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ABSTRACT

This monograph presents information about Reading Recovery, describes the latest research concerning the program, and summarizes practical experience concerning the implementation of this innovation in reading instruction. Chapter 1 presents a general description of Reading Recovery instructional procedures. Chapter 2 contains three case studies that provide a more concrete look at how the program works with individual children and teachers. Chapter 3 discusses a longitudinal study conducted in the Columbus Public Schools to determine both the short-range and the long-range effects of Reading Recovery on a group of at-risk students. Chapter 4 describes the studies of Reading Recovery at sites throughout the state of Ohio during the years of 1985-86, 1986-87, and 198-88. Chapter 5 describes the Reading Recovery staff development component, along with studies of teacher training and development in program techniques. Chapter 6 presents suggestions for school districts or state agencies that wish to implement Reading Recovery. Thirty-three references and three appendixes containing a list of books used in Reading Recovery, a description of the alternative intervention program employed during the first year of the longitudinal study, and measures used to assess children in the Reading Recovery Program are attached. (MS)

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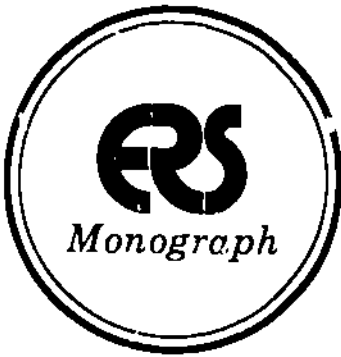
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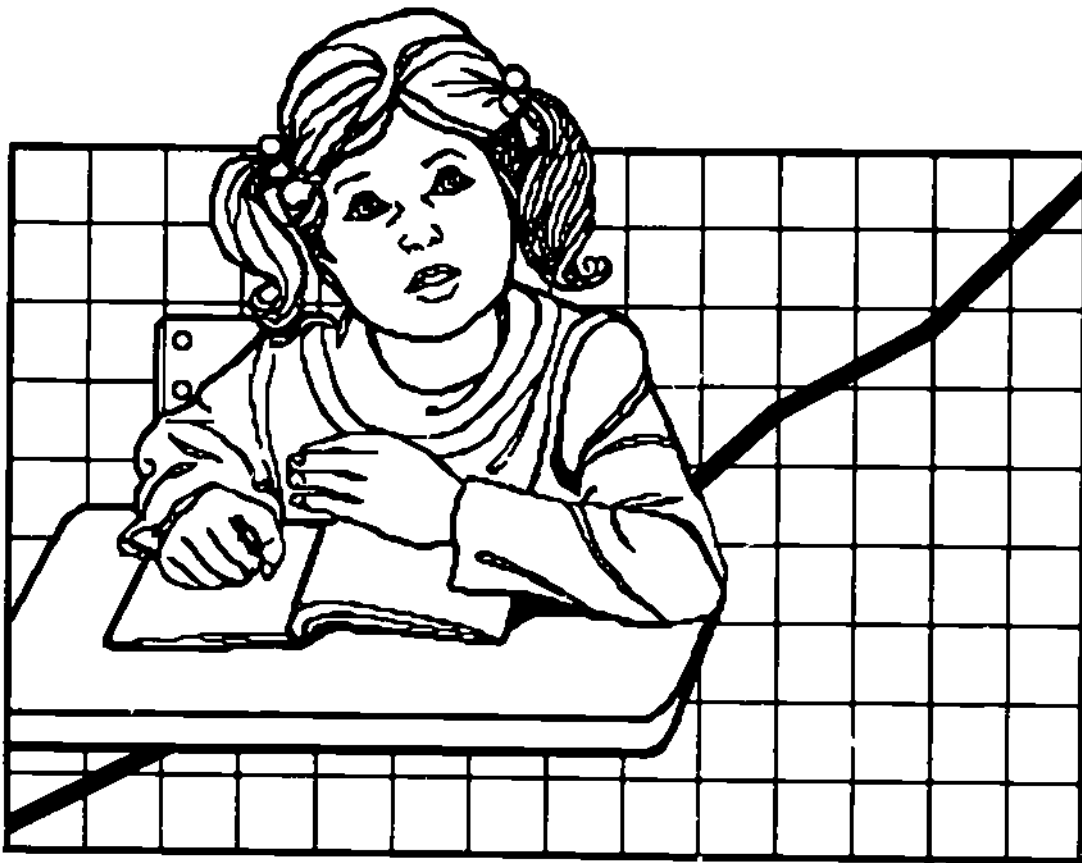
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Reading Recovery: Early Intervention for At-Risk First Graders

*Gay Su Pinnell
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Carol A. Lyons*



