Summer 2000

Activities and Strategies for Parents and Teachers to Promote Fluent Reading Acquisition in Emergenct Readers Through the Use of an Internet Web Page and Printed Materials

Carolyn Sue White

ACTIVITIES AND STRATEGIES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS TO PROMOTE FLUENT READING ACQUISITION IN EMERGENT READERS THROUGH THE USE OF AN INTERNET WEB PAGE AND PRINTED MATERIALS

A Project Report

Presented to

The Graduate Faulty

Central Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Education

Reading Specialist

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by

Carolyn Sue White

August, 2000

ABSTRACT

ACTIVITIES AND STRATEGIES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS
TO PROMOTE FLUENT READING ACQUISITION
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Research relating to phonics, whole language, and a balanced approach as it relates to fluent reading acquisition was read, evaluated, and summarized. A web page with activities and links to other web sites was designed and installed on the internet to provide parents and teachers with material intended to help them promote fluent reading acquisition in emergent readers.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I dedicate this project to my husband, Bill White, for walking beside me every step of the way. His encouragement, technical assistance, knowledge, confidence, patience, and devotion were unwavering.

Thanks to Barb Engvall, for her technical expertise and great amount of time spent helping design and implement the web page. A special thanks to Dave and Barb Engvall for many fantastic dinners that we affectionately named "Master's meals on wheels." Not only did they feed my husband and me, but they spent many hours proofreading, offering suggestions, and giving me support.

Dr. Gail Goss provided the incentive and direction to challenge me to complete this project and strive for excellence. I am grateful for the time Dr. Goss, Dr. Nancy Jurenka, and Dr. Andrea Sledge took to read my work thoroughly and provide input and suggestions.

Thank you to my family for their encouragement and to my mother-in-law, Stella White, for providing me the opportunity to return to school and ultimately to achieve this goal.

Most of all, thank you to the children and parents who inspire me daily. This project is for you!

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Chapter 1

Focus of the Project

Reading is paramount to becoming a fully contributing member of our society (Rasinski & Fredericks, 1991; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). The ability to read is highly valued and important for social and economic advancement (Snow, et al.). In our technological society, the demands for higher literacy are ever increasing, creating more grievous consequences for those who fall short (Snow, et al.). One of the best predictors of whether a child will function competently in school and go on to contribute actively in our increasingly literate society is the level to which the child progresses in reading and writing (International Reading Association and The National Association for the Education of Young Children [IRA/NAEYC], 1998).

Learning is an active process that needs to be meaningful to the learner (Smith, 1999). Smith states that to learn to read, you must become familiar with written words as significant elements of meaningful language. The best time to do this is while reading, when new words that are encountered are in context and have meaning, not from preselected lists of isolated and decontextualized words. Encountering new words in meaningful contexts is how infants learn to talk, and how we all expand our vocabularies through life.

Early, systematic, explicit phonics instruction is an essential part, but only a part, of a balanced, comprehensive reading program. No one approach to teaching reading and writing is best for every child (Duffy & Hoffman, 1999). Phonics instruction, to be effective in promoting independence in reading, must be embedded in the context of a

total reading/language arts program (International Reading Association [IRA], 1997; Smith, 1999). Extensive reading practice is required for students to incorporate strategies to the point where they become automatic (Gunning, 1998).

Children learn to read when conditions are right. These conditions include their relationships with books and other reading materials in addition to their relationships with people who will help them to read. The conditions also include their own unique personalities, their self-image, mood, interest, expectations, and comprehension (Smith, 1999).

Early exposure to reading promotes cognitive development in children while familiarizing them with a wide range of vocabulary, the structure of printed words, and story development (Hall & Moats, 1998). The early childhood years, from birth through age 8, provide the period of the greatest literacy development (IRA/NAEYC, 1998). Studies indicate that children who learn to read early have parents who play the critical role in their children's early success in reading (Durkin,1966; Izzo, Weissberg, Kasprow, & Fendrich, 1999).

Statement of the Problem

When taught the mechanics of reading only, children tend to stop using the reading process to make sense and focus primarily on each letter and each word instead of on its meaning (Yopp, 1992). Fluency enables children to concentrate on the meaning of what they're reading rather than on skills and the process of decoding (Carbo, 2000). Young children are quite adept at learning, not only the forms (sounds, words, rules) of language but a complex array of language functions, speaker roles, and social conventions for language use, all before attending school (Weaver, 1994).

Reading experts agree that parent involvement and especially activities for use at home are vital to reading success no matter which approaches are used (Cromwell, 1997). Parents need strategies and information to help their children become successful readers. The Internet is an ever-expanding and constantly updated source of information for families to gain access to strategies, activities, information, and home learning materials (Ngeow, 1999-00).

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project was to create an Internet web page designed to incorporate activities and links relevant to promoting fluent reading acquisition in emergent readers. The web page was intended to serve as a resource for parents and teachers.

Definition of Terms

1. alphabetic principle - letters stand for sounds in spoken words (Griffith & Olson, 1988).
2. blend - The sound of two consonants in sequence that are recognized as two phonemes rather than one (May, 1994).
3. decode - translating letters into sounds to access the pronunciation of a word (Smith, Simmons, & Kameenui, 1995).
4. emergent literacy - reading and writing concepts and behaviors of young children that develop into conventional reading and writing (Teale & Sulzby, 1986).
5. fluency - the smoothness with which students read. A fluent reader groups words into meaningful phrases and reads with appropriate expression (Gunning, 1998).

6. grapheme - one or more letters that represent one phoneme (May, 1994).
7. miscues - substitutions, omissions, insertions, defaults, repetitions, and self-corrections generated while reading orally (May, 1994).
8. phoneme - the small units composing spoken language (National Reading Panel, 2000).
9. phonemic awareness - the awareness that language is composed of small sounds (phonemes) (Adams, 1990).
10. phonics - the relationship between the letters in written words and the sounds in spoken words (Fox, 2000).
11. segmentation - separate articulation of all the sounds of a word in the correct order (Williams, 1980).
12. trade books - books sold by publishers to the general public rather than to students or schools for specific courses; books that are not considered to be "textbooks" (May, 1994).
13. traditional/traditional American education - instruction that begins with reading lessons that focus on phonics, then on combinations of letters, tightly controlled vocabulary, and short basal reading passages, followed by numerous skills exercises, each with only one correct answer (Phonics and Whole Language, 2000).

Organization of the Project

Chapter one includes the focus of the project, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the project, and the definition of terms. Chapter two contains a review of literature on phonics, whole language, and balanced approaches to reading instruction, and

the role of parent involvement as related to fluent reading acquisition. Chapter three outlines the procedures used to construct the Internet web page. Chapter four includes hard copies of the project home page and subsequent pages within the web site. Chapter five summarizes the project, presents conclusions, and makes recommendations.

Chapter 2

Review of Selected Literature

The purpose of this study was to create an Internet web page of activities and links for parents and teachers to promote fluent reading acquisition in emergent readers. Reading is a process that needs to be taught using a balanced approach so that all knowledge systems can function interactively to decode fluently and to aid the construction of meaning (Carbo, 2000; Morrow, Tracey, Gee Woo, & Pressley, 1999; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998).

A growing body of research suggests that when teachers and parents collaborate, students perform and behave better in school (Family Involvement Partnership for Learning, 2000; Izzo, Weissber, Kasprow, & Fendrich,1999; Metsala, 2000; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). Parent participation in educational activities at home is a strong predictor of academic achievement (Izzo, et al.).

