

**Client:** NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR DIRECT INSTRUCTION  
**Project:** NIFDI VIDEO  
**Subject:** READING MASTERY TRAINING SERIES (Part 1):  
Path to Literacy  
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[TEXT; CLASSROOM]

**Narrator:** This is the story of five teachers. Last fall each teacher took a class of Kindergarteners and taught them to read. The children came from poor urban areas, many from single parent families.

**Sarah Scott (Southmayd Teacher):** Ready. Say it fast. Yes, what word?

**Narrator:** Step by step from sounds, two words, two stories, in nine months these teachers gave their students the gift of literacy. And so can you.

**Students:** [UNISON]

**Mary Abdel Sayed (Wesley Teacher):** Let's get ready.

**Student:** Aah.

**Teacher Sayed:** Again.

**Student:** Aah.

**Teacher Sayed:** Again.

**Student:** Ah.



Teacher Said: Yes. Aahh. 'Rock'. Your turn. Get ready.

Students: [UNISON] Rock.

Teacher Said: Again.

Student: Rock.

Teacher Said: When you read this word, first you'll say?

Students: [UNISON] Mmmm.

Teacher Said: Then you'll say.

Students: Eee.

Teacher Said: Then you'll say.

Students: Sss.

Teacher Said: Very good. Sound it out. Get ready.

Students: [UNISON] Mm-ee-ss.

Teacher Said: Say fast.

Students: Miss.

Teacher Said: Brea, say it fast. Get ready.

Student Brea: Him.

Teacher Said: Him. Next word. Get ready.



Student Brea: Sat.

Teacher Sayed: Sat. Next word. Get ready.

Student: Him.

Teacher Sayed: Him. Next word. Get ready.

Student Aria: Fast.

Students: [UNISON] She read a [?] child.

Teacher Sayed: Ahm.

Students: [UNISON] Because - -

Narrator: Every year for a decade Mary Abdel Sayed has taken a class of Kindergarteners and taught them to read using a program called Reading Mastery.

Students: [UNISON] Three thousand. No.

Teacher Sayed: Ahm.

Narrator: The children are poor and at risk for educational failure.

Students: [UNISON] I will give - -

Narrator: Despite the fact that they know nothing in the fall, by May the prospects of these Kindergarteners have been transformed.

Teacher Sayed: Beautiful. Absolutely beautiful. Go on.



Student: [READS] Thank you, Sandy. Sandy and the others were near the shed. The cop said—

Teacher Said: Kids are really smart. They're like sponges. I mean, they walk in your room. They can't hold a pencil. They can hardly give you a complete sentence and at the end of the year my kids can read stories.

Girl Student: [READS] Big Bill said, *I've got work to do. I'm leaving. You better just stay here.*

[EXTERIOR; CLASSROOM]

Students: [UNISON] I don't have other papers that they'll have to make up.

[ANOTHER CLASSROOM]

Students: Mmmm.

Dominique Carter (Roland Park Teacher): Yes.

Girl student: Mmm.

Teacher Carter: Very good. Get ready.

Students: Aaahhh.

Teacher Carter: Watch me. I can do it without stopping between my sounds: Mm-aa - -

Narrator: Reading Mastery is a highly structured curriculum. The teaching is done in small groups.



Teacher Carter: The way to read the word - -

Narrator: Teachers use precise language and special signals.

Teacher Carter: One, two, three, four, five. Get ready.

Narrator: But for teachers who use it correctly, results come fast.

Teacher Carter: Three, four, five. Get ready.

I usually start to see a big difference around Thanksgiving time when they wanta write little letters to their parents about Thanksgiving or they're trying to write sentences or they're trying to write 'I love you' and 'love' is 'l-u-v' and you can tell it's 'luuva'].

Girl Student: [READS] The girl and the dog. The girl said, *I can teach the dog to run.*

Teacher Carter: In the beginning when I first started teaching it, it blew my mind. Here were children who basically didn't know how to read anything and now they're reading these words by sounding them out.

Girl Student: [READS] She said, *I don't even have to touch it.*

Teacher Carter: It just tickles you to see how excited they are that they're reading and writing. It just it makes them feel so good. Now, I think I'm kinda used to it and I kinda in a way I expect it from them. So when they do it and they're shocked, I'm just like, *Well, of course you can do it. You're smart.*



Boy Student: [READS] You helped me win the bet.

[HALLWAY]

Narrator: Since children learn at very different rates, this program divides children into small reading groups based on their levels.

Teacher Said: I teach actually everything as a whole group, except reading. When it's reading, I have three groups. It could vary from five to eight children in a group but I do not go above eight.

Students: [UNISON] Smile.

Teacher Said: Smile. What word?

Students: [UNISON] Smile.

Teacher Said: When you have a small group, you can really have this eye contact where you can hear and see every child.

Student: [UNISON] Were.

Teacher Said: Word. What word?

Students: [UNISON] Were.

Teacher Said: Yes. Were. Next word. Get ready.

Students: [UNISON]

Teacher Said: Again.



Students: [UNISON]

Teacher Sayed: Again.

Students: Stick.

Teacher Sayed: Say it. What word?

Students: Stick.

Teacher Sayed: Say it. What word?

Student: Stick.

Teacher Sayed: Say it. Next word. Get ready.

You find a child who is doing better, who can be moved up, or a child or needs a little bit more instructions and I just move them to lower group. Again, you have to emphasize that when I move you up or I move you down it's not because you're not smart. It's just things are getting harder. I want you to feel successful.