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Contents

Foreword.....	ii
Acknowledgments.....	iii
About the Authors.....	iv
Introduction: What Is Reading Recovery?.....	1
Chapter 1: Description of Reading Recovery Lessons.....	7
Chapter 2: Case Studies of Children.....	15
Chapter 3: Longitudinal Study, Columbus Public Schools.....	27
Chapter 4: Ohio Reading Recovery Project.....	45
Chapter 5: Reading Recovery Staffing and Staff Development Program.....	55
Chapter 6: Implementing a Reading Recovery Program.....	65
Bibliography.....	73
Appendices:	
Appendix A: Some Small Books Used in Reading Recovery.....	75
Appendix B: Description of Alternative Intervention Program, Columbus Longitudinal Study 1985-86.....	81
Appendix C: Dependent Measures Used to Assess Children in Reading Recovery Program.....	83

Foreword

Early reading difficulties can prevent children from achieving initial success in school, locking many of them into an early pattern of school failure. Even with extensive and costly remedial assistance throughout their school careers, such children often do not break out of this pattern. The dilemma of how to take children with early reading difficulties and put them on the road to success is a major concern for school officials and teachers.

This monograph, *Reading Recovery: Early Intervention for At-Risk First Graders*, describes an innovative program that has achieved impressive results with a large percentage of faltering early readers. Reading Recovery originated in New Zealand, and has been a nationwide program in that country since 1979. It has been successfully adapted and tested for four years in Ohio, and is now being disseminated to many other locations throughout the United States, Canada, and Australia.

I have had the opportunity to observe the Reading Recovery program in action first-hand in Ohio, in New Zealand, and in Australia. In each of these varied locations and with a variety of children, the program has consistently produced positive results by taking a large proportion of children who were performing in the bottom 15 or 20 percent of their class in reading skills and raising these children to the average range for their class in a very short time. Moreover, these gains were consistently sustained over the long term without further intervention.

Although the Educational Research Service, in accordance with its standard policy, does not endorse any particular program or instructional method, the Reading Recovery results and evaluations presented in this monograph deserve the special consideration of educators and concerned citizens nationwide. The monograph describes these study results, how Reading Recovery operates, and how it may be implemented in local school districts. The monograph is an example of the role that ERS plays in providing dependable information that school officials, other educators, and responsible citizens need to make sound educational decisions in their states and school districts. As with all ERS monographs, the data and views presented in this publication are solely those of the authors, and should not be construed as those of ERS or any of its sponsoring organizations.

ERS wishes to thank the authors of this monograph, Drs. Gay Su Pinnell, Diane DeFord, and Carol Lyons, for the excellent work they have done in explaining in an interesting and understandable way both the Reading Recovery process and the research on its immediate and long-term effects on children having difficulty learning to read. In addition, I personally want to acknowledge and thank Dr. Marie Clay, Professor of Child Psychology, the University of Auckland, who initially researched and developed Reading Recovery, and Dr. Barbara Watson, who is Director of Reading Recovery in New Zealand, for their kind assistance in acquainting me with their research and their long-term experience with Reading Recovery in the land of its origin.

Glen Robinson
Director of Research
Educational Research Service

Acknowledgments

The story of Reading Recovery implementation is in itself a case study of the kind of inter-institutional and interpersonal collaboration needed to create positive change in education. The first year of the project was jointly funded by The Martha Holden Jennings Foundation and the Columbus Foundation, with additional resources contributed by The Ohio State University and Columbus Public Schools. Since summer 1985, funds for training and materials have been provided by The Ohio General Assembly.

From the beginning, a number of exceptional individuals in different organizations have collaborated to conceptualize and implement the Reading Recovery project. The Ohio Department of Education, under the leadership of Franklin Walter, Superintendent of Public Instruction, G. Robert Bowers, Associate Superintendent, Nancy N. Eberhart, Director, and Hilda Edwards of the Division of Inservice Education, worked to communicate with school districts and other agencies, to create the necessary policy climate, and to solve implementation problems. James Hyre, who was Superintendent of the Columbus Public Schools at the start of the project, made the first test and longitudinal research for the program possible; the current Superintendent, Ronald Etheridge, has provided the continuing strong administrative support so necessary to the program's long-term success. Evelyn Luckey, Assistant Superintendent, played a critical leadership role in encouraging teachers and administrators to undertake the project. Stacey Woodford, Director of Federal Programs, and Shirley Mann provided support and encouragement. Teachers in the project are especially grateful to John Hilliard, Director of Chapter 1, for his problem-solving ability and his commitment to making Reading Recovery a quality program for children.

At The Ohio State University, the Office of Research and Graduate Studies, Thomas L. Sweeney Associate Vice President, has contributed tuition costs for NDN Teacher Leaders. The Office of the Provost, David Boyne Associate Provost, has contributed continuing support for the project. The Office of the Dean of Education, Donald P. Anderson, Dean, and the OSU Research Foundation have provided valuable leadership. Faculty members involved in the project especially thank our Department Chair, Frank Zidonis, and our colleagues in Language, Literature, and Reading.