Chapter 2 reviews studies that investigate the phonics approach to reading, the whole language approach to reading, a balanced approach to reading, and the role of parent involvement.

Phonics Approach to Reading

Phonics is a system of teaching reading that builds on the alphabetic principle of which a central component is the teaching of correspondences between letters or groups of letters and their pronunciations (Adams,1990; Fox, 2000). The National Reading Panel (2000) states:

> Phonemic Awareness is frequently confused with phonics instruction, which entails teaching students how to use letter-sound relations to read or spell words.

> Phonemic awareness instruction qualifies as phonics instruction when it involves teaching children to blend or segment the sounds in words using letters. However, children may be taught to manipulate sounds in speech without any letters as well; this does not qualify as phonics instruction (p. 7).

Stanovich (1994) defines phonological awareness as "the ability to deal explicitly and segmentally with sound units smaller than the syllable." He adds that "researchers argue intensely about the meaning of the term" (p. 283). According to Sensenbaugh (1996), sometimes phonological awareness is defined as an awareness that words are made up of syllables, onsets and rimes, and phonemes. Therefore, phonological awareness may be considered a broader notion than phonemic awareness. Sensenbaugh also states that the terms *phonics, phonemic awareness, and phonological awareness* have and may have been used interchangeably. In addition, Bond & Dykstra (1967) assert that the terms phonics, phonetics, or phonetic methods often refer to an entire method of teaching reading, supplementary teaching of phonics as an area of study in its own right, or the teaching of phonics as a part of another method. For the purpose of this project the terms phonics, phonemic awareness, and phonological awareness are used as they appear in each source, which may or may not mean they are interchangeable.

Adams (1990) states that "faced with an alphabetic script, a child's level of phonemic awareness on entering school is widely held to be the strongest single determinant of the success that she or he will experience in learning to read–or, conversely, the likelihood that she or he will fail" (p.304). Phonemic awareness and phonological awareness appear to play causal roles for reading acquisition and for

separarating normal and disabled readers (Adams, 1990; Stanovich, 1994). They are prerequisite and critical elements in the process of learning to read and write the English alphabetic language, since the English system of reading and writing associates letters with sounds in spoken words (Griffith & Olson, 1992). It has been found that preschool and kindergarten children, who are exposed to programs that include and promote phonological awareness become better readers (Ball & Blachman, 1991; Bradley & Bryant, 1985; Bryant, MacLean, Bradley, & Crossland, 1990; Stanovich, 1984). Research conducted by Stanovich, Cunningham, & Cramer (1984), which focused on kindergartners from middle-class families, involved a group of children who were given phonological tasks. Their reading ability was assessed one year later, with results indicating that those students who had become skilled readers were more proficient at phonological tasks as compared to the less-skilled readers in the study. The researchers concluded that the phonological tasks were highly significant predictors of first-grade reading ability and that the relationship between phonological awareness and reading ability appears to be characterized by reciprocal causation. This hypothesis is supported by Yopp (1992) who states that "in order to benefit from formal reading instruction, youngsters must have a certain level of phonemic awareness. Reading instruction, in turn, heightens their awareness of language. Thus, phonemic awareness is both a prerequisite to and a consequence of learning to read" (p. 697).

Even though phonemic awareness is not necessary for speaking or comprehending oral language (Lundberg, Frost, & Peterson, 1988), it is vital for learning the skills necessary during the manipulation of phonemes, which leads to fluent word recognition.

Stanovich (1994) concluded that reading difficulties were thought to arise because some readers could not, or would not, use context to predict upcoming words. Instead, it was the less-skilled readers who were more dependent upon context for word recognition. The reason for this finding eventually became apparent: the word recognition processes of the skilled reader were so rapid and automatic that they did not need to rely on contextual information. Learning and practicing the basic skills and strategies involved in lower-order processes until they are automatic is critical to the higher-order processes needed for comprehension during reading (LaBerg & Samuels, 1974).

Chall's (1967) landmark study, which was designed to review existing research, concluded that direct, systematic instruction in phonics was required if children were expected to develop word identification skills and reading fluency in an efficient manner. Her research indicated that by a significantly larger margin, programs that included systematic phonics reported better word recognition, improved spelling, increased vocabulary, and improved reading comprehension through the third grade. Her studies showed that low levels of phonics knowledge following the third grade continued to be a good indicator of low reading abilities. Juel (1988) states that readers who enter first grade phonemically unaware are very likely to remain poor readers at the end of fourth grade, since their lack of phonemic awareness contributes to their slow acquisition of word recognition skills.

In 1997, Congress asked the Director of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) to initiate a review of a body of research to determine the effectiveness of various approaches for teaching children to read. The researchers were

tasked with developing a strategy to disseminate their findings to schools so that the information could be incorporated into their reading instruction (National Reading Panel [NRP], 2000). The National Reading Panel (NRP) was established. The NRP identified studies published since 1970 which compared phonics instruction to other forms of instruction for their impact on reading ability. Of the 1,373 studies identified, 38 were used for the meta-analysis. Members of the NRP determined that:

> It is important to recognize that the goals of phonics instruction are to provide children with key knowledge and skills and to ensure that they know how to apply that knowledge in their reading and writing. In other words, phonics teaching is a means to an end. To be able to make use of letter-sound information, children need phonemic awareness (p.10).

Educators who utilize phonemic awareness as an instructional tool have determined that this dramatically improves reading and writing growth (Adams, Foorman, Lundberg, & Beeler, 1998). However, Griffith and Olson (1992) assert that phonemic awareness activities will be useless unless they can be used in a context of real reading and writing. They suggest that this can be done by correlating sound segmentation tasks with the actual strategies a child uses while attempting to read or spell a word. If students are given large doses of phonics, Gunning (1998) reiterates that it is critical that they are also given ample opportunity to apply decoding strategies in prolonged periods of reading and/or other forms of application. One size does not fit all. The teaching of readers needs to be tailored to their needs, skill levels, and must include a systematic approach.

Adams (1990) asserts that most reading programs that advertise they are phonics based teach some level of phonics. The issue of teaching phonics, phonemic awareness, and phonological awareness now translates into one of deciding not if, but how much.

Whole Language Approach to Reading

Whole language is a set of beliefs describing how language learning happens, combined with a set of principles to guide classroom practice. It is based on the belief that reading and oral communication are both languages (Goodman, 1986). For the emergent reader the acquisition of literacy is the logical progression of learning as children learn and make sense of both languages in the same manner and for the same purposes. This natural flow from speaking to literacy evolves from a child's active participation in the communication process. Whole language is taught in a non-competitive atmosphere where learners engage in authentic, meaningful learning experiences that allow each child to participate at his or her developmental level (Goodman, 1996).

Whole language beliefs include a philosophy of teaching and learning, an approach to a curriculum, and a family of distinctive, but closely related activities. Teachers who use whole language share many strategies, including but not limited to utilizing classic children's literature, reading aloud daily, structured independent reading and writing, presenting multiple cueing systems for decoding unknown words, encouraging early writing and inventive spelling, teaching grammar and correctness in context, and conducting regular teacher-student conferences (Daniels, Zemelman,& Bizar, 1999). It appears that the name whole language may have developed from a concern for keeping language whole during instruction and the hope that language would not be fragmented into bits and pieces for isolated drill (Watson, 1989).

