President Kevin Yuen and his parents, Ray and Christine Yuen, have presented royalty checks to RRCNA Executive Director Jady Johnson during the National Conference — checks totaling $45,635 over the last 5 years!

The Kaleidoscope Collection is comprised of 150 titles— leveled readers written by a group of experienced Reading Recovery teachers, teacher leaders, literacy coaches, and reading specialists—all members of RRCNA. The series contains both fiction and nonfiction books.

Children's author Joy Cowley provides editorial guidance for the series. Her *What Is a Book?* was written in honor of Reading Recovery's 30th anniversary. Joy graciously donated $2,355 in author's royalties to RRCNA.

Thanks go to Kaleidoscope authors, to Joy, and to the Yuen family who have a history of generous support for Reading Recovery!

Joy Cowley signs copies of the commemorative book that was given to each attendee at the 2015 National Conference. Joy provides editorial guidance for the Kaleidoscope Collection — a series of books that are written by Reading Recovery professionals whose names appear below.

KALEIDOSCOPE COLLECTION

Susan Antonelli	Anita Goodwin	Libby Larrabee	Molly J. Reed
Elaine S. Belay	Janelle Green	Patti Lindsay	Lisa A. Richardson
Nancy R. Brekke	Geraldine Haggard	Reva Lobatos	Jacqueline Russo
Agatha Brown	Carolyn M. Harding	Melissa Martin	Susan Sellers
Gregory H. Brown	Samantha Harris	John T. McCarrier	Rebecca L. Shoniker
Lillian Burris	Heather Hill	Rhonda McDonald	Jan Shoupe
Natalie Byerly	Teresa Horner (deceased)	Mary McHugh-Mullane	Elaine M. Simpson
Lucretia Cahill	Jane Hunter	Jo Beth McKee	Andrew Sommer
Sharyl M. Calhoun	Kimberly Hurley	Debra G. Moeller	Steven V. Steele
JoAnne Demetrio	Gaynell R. Jamison	Rita Nicolussi	Sandra S. Veach
Karen B. Diaz	Rhonda Johnson	Liza O'Neal	Maren Wallenberg
Paula Dugger	Christine Jojola	Gennifer Paul-Fetterman	Susan G. Weaver-Jones
Jamie A. Duncan	Jean Junis	Miguel Perez-Soler	Kimberly Ziemann
Rebecca A. Gibson	Lisa Burnett Killebrew	Sharon R. Powell	
Heather Goodacre	Amy Klopfenstein	Tracy Rawles	

RRCNA Development Chair Cathy Duvall challenged all attendees to contribute to the Fund.

M. TRIKA SMITH-BURKE BEQUEST

Match Raises Fund Total to $25,922

One-of-a-kind, handmade felt flower pins were springing up in February as 2016 National Reading Recovery & K–6 Literacy Conference attendees donated to the Reading Recovery Fund. The flowers were a tie-in to the Council's new "Growing Readers One by One" campaign that was inspired by Columbus author Edith Pattou's book, *Mrs. Spitzer's Garden.*

The Reading Recovery Fund allows RRCNA to continue its work supporting education policy, adequate school funding, meaningful professional development, ongoing research, and outreach to school decision makers.

This year, funds bequeathed by M. Trika Smith-Burke matched the $12,961 from donors, for a total contribution of $25,922! Trika chaired the Development Committee for many years, and her regular and big-hearted contributions were designated for RRCNA priorities. Our thanks to all the generous donors who allow us to continue to help struggling readers with the one-to-one power of Reading Recovery.

We're Working for You!

Scavenger hunt explores website

The Membership Commitee recently challenged all members to an online scavenger hunt comprised of 15 questions relating to resources found on RRCNA's website. Dozens of members accepted the challenge, and many commented that in researching answers, they discovered resources they never knew existed!

The quest led seekers to the Book List, the Listening Library, the journal archive, and other treasures. All members who completed the questionnaire before February 29 received a free gift and a chance to win a $100 gift certificate from their favorite RRCNA associate member company. Grand prize winners were Amy Smith, Richmond, KY; Jennifer Wicklow, Fargo, ND; and Heather Garland, Simpsonville, KY. Watch for another scavenger hunt this fall.

Listening Library: Great on-the-go PD

RRCNA's Listening Library is a growing collection of over 80 National Conference audio recordings on a wide variety of topics of interest to Reading Recovery and classroom teachers and administrators. This is a great way to access PD on-the-go from your mobile devices or computers. Many sessions also include printable handouts.

Among the newest recordings:
- Change Over Time in Writing
- Activating Teaching: Using Running Records to Inform Teaching Decisions
- Teaching for Acceleration: Learning from Fast Progress Children
- Is it Greek? Is it Latin? What's the Root?
- Accelerating Struggling Readers in Grades 2–6
- Embedded Coaching and Unifying Intervention Staff in Theory and Practice

If you haven't had a chance to explore all the online resources, do it today! You won't believe what you've been missing!