The first teacher leaders, Mary Fried, Arlene Stuck, and Edwina Bradley, now Director of Reading, as well as those teacher leaders, site coordinators, and area administrators who have assumed the responsibility for the state of Ohio program, took on extra heavy work loads and many new responsibilities. Those leaders and the Reading Recovery teachers have been willing to learn new ways of teaching and performing their roles, and they have done so with such high quality that they are responsible for the results described here. At The Ohio State University, the Reading Recovery project staff over the five-year period has included Katie Button, Eleanor Handerhan, Kathleen Holland, Nancy Nussbaum, Andrea McCarrier, Barbara Peterson, Jim Schnug, Kathy G. Short, Susan Tancock, Nora White, and Daniel Woolsey. Special thanks are due to Phil Young, Jim Rinehart, Will Place, and David Bates for data analysis, and to Linda Hopper, Adrienne Johnson, and Karen Kerr for preparation of reports.

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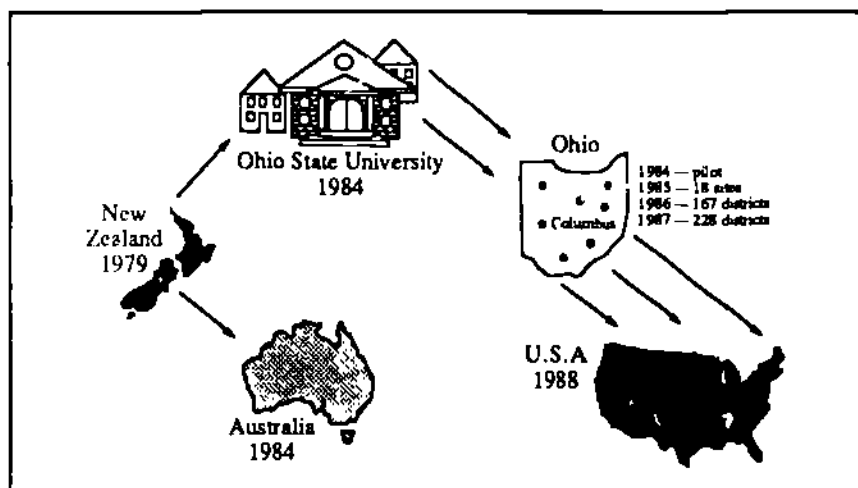
About the Authors

Gay Su Pinnell is Associate Professor of Educational Theory and Practice at The Ohio State University, where she teaches courses on language arts, literacy, and children's literature. She is the author of *Teaching Reading Comprehension*, *Discovering Language with Children*, and numerous articles on language and literacy development. She is Director of the Reading Recovery project at The Ohio State University, and Principle Investigator for the Early Literacy Research Project. Dr. Pinnell has been an elementary classroom teacher in the California and Ohio public schools and has served in state administration in Ohio. She received the Ph.D. degree from The Ohio State University, and since has been involved in administration, evaluation, teaching, and research related to school organization, teacher education, and the development of language and literacy. She has served as an officer of the National Council of Teachers of English, the International Reading Association, and the National Conference on Research in English. She currently serves on the Commission on the English Language of the National Council of Teachers of English. She is a member of the American Educational Research Association.

Diane E. DeFord is Associate Professor of Educational Theory and Practice at The Ohio State University. She teaches courses in reading and writing methodology and evaluation. She has authored articles in *Language Arts*, *Journal of Reading*, and *Reading Research Quarterly* on the impact of instruction on the development of children's reading and writing strategies. Dr. DeFord is a co-investigator in the National Diffusion Network Reading Recovery Program and Early Literacy Research Project. She also coordinates the faculty of Language, Literature and Reading. She received the Ph.D. at Indiana University, and has taught at elementary and secondary school levels. She is a member of the National Conference on Research in English, the International Reading Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, the National Reading Conference, and the American Educational Research Association.

Carol A. Lyons is Assistant Professor of Educational Theory and Practice and Director of the Martha L. King Center for Language and Literacy at The Ohio State University. She is the editor of *Literacy Matters* and the author of numerous articles on learning, reading disabilities, and teacher education. Dr. Lyons is Director of the National Diffusion Network Reading Recovery Program and collaborator in the Early Literacy Research Project. She has been an elementary classroom teacher in Tacoma, Washington, New Britain, Connecticut, and Boardman, Ohio. She received the Ph.D. degree from The Ohio State University. She is a member of the National Council of Teachers of English, the International Reading Association, the National Reading Conference, the National Conference on Research in English, and the American Educational Research Association.

Introduction: What is Reading Recovery?



The early years are crucial in the process of becoming literate. Although most children make the "breakthrough" to literacy during their first years of school, many find it difficult to learn to read and write.

It is risky to wait and see whether such children will "grow into reading" or "catch on" later in school. When a child cannot read, the problem soon goes beyond reading. Children who experience reading difficulties quickly fall behind in school, meet failure repeatedly, and require continuous and expensive extra help for many years. Often, they never learn to read well.

