Providing Ongoing Professional Support for Reading Recovery®/Descubriendo la Lectura Teachers: A Teacher Leader Resource Paper

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Prepared by the Teaching and Professional Development Committee
North American Trainer Group

This document is designed to support Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura (DLL) teacher leaders in their work with trained teachers.

Teachers continue to learn, continue to develop effective practices and deepen their understandings of "literacy processing, the theory of reading and writing with which they work" (Clay 2001, p. 232).

Teacher leaders facilitate this continued learning in many ways, including a combination of ongoing professional development sessions, school visits, personal contact, conferences, meetings, and distribution of materials of different kinds.

Regardless of the levels of experience of teachers and teacher leaders, there are certain conditions which promote positive relationships and effective learning environments. These include:
- Listening actively to comments and concerns of teachers
- Responding sensitively to issues raised
- Respecting differences in opinions
- Valuing the experience and the professional expertise of teachers
- Working in collaboration to refine and extend their understandings and teaching

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1. Ongoing Professional Support: Why, When, and How

Why?

Ongoing professional development and support enables Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura (DLL) teachers to:

- Extend their understanding of the complex theory of literacy processing that informs Reading Recovery/DLL teaching
- Have opportunities to fine-tune their teaching as a result of deepening their understandings of Reading Recovery/DLL theory and practice
- Articulate further the rationales behind Reading Recovery/DLL lessons and teaching procedures
- Continue to critically examine their teaching decisions and children's progress in reading and writing
- Seek assistance with children who are not who are not responding well to their teaching
- Maintain a high quality implementation through the ongoing support of effective Reading Recovery/DLL school teams
- Use data analysis to strengthen Reading Recovery/DLL at the school level, and
- Keep up with shifts and advances in implementation at the state, national and international levels

When?

Teachers continue to meet with their colleagues regularly following the training year to engage in professional conversations around teaching and learning. Trained Reading Recovery/DLL teachers attend a minimum of six professional development sessions per year, including a minimum of four behind-the-glass sessions with two lessons each session (see *Standards and Guidelines of Reading Recovery in the United States,* standard 4.44 and 5.50). These observations, skillfully facilitated by a teacher leader, provide opportunities for rich and productive discussions.

How?

As in the training year, teachers continue to build their knowledge and understanding of child literacy processing and the powerful teaching decisions that promote accelerated learning. During ongoing professional development sessions topics are explored in much greater depth utilizing literature on teaching and learning to expand the theoretical understandings established in the training year.

Professional development sessions for trained teachers differ from the training year in a number of ways. Most evident is the shift in roles and responsibilities between teacher leaders and teachers. In the training year, teacher leaders have major responsibility for organizing and guiding sessions. In the ongoing professional development that follows there is a shared commitment and responsibility with teachers having significant input into identifying content of sessions, emphases to be explored, organization of sessions, the evaluation of session effectiveness and the ongoing planning of future sessions in response to individual and group needs.

Also there is a shift in the structure and organization of sessions. In the training year sessions follow a consistent structure throughout the year, while in the subsequent years there is opportunity for greater variation in the structure and organization of sessions (see section 3).

Teacher leaders in their field year seek the support of teacher leader colleagues and their UTC trainers to develop expertise in providing ongoing professional support. During the field year the teacher leader should not carry full or primary responsibility for providing ongoing professional development support (see *Standards and Guidelines of Reading Recovery in the United States,* Guideline 5.53) The following three-part process of support is recommended for the delivery of ongoing professional development sessions:

- teacher leaders observe experienced colleagues conducting one or more ongoing professional development sessions
- teacher leaders conduct the next ongoing professional development session in collaboration with an experienced colleague
- teacher leaders conduct a session on their own while an experienced colleague observes them and provides feedback

Teacher leaders in their field year consult with teacher leader colleagues to plan other aspects of ongoing professional support.

In the event that a teacher leader is required to provide ongoing professional support in the field year, the UTC will facilitate the development of a plan to suit the needs of the individual site to address ongoing professional development concerns.

Resources:
See Teacher Leader Information Sheet, Appendix A:
- o "Maintaining Quality Implementation After the Teacher Training Year"

2. Guiding Principles for Planning a Year of Professional Development

Determine Content and Focus for the Year's Professional Development in Collaboration With Teachers

Teacher leaders work with teachers to plan the content of the ongoing professional development sessions. Sessions are customized to the groups' needs. The goal is to provide a forum within which teachers may find their own solutions to problems. An atmosphere that acknowledges the strengths and concerns of teachers prevails. Teachers and teacher leaders work together as colleagues, to analyze and problem solve the teaching of children who are not making satisfactory progress and gain a deeper understanding for teaching decisions.

Key areas of need are identified based on data. Group goals may be established by reviewing the previous years' results and/or reflecting on last years' progress in teaching. Following a review of school/site data, trends can be identified to highlight areas of need. This will enable the total implementation of Reading Recovery to improve.