Wagner's (1989) list that guides whole language classroom practices include beliefs that:

- the function of language, oral and written, is to construct meaning (Altwerger, Edelsky, & Flores, 1987; Weaver, 1994).
- language is both personal and social. It serves thinking and communicating.
- speaking, listening, reading, and writing are all learned best in authentic speech and literacy events. Learners achieve expressive and communication purposes in a genuine social context (Newman, 1985).
- the learner builds on his own prior knowledge and operates on his own ever-developing "hypotheses" about how oral and written language operate (Smith, 1983).
- cognitive development depends on language development, and vice versa (Wells, 1986).
- readers predict, select, confirm, and self-correct as they make meaning out of print; the goal is comprehension.
- writers choose their own purposes as they write for various audiences, such as themselves, peers, parents, and teachers; the goal is to make sense out of their experience and imagination.
- learning how to use language is accomplished as learners use language to learn about the world. The focus is on the subject matter (e.g., spiders, the Oregon Trail, the surface of the moon) (p.1).

Whole language teachers have found that at-risk and special needs students have their best chance of becoming independent readers, writers, and learners in whole language classrooms. Instead of introducing more skills out of context, all students are given opportunities to engage in reading and writing in the context of whole and meaningful texts (Weaver, 1994). Chomsky (1976) worked with third graders who, despite normal IQ's and no learning disabilities, were making no headway in reading. They were removed from the school program of heavy phonics drill and started on a literature-based approach, which included lively read-alouds and memorizing favorite stories. As a result, the students reading skills improved considerably.

Reading Recovery, a one-on-one tutoring program for early intervention with at-risk first grade readers, is a highly successful and well documented program. The instructional activities used in daily, half-hour tutoring sessions are similar to whole language activities. The children typically receive an average of 15-20 weeks of intervention (Daniels, Zemelman, & Bizar (1999). In Boehnlein's (1987) study, ninety percent of the children whose pretest scores were in the lowest twenty percent of their class caught up to the average of their class and did not need remediation again.

Instead of teaching skills in isolated lessons, skills in whole language classrooms are taught within the context of authentic literacy and learning experiences (Weaver, 1994). A year-long study was conducted by Ribowsky (1985) comparing the effects of a code emphasis approach, focusing on phonemes and letter/sound correspondences, and a whole language approach on the emergent literacy of 53 girls in two kindergarten classes. Phoneme-grapheme correspondence and letter recognition tests were administered as

posttests. Pretests were not administered because it was felt that the tests were too difficult for beginning kindergartners. Children in the whole language classrooms scored considerably better on all measures, including the tests of letter recognition and letter/sound knowledge.

In a separate study involving fifty children from both rural and inner-city schools who were identified as at risk, Stice and Bertrand (1990) focused on the effects of a whole language approach on the literacy development of at-risk first and second-graders, as compared with a traditional skills approach. Whole language children exhibited slightly greater gains when compared to traditionally taught children, but the gains were not statistically significant. Although the children in the whole language groups scored lower on the Concepts About Print test to begin with, they scored considerably higher on the posttest. Children in the whole language classrooms did as well on traditional spelling as their counterparts, while also using more invented spellings. Whole language children retold significantly longer and more complete versions of stories, suggesting that their comprehension might have been better. They also corrected more of their miscues. Whole language classrooms were more cognizant of alternative strategies for dealing with problems such as with particular words. The readers and writers appeared to feel better about themselves and concentrated more on meaning and communicative aspects of language. They seemed to also be developing a greater independence in both reading and writing. The researchers concluded that these students were far ahead of their counterparts in their development of the strategies, attitudes, and understandings of readers, writers, and thinkers.

To encourage emergent readers to genuinely learn, teachers and parents must model what it means to be readers, writers, and life-long learners in addition to demonstrating the skills and strategies that learners need to develop. Based on observation of the strategies that individual learners are developing, teachers need to recognize that some whole-to part strategies may need to be supplemented with more emphasis on parts for some learners (Weaver, 1994).

Balanced Approach to Reading

The First Grade Studies, a research project conducted by Bond and Dykstra (1967) involving 27 individual projects, concluded that the preferred single method of reading instruction was yet to be determined. These studies lent support for the use of phonics as part of beginning reading instruction. The major objective of the studies was to compare various nonbasal programs with basal programs used in the same project. It was determined that combinations of programs, such as a basal program with supplementary phonics materials, were often superior to single approaches. However, the extent that each method contributed to the reading program needed further investigation.

Effective reading ability is influenced by multiple factors including but not limited to having frequent and intensive opportunities to read, being exposed to frequent, regular spelling-sound relationships, learning about the nature of the alphabetic writing system, and the understanding of the structure of spoken words (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998).

A balanced approach to reading blends the best of the new methods with the best of the old. While supporters of the whole language method believe that children's literature, writing activities, and communication activities can be used across the

curriculum to teach reading, backers of phonics instruction insist that a direct, sequential method of instruction enables students to master reading in an organized way. Using a single approach to reading generally doesn't work, according to Carbo (2000). It is her contention that multiple combinations and permutations are required to provide an optimal learning environment for an entire population of readers. Neither method by itself is effective all the time, but both methods possess merit. According to Cromwell (1997) what does work is a carefully designed reading program which utilizes both the whole language approach and the phonics approach, while allowing for each student's individual learning style, strengths, and weaknesses.

The perfect method concept is not a solution. Teachers need to know a variety of methods and approaches to reading instruction and must be able to tailor them to student needs (Duffy & Hoffman, 1999). These researchers explain that effective teachers root their eclecticism in assessing students and analyzing situations before deciding what method or materials to use in ongoing evaluation. The teachers thoughtfully adapt to the students and the situation. It is not a matter of doing whatever you want; it is a matter of knowing many methods and materials and applying one (or a combination) in one situation and something else in another situation, depending on what students need.

In a balanced reading approach, it is imperative that teachers present the skills of phonics systematically and within the context of reading and writing (Gunning, 1998; Strickland, 1998; Phonics and Whole Language, 2000; NRP, 2000). Children need to know how to use phonics, and especially how phonics is used in conjunction with other strategies as no one skill is sufficient within itself. The rate and method(s) that are utilized

to teach these strategies, will depend upon the child. Not all children learn at the same rate or in the same manner (Strickland, 1998.)

Strickland (1998) notes that teachers who primarily use the holistic approach tend to incorporate word-recognition programs with phonics, while teachers who endorse systematic phonics tend to read aloud while encouraging inventive spelling. Daily activities in balanced classrooms include reading aloud to children; providing time for children to engage in self-selected, independent reading; creating opportunities for discussion and oral expression; involving children in oral and written response-to-literature activities; and writing. In addition, phonics skills, other word identification skills, and comprehension strategies need to be taught so that students can learn and practice pronouncing words presented in stories (Baumann, Hoffman, Moon, & Duffy-Hester, 1998; Strickland, 1998).

According to Baumann, Hoffman, Moon, & Duffy-Hester (1998), many teachers prefer a balanced program utilizing a blend of phonics and holistic principles and practices. Their studies indicate that the majority of U.S. public school primary-grade elementary teachers support the belief that reading instruction should promote readers who appreciate literature, and are skillful, motivated, independent, and knowledgeable. The teachers surveyed typically use a literature-based perspective combined with basal anthology selections and trade book reading. Phonics instruction is explicit and occurs in the context of literature. These teachers also teach words by sight and provide complementary instruction in structural and contextual analysis. They hold and practice a philosophy of disciplined eclecticism toward reading and language arts teaching and learning, resulting in

a comprehensive, balanced blend of meaningful instruction that is grounded in visible curricular goals (Baumann, Hoffman, Moon & Duffy-Hester, 1998; Strickland, 1998).