Current efforts to help such children require an enormous, long-term investment of resources. Unfortunately, the evidence shows that this remediation often fails to help many children with difficulties. The problem is not simply one of immaturity, to be solved by holding children back to give them time to grow. Nor is it a matter of raising standards so that children are not promoted until they are "motivated" or master certain skills. Children who have early difficulty with reading need extra time and special help, and they need it in the initial stages of learning. We must find ways to teach the skills children need so that they can make timely progress and can function productively in school.

Fortunately, research has provided the basis for promising approaches which can now be ap-

plied in a variety of school settings. This monograph reports the implementation and evaluation of Reading Recovery, which is an early intervention effort to reach those first-grade children who are having the most difficulty learning to read and to help them catch up before they fall into a pattern of school failure.

The Reading Recovery Program

Literacy at age six or seven serves children throughout school and frees them to continue to acquire knowledge and understanding all their lives. It is crucial, therefore, to ensure that all children have access to literacy in the early years of their education. That was the goal of the Ohio Department of Education, The Ohio State University, and the Columbus Public Schools when they decided to try a new program of early intervention for children who were at risk of reading failure in their first year of school.

Originally developed by New Zealand child psychologist and educator Marie M. Clay, Reading Recovery has been successfully adapted and tested for four years in Ohio. It has won support from teachers, principals, school boards, the state education agency, and the state legislature. Studies of the research and development phase demonstrate the program's effectiveness across economic and ethnic groups. Now, Reading Recov-

ery is a statewide program in Ohio, existing in 228 school districts. Separate school district projects have begun in Arizona; Illinois; South Carolina; Texas; Ontario, Canada; and Victoria, Australia. Reading Recovery has been a nationwide program in New Zealand since 1979.

Reading Recovery is based on the premise that early, high-quality help has the greatest potential for lasting impact and for reducing the need for continued compensatory help.

The program is an intensive one-to-one intervention program for the poorest readers (lowest 20 percent) in first-grade classrooms, as identified by teacher judgment and a Diagnostic Survey. The primary goals of Reading Recovery are to reduce reading failure through early intervention and to help children become independent readers. The program accomplishes this by: 1) bringing children who are "at risk" of reading failure up to the average of their class within a short period of time, so that they can profit from ongoing classroom instruction, and 2) helping these children develop a self-improving system for continued growth in reading, so that additional help is not necessary.

Reading Recovery supplements but does not substitute for conventional classroom teaching. During daily, 30-minute lessons, teachers who are specially trained in Reading Recovery techniques individually tutor these faltering readers to help them develop the kinds of strategies that good readers use. The power of Reading Recovery is in the framework of the lesson itself and in the development of teacher knowledge and problem-solving ability. The approach combines the use of related reading and writing experiences, close interaction between teacher and child within the lesson, and careful selection of materials for reading. In this instructional program, the teacher follows and guides the child individually in his or her use of reading and writing strategies. The teacher closely assesses and monitors progress

and makes appropriate decisions to accelerate the child's progress.

Research to date indicates that Reading Recovery has potential for substantially reducing the number of children with reading difficulties. As a result of accelerated progress, children typically leave the program within 12 to 16 weeks and are able to perform at satisfactory levels in reading without continued extra help. The sustained success that Reading Recovery achieves with the poorest performers in first-grade classes runs counter to the experience in most remedial education programs.

Unique Features of Reading Recovery

A number of specific aspects characterize Reading Recovery and distinguish it from other programs designed to help children who have reading problems. Some of these unique features are listed below.

1. Early Intervention.

Reading Recovery is an early intervention program rather than a remediation program. The idea is to provide intensive and focused intervention while the child is in the process of learning the early strategies of reading. The intervention takes place before the emotional impact and confusion of failure occurs. The program attempts to get children on the right track in reading, thus preventing further difficulty.

2. Short-Term Extra Help.

The program provides temporary help that enables children to develop the self-generating system they need to continue learning independently. Like most remedial programs, Reading Recovery means taking the child out of the classroom for 30 minutes each day; however, this "pull-out" period lasts a relatively short time and yields a tremendous payoff by boosting the read-

ing skills of a high percentage of at-risk readers up to the classroom average.

3. Building on Strengths.

Reading Recovery supports the development of reading strategies by helping children use what they already know. Some remedial "deficiency" models focus on drilling children on the very items that confuse them. In contrast, the Reading Recovery teacher assesses each child's strengths in great detail and builds on those strengths in daily, individual lessons. Children gain confidence because they realize that what they already know and can do has value in the reading-writing process. More importantly, they learn specific strategies for applying their own knowledge.

4. Independence.

In Reading Recovery, children learn how to be independent because they are taught how to solve problems using specific strategies such as self-monitoring, cross-checking, predicting, and confirming. They are encouraged to use multiple sources of information while reading and writing; they learn to "orchestrate" strategies while attending to the meaning of the text. The program emphasizes learning "how to" rather than memorizing any specific list of words.

5. Flexibility and Responsiveness.

Unlike other programs, Reading Recovery does not depend on particular materials. It is not based on the use of any one set of reading texts or one teaching method. Instead, it depends on teachers developing a systematic knowledge of the reading-writing process and helping children to acquire the strategies they need to construct meaning from texts.