The teacher leader works with the teachers in various ways to develop goals for the year. Teachers may talk in small groups on goals they want to set giving others ideas for personal goals. Teachers may complete a survey evaluating themselves on their teaching effectiveness and identify areas they want to strengthen. They may complete a survey asking them to prioritize topics for areas of study. This type of survey can be completed at the end of the previous year or sent to teachers prior to the start of the new year. During the last session of the year, teachers may work in groups to identify and prioritize topics of interest to be addressed in the next year.

To effectively address topics of interest, a more flexible structure can be adopted in the ongoing professional development sessions while staying with the same design components. For instance, in a session the lessons might be separated by a short discussion related to each lesson, rather than having the two lessons back-to-back or the teachers might discuss a topic related to a theme for a period prior to the observation and discussion of teaching. For more details about flexible approaches to professional development sessions, see Section 3.

Regardless of how the teacher leader determines the emphases and session structure for the upcoming year, it is essential that there is an overview for the year and that the teacher leader develops the plan with input from the teachers and based on needs identified from the data.

A beginning-of-the-year meeting is extremely helpful for planning the emphases and topics for the year. A review of assessments, forms, and early teaching procedures is critical for clarifying understandings and promoting effective teaching for newly trained teachers and for those who have been teaching for years. Topics to review at this session might include the Observation Survey and Summary, Predictions of Progress, Roaming Around the Known, Moving Into Instruction, and Learning to Look at Print.

A beginning-of-the-year meeting helps organize the year by establishing procedures, setting meeting dates, and making a tentative schedule of teaching assignments for the professional development sessions. This planning enables teachers to follow the district requirements for

scheduling inservice days. Teachers can bring school calendars to the meeting so that teacher leaders may schedule initial school visits as well.

Many schools have existing literacy teams that monitor progress in literacy learning as well as a team or subgroup that focuses on the implementation of Reading Recovery /DLL. It is important for the teacher leader to provide support for the school teams through sharing and discussion during the beginning of the year meeting and at times in other sessions throughout the year. See RRCNA's *A Principal's Guide to Reading Recovery* for details on School Teams.

The end-of-year meeting provides an opportunity to review the range, nature and effectiveness of ongoing professional development sessions throughout the year. During the end-of-year meeting teachers and teacher leaders might address the following:
- Accomplishments and successes during the year
- Effectiveness of Reading Recovery/DLL as a team effort within each school
- Data collection
- Writing school reports (See Appendix F in *A Principal's Guide to Reading Recovery* for a sample Reading Recovery School Report Form)
- Evaluation of personal and group goals
- Setting personal and group goals for next year

Analyze Data and Other Information to Identify Possible Areas of Study
Reading Recovery/DLL professionals rely on an extensive amount of data to set learning priorities that will guide their study across the academic year. On an annual basis, teacher leaders receive site data, school system data, and school data. In collaboration with teachers and administrators, teacher leaders analyze the data for trends to gauge progress from year to year and to identify areas of need in teaching and implementation. Local data also may be compared to state or national data to determine areas for growth. Examining Reading Recovery data alongside other information collected in the school system provides additional insights. This process of collaborative data analysis helps the group to identify meaningful areas of study for the year and set personal goals for learning.

Although areas of group study are established at the beginning of the year, teachers have individual interests and needs for their professional learning. Therefore, teacher leaders remain responsive to these needs as the year unfolds. Information gathered from visits to teachers, from regular monitoring of student progress, and through review of teaching records also may provide direction for study.

Establish a System for Monitoring and Evaluating Progress
Monitoring the Progress of Children. Teacher leaders help teachers document the progress of children they teach throughout the year.   Monitoring provides information on:
- frequency of lessons
- number of weeks in the child's series of lessons
- early identification of children making unsatisfactory progress who may need a school visit by the teacher leader

- identification of children who have come to a block in continuing to make accelerated progress and who may need a visit or input from the teacher leader
- identification of children who may be ready to have their lesson series discontinued

Children Not Making Satisfactory Progress. Children are expected to progress swiftly through their series of lessons and move successfully up the gradient of text difficulty. When a child remains at the same instructional book level or at the same level of processing in reading or writing for more than two weeks, rapid progress is threatened. If this happens at the beginning, or at any stage of a child's series of lessons, immediate action is needed.

Teacher leaders establish efficient monitoring systems and communication structures to keep abreast of children's progress. These systems allow teacher leaders to support teachers with children who are not making satisfactory progress. Teachers need to contact the teacher leader early about children who are not making satisfactory progress. Open communication channels facilitate conversations and teacher leader support when children are having particular difficulty making progress. (See information on "clinical visits" in section 4). Monitoring systems may also alert teacher leaders to students making slower than expected progress. For a variety of monitoring systems, see Appendix B, "Establishing a Process for Monitoring and Identifying Children not Making Satisfactory Progress."