Hundreds of members gathered during the National Conference to relax, grab a snack, and catch up on Council news at the Annual Membership Meeting. And as always, the door prizes were plentiful! Each year, thanks to the generosity of conference exhibitors, everyone leaves a winner from this event. We hope to see you there at next year's gathering!

Thank you to these exhibitors for donating door prizes: Blueberry Hill Books, Capstone, Graceland University, Hameray Publishing Group, Heinemann, Kaeden Books, KEEP BOOKS, Lego Education, MaryRuth Books, Pioneer Valley Books, Reading Matters, Reading Reading Books, Really Good Stuff, Resources for Reading, Richard C. Owen Publishers, Songlake Books, Stenhouse, Stop Falling Productions, and Townsend Press.

Make the most of your membership!

You'll need an online profile to access your Members Only resources. If you haven't yet set up a username and password, just follow these three easy steps.

1. From the readingrecovery.org homepage, click the top right column LOGIN button.

2. Enter your email address, then click the Reset my Password button.

3. You will receive an email with a temporary username and password that you can change anytime.

2016 National Reading Recovery & K-6 Literacy Conference

The nation's premier K–6 literacy conference connected educators from around the world and created momentum in the reading community. Over 2,300 Reading Recovery professionals and other educators took part in this rich learning experience.

Above – RRCNA Executive Director Jady Johnson and President and 2016 National Conference Chair Craig Dougherty welcomed attendees during the opening session. In her keynote presentation, Dr. Linda Dorn (center) addressed three questions that helped us focus on engaging children in meaningful reading and writing.

Above right – Dr. Anthony Muhammad, an expert in school culture and organizational climate, challenged us to improve student achievement through staff collaboration as a part of a professional learning community.

Right – Steve Jenkins, Caldecott Honor-winning children's author and illustrator, shared techniques for creating high-interest, nonfiction stories to deepen young children's understandings.

More than 100 sessions provided teacher and administrator professional development. In addition to the School Administrators Institute, special interest group meetings provided details for first-time attendees and conference mobile app users, and information on Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura. New meeting space and a packed exhibit hall added to the excitement.

Columbus attorney Dante Marshall – the first Reading Recovery student in the U.S. – shared remarks and excerpts from Dr. Martin Luther King's "I Have A Dream" speech as part of the annual African American Read-In.

What attendees are saying …

I have already begun implementing what I learned into my classroom! My students enjoy hearing that I am always learning, too!

It was an excellent conference this year! The keynotes were exceptional as were the sessions I attended.

It is an inspiring and energizing experience. Where else can we hear the latest from the experts as well as trends in schools nationwide? It is important to feel that we are part of a greater village, not just our microcosm.

Always so re-energizing for me! It is professionally fulfilling to learn, share ideas with colleagues and other attendees, and come back with new ideas and a rededicated effort!

OUR THANKS TO THESE CONFERENCE SPONSORS

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The Last Word

Please enjoy these gems from previous issues, and send more for us to share!

Connecting to Text!

Kay Emmons, San Luis Obispo, California
Spring 2003

I was working with one of my students in familiar reading. Kayla was reading *I'm King of the Mountain*. When we got to the part about the cow going down the road, Kayla looked up at me and asked, "Shouldn't that say, 'I'm queen of the mountain'?" Pretty good thinking!

Using Analogy!

Emily Jordan, West Bend, Wisconsin
Fall 2003

I had just begun Roaming Around the Known with Hannah, and I was introducing her to a book that used the word *mum* instead of *mom*. Knowing that this could be confusing for her since she knew *mom*, I explained to Hannah that some people use *mum* instead of *mom*. Hannah listened to my explanation, then asked, "So do they call their dads *duds*?"

More Important Learning?

Linda Rak, Lydonville, New York
Fall 2004

The mother of one of my Reading Recovery children had just observed a very successful lesson with him. As the child was leaving the room, his mother sighed heavily and said, "Come back here and let me tie your shoes. You *really* need to learn how to tie these things." "Yeah, I know," replied the child, "but I can read!"

Out of the Mouths...

Jan Kuenning, DoDDS, Stuttgart, Germany
Spring 2006

To discourage the word-by-word reading of one of my students, I used the prompt, "Read it with your eyes," to which she quickly replied, "But then you can't hear me."

Spelling Bee

Ginger Hill, Fargo, North Dakota
Fall 2008

During the Writing Vocabulary component of the Observation Survey assessment this year, a child said, "I can write *we*." He wrote *Wii*. Our language is dynamic for sure!

This One Will Make You Cheep

Julie A. Christensen, Exira, Iowa
Fall 2009

I was doing a familiar read the other morning with one of my little ones. He was reading the story about Kitty and the birds. As he was reading the last page which says, "Cheep, cheep, cheep, kitty is asleep. Kitty is asleep, cheep, cheep, cheep," he turns and says to me, "That's my dad!" I asked him what he meant. His reply, "My dad, he's cheap, my mom always has to buy and she gets tired of it!" I couldn't keep a straight face and he was just as serious as can be! I wish I could have started a diary 33 years ago to keep track of all their funnies. I would be sharing them with their children by now!