Once teachers are trained to work with children in Reading Recovery, they can effectively select and use a wide range of books and can help children use their own writing to assist in reading.

They can perform and record their own assessments. No prescribed, step-by-step kits or sets of consumable materials are necessary.

6. Action-Oriented.

The program is based on the premise that children are active learners. As they interact with others and with texts, they bring their own meaning to the books they read. The instructional setting provides the opportunity for children to think and solve problems while reading. The teacher provides choices and support, but the child must do the work and solve the problems.

7. Enabled Participation.

Reading Recovery is not specifically tailored to match the classroom program. However, the teacher is constantly aware of the level the child must reach to be released from Reading Recovery. The program goal is not a set criterion or "gain." The aim is to help each child reach the average range for the particular instructional setting (class or school, whichever makes sense programmatically) in which he or she is operating.

Children who enter this program at some time during their first-grade experience generally have already fallen far behind. They may have difficulty making sense of much that goes on in classroom instruction. When a child has moved ahead in the Reading Recovery program to the point where he or she can read texts equivalent to the average group in the classroom, then the child can begin to profit substantially from the ongoing instruction and can continue to improve in reading without extra help.

8. Accelerated Progress.

Reading Recovery children are expected to make accelerated progress so that they can catch up with their peers in the regular classroom setting. Intensive individual tutoring by specially trained teachers supports the children so that they

grow better and better at using various strategies. The child does the accelerating, supported and guided by a knowledgeable teacher.

9. Reading-Writing Connections.

Every Reading Recovery lesson has both reading and writing components; learning in each situation enhances learning in the other. Writing is used in lessons as a support to developing reading strategies. Writing allows children to attend to the details of print and to develop strategies for hearing sounds in words, for generating new words from known words, and for monitoring, searching, and cross-checking.

10. Individual Tailoring of Instruction.

The lesson provides a framework of activity; within this framework, however, the program differs for each child. The difference takes place in the nature of the moment-to-moment interactions between teacher and child, in the particular texts selected and read, and in the writing work on a message the child has composed.

11. Teacher Expertise and Judgment.

Children are identified for the program by their teachers rather than by specialists. These children are the lowest achievers in the first-grade age cohort, excluding none. Thus, Reading Recovery provides a good "first net" for children who are most likely to have reading problems. It enables good teachers to work with children in special ways. These teachers, who because of the nature and high intensity of the program work only half of the day in Reading Recovery, can and usually do teach other subjects during the rest of the day.

12. Focus on Meaning.

In Reading Recovery, children read for meaning from the very beginning stages of their instructional program. From a list of over 500 very short and interesting story books, the teacher

selects those that suit the child's interests, that have appealing language and stories, and that are at a relatively easy level for the child to read. Thus, at every level of text difficulty, children read fluently and for meaning and enjoyment.

13. Sound-Letter Relationships.

Although the basic approach is to teach the child to read fluently for meaning and enjoyment, each lesson includes writing, through which children learn the relationship between the sounds contained in problem words and their relationship to specific letters and combinations of letters. Thus, the child is encouraged to use the sound-letter relationships as one of the basic strategies in solving problems that he or she encounters when reading. Unlike some other approaches, in Reading Recovery the child works from the sounds in words to the letters representing those sounds, rather than from letters to sounds.

14. Staff Development.

Initial training for teachers takes one academic year, but Reading Recovery teachers and Teacher Leaders begin to work with children immediately. In the year-long staff development program, teachers learn to observe children's behavior carefully and systematically, to draw inferences from their observations, and to make decisions based on that information. From their wide repertoire of actions, they try to select the most powerful and the most supportive at the particular time. A key feature of the staff development program is the extensive use of a one-way glass through which teachers watch each other and analyze the child and teacher interacting in various situations.

15. System Intervention.

Reading Recovery is more than a program for children and a staff development course. It is a carefully designed set of interlocking principles and actions that require the long-term commitment

of an entire school system in order to ensure a quality program and sustained results.

Contents of the Monograph

The purpose of this monograph is to present information about Reading Recovery, to describe the latest research concerning Reading Recovery, and to summarize practical experience concerning the implementation of this innovation in reading instruction. The monograph has been prepared for the use of school officials, teachers, parents, political leaders, and concerned citizens who are interested in examining and perhaps implementing a Reading Recovery project.

Chapter 1 presents a general description of Reading Recovery instructional procedures. However, it is not the purpose of this document to provide specific instructions on how to apply the teaching procedures used in Reading Recovery. The procedures for diagnosis and instruction are discussed in detail in the text used in the year-long training program for teachers, *The Early Detection of Reading Difficulties* by Marie M. Clay (Heinemann, 1988).