Resources:
- See Teacher Leader Information Sheets, Appendix A:
  - "Children Entering Reading Recovery with Low Text Reading Levels: Gathering Additional Information"
  - "Children Entering Reading Recovery with Limited Language Levels"

- See Appendix D: "Oakland University Reading Recovery Center Self-Evaluation Rubric for Continuing Reading Recovery Teachers"

3. Conducting Ongoing Professional Development Sessions

In designing ongoing professional development sessions teacher leaders give consideration to further developing:
1) teachers' understandings of children's literacy processing and Reading Recovery teaching procedures which promote powerful learning for individual children experiencing literacy difficulties, and
2) group processes which facilitate teacher professional development and learning within an inquiry-based community of learners approach.

Developing Teacher Knowledge and Understanding of Children's Literacy Processing and Teaching Procedures
Working with an Emphasis. In planning ongoing professional development sessions teacher leaders may identify an emphasis which provides purpose, direction, and cohesion to both the observation of the teaching and the discussion of the lessons. In determining the emphasis teacher leaders draw upon the needs and interests of the group, children's rate of progress, evaluation of data, reflection on previous sessions, and issues arising from school visits.

During the continuing years teachers will extend their theoretical understandings established during the training year. The session emphasis facilitates in-depth exploration of learning and teaching while maintaining cohesion within the session.

Possible emphases or topics for consideration could include:
- Change over time in reading and or writing
- Working from the children's competencies to strengthen literacy processing
- Fostering independence
- Achieving accelerated progress
- Working actively to achieve shifts within each lesson activity
- Fostering strategic activity in reading and writing
- Designing individual lessons
- Teaching for phrasing and fluency across lesson activities
- Teaching through demonstration and economy of words
- Fostering oral language development
- Observation and analysis of strategic activity using running records

When working with an emphasis it is important to ensure that discussions provide scope for exploring and responding to the complexities of learning and teaching being observed.

Using Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals to Promote Knowledge of Reading Recovery Teaching Procedures. During the training year teachers use *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals Parts One and Two* to become familiar with the components of the Reading Recovery lesson and the teaching procedures which are most powerful in promoting accelerated literacy learning for children who experience difficulties. During the continuing years teachers continue to use *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals* to inform their teaching, to reflect

upon the appropriateness and responsiveness of their teaching for individual children, and to deepen further their understanding of literacy processing and accelerated learning.

Using Research to Extend Understandings of Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura. In addition to using *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals* teachers and teacher leaders also draw on a wider body of literature to broaden and deepen their understandings of theory and practice. Clay's writings including *Becoming Literate: The Construction of Inner Control, Change over Time in Children's Literacy Development, By Different Paths to Common Outcomes,* along with a range of journal articles by Clay and other Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura professionals provide a basis for ongoing analysis and discussion of teaching and learning.

This literature can be used for ongoing professional development in different ways depending upon the emphasis of the session, the interests of the group, the areas of teaching and learning being explored and any refinements or changes to Reading Recovery/Descubriendo la Lectura.

Using Current Research to Inform Understandings of Teaching and Learning. Teacher leaders and teachers may also draw upon a more general body of literature related to literacy teaching and learning to enhance their understandings. When engaging in discussions with colleagues at school sites or team meetings it is important that teachers understand and are able to discuss similarities and differences in the range of perspectives which inform teaching and learning.

Establishing Processes Which Facilitate Powerful Teacher Learning
Encouraging Discussion and Debate. During the training year teacher leaders guide teachers in learning how to observe, discuss, analyze and reflect upon child literacy processing and the teaching decisions which promote powerful learning. During this process teachers also learn to:
- Be comfortable, honest and open in their interactions with colleagues
- Value own and others' knowledge, skills, and experience
- Engage with issues and challenge own and others' assumptions
- Develop a professional stance of life-long learning

During ongoing professional development sessions, teacher leaders and teachers continue to work together within this inquiry-based approach to learning with a greater emphasis on shared responsibility for constructing understandings around teaching and learning.

Maximizing the Power of Ongoing Professional Development Sessions. The power of the sessions is maximized when there has been pre-planning, preparation, identification of an emphasis, and could include:

- Collaboration with colleagues in the planning and preparation of sessions
- Teachers having assigned tasks or readings to complete prior to sessions
- Tailoring of session in response to specific needs of the group
- Variations in grouping of teachers for specific purposes or periods of time
- Teacher input and ownership into the content and organization of the sessions
- Variation in the timing and scheduling of sessions

Any assigned readings and activities within sessions should be decided by the group and relate directly to the theory and practice of Reading Recovery.