Carbo (2000) claims that when children become fluent readers, they can concentrate on the meaning of what they're reading instead of trying to figure out words. Students need to be exposed to adults modeling good reading. To improve reading fluency, Carbo says we need to read interesting books aloud to children to familiarize them with written language and write stories or take dictation on paper.

Carbo (1996) also recommends keeping children's individual reading styles in mind. She makes these recommendations for modifying curriculums:

To improve phonics programs:

- balance your reading program: make its focus literature and fun. Read to students often, choral read with them, and give them time to read both alone and in pairs.
- guard against one of the most negative side-effects of phonics: boredom. Be careful not to overdo phonics or worksheets. Spend only several minutes each day on phonics; do no more than one worksheet daily; allow children to work together.
- include many games in your teaching. For most children, phonics is easier to learn if they are having fun and are not placed under stress.
- If your students are not able to learn phonics with a fair degree of ease, try other approaches. Remember, phonics is only one of many reading methods. Try recorded books for example, or story writing.

- develop a well-stocked library in your classroom. Give children time to browse, read, and discuss books.

To improve whole language programs, Carbo suggests teachers:

- balance your reading program. Continue to emphasize literature and fun while providing adequate and some step-by-step skill work, especially for analytic students.
- provide sufficient tools for decoding words. Use small amounts of direct instruction in phonics for auditory and analytic learners. Tape-record phonics lessons so that students can work independently to improve skills.
- include games in your teaching. Since your children are tactile, they often learn words and skills quickly with hands-on games.
- don't use invented spelling for extended periods with strongly analytic learners or with students who have memory problems.
- Provide sufficient modeling of reading aloud before expecting children to read independently. Use large amounts of shared reading, choral reading, or recorded books if necessary (p. 62).

Reading programs are not equally effective in all situations. Factors other than the method may be influenced by a particular learning situation, which may influence pupil success in reading. No one approach is so markedly better in all situations when compared with others that it should be considered the one best method. It has been established that the best instruction results when combinations of methods are orchestrated by a teacher who decides what to do in light of children's needs (Bond & Dykstra, 1967; Pearson,

1997). Hence, reading instruction effectiveness lies not with a single program or method, but with a teacher who thoughtfully and analytically integrates various programs, materials, and methods as the situation demands (Duffy & Hoffman, 1999).

Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is critical in facilitating children's development and achievement (Becher, 1986-00, Genisio, Bruneau, and Casbergue, 1999). The single most important activity for building the knowledge, understandings, and skills essential for reading success is that of reading aloud to children (Adams, 1990; IRA/NAEYC, 1998). For children's reading to truly flourish they need to be reading at home, with their immediate and/or extended family (Rasinski & Fredericks, 1991).

Early exposure to reading promotes cognitive development in children while familiarizing them with a wide range of vocabulary, the structure of printed words, and story development (Hall and Moats, 1998). The early childhood years, from birth through age eight, provide the period of the greatest literacy development, even though reading and writing skills continue to develop throughout life. Failing to give children literacy experiences until they are school-age can severely limit the reading and writing levels they ultimately attain (IRA/NAEYC, 1998).

Reducing the number of children entering school with insufficient literacy-related knowledge and skills may serve as a beginning toward preventing reading difficulties. Children who begin school with less prior knowledge and skills in the ability to perceive the individual sounds, awareness of basic purposes and mechanisms of reading, and letter

knowledge are most likely to have difficulty learning to read in the primary grades. Children from poor neighborhoods, children with limited English proficiency, hearing impairments, preschool language impairments, and children whose parents had difficulty learning to read are at considerable risk of arriving with weaknesses in these areas and possibly falling behind at school (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998).

Studies indicate that children who learn to read early have parents who play the critical role in their children's early success in reading and can positively affect their children's academic performance (Durkin, 1966; Rasinski & Fredericks, 1989). According to *Helping Your Child Become a Reader* (2000), the child's first and most important teachers are the parent(s). They know their children intimately, interact with them one-to-one, and do not expect to be paid to help their children succeed (Peterson, 1989).

Scientists and researchers have found that babies acquire substantially more input from sights and sounds than previously thought. A baby's first step toward becoming a reader is hearing the spoken word, which helps develop a love of language and the acquiring of words. When we smile, talk, sing, read, and gesture to babies, they try to read the looks on our faces, imitate sounds, and watch the movements of our hands. Parents and teachers can help facilitate this growth by taking advantage of their child's natural curiosity and desire to learn (Helping your Child Become a Reader, 2000).

The young child's ability to learn, master, and utilize not only the forms (sounds, words, rules) of our language, but also the complete array of social conventions, speaker roles, and language functions is amazing, especially considering this is acquired before being exposed to formal education (Weaver, 1994).

Durkin (1966) asserts that parents can demonstrate to their children how important reading is to them by keeping good books, magazines, and newspapers in the house. It is imperative to let their children see them read and to let their children read to them. Beyond the pleasure of reading to a child is the challenge that comes from discussing the content and seeing the excitement of engaging that child's active attention. This develops and expands a child's curiosity about text and what is means.

Parents need strategies and information to help their children become successful readers (International Reading Association [IRA], 1998). Just as parents can serve as models of literacy for children, teachers may serve as models of literacy to parents (Metsala, 1996) to help provide needed activities. An important finding in a longitudinal study of parent involvement was that participation at home in educational activities predicted academic achievement more strongly than any other parent involvement variable (Izzo, Weissberg, Kasprow, & Fendrich, 1999).

Summary

No one method can provide the total instruction that any given child may require to become a fluent reader. The research presented indicates that teachers and parents need to provide emergent readers with a balanced, eclectic reading program incorporating both skills instruction and immersion in enriched literacy experiences (Baumann, Hoffman, Moon, & Duffy-Hester, 1998). In addition, it is evident that parent modeling and involvement plays a critical role in children's early success in reading.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Purpose

In order for a child to be a productive, contributing member of our highly technological society, fluent reading with understanding is crucial. Parent involvement and especially activities for use at home have been shown to be vital to reading success. Participation at home in educational activities was a strong predictor of academic achievement. Consequently, parents need strategies and information to help their children become successful readers (IRA, 1998). With an ever-increasing use of technology and Internet accessability through the use of computers in the home, office, and public facilities, the Internet was selected as the preferred medium to provide parents with access to activities and links relevant to promoting fluent reading acquisition in emergent readers. The activities and links selected for this web site reflected a balanced approach to early reading acquisition, and were designed to be used by both parents at home and teachers in the classroom to reinforce what has been taught in the classroom setting.

Procedures

The basis for a web page was supported by a review of literature relating to the importance of phonics, whole language, and balanced approaches to emergent reading and parent involvement. Past and recent research indicated that no one approach was best for teaching children to read. Therefore, a balanced approach to reading was found to incorporate and encompass the necessary skills and strategies found in the phonics and whole language approaches. Phonemic awarenesss and phonics instruction were shown to

be necessary skills to enable students to become fluent, independent readers, but needed to be taught in the context of a total reading program. Children's attitudes and relationships with books, combined with interests, expectations, and ability to comprehend enhanced reading fluency.