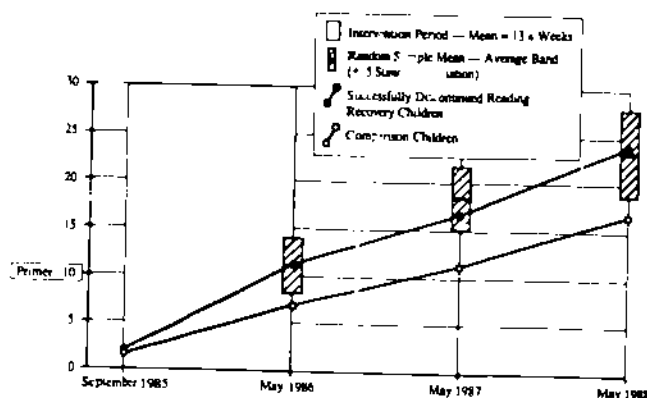
Chapter 2 contains three case studies that provide a more concrete look at how the program works with individual children and teachers.

In the Chapters 3 and 4, we report the results of evaluation studies conducted in Ohio to assess the effectiveness of Reading Recovery.

Chapter 3 discusses a longitudinal study conducted in the Columbus Public Schools to determine both the short-range and the long-range effects of Reading Recovery on a group of at-risk students. These children, who were first graders in fall 1985, were in the bottom 20 percent of their class in reading skills, according to diagnostic measures and their teachers' assessments. Evaluations through the end of their third-grade year showed that the Reading Recovery intervention these children received in the first grade raised a large proportion of them (73 percent) up

to the average reading level of other first-grade children. Most importantly, these gains were maintained for a substantial number of these children through the end of grade three *without further intervention*.

The chart below, from Chapter 3 page 36, shows that the group of successfully discontinued Reading Recovery children (those who were successfully released from the program) made sustained gains compared with the band of average scores of a random sample of all first-grade students, and also compared with a group of similar children who received an alternative intervention program.



Chapter 4 describes the studies of Reading Recovery at sites throughout the state of Ohio during the years 1985-86, 1986-87, and 1987-88. Children who received Reading Recovery instruction at these sites were assessed on various measures and compared with a random sample of first graders at the end of their respective first-grade years. The results statewide supported the positive findings of the longitudinal Columbus study.

Chapter 5 describes the Reading Recovery staff development component, along with studies of teacher training and development in program techniques. Finally, Chapter 6 presents suggestions for school districts or state agencies that wish to implement Reading Recovery

Chapter 1: Description of Reading Recovery Lessons



This chapter describes how the Reading Recovery program works for children: how the lesson format was developed, how the lessons are structured, and the theoretical assumptions on which the instruction is based. This general description is followed in Chapter 2 by three case studies showing the difference that Reading Recovery has made in the lives of individual children.

Reading Recovery provides individually designed lessons to help children who are having reading difficulties to develop the kinds of strategies used by good beginning readers. This goal is accomplished through teachers interacting with children who are engaged in holistic reading and writing activities.

Development of the Process

Marie M. Clay, a professor in child psychology at the University of Auckland, who developed Reading Recovery in New Zealand, began her research with detailed observations of good readers in the early stages of learning to read. After constructing knowledge of just what these good readers do, she looked at children who were having difficulty, asking the question: "Can we see the reading process going wrong in the first year of schooling?" As teachers of young

children can verify, the answer to that question was "yes" (1988).

Clay went on to design and experiment with intervention procedures based on her detailed observations. Acting on their observations while working with children, teachers sensitively intervened to support children's development of strategies. The goal was to help children expand the range of strategies available for their use.

Next, Clay's research team constructed a lesson framework. The activities were selected not as a "lesson plan" with a script to follow, but as a set of generative activities that would provide plenty of opportunity to read extended text, to talk about what was being read, and to use the full range of information sources available for constructing meaning. After pilot Reading Recovery procedures were further refined, the staff development program was created. Reading Recovery has been a nationwide program in New Zealand since 1979.

Diagnostic Procedures

In Ohio, children are selected for Reading Recovery in the middle or late September of their first-grade year. All children selected for Reading Recovery must be in the lowest 20 percent achievement group of their first-grade class in

reading. The Reading Recovery teacher selects students by using a combination of measures, including the classroom teacher's ranking, the kindergarten teacher's opinion if applicable, scores on the six measures of the Diagnostic Survey, and any additional information, such as standardized test scores, that may be available. (In districts where Reading Recovery is supported by Chapter 1 funds, all children served must also qualify under Chapter 1 criteria.)

Prior to beginning a Reading Recovery program, children are assessed using the comprehensive set of individually administered instruments that make up the Diagnostic Survey. To administer the Diagnostic Survey, teachers involve the children in six assessments, each presenting a different aspect of reading and writing. The goal is to gain an understanding of what the child already knows about reading and writing.

There are several important points to note concerning the Diagnostic Survey. First, most of the measures involve children in reading and writing tasks. Throughout the testing, which takes about one hour, the teacher and child interact in an informal way with books and through writing.