Shaping the Session: The Role of Teacher Leaders and Teachers
In the training year, training classes have an organized structure incorporating two lessons, and the discussion of lessons back in the circle. This structure remains constant throughout the training year.

In continuing years there is potential for more flexibility in the organization, format and emphasis for sessions. However, the following five components are present in each session:

> i)   Planning and Preparation
> ii) Observing and talking about live lessons
> iii) Discussion following lessons
> iv) Addressing implementation and program issues
> v)   Evaluation

Planning and Preparation. Prior to the sessions teacher leaders and teachers may decide upon a particular emphasis and prepare for sessions in a range of ways including:
- reading literature related to the particular emphasis
- analyzing lesson records prior to the session
- reflecting on their teaching in relation to the emphasis

This preparation is the catalyst for the observations and discussions during the session. It also provides teachers with a framework for introducing the children being taught behind the glass.

During the introduction to the session teachers identify personal and group goals to further develop their competencies in teaching and in the inquiry-based processes which facilitate their learning.

Varying the format of sessions. The organization and design of sessions can be flexible and varied. Sessions may incorporate differences in the timing of teaching sessions, the range and nature of small group activities and discussions, and the use of resources including literature and videotapes. Variations that do not meet the standard for the number of behind the glass lessons need to be discussed with trainer(s) at the University Training Center.

The type of lessons being observed may vary in a range of ways, for example:
- Watching one teacher teach two lessons with the same child to observe shifts in learning and teaching
- Selecting students according to a specific theme or purpose, e.g. ready for discontinuing lessons, early in the series of lessons, etc. for in-depth exploration of a particular area of interest
- Using a recent videotaped lesson followed by a discussion of literacy processing, then a live lesson with the same child followed by further discussion of shifts in learning
- Observing reading **or** writing component of a lesson with three different children to identify individual differences in children's literacy processing and responsive teaching

- Taking notes in lieu of discussion for a specific lesson activity to provide concrete examples of learning and teaching for discussion (e.g. recording teacher prompts on a new book or self-initiated activity by the child during the writing)
- Observing an average first grade student reading **or** writing followed by a Reading Recovery lesson with a low achieving child to hypothesize about strategic activity utilized by average achieving students
- Observing one lesson with a child not making accelerated progress. Discuss this lesson in-depth with problem solving and generating potential alternate teaching. A different teacher or the teacher leader brings the child back for a focused teaching interaction. This interaction is followed by more interactive discussion
- Observing a colleague visit behind the glass to identify conversations which promote powerful teaching

Observing and talking about the lessons. During the observation and discussion of lessons, teachers and teacher leaders build upon and deepen the theoretical understandings developed during the training year. Teachers take greater responsibility for initiating discussion and elaborating on ideas relating to the emphasis. Teacher leaders also encourage teachers to explore ideas with increasing levels of sophistication and complexity during discussions. The aim of discussion continues to be directed towards strengthening teaching to promote accelerated literacy learning for individual children.

Discussion following lessons. During this part of the session, teachers and teacher leaders identify and discuss significant ideas explored during the observation of lessons. They share and discuss observations and insights in relation to the specific lessons observed, the emphasis for the session, and the literature which provides the theoretical base for understandings. New learning may be extended by additional readings or examples provided by the teacher leader.

Addressing implementation and program issues. During this part of the session, teachers or teacher leaders may raise issues that are important for successful implementation of Reading Recovery within the school or system. Implementation and program issues might include advocacy by the teacher, monitoring students' progress after Reading Recovery lessons are discontinued, discussion of data collection and results, liaison with classroom teachers, etc. It is recommended that the teacher leader devote 5-10 minutes in each session to implementation and program issues.

Evaluation. Evaluation of ongoing professional development sessions encourages teachers to identify the specific changes they will make in their teaching to promote optimal student learning outcomes. In evaluating the effectiveness of the session, teachers and teacher leaders draw upon the personal and group goals identified at the beginning of the session. Together they design appropriate evaluation processes and procedures. Evaluation may occur in both oral and written modes and will vary from session to session. Often the evaluation becomes the basis for the introduction to and planning of the following session.

Teacher leaders also evaluate professional development sessions to reflect on their own effectiveness at facilitating the group processes that foster inquiry and continued learning. This evaluation helps them refine their practice of working with teacher groups. Teacher leaders

consider whether teachers' understanding of literacy processes, theory, and teaching procedures is growing. They judge how their planning, preparation, and interactions may have impacted teachers' learning and participation. They also examine how their own role as a facilitator promoted discussion, debate, and engagement among class members. In doing so, teacher leaders gain insight about what went well, how they might change their own behavior, and how they can follow up with teachers after the class session. (For suggestions about ways teacher leaders might engage in self-reflection, see Appendix C, "Evaluating Ongoing Professional Development Sessions: Self-Reflection for Teacher Leaders").