After securing a site to host the web page, a webmistress was selected to assist in the design and implementation of the web pages. The web page was designed to include links to activities and informational sites. The linked sites were evaluated to ensure each was academically appropriate and suitable for school and home use. The design criteria for the web page included flexibility to add additional links and activities, ease of movement from section to section, ability to return to home page, and the incorporation of a logo (Ima Bookworm) for easy recognition. The information, including the home page and activities were transferred to the web site and tested. All links listed were tested to ensure they were accurately entered and active. This web site is currently located at http://www.selah.wednet.edu/JC/readabook/readabook.html

Chapter 4

The Project

The following pages are hard copies of the project home page and subsequent pages within the web site, currently located at

http://www.selah.wednet.edu/JC/readabook/readabook.html

Definitions

1. home page - the top-level entry point relating to an individual or institution, or possibly a subject area on the Internet (Foldoc, 1999).

2. Internet - an electronic communications network that connects computer networks and organizational computer facilities around the world (Foldoc, 1999).

3. link (hyperlink) - a reference from some point in one hypertext document to another document or another place in the same document (Foldoc, 2000).

4. webmaster/webmistress - the alias or role of the person(s) responsible for the development and maintenance of one or more web servers and/or some or all of the web pages at a web site. The term does not imply any particular level of skill or mastery (Foldoc, 2000).

5. web page - a simple text file that contains text along with a set of HTML tags that describe how the text should be formatted when a browser displays it on the screen (Foldoc, 2000).

6. web site - any computer on the Internet running a World-Wide-Web server process (Foldoc, 2000).

READ-A-BOOK!

Ima Bookworm! Are you???

How to use this site

The purpose of this site is to help kids learn to read fluently and develop a lifelong love of reading! It is hoped that you will find it useful and FUN!

back to John Campbell back to Reading EALR's

This page is under construction as part of the project requirements for Carolyn White's Master's degree.

Links

How can I help my child read?

Links to activities

Predictable Books, Literary Patterns and How to Use Them

A Reader's Bill of Rights

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How to Read to Your Child

One of the most important things you can do for your children is to make reading a part of y home life. If children see each member of the family reading regularly, they grow up with an understanding of how basic reading is to everyday life. If they are made a part of reading in home, whether it is the comics in the newspaper, a recipe in the kitchen a how-to manual in garage, a magazine in the living room, or a book near the bed, they are given some importan in reading development.

Make reading to and with one another a part of your daily routine. Before bed or after dinner are good times for reading. Make this a short time, longer only if desired.

Reading materials should be enjoyable. Read what you like. Materials for your children should be what they like.

Read what is comfortable. Before anyone reads aloud, that person should have the opportunity to read it silently first.

Do not interrupt the reading of one another. If a child stumbles on a word ask, "What would make sense here?" Read to the end of the sentence and then read the sentence again. You may help the child decide what the word might be.

Keep the situation positive. Compliment a reader on how smoothly he/she is reading, using expression, or choosing a good story.

Discuss what you read. If there is an interesting story in the paper, share that news. If the story is exciting, wonder together what will happen next.

Small children love repetition. Read a good story over and over again.

Keep books and other reading materials - for all ages and tastes - in convenient locations around the house.

Make sure everyone in the family group is a part of reading. Dads need to be

involved, too.

Visit the library regularly - at least once a week. The library is a source of information on many topics for all ages: parenting, moving, divorce, etc.

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Reading Activities

Fun activities to do right now!

Here are some links to a variety of sites that have great activities to help you and your child with learning to read.

American Library Association

Internet Public Library Youth Division

U.S. Education

Ideas Gateway

Kids Stuff

Kidsource: Read Write Now!

Moving in Reading: Preschool through Grade Two

Kindergarten Activities (Read and reread a variety of books while using these activities.)

U.S. Education (Helping your child learn to read)

Writing activities to compliment reading

What Can We Do to Help Our Children Learr

Interactive Reading Activities

Reading Help

Kidsource: Beginning to Read

Fun Activities You Can Do Now

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Sing Silly Songs
Take A Bow!
Rhyme with Me
Fun While You Ride
Make a Story Map
Word Tag
Repetitive Book Activity
Make a Book
Go for a Walk
Sequence of Events
New Endings
Make your own books on tape

Great books to read to and with your child.

Ima Bookworm says

"Let your imagination go and encourage your child's imagination to soar!"

back

Literary Patterns for Reading and Writing

Bill Martin Jr. and Peggy Brogan describe the seven basic patterns authors use when writing stories. Orin Cochrane, in the book *Reading, Writing, and Caring* (1984), adds the eighth. This list of predictable books was started by Nellie Edge and has been expanded.

Predictable books give kids the opportunity to predict what is going to be said and what will happen next in a story. The more predictable the story, the more likely children will enjoy, remember and want to read it over and over. After reading the same story a few times, children will start to read along or predict what is coming next and may "read" the whole story, even though they may not yet be able to recognize individual words. At this point beginning readers can add emotion and fluency to their reading or retelling.

The following are short descriptions of the eight patterns of predictable books. After each description you may click on *activity* to be linked to a sample activity or *book list* to be linked to a list of books.

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1. Repetitive: The same phrase, sentence, or episodes repeat one another throughout the story. Repetition makes books predictable, helps develop vocabulary and sequencing, plus children love to anticipate what's coming next in a story or poem. . The sounds of language become planted in children's memory.

Activity - Repetition and Rhyme
Book list

---

2. Cumulative: Each part repeats the previous part and then adds a new part. The story begins with one person, animal, or event, then adds on bit by bit to form the complete story. This type of book encourages predicting which helps children enjoy, stay on task, and remember the story. In addition, children see the same words repeated which teaches sight vocabulary.

Activity - Sequence of Events
Book list

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3. Rhythm/Rhyme Sequence: Any story that unfolds in a predictable rhyme or rhythm sequence. Combined with repetition it provides for easily internalized language. The rhythm and rhyme make these stories and poems predictable. Words are practiced and phonemic awareness is developed effortlessly and joyfully within a context of language that children know and enjoy. Children internalize concepts such as sequencing, movement, rhythm, and rhyme.

Activity -Rhyme with Me: It's Fun, You'll See!

Book list

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4. Interlocking Pattern (chain or circular story): Each episode relates to the one before in an intriguing and dependable way. The plot is interlinked so that the ending leads back to the beginning. Children become familiar with concepts and begin identifying key words.

Activity - Word Tag
Book list

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5. Chronological pattern: These stories follow a time sequence. The stories are predictable and provide repeated exposures to words and multiple opportunities for repeated reading of connected texts. This develops reading fluency and promotes an understanding of the structure of spoken words.

Activity - Make a Story Map
Book list

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6. Familiar Cultural Pattern (familiar sequence): The story pattern is based on a known sequence such as the alphabet, numbers, days of the week, and months of the year. Learning takes place through familiar themes that incorporate patterns from a child's environment. The stories promote children's understanding of text and helps children recognize and organize new vocabulary and concepts.

Activity - Make a Book
Book list

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7. Problem Centered Story: Stories that are built around a problem and a sequence of episodes leading to a solution. These stories encourage creative thinking and stimulate the imagination. Children are given the opportunity to use their knowledge as a framework for comprehending a story by setting up expectations occurring in a particular sequence.

Activity- New Endings
Book list

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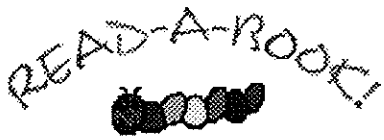
8. Main Character: The ideas of a story revolve around a main character who may be an animal or a human. The story is predictable because of the character. Vocabulary is built when students use inferential skills to predict which vocabulary words tell about the character.