Second, no one of the measures is intended to be used as the sole determinant of a child's program. Reading Recovery teachers look at the child's behavior across all measures to summarize relevant information about the child. This summary is only the beginning of the teacher's detailed observation of the child's behavior. He/she will spend the first 10 days of the program interacting with the child and observing closely the reading and writing behavior that provides clues to the child's additional knowledge.

Third, scores on the assessment instruments are less important than the observations and notes made during the assessment and teaching sessions. Teachers are prepared to notice significant behavior and to draw inferences to build their knowledge of the child's competence.

Fourth, these assessments should not be confused with the instructional program. They are intended to provide a broad first look at the child. Several of the tasks — for example, writing all the words the child knows — are not used in instruction. Successful release from the program depends on a qualitative look at the documentation of the child's progress over time.

The Diagnostic Survey includes the following assessments:

1. *Letter Identification.* Children are asked to identify as many as they can of 54 characters (the entire upper-case and lower-case alphabets, plus the alternative printed forms of "a" and "g"). They may identify the name of the letter or the sound the letter makes, or they may suggest a word that starts with that letter. Any of these responses would be considered correct. Teachers notice the kinds of substitutions children make as well as their accurate responses; for example, calling a "j" by the name of "t" may indicate awareness of distinctive features. This assessment is used not because children must be able to name all the letters in order to read; rather, teachers must find out what the child knows about letters to help integrate this information into the instructional program.
2. *Word Test.* The word list used in Ohio was compiled from the high frequency words on a Dolch word list. Clay (1988) advises that the list be made up of the most frequently occurring words in whatever basic reading texts are being used in the system. This test helps the teacher get an idea as to whether the child is acquiring knowledge of frequently occurring words; it does not provide information as to the child's ability to read extended text. Again, the assessment should not be confused with instruction. At no time in the Reading Recovery program is the child asked to read isolated words.

3. *Concepts About Print.* The teacher and child interact as the teacher reads a little book with pictures. The teacher questions the child in order to assess the child's development of significant concepts about printed language. For example, the child is asked to show a letter or a word, the front of the book, where we start to read, and which way we go when we read.
4. *Writing.* Children are asked to write all the words they can write (on a blank piece of paper) during a maximum of 10 minutes. After the child exhausts his/her supply of known words, perhaps beginning with the child's name, the teacher prompts from a list of high frequency words. The teacher notes words at which children make good attempts, because those show competence and knowledge.

Reading Recovery teachers and classroom teachers may also examine writing samples produced by the child in the classroom setting, to gain as much information as possible about the child's knowledge of writing. (An informal period of two weeks will follow the assessment, during which the child will engage in writing, and the teacher will have a chance to observe the process.)
5. *Dictation Test.* The teacher reads a simple sentence, containing 17 phonemes, and asks the child to try to write it. We are interested in the child's ability to analyze a word and to represent its sounds heard. Accurate spelling is not the goal.
6. *Text Reading.* The teacher takes a "running record" of the child's reading of an extended piece of text. For a child who cannot yet independently read even very short books, the teacher does most of the reading aloud and asks the child to read predictable books with repeated language patterns. A child who can read a little is asked to read texts while the teacher uses checks and other sym-

bols to record reading behavior. Then, the teacher analyzes the record, looking for evidence about how the child uses the cueing systems in reading (meaning, language structure, or visual information) and getting information about the complex processes going on during reading.

The Text Reading level is a numerical score and refers to the level of difficulty a child can read with 90 percent accuracy or above. In addition to level, the teacher makes a qualitative assessment of the child's reading based on the behavior observed in reading various texts, from hard to easy.

This list provides only a brief description of the Diagnostic Survey. For a full description and directions for administration and use, see Clay, *The Early Detection of Reading Difficulties*, 1988, third edition.

In all of these assessments, teacher judgment and ability to analyze are the critical factors. The process produces a set of numerical scores that can be quantified and used as justification for providing special help (for funding agencies, for example) or as documentation of progress. By adding the qualitative analysis, the teacher builds the foundation for the instructional program. This analysis provides the basis for the Diagnostic Summary, a written document in which the teacher brings all the test results together. The teacher looks across assessments to make a set of summary statements that will provide a starting point for Reading Recovery instruction.

"Roaming Around the Known"

For the first 10 days of the child's 30-minute daily program, the teacher does not teach, but rather, explores reading and writing with the child. During this time they can talk together, enjoy books and collaborative writing, and get to know each other. The teacher has some basic in-

formation about what the child knows, and uses this information to involve the child in very easy tasks that make the most of what the child can do.

In this very supportive situation, the child may begin to take risks and to produce responses that have not been evident in the classroom or testing situation. By the end of the "roaming around the known" period, the teacher has a much broader knowledge of the child and a better knowledge base on which to proceed. Additionally, a foundation of trust has been established and the teacher and child go into more intensive lessons with greater confidence.

The Reading Recovery Lesson

Each Reading Recovery lesson includes reading many small books and composing and writing a story. The lesson framework includes the following.

The child rereads familiar books.