Resource:
See Teacher Leader Information Sheet, Appendix A:
- o   "Ongoing Professional Development: What Makes a Strong Session"

4.   Providing Other Professional Support

School Visits to Trained Teachers
Teacher leader visits to trained teachers are part of Reading Recovery's ongoing professional development. School visits for trained teachers are less frequent than during the training year because the trained teachers have a great deal more independence in teaching children. Decisions on school visits are based on teacher needs, and analysis of information gathered from monitoring student progress. Teacher leaders respond quickly to teacher's requests for support with children who are not making satisfactory progress.

School visits to teachers are opportunities to engage in problem solving and clarify understandings on a more personal level. The following information relates to school visits to trained teachers.

- Set a focus for the lesson observation based on the teacher's analysis and observation of the child's processing. The tone is supportive and interactive as the teacher and teacher leader work together in a collegial manner.

- Observe, taking detailed notes related to the problem the teacher has articulated.

- Promote mutual analysis and problem solving based on the identified problem and supported by evidence from the lesson. Discussion occurs before and after the lesson.

- Follow the discussion with:
    - planning the child's next lesson,
    - planning some aspect of the lesson,
    - bringing the child back for a trial of particular teaching in reading or writing, or
    - scheduling a follow-up visit, communication, or update.

Using Colleagues to Support Effective Teaching

Colleague Visits. Another aspect of ongoing professional development is a colleague visit. In a colleague visit, one teacher visits another teacher to observe a lesson for a particular purpose. The goal of the visit is to work together to explore and understand the teacher's teaching and the child's processing so that both teachers go away having learned more. A colleague visit will follow a similar pattern to other visits. It would involve discussion before the lesson, observation of the lesson and discussion following the lesson.

Discussion before the lesson would include:
- information about the child's strengths as a reader and writer and
- the questions and particular focus of the teacher who is teaching.

Discussion after the lesson would include:
- the child's strengths as a reader and writer,

- discussion of observations that pertain to the questions and particular focus of the teacher who taught, and
- relevant parts of *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals, Parts One and Two* to clarify and better understand the child's processing or the teacher's teaching.

Cluster Visits. Another level of support is a cluster visit. Cluster visits involve two to four teachers and may often include a teacher leader. Many experienced teachers and teacher leaders find these visits more effective than one-to-one visits. Having more people present provides richer discussions and results in more effective problem solving.

A schedule of cluster or colleague visits is generally established early in the school year. Teacher leaders have found that the beginning-of-the-year meeting or the first ongoing professional development session are the most appropriate times. Setting up the placement of teachers in cluster groups and having them arrange the dates for their visits quickly gets the details of these visits organized.

Teachers need some guidance in how to get the most benefit from these sessions. It is recommended that each year all teachers be involved in at least one cluster visit where a teacher leader is present. The support from teacher leaders is especially important when the cluster includes teachers who have not been part of this process before.

Combining teachers who have been trained in different years or with different teacher leaders adds a wider range of experience and skills to each cluster group.

Teacher leaders report that cluster visits work best when time is taken at sessions to talk about how these could be conducted. For example, talking through a format such as the one described below. Some teacher leaders have successfully introduced teachers to these visits during the last part of their training year.

> *A possible format for a cluster visit:*
> - Before a lesson begins, have a discussion on:
>   - The child's strengths in reading and writing.
>   - The teaching planned for the day.
> - Observe the lesson.
> - After the lesson, come to agreement regarding:
>   - The child's strengths as a reader and writer.
>   - The next most powerful teaching decisions for this child in reading and writing using written references by Marie Clay to support these decisions.
>   - Clarification of procedures as necessary.

Clinical Visits. A special form of cluster visit is a clinical visit. Teachers and a teacher leader work together at a school to observe and problem-solve about a child who is proving exceptionally difficult to teach. Most clinical visits are scheduled for one half day. The visiting team is usually composed of two Reading Recovery teachers and the teacher leader. Using instructional records they discuss and analyze the child's lack of progress and processing problems. Following the analysis of progress, they observe the lesson and compile careful

observational notes. After the lesson, they engage in rigorous analysis and hypothesize on problem areas. They propose procedures and decide on priorities for immediate teaching. Then the student is brought back for more teaching by the teacher leader or one of the teachers. After the child leaves, they engage in rigorous analysis and propose possible next steps that will powerfully impact the child's learning. Each team member summarizes his or her own learning. It is highly recommended that communication continue with the teacher leader on the progress of this child to ensure that the work done during the clinical visit be sustained to support the child's learning.

Trained Teachers Needing More Support
Sometimes trained teachers need extra support to become more expert in their own teaching.

Resource:
See Teacher Leader Information Sheet, Appendix A:
  o "Support for Teachers"

References

In addition to Clay's writings the following references are recommended:

A Principal's Guide to Reading Recovery. 2002. Columbus, OH: Reading Recovery Council of North America.

