READING FIRST
NOTEBOOK

Spring 2006

Special Issues in First and Second Grade

Early learning can be an exciting time as students get their first real taste of independent reading. First grade is a time when beginning reading skills are being practiced and polished. By the end of the school year, most first-grade students are phonemically aware, have mastered letter sounds, have begun to read and write simple text, and are developing their listening and reading comprehension skills. By the end of second grade, most students have perfected letter sounds and are mastering sounds of letter combinations and vowel patterns. They are developing competence in fluent reading, and their comprehension abilities and vocabularies continue to grow and develop. However, instruction for these young children can be challenging as teachers attempt to capitalize on precious instruction time, provide effective instruction for each student, and meet the needs of those students who struggle.

This edition of the *Reading First Notebook* is the second in a series dealing with specific grade-level issues. The Winter 2006 edition of the *Reading First Notebook* dealt with issues central to kindergarten. This edition will focus on topics that first- and second-grade teachers often confront, including instructional issues in the areas of phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency, as well as differentiated instruction. The next issue of the *Reading First Notebook* will highlight matters important to third grade.

This edition is not for first- and second-grade teachers only. All primary grade teachers benefit from an awareness of the types of instruction and instructional topics that are being addressed in surrounding grade levels.

In This Issue...

Reading First Levels of Participation
As of 4/25/06

1,576 district awards representing

5,229 schools have been made.

Vocabulary Development in First and Second Grades

A variety of fun vocabulary activities will keep students engaged, excited, and motivated to learn more words. Reading First teachers should have a collection of effective instructional strategies that will help students develop vocabulary at their fingertips.

A student's vocabulary knowledge correlates highly to his or her ability to comprehend text and achieve in school (Baumann, Kame'enui, & Ash, 2003). Vocabulary has been described as the bridge between the word-level processes of phonics and the cognitive processes of comprehension (Kamil & Hiebert, 2005). Keith Stanovich (1986) has adapted Walberg and Tsai's (1983) term "Matthew Effect," which describes the concept that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer, to the field of reading. Stanovich contends that the "rich" (those students with, for example, a well-developed vocabulary) have an advantage in reading due to their vocabulary abilities and therefore read more and learn more words. Meanwhile, the "poor" (those with a limited vocabulary) have a disadvantage in reading because of their lack of word knowledge and therefore find reading more difficult and read less often and learn fewer words.

We know that students enter classrooms with varying levels of word knowledge (see "Research Spotlight on Vocabulary" in the Winter 2006 edition of the *Reading First Notebook*). In order to prevent a progressively widening gap in word knowledge and reading abilities, students, especially those in Reading First classrooms, are likely to have some catching up to do.

Vocabulary learning can occur both indirectly and directly. Teachers should provide both an environment in which students are exposed to rich language and explicit vocabulary instruction. Teachers play a big part in ensuring students are learning not only enough words but also the most relevant types of words. Many Reading First teachers have received in-depth professional development on Isabel Beck's work. Beck (2000) provides guidance by defining the following three types of vocabulary words:

- Tier One words are common words that students are likely to know or that are easily taught (*friend, tail, orange*).

- Tier Two words are less common words but are likely to appear in a variety of more sophisticated texts (*require, identical, review*).

- Tier Three words are rare words that students are less likely to encounter frequently. These are often content-specific words whose meanings are often supported by surrounding text (*thorax, silt, pollen*).

First- and second-grade students possess a wide range of understanding of words from each category, so teachers must have strategies to select appropriate words on which to focus instruction. First- and second-grade teachers frequently spend too much time on instruction of Tier One words, which commonly require simply a quick

definition or reminder, and Tier Three words, which are rarely used and often confined to a specific content area. Instead, teachers should focus instruction on carefully selected Tier Two words. Tier Two words are those that appear frequently and are useful in an array of reading and writing situations. In selecting Tier Two words, teachers should judiciously select those words that carry high importance, utility, and the most instructional potential, as well as those that help build conceptual understanding.

Some examples of effective strategies for vocabulary development include the following:

Semantic Maps. The teacher provides instruction on how to complete semantic maps that will assist word learning and concept development, such as brainstorming webs, graphic organizers, and maps to classify, compare, contrast, and describe qualities.

Text Talk (Beck & McKeown, 2001). The teacher provides direct instruction of three selected vocabulary words within the context of a story. Students are then provided an opportunity to discuss and extend the meaning of the words through a teacher-led discussion.

Teaching Word Meanings During Shared Storybook Readings (Coyne, Simmons, & Kame'enui, 2004). Over a series of days, students are directly taught selected story vocabulary, provided opportunities to integrate and apply the vocabulary, and encouraged to use target vocabulary in retelling.

Word Wizard (Beck, Perfetti, & McKeown, 1982). The teacher posts interesting words on a word wall. Children are encouraged to use the words in a variety of contexts and notice words in other contexts. They are "rewarded" for their use and observations of posted words.

Classification (Stahl & Stahl, 2004). Students are taught to sort or classify pictures and objects by characteristics. Children are asked to verbalize the features of the objects that make them alike or different.

It is important for Reading First teachers, coaches, and administrators to understand the implications of vocabulary instruction, know sound strategies for selecting the most appropriate words to teach, and possess a variety of effective vocabulary instruction strategies.

References:

Baumann, J. F., Kame'enui, E. J., & Ash, G. E. (2003). Research on vocabulary instruction: Voltaire redux. In J. Flood, D. Lapp, J. R. Squire, & J. M. Jensen (Eds.), *Handbook on research on teaching the English language arts* (2nd ed., pp. 752–785). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G., & Kucan, L. (2000). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction.* New York: Guilford Press.

Beck, I. L., & McKeown, M. G. (2001). Text talk: Capturing the benefits of read-aloud experiences for young children. *The Reading Teacher, 55*(1) 10–20.

Beck, I. L., Perfetti, C. A., & McKeown, M. G. (1982). Effects of long-term vocabulary instruction on lexical access and reading comprehension. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 74*, 506–521.

Coyne, M. D., Kame'enui, E. J., & Simmons, D. C. (2001). Prevention and intervention in beginning reading: Two complex systems. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 16*(2), 62–72.

Kamil, M. L., & Hiebert E