



National Institute for Direct Instruction

Video Guide for: Reading Mastery Training Series Disk Three: Anatomy of a Reading Mastery Classroom

26:40 minutes

Video Guide Purpose:

This presentation guide is to be used as a tool for stimulating discussion about the important points raised in the video. It is only intended to be a framework for discussion. Presenters of the video should feel free to add to the focus items which have been included. Other topics related to the events in the video may come up after the video is viewed.

Video Summary:

This video takes place in schools located in poor, urban areas of Houston and Baltimore. The students you will see are predominantly disadvantaged, at risk children. Many are from single-parent homes. An impressive story unfolds as five kindergarten teachers use Reading Mastery effectively to teach their students to read. Their success is based on eight classroom practices that any teacher can follow.

1. Manage behavior effectively.
2. Use praise, not criticism.
3. Set up reading groups carefully.
4. Use signals to elicit unison responses.
5. Master the scripts.
6. Monitor closely and correct immediately.
7. Firm every child to mastery.
8. Make it fun for the kids.

Note:

Although all five teachers are using Reading Mastery successfully in the video, you will see slight differences in presentation from teacher to teacher. In a school provided with support from the National Institute for Direct Instruction (NIFDI), some of these differences would be corrected by NIFDI support personnel.

Focus Items:

The next section includes a list of possible focus items to be used by the presenter. Some points of discussion are bulleted after the focus items, but they include only a sample from the video. Presenters and participants will likely find many other topics to discuss depending on their own personal experiences.



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1. **At the beginning of this video, the teachers stress three critical features: the importance of organization, the direct teaching of expectations and consistency. One of the teachers says, “When the kids walk in the room, you have to have a plan. Because if you don’t have a plan, they’re gonna [sic] have a plan for you.” What could she mean by this statement?**
2. **These kindergarten teachers consistently use praise as they teach reading.**
 - a. **What do you notice about the praise statements made by each teacher as they teach reading?**
 - Praise is frequent throughout the lesson.
 - Praise statements are quick and efficient.
 - Praise is always paired with a specific statement of the desired behavior.
 - b. **Why are these things important in the effective use of praise?**
3. **Great care is taken with the seating for reading groups.**
 - a. **What are some aspects considered when designing the seating arrangements?**
 - Groups are small.
 - Students are seated in chairs in a semi circle.
 - Outer parts of semi-circle for stronger readers.
 - Students with the greatest need (behavioral or academic) are placed directly in front of the teacher for careful monitoring.
 - Teacher sits within touching distance.
 - b. **Discuss the advantages to the students and teachers of each aspect.**
4. **What reasons are given for eliciting a unison response with a clear signal?**
 - Eliminates the problem of a few students dominating the group.
 - Allows more think time for those students who may need it to figure out the words.
5. **One of the tips for signaling is to, “Hold the sounds for at least two seconds.” Why might this be this critical when teaching beginning reading?**
6. **The video states, “When reading mastery was developed, researchers discovered that kids stumbled when teachers used words imprecisely. By scripting a consistent language of instruction, results improved dramatically.” Put this statement in your own words and share with a partner.**
7. **These kindergarten teachers talk about the importance of practicing all aspects (scripts, signals, etc.) of Reading Mastery before presenting lessons to students. Discuss the impact of teacher preparation on student performance.**



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8. **Individual turns and delayed tests are mentioned as critical parts of any correction procedure. Why is this so important?**
 - Ensures that all children are at mastery.

9. **Although these teachers maintain strict classroom control, what evidence do you see that their students are having “fun?”**

Note to presenter: The next page should be reproduced and handed out to participants for the purpose of taking notes as the video is viewed and for reference during discussion.



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- b. Why are these things important in the effective use of praise?**

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