The child reads again several favorite books that he/she has previously read. The materials are story books with natural language rather than controlled vocabulary. Books within a lesson may range from quite easy to more challenging, but the child is generally reading above 90 percent accuracy. The accuracy rate here guides the teacher in making sure that the texts selected are appropriate for the child; that is, they are easy enough for the child to use effective strategies, and difficult enough to provide opportunities for independent problem solving.

In addition to the accuracy index, the teacher also assesses the balance of strategies and cues. During this time, the child has a chance to gain experience in fluent reading and in using strategies "on the run" while focusing on the meaning of the text. The teacher interacts with the child during and after the reading, not "correcting," but talking with the child about the story and supporting the effective actions the child has taken.

The teachers analyzes reading using the running record.

Each day the teacher takes a "running record" of a book that was new for the child the previous day. The running record is a procedure similar to miscue analysis (Goodman, Watson, and Burke, 1987). Using a kind of shorthand of checks and other symbols, the teacher records the child's reading behavior during oral reading of the day's selected book. The teacher examines running records closely, analyzing errors and paying particular attention to behavior such as self-correction. In this way, he/she determines the strategies the child is using to gain meaning from text. This assessment provides an ongoing picture of the progress the child makes.

The Reading Recovery teacher does not consider one record an adequate source of evidence about a child's reading. He or she looks across records, taken daily over a period of time, to discern patterns and change. During this time, the teacher acts as a neutral observer; the child works independently. The accuracy check tells the teacher whether the text has been well selected and introduced the day before.

The child writes messages and stories and then reads them.

Every day the child is invited to compose a message and to write it with the support of the teacher. Writing is considered an integral part of gaining control over messages in print. The process gives the child a chance to closely examine the details of written language in a message that he/she has composed, supported by his/her own language and sense of meaning. Through writing, the child also develops strategies for hearing sounds in words and using visual information to monitor and check his/her own reading.

After the construction of the message, the teacher writes it on a sentence strip and cuts it up for the child to reassemble and read. This activity provides a chance to search, check, and notice

visual information. Using plastic letters on a magnetic board, the teacher may take the opportunity to work briefly with the letters to increase the child's familiarity with the names of letters and their use in known words, such as the child's name. This work will vary according to the knowledge the child already has.

The child reads new books.

Every day the child is introduced to a new book that he/she will be expected to read without help the next day. Before reading, the teacher talks with the child about the book as they look at the pictures. The teacher helps the child build a frame of meaning prior to reading the text. The purpose of the introduction is not necessarily to introduce new words, but to create understanding in advance of reading so that it will be easier to keep a focus on meaning.

This basic framework for the Reading Recovery lesson provides a guide, but the teacher's own knowledge of the child and of the repertoire of possible variations make it possible to individualize the lesson. Within this framework, every child's program differs. Children do a great deal of reading, but not from a graded sequence. No child reads the same series of books. The small books are carefully selected by the teacher for that child at that time. In writing, children work on their own messages, so they are writing and reading works that are important to them individually. The special techniques used in the writing part of the lesson are most powerful when used on the children's own produced text. The major difference within and across lessons lies in the teacher's ability to follow each child and to respond in ways that support acceleration and the development of strategies.

Meeting the Child's Individual Needs

Reading Recovery teachers recognize that the difficulties children experience in learning to

read differ greatly from child to child. Therefore, although all Reading Recovery lessons follow a standard structure, within this structure the teacher carefully selects the activities needed by each child at a particular time. Throughout the lessons, the teacher looks for effective reading strategies that the child needs to acquire or strengthen. Such strategies may include directional movement, one-to-one matching, self-monitoring, cross-checking, using multiple cue sources, and self-correction. The Reading Recovery teacher uses instructional techniques designed to help the child develop and use such strategies.

As one example of the different instructional techniques that the teacher may weave through the basic lesson to encourage a specific reading skill, a section of *The Early Detection of Reading Difficulties* (1988) is reproduced below. Clay outlines the following suggestions for teaching the skill of self-monitoring.

The successful reader who is making no errors is monitoring his reading at all times. Effective monitoring is a highly skilled process constructed over many years of reading. It begins early but must be continually adapted to encompass new challenges.

- To encourage self-monitoring in the very early stages ask the child to go back to one to one pointing:
Say 'point to each one.'
Or 'Use a pointer and make them match.'
- Direct the child's attention to meaning:
Say 'Look at the picture.'
Or 'What happened in the story when...'
- For particular attention to an error allow the child to continue to the end of the sentence:
Say 'I like the way you did that.
But can you find the hard bit?'
Or 'I like the way you did that.
You found the hard bit.
Where was it?'
- If the child gives signs of uncertainty — hesitation, frowning, a little shake of the head — even though he takes no action:
Say 'Was that OK?'
Or 'Why did you stop?'
Or 'What did you notice?'

These questions tell the child that you want him to monitor his own reading. The operation to be learned is checking on oneself. It is more important that the child comes to check on his own behaviour than that