[ANOTHER CLASSROOM]

Anayezuka Ahidiana (City Springs Teacher): Again. Get ready. Fff-aaa-nnn. Say it fast. Fan. What word? Fan. Get ready.

Narrator: Reading Mastery aims to teach all children to read. So the program uses a set of precise signals to ensure all children answer questions, not just the same few kids.

Teacher Ahidiana: When there's a signal, everybody gets to respond.



Now do it by yourself.

And the signal gets the children in unison.

Students: [UNISON] Six.

Teacher Ahidiana: So that they're responding as one.

Get ready.

Students: [UNISON] Ss-ix.

Teacher Ahidiana: Say it fast - -

It allows everybody to figure out the answer. It's keeping everybody engaged. It's making sure everybody's learning and it gives you information. As a teacher, it gives you information immediately and to who knows what.

Here we go. We are going to learn to read. Put your eyes up here - -

Narrator: In Reading Mastery even a low performing group of Kindergarteners like this one can make significant progress.

Teacher Ahidiana: Mmm. Say it fast.

Students: [UNISON] Seat.

Teacher Ahidiana: Seat. You sit so big in your seat. Now smart, smart people, these words rhyme.

Narrator: Covering 125 out of the 160 lessons in Reading Mastery 1.



Teacher Ahidiana: Everybody, read the next one. Get ready.

Narrator: Placing them in a strong position to meet the challenges of 1<sup>st</sup> Grade.

Teacher Ahidiana: Get ready.

Students: [UNISON] No.

Teacher Ahidiana: What'd the cow say?

Students: [UNISON] No.

Teacher Ahidiana: No. Start up at the top. This time we're gonna read it again. This time I'm gonna ask you questions and see if you really understand what you're doing.

[ANOTHER CLASSROOM]

Alicia Hawkins (Codwell Teacher): Watch. You're gonna start on a big ball - -

Narrator: Before they can read, children must first learn to recognize and say the underlying sounds and then blend these sounds together into words.

Teacher Hawkins: In the beginning, you're training their ears. I play a game, see who can hold their sounds the longest and I hold— You know like I might say— In the beginning I might say 'aaaa'.

'Aaaaaaa'. It's magic. As long as I'm touching you're saying the sound. Get ready.

Students: [UNISON] Aaaaaa-mmmmm.



Teacher Hawkins: Good. First you're gonna say this sound, then you're gonna say E. What sound are you gonna say first?

Girl Student: Ssss.

Girl Student2: E.

Teacher Hawkins: Again.

Girl Student: Ssss.

Girl Student2: E.

Teacher Hawkins: Don't stop between the sounds. Get ready.

Children have to learn how to blend those sounds together.

E. Again.

If you do not learn how to blend, they do not learn how to read.

Say it fast.

Girl Student: See.

Teacher Hawkins: Good. Let's start over. Get ready.

Students: [UNISON] Eeee.

Teacher Hawkins: You really, really have to have high expectations for the kids. Then she'll have to feel like she expects me to do this. She thinks that I'm good. She thinks that I'm smart and so



then they say, *I can do it, too*. And they will. [CHUCKLES]  
They will.

[ANOTHER CLASSROOM]

Girl Student: [READS] There was a small bug that did not have a home.  
The— He wanted to live in a tall tree but a big eagle said,  
*This is my tall tree. Go look for - -*

Sarah Scott (Southmayd Teacher): I think you have to follow the program. I  
think it's really, really, really important to follow the script  
exactly and to make it important to the children.

Teacher Scott: Sound it out. Get ready.

Students: [UNISON] Eeee.

Teacher Scott: Again. Get ready.

Students: [UNISON] Eeee.

Teacher Scott: Yes. What word?

Students: [UNISON] Eeee.

Teacher Carter: I never sit down at the reading group without saying, *Are you ready to learn? Are you ready to read?* And if there's a new sound the kids are always like, *Ooohhh*. They're so excited. And I say, *Oh, my goodness, you are so smart. Look at this. We get a new sound today.* And I know that they're the smartest little kids and they're gonna be able to read fluently by the end of the school year.



Girl Student: A.

Teacher Carter: And really they all can't.

Girl Student: - - eagle was sitting in a tree when a tiger came hunting for eagles.

Teacher Carter: Sss-aaa-mmm.

Narrator: These five teachers will be your guides as you learn Reading Mastery.

Teacher Ahidiana: Sshh.

Teacher Carter: Pah.

Narrator: You'll learn about the sounds.

Students: [UNISON] Aahh.

Narrator: The signals, the scripts.

Teacher Scott: See if you can say all of these sounds without making a mistake. Get ready.

Students: [UNISON] Mmmm.

Teacher Hawkins: Excellent, in the house.

Students: [GIGGLING]

Teacher Hawkins: [CHUCKLES] Very good.



Teacher Sayed: Oh, look, at that - -

Narrator: It's hard work but soon you will be teaching your kids to read as well. You are graduation now. You're big kids.

[AUDITORIUM]

Teacher Ahidiana: They did not know they were going to do this until - -  
  
You can teach any child. You can teach every child. If you can open this door, the kid can walk through it. They have an option. But if you don't do it, it probably won't get done and the kid has no option.

Teacher Carter: Everyone, put your thumbs up. Say: Good job. Good job.

Students: [UNISON] Good job. Good job.

Teacher Carter: Good job. Good job. Now put 'em back. Good job. Good job. Good job. Put forward. Gooooood job!

[TEXT]

[END]