Activity - Take a Bow!
Book list

Tips for parents:

http://www.cec.sped.org/ericec/ptips.htm

http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/Reader/index.html



back to Literary Patterns

Literary Patterns for Reading and Writing

Bill Martin Jr. and Peggy Brogan describe the seven basic patterns authors use when writing stories. Orin Cochrane, in the book *Reading, Writing, and Caring*, adds the eighth. This list was started by Nellie Edge and has been expanded.

1. Repetitive: The same phrase, sentence, or episodes repeat one another throughout the story. Go to activity sample.

Ask Mr. Bear	Flack
At Mary Bloom's	Aliki
Big Orange Splot	Pinkwater
Brown bear, brown, bear what do you see	Martin
Caps for sale	Slobodkina
Carrot seed	Krauss
Caterpillar and the polliwog	Kent
Chick and the duckling	Ginsburg
Dance away	Shannon
Dark, dark tale	Brown
Do you know what I'll do?	Zolotow
Doorbell Rang, The	Hutchins
Fortunately	Charlip
Going for a walk	deRegniers
Good-night, Owl!	Hutchins
If I found a wistful unicorn	Ashford
Important book	Brown
It looked like spilt milk	Shaw
Jesse Bear, what will you wear?	Carlton
Jump, frog, jump	Kalan
King Bidgood's in the bathtub	Wood

Klippity Klop	Emberley
Lizard's song	Shannon
Love you forever	Munsch
Mary wore her red dress	Peek
Millions of cats	Gag
Mother, Mother, I want another	Polushkin
My Mom travels a lot	Bauer
Q is for duck; an alphabet guessing game	Elting
Quick as a cricket	Wood
Rain	Kalan
Roll over	Gerstein
Sadie and the snowman	Morgan
Someday	Zolotow
Three Billy Goats Gruff	traditional
Three Little Pigs	traditional
Very Busy Spider	Carle
Witch's hat	Johnston
Who sank the boat?	Allen
Wonderful shrinking shirt	Anderson
That's good, that's bad	Cuyler

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2. Cumulative: Each part repeats the previous part and then adds a new part. Go to activity sample

Bringing the rain to Kapiti Plain	Ardema
Elephant and the bad baby	Vipont
Enormous turnip	Parkinson
Fat Cat: a Danish folktale	Kent
Fiddle-i-fee	Stanley
Great big enormous turnip	Oxenbury
Hairy MacClary from Donaldson's Dairy	Dodd
Henny Penny	Galdone
House that Jack built	Stevens
I know an old lady	traditional
Jacke I wear in the snow	Neitzel
Little old lady who was not afraid of anything	Williams
Little red hen	Galdone
Napping house	Wood
No jumping on the bed	Arnold
"Not me" said the monkey	West
"Not now" said the cow	
Old woman and her pig	Galdone
Over the steamy swamp	Geherety
Silly Sally	Wood
Teeny Tiny	Bennett
Judge, The	Zemach
There was an old woman	
Twelve days of Christmas	
Too much noise	McGovern

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3. Rhythm/Rhyme Sequence: Any story that unfolds in a predictable rhyme or rhythm sequence. Combined with repetition it provides for easily internalized language.Go to activity sample

Brown bear	Martin
Friendly book	Brown
Good night, Moon	Brown
I like bugs	
Lady with the alligator purse	Westcott
Noisy Nora	
Once a lullaby	Nichol
Round is a pancake	Sullivan
Seven little monsters	Sendak
Sitting on the farm	King
Willy o'Dwyer jumped in the fire	deRegniers
Witch's hat	Johnston

---

4. Interlocking Pattern: Each episode relates to the one before in an intriguing and dependable way. Go to activity sample.

Allison's zinnia	Lobel
Blue sea	Kalan
Chick and the duckling	Ginsburg
Day Jimmy's boa ate the wash	Noble
Each pear each plum	Ahlbert
Five Chinese brothers	Bishop
Gossip	Pienkowski
Happy birthday, dear Duck	Bunting
Hide and snake	Baker
If you give a mouse a cookie	Numeroff
If you give a moose a muffin	Numeroff
Jump, frog, jump	Kalan
King, the mice and the cheese	Gurney
One fine day	Hogrogian
Mr. Willowby's Christimas tree	Barry
Runaway bunny	Brown
Willy O'Dwyer	deRegniers

---

5. Chronological pattern: These stories follow a time sequence: Go to activity sample

Caterpillar and the polliwog	Kent
Giving tree	Silversteen
Go tell Aunt Rhody	Aliki
Grouchy ladybug	Carle
Growing vegetable soup	Ehlert
Love you forever	Munsch
Papa, please get the moon for me	Carle
Red leaf, yellow leaf	Ehlert
Sand cake	Asch
Seasons of Arnold's apple tree	Gibbons
Sun's day	Gerstein
Sun's up	Euvremer
Very hungry caterpillar	Carle

---

6. Familiar Cultural Pattern: Story pattern is based on a know sequence such as the alphabet, numbers, days of the weke, and months of the year. Go to activity sample.

10 bears in my bed	Mack
Busy Monday morning	Domanska
Chicken soup with rice	Sendak
Cookie's week	Ward
Heckety Peg	Woods
May I bring a friend?	deRegniers
Over in the meadow	Keats
Q is for duck	Elting
Roll over	Gerstein
Six foolish fishermen	Elkin
Ten little caterpillars	Martin
This old man	Koontz
When sheep cannot sleep	Kitamura

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7. Problem Centered Story: Stories that are built around a problem and a sequence of episodes leading to a solution. Go to activity sample.

Curious George	Rey
Hansel and Gretal	traditional
Millions of cats	Gag
Mean Soup	Everett
Rumplestiltskin	traditional
Tikki Tikki Tembo	Mosel
Thundercake	Polacco

---

8. Main Character: The ideas of a story revolve around a main character who may be an animal or a human. The story is predictable because of the character. Go to activity sample.

Amelia Bedelia books	Parish
Curious George books	Schulz
Arthur books	Brown
Anansi the spider	Kimmel
Iktomi	Galdone
Magic school bus	Cole

A Reader's Bill of Rights

Whereas, all students need access to the kinds of reading opportunities that will allow them to grow up to be successful members of their society, and

Whereas, it is everyone's responsibility to offer support for providing these opportunities, and

Whereas, the ultimate goal of reading education is to create Communities of Readers where each student can fulfill his or her potential and experience the joy of reading.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that all students have certain inalienable Reading Rights:

Success as a reader. Every child is capable of learning to read and to enjoy reading. That expectation must be shared by all and must form the foundation of all approaches to reading education.

Access to appropriate books. Appealing books for a wide variety of interests and covering all reading levels, must be available in classrooms, home, school and public libraries, and other locations. Library schedules must be flexible so students can obtain their next book as soon as possible after completing the last one.

Time to read. Reading, like any other skill, must be practiced to be perfected. Schools must provide dedicated time during the school day to read for a variety of purposes'for pleasure, for information, for exploration.

Read-aloud experiences. All children must have regular opportunities to hear books read aloud to them. At early ages, reading aloud introduces them to the magic of print. As they grow, read-aloud encounters stretch their vocabulary, introduce them to new ideas, and demonstrate to them that adults value reading highly.

Time for book discussions. Discussing books is one of the strongest ways to build Communities of Readers, and to develop students' thinking skills. Schools must make time for book discussions'not only between teacher and student, but among students sharing books they have enjoyed.