Reading Recovery Council of North America website (www.readingrecovery.org)

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Lindfors, J. (2008). *Children's language: Connecting reading, language, and talk.* New York: Teachers College Press.

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Lose, M. K. (2008). Beyond the words: Considering nonverbal communication in Reading Recovery teaching. *The Journal of Reading Recovery, 7*(2), 5-17.

Lose, M. K. (2007). A child's response to intervention requires a responsive teacher of reading. *The Reading Teacher, 61* (3), 276-279.

Lose, M. K., & Konstantellou, E. (2005). Selection of children for Reading Recovery: Challenges and responses. *The Journal of Reading Recovery, 5* (1), pp. 32-45.

Van Dyke, J. (2008). Reading books and discussing stories: Constructing knowledge through talk. *The Journal of Reading Recovery. 7*(2), 18-25.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Teacher Leader Information Sheets:

- o "Maintaining Quality Implementation After the Teacher Training Year"
- o "Children Entering Reading Recovery with Low Text Reading Levels: Gathering Additional Information"
- o "Children Entering Reading Recovery with Limited Language Levels"
- o "Ongoing Professional Development: What Makes a Strong Session"
- o "Support for Teachers"

Tutor Information

MAINTAINING QUALITY IMPLEMENTATION
AFTER THE TEACHER TRAINING YEAR

While the inservice training prepares teachers and schools to operate Reading Recovery independently, continued support and guidance is required to maintain high quality implementation. Early in the development of Reading Recovery the need for some ongoing guidance for previously trained teachers became apparent. There was a tendency for some teachers to deviate from the procedures. Also, many teachers reported feeling professionally isolated without the regular input their training year had provided.

Sessions for continuing support are integral to the implementation of Reading Recovery. Trained teachers meet with the Tutor at a local Reading Recovery centre six times a year (approximately every six weeks). Teachers continue to bring children to teach for their colleagues, but the emphasis at sessions is different because the teachers' needs have changed. The support sessions aim to:

- sharpen teachers' observations
- refine thinking
- increase understanding, and
- improve decision-making abilities.

Above all it is essential that teachers continue to ask themselves and their colleagues: Why did the child do that? Why did the teacher do that?

Sessions also provide an opportunity for the teachers and Tutors to talk about the children's progress and the operation of Reading Recovery in their schools.

Sessions for trained Reading Recovery teachers are supported by visits from Tutors and colleagues as follows:

- Tutors visit trained teachers on request and at least once during each year.

- As part of their Reading Recovery training teachers learn how to give guidance and support to each other. In subsequent years teachers arrange to both visit a colleague and have a colleague visit them at least twice a year.

- Cluster visits with more than one Reading Recovery teacher visiting a colleague are a more recent development that is proving to be very worthwhile. Cluster visits are particularly effective in rural areas where distances are great.

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Tutor Information

**Children entering Reading Recovery with low text reading levels:
Gathering additional information**

Rationale

When the Observation Survey is being administered to children whose instructional reading level is level two or below, the running records will not provide sufficient information on their reading behaviours. Teachers will need to gather additional samples of text reading before writing up the Observation Survey Summary and Predictions of Progress. Running records taken while the child reads additional texts with support will provide insight into the reading behaviours that are beginning to come under control but are not fully captured by the standard procedures. The aim is to explore reading behaviours and find out about anything the child understands or can do when reading very simple texts.

Steps

A)   Use standard procedures to obtain the instructional text level in the usual way

- Establish the instructional text level obtaining texts at three different levels where possible. Remember to check control of directional movement (see Observation Survey, pg. 61).

- Transfer the information from these running records onto side one of the Observation Survey Summary.

- Complete side one of the Observation Survey Summary sheet.

> *Note: To obtain a sample of text reading for a child at instructional Level 0 (Dictated Text) ask the child to draw a picture and tell you about it. Write the 'story' in clear print, and ask the child to read it while you take a running record. If the child cannot read this message try to get a simpler message e.g. less than four words.*

Tutor Information

CHILDREN ENTERING READING RECOVERY WITH LIMITED LANGUAGE LEVELS

For children with limited language, Marie Clay suggests that the Reading Recovery teacher may need to negotiate or contract for more oral language in the class programme. In some way class teachers need to generate extra talking time.

We can expect reading and writing to improve oral language in the early stages. It appears sometimes that children plateau at about Level 9. This can be prevented by the child getting extra opportunities for oral language. One problem in the classroom situation is that teachers are not conscious of doing things for oral language's sake. (See Engaging with the School System Study, Clay 1985.)

If children's language is very limited on entry we may need to keep them longer. The children need to have a generative system- the generative power to go on. Language level is not the critical thing. What is needed is a working system. Children need to know how to generate their own solutions, hypotheses. Clay suggests we need to ask, "How would we recognise this?" It seems that we would need to look closely at how the child responds to new text. What evidence is there that the child can search for and use all sources of information but particularly structure?

Another question to ask ourselves is "How can we make the most of opportunities across the lesson to extend the child's control of structure as a source of information?"

See also **Conversation as a Model of Teaching**

Tutor Information

ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:
WHAT MAKES A STRONG SESSION?

- Opportunities for teachers to share with each other, to take responsibility for the session, to talk amongst themselves, get to know each other, developing professional rapport

- Creating a context in which teachers feel safe to explore issues, developing openess and flexibility of responses

- Attending to factors that facilitate teacher interaction

- Fostering group responses for learning

- Listening to underlying messages

- Encouraging teachers to relate back and discuss their own children

- Linking and building across sessions throughout the year

- Keeping to BIG IDEAS

- Novel and varied approaches; a certain complexity to content

- Ensuring a mix of theory and practice

- Not rehashing training

- Sending teachers away thinking

- Continued evaluation

- Careful time management

- An effective sized group

- Ensuring a good balance of experienced/recently trained teachers, from different kinds of schools or locations

Notes from shared session at a
Tutor Development Week

NZRR
2007

Tutor Information

SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS

Some suggestions for supporting teachers who seem a little weaker than others at the end of the training year:

1.   Invite them to attend extra Inservice sessions in the next year. Most profit is probably gained from attendance at a series of two or three, starting about the end of Term I or early Term II.

2.   Invite them to attend extra Continuing Contact sessions in Term I (i.e. four sessions instead of two). This is only possible where two groups are operating in a year.

3.   Provide Tutor visits for extra support.

4.   Arrange for them to undertake extra colleague visits. The organisation of these could be varied to include, for example, cluster visits with one or two other teachers.

5.   Have them go with you on a visit to another teacher or teachers.

6.   Have them join in on special "update" sessions being run for teachers returning to Reading Recovery teaching after a break away.

Appendix B: Establishing a Process for Monitoring and Identifying Children Not Making Satisfactory Progress

Reading Recovery teachers who consider that they have an unusually challenging child need to communicate this to the teacher leader as soon as possible, probably within the first few weeks of the child's series of lessons.

The following examples are structures teacher leaders have created to monitor student progress:

Example 1: Use a bar graph to chart progress on a designated schedule. When each teacher's bar graph is sent to the teacher leader he/she can quickly scan the graph and determine children making rapid or slow progress.

Example 2: Use a form and have Reading Recovery teachers complete and mail/e-mail the summary of student progress on text reading level and writing vocabulary at designated intervals (for example at 5, 10, 15, and 20 weeks).

Example 3: Develop a computer program for teachers to log in student progress at designated time intervals. Book levels and writing vocabulary that indicate slow progress are automatically highlighted in red.

**Appendix C: Evaluating Ongoing Professional Development Sessions:
                 Self-Reflection for Teacher Leaders**

Teacher leaders self-reflect at many points during an ongoing professional development session, but they have a particularly powerful opportunity for evaluation when the session has ended. The following questions are suggested to guide evaluation and self-reflection for teacher leaders.

Evaluating Teachers' Learning
- What new learning did teachers take away from today's session?
- What growth in knowledge was evident related to the area of study and objectives for this session?
- What growth did I see in teachers' theoretical understanding of literacy processing?
- Did I see increasing sophistication in teachers' exploration of ideas as they shared observations, discussed lessons, and made links to literature?
- What evidence do I have that teachers are becoming more expert at using teaching procedures that promote powerful learning for children?

Evaluating Teachers' Interactions
- Are all teachers engaging productively in discussion and debate?
- Are teachers sharing the responsibility for constructing understandings?
- Are teachers valuing and building upon colleagues' contributions?
- Are teachers willing to share ideas and challenge assumptions?

Evaluating Teacher Leaders' Preparation and Facilitating
- Was our *emphasis* productive? Why or why not?
- Did our *preparation* contribute to a successful session? What will that mean for the next session?
- To what extent was the *structure* of the session conducive to teachers' learning about the selected emphasis? What might I have done differently?
- How are teachers' interactions facilitating or hindering their learning?
- How effectively did I support teachers
    - to willingly share their ideas?
    - to engage with issues?
    - to value and build upon colleagues' contributions?
    - to challenge assumptions?
    - to keep a focus on productive issues?
    - to develop a professional stance of life-long learning?

Follow Up
- How will I know if teachers are implementing their new learning?
- What issues or understandings might need clarification or continued exploration?
- How can I effectively build upon today's learning in the next session?
- How might I follow up on today's learning during teacher visits or through personal communication?

- What changes might I need to make related to group size, group composition, session structure, or time management?
- What changes might I need to make to generate more of a shared responsibility among teachers for engaging in productive discussion and constructing understandings together?
- What implications does this session raise for implementation and communication within our site?
- How will I continue my professional study to support teachers' growing understandings and effectiveness?

**Appendix D: Oakland University Reading Recovery Center Self-Evaluation
                  Rubric for Continuing Reading Recovery Teachers**

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY READING RECOVERY CENTER
Self-Evaluation Rubric for Continuing Reading Recovery Teachers 2008-2009

Reading Recovery Teacher: _____

On a regular basis, Reading Recovery continuing teachers will evaluate their professional progress in four areas: Teaching Children, Collecting Data, Understanding Theory, and Understanding the Program and Its Implementation. Each area will be evaluated on a scale from 1 to 5 (see below).

Teaching Children   **Circle one: 5   4   3   2   1**

- Teach at least four first-grade students per day individually for 30-minute daily sessions in a school setting throughout the school year.
- Demonstrate effective teaching of Reading Recovery students.
- Keep complete records on each child as a basis for instruction (*An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* and the Observation Survey Summary, Observation Summary for Multiple Assessments, Recommendations for Discontinuing Before Final Assessment, predictions of progress, Daily Lesson Record Sheets, Running Records, Weekly Record of Known Writing Vocabulary, Change Over Time in Text Level, Weekly Record of Known Reading Vocabulary, Change Over Time in Known Writing Vocabulary).
- Teach a minimum of eight children per year.
- Because Reading Recovery teaching and training are intensive, exceeding more than four Reading Recovery slots during the training year can only be done with the concurrence of the teacher leader and teacher.
- Communicate with parents, first-grade teachers, and other school personnel on a regular basis throughout the year.

Always (5)	Almost Always (4)	Sometimes (3)	Almost Never (2)	Never (1)
Theory and student observation drive use of procedures, through explicit instructional language, resulting in effective and efficient teaching decisions.	Lesson components are firmly in place, procedures based on theory match students' needs, some evidence of explicit instructional language and prompts, leading to mostly effective and efficient teaching decisions.	Lesson components are generally in place, with some evidence of matching students' needs with procedures based on theory.	Lesson components may be in place, but accompanied by rote teaching. Lack of specific instructional language. Theoretical understandings almost never evident.	Lesson components are in place, little evidence of teaching. Confused teacher language/prompting. Lack of evidence of teaching based on theory.

Collecting Data   **Circle one: 5   4   3   2   1**

- Maintenance of all records pertaining to the teaching of children according to the criteria established by Reading Recovery.
  All data is submitted/shared as requested by Teacher Leader.

Always (5)	Almost Always (4)	Sometimes (3)	Almost Never (2)	Never (1)
All records are independently maintained and data are submitted on time.	All records are maintained, data submitted with only an occasional reminder from teacher leader.	All records are maintained and data submitted with frequent reminders from teacher leader.	Some records maintained, some missing information. Data are submitted with frequent reminders.	No evidence of records and no data are submitted.

Understanding Theory   **Circle one:**   5   4   3   2   1

Evidence of understanding theory through observation and evaluation of the following:

- Teacher's participation in discussion before, during, and following lessons taught behind the glass.
- Teacher's assessment, analysis, and use of student records to inform teaching.
- Teacher's theory as reflected in the teaching of students.
- Teacher's preparation for, and active participation in, Teacher Leader Observations of Teaching / Cluster Visits.
- Teacher's self-evaluation of his/her professional progress.
- Teacher's completed assignments and readings for participation in RR continuing professional development sessions.

Always (5)	Almost Always (4)	Sometimes (3)	Almost Never (2)	Never (1)
Independent, voluntary, insightful verbal interactions with appropriate timing. Comments move effortlessly between practice and theory skillful understanding of literacy lessons designed for individuals. Engaged, active participation.	Consistent verbal participation. During group interactions, comments usually help the group extend understanding of theory. Sometimes needs teacher leader support.	Variable verbal interaction with and without teacher leader questioning / support. Comments sometimes show understanding of and connection to theory of individually designed lessons.	Minimum verbal interaction after teacher leader prompting. Comments are usually general and not tied to theory of literacy lessons designed for individuals.	No verbal interaction despite encouragement / reminders.

Understanding Reading Recovery Implementation   **Circle one:**   5   4   3   2   1

- Ability to communicate effectively with staff and parents about Reading Recovery.
- Preparation and development of a school annual report.

Always (5)	Almost Always (4)	Sometimes (3)	Almost Never (2)	Never (1)
Initiates effective ongoing communication opportunities to keep Reading Recovery in the forefront.	Communication is effective and ongoing.	Communication is effective but minimal.	Very little communication is undertaken.	No attempt to communicate with staff or parent(s) is evident.

Date:	Total Points:	Signature:

Professional Goals

GOAL	WHEN AND HOW MEASURED	EVIDENCE