Reading role models. In Communities of Readers, all adults in school, at home, and across the community show by example how they value reading and guide young people to make reading a priority in their lives. Peers and older students can also serve as reading role models.

Literacy-rich environments. Everything in students' surroundings must show that books and reading are valuable, from the presence of books in the classroom and open access to the library, to posters, bulletin boards, public recognition, and community events celebrating reading.

Library support. Libraries must not be storage places for books. They must be dynamic places providing services specifically designed to engage young people's interest in reading. Both school and public libraries must play their parts in building the Community of Readers.

Family support. Parents, grandparents, and other family members must be encouraged to involve themselves in reading to and with their children. Opportunities must be created for families to participate in reading activities at school and community levels. Especially, since one-on-one tutoring has been proven to be the most effective way to improve reading performance, all adults, whatever their own reading abilities, must be encouraged to assist children to grow as readers. Tutoring activities can be basic, such as reading aloud to children, or require some training, such as paired reading.

Community support. Programs involving all adults, not just parents, must be developed to give the community meaningful ways to be involved with reading development. Funding for books and reading events is one way for businesses and other community members to get involved. Giving time for one-on-one tutoring activities is perhaps the most effective way for individuals, such as senior citizens, to make a contribution toward the growth of literacy.

To secure these Reading Rights as stated, all members of every community should pledge their support, time, and resources.

From the Indiana Middle Grades Reading Network's "Reading Bill of Rights for Indiana's Young Adolescents"

Fun While You Ride

What to do:

Play license plate games.

1. Say words that begin with the letters on the license plate.

2. Find the letters of the alphabet in order.

3. Find the letters of the alphabet in order on signs.

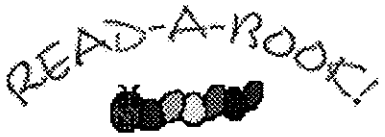
4. Count how many of one letter you can find on license plates and on signs.

Are you on a long ride? If you are you can:

5. Look for license plates from other states. Write them down. Maybe you can find all 50 states.

6. Look for things that start or finish with a particular sound ie: /t/ tree, town, toy, tower

Activity Menu



Go For a Walk

What you'll need:

Paper, writing and drawing utensils

What to do:

1. Take your child for a walk

2. When you return, have your child write a story about your walk (e.g., What did you see, feel, do, and/or experience?)

3. If your child doesn't write yet, have the child draw a picture and tell you about the walk.

4. Write what she/he says, exactly like your child says it. A young child's language may not always be what we consider correct. Ima Bookworm told me this is normal development. Its okay! Write it down anyway! The story may only be a few words or may be quite lengthy.

5. Have your child read the story back to you. Put your finger under the written words and follow along as your child "reads" the story.

6. Share the story with friends and grandparents.

Activity Menu

Make a Book

back to Literary Patterns

Using books with Familiar Cultural Patterns

What you'll need:

A good book! See the booklist for ideas.
Paper, writing and coloring utensils

What to do:

1. Read the book together.
2. Make your own book.

Example:
1. Read the book *More Bugs in Boxes* (Carter, 1990).

2. Help your child make their own "open the flap" book with drawings of interesting bugs hidden away under each flap. Each bug could represent a particular sound. e.g.: /s/ Six silly bugs looking sideways.

Example:
1. Read the book Cookie's Week by Cindy Ward.

2. Your child can draw pictures or write a story about his/her week. Use a page for each day. You may need to help your child write or write as the child tells you the story.

3. Your child can read the story to friends and relatives.

Encourage your child to develop the drawings and cutouts on their own. If the drawings and cutouts aren't perfect, that's okay. Ima Bookworm would tell you that your child is a work in progress, too!

Activity Menu

back to Literary Patterns

Make a Story Map

Using Chronologically Patterned Books

What you'll need:

A book, story, or poem; Go to the booklist for ideas
Paper, scissors, writing and coloring utensils

What to do:

1. Read a story to your child, such as The Three Bears.

2. Discuss who the characters are (Goldilocks, Papa Bear, Mama Bear, Baby Bear).

3. Talk about the setting (where the story takes place; in this story it is in the Bear's house in the woods).

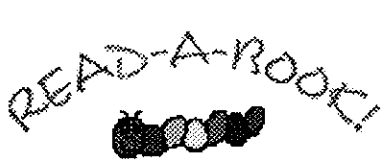
4. Make cutouts of the characters, the house, woods, table, bowls, chairs, beds, etc.. You may need more than one set of the characters.

5. Lay these cutouts on a big piece of butcher paper, on a table, or the floor. Have fun putting them in the correct order like scenes in a play.

6. Help your child label the map if they are old enough.

7. When you are finished, have your child tell YOU the story using the map. Have the child share the story with someone else.

Activity Menu



Make Your Own Books on Tape

What you'll need:

A favorite book; See the booklist for new ideas.
Tape recorder, blank tape

What to do:

1. Record yourself or your child reading a favorite book. You can ring a bell or make a sound when it's time to turn each page.

2. Follow the words with your finger as you and your child listen and read.

Now your child can listen and read the book many times on his/her own. Repeated readings of a book promotes word recognition.

Activity Menu

READ-A-BOOK!

back to Literary Patterns

New Endings

Using books with Problem Centered stories

What you'll need:

Books with interesting endings or problem-centered stories. See the booklist for ideas.
Paper, writing and drawing utensils

What to do:

1. Read a story (or part of a story) to your child.

2. Discuss the characters and the problem in the story.

3. Challenge your child to make up a new ending.

4. Have the child write the ending or dictate the ending to you.
If the child dictates the ending, write it exactly as they tell it to you, even if it is grammatically incorrect, because this is how the child understands and will retell the story.

5, Encourage your child to illustrate the ending and share the "new" story with you and others.

Activity Menu

Read - a - book!

Repetition and Rhyme

back to Literary Patterns

Using Books that have a Repetitive Pattern

Repetition makes books predictable, and young readers love knowing what comes next.

What you'll need:

Books with repeated phrases or short rhyming poems

A few favorites are:

Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible No Good, Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst;
Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Bill Martin, Jr.;
Horton Hatches the Egg by Dr. Seuss;
The Little Engine That Could by Watty Piper.
more books

There are many good booklists that highlight those books with repetitive refrains. (See Resources)

What to do:

1. Pick a story with repeated phrases or a poem you and your child like.

2. For example, read:
Wolf Voice:
Little pig, little pig, Let me come in.
Little Pig:
Not by the hair on my chinny-chin-chin.
Wolf Voice:
Then I'll huff and I'll puff, And I'll blow your house in!

After the wolf has blown down the first pig's house, your child will soon join in with the refrain.

3. Read slowly, and with a smile or a nod, let your children know you appreciate their participation.

4. As children grow more familiar with the story, pause and give them the chance to "fill in the blanks."

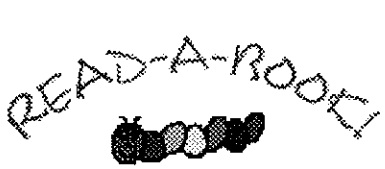
5. Encourage your children to pretend to read, especially books that contain repetition and rhyme. Most children who enjoy reading will eventually memorize all or parts of a book and imitate your reading.

When youngsters anticipate what's coming next in a story or poem, they have a sense

of mastery over books. When children feel power, they have the courage to try. Pretending to read is an important step in the process of learning to read.

This activity and more can be found at: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/Reading/ReadAlong.html

Activity Menu



back to Literary Patterns

Rhyme with Me: It's Fun, You'll See!

Using books that have Rhythm and Rhyme

Rhyming helps children to connect letters with sounds.

What you'll need:

Books with rhyming words, games, or songs. See the booklist for examples.

What to do:

1. The first activities in the list below work well with younger children. As your child grows older, let him do more of the later activities, but keep doing the first ones as long as he enjoys them.

2. Play rhyming games and sing rhyming songs with your child. Many include hand clapping, playing with balls, and playing in groups.

3. Read rhymes to your child. When reading a familiar one, stop before a rhyming word and encourage your child to fill in the rhyme. When he does, praise him.

4. Listen for rhymes in songs you know or hear on the radio, TV, at family or other gatherings, and sing them with your child.

This activity and more can be found at: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/Reader/activities.html#rhyme
(To return to this page use "back" on your browser.)

Activity Menu

back to Literary Patterns

Sequence of Events

Using books that are Cumulative

What you'll need:

A cumulative style book, such as *The Napping House* by Audrey Wood (1984). See the booklist for more examples.
Paper, scissors, writing utensil

What to do:

1. Read the book with your child.

2. Help your child identify, draw, and cut out the characters or objects in the story.
If you use *The Napping House*, draw and cut out the granny, the child, the dog, the cat, the mouse, and the flea.

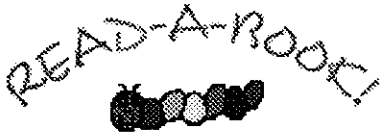
3. Have your child put the cut outs in order as they appear in the story and retell the story.

Variation:
1. Either you or your child writes the words on small pieces of paper or cards (3x5 cards work great) that match the drawings that your child made.

2. Have your child then match the labels to the cut outs. As your child is becomes familiar with the sounds of letters, suggest using clues such as the beginning sounds of the words to make a match. The child can also refer to the book to gain clues of words that are repeated.

Activity Menu

Read - a - book!



Sing Silly Songs

What to do:

1. Play with the sounds of language by changing sounds in the words.
For example, sing *Row, Row, Row, Your Boat*

Row, Row, Row Your Boat
Gently Down the Stream
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily
Life is but a dream.

2. Now substitute "tow, tow, tow, your boat" or "mow, mow, mow, your boat" for "row, row, row your boat"

"Berrily, berrily, berrily, berrily" or "terrily, terrily, terrily, terrily." can be substituted for "merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily"

You can play with the sounds of language in many ways.

Activity Menu

back to Literary Patterns

Take a Bow!

Using books that revolve around a
Main Character

When children act out a good story, they show their own understanding of what it is about.
They also grow as readers by connecting emotion with the written word.

What you'll need:

Stories written from a child's point of view with a strong main character. Go to the booklist for ideas
Things for using in a child's play (dress-up clothes, puppets).

What To Do:

1. The first activities in the list below work well with younger children. As your child grows older, more of the later activities can be done, but keep doing the first ones as long as the activities are enjoyed.

2. Read a story slowly to your child. Read it with feeling, making everything seem important.

3. If your child has a special story, a favorite line or two can be acted out. Praise your child for a job well done.

4. Ask your child to act out the story (or a part of it) and make a face the way the character in the story is feeling. Making different faces adds emotion to the performer's voice. You are the audience, so again praise your child again and clap your hands.

5. Have your child perform the story for family and friends. Set a time when everyone can be together.

Variation:

1. Encourage your child to make up a play from a story she/he has read or heard. It can be make-believe or from real life.

2. Help your child to find or make things to go with the story--a pretend crown, stuffed animals, a broomstick, or whatever the story needs.

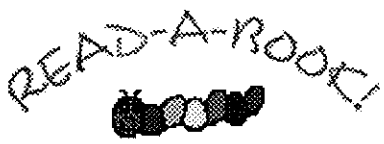
3. Friends or family also can help. You can write down the words, or help write them, if the child is old enough. Then stage the play for everyone to see!

Play acting helps a child learn that there are both more important and less important parts to a story and how one thing follows another.

This activity and more can be found at: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/Reader/activities.html#rhyme

(To return to this page use "back" on your browser.)

Activity Menu



Word Tag

back to Literary Patterns

Using Interlocking Patterns

It is important for children to read words in sentences and stories, so they realize that reading is about understanding.

What you'll need:

An easy-to-read story with many words your child can already sound out or read. See the booklist for examples

What to do:

1. Tell your child, "In this story, I'll read some of the words and you'll read some words. When it's your turn to read a word, I will tap your shoulder." Start reading. As you come to a word that your child can read, tap the child's shoulder. Trade places. Now your CHILD can read the story and tap YOUR shoulder when he/she would like YOU to read.

2. Keep taking turns reading the story. You can go back and reread parts of the same stories for extra practice.

This activity and more can be found at: http://www.ed.gov/Family/RWN/Activ97/begin.html
(To return to this page use "back" on your browser.)

Activity Menu

Chapter 5

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

One of the best indicators of a child's ability to function in school and our society is their ability to read and write. Children who have early exposure to reading will enjoy cognitive development while familiarizing themselves with a wide range of vocabulary, the structure of printed words, and story development. The best instructional results occur when a combination of methods are used which are tailored to the needs of the child and when the child is provided with time for self-selection and independent reading. Opportunities for discussion and oral expression, involving the child in oral and written responses to literature, scheduled writing, exposure to good books, magazines, and newspapers combined with a balanced, eclectic reading program which incorporates both skills instruction and immersion in enriched literacy experiences will help promote reading fluency.

Reading experts have concluded that parent involvement is critical to obtaining the reading success necessary in today's society. With the advent of affordable computers and ready access to the World Wide Web, we now have a medium that offers us the opportunity to provide a source of materials that are current, appropriate, and easily accessible for teachers and parents to utilize in the process of promoting fluent reading acquisition in emergent readers.

Conclusions

Based on the research, several conclusions may be drawn as to what is necessary to promote fluent reading acquisition in emergent readers.

1. Educators should be familiar with the research that indicates no one method can provide the total instruction that any given child may require to become a fluent reader and each child's individual differences need to be taken into account.
2. Students need to be provided with a balanced reading program incorporating both skills instruction and immersion in enriched literacy experiences.
3. Early, systematic phonics instruction needs to be taught within the context of authentic reading and writing.
4. Teachers and parents need to model reading and encourage children to read.
5. Parents need to have access to resources for home reading activities.
6. All young children need to be regularly engaged in activities which promote reading fluency.

Recommendations

For an Internet web page of activities promoting reading fluency to be effective, the following is recommended:

1. Parents be provided with access to materials and activities written in terminology that is easy to read and understand.
2. The content of the activities and materials needs to be based on the philosophies and principles found in a balanced reading program.
3. Engage a qualified webmaster/webmistress to assist with the design, implementation, and maintenance of the web site. In addition, the website needs to be updated on a regular basis to ensure that the links and activities are current, appropriate, and active.

4. Encourage the submission of activities and suggestions of appropriate sites to be added.
5. Solicit parent feedback pertaining to the existing web site and recommendations of additional activities and/or possible links to be incorporated.

The intention is to provide parents access to simple, fun, developmentally appropriate reading activities that can be easily understood and implemented to promote reading fluency. The web page, still in its infancy at this point, has the potential of growing into an exciting long-term project with an ultimate goal of children becoming fluent, successful readers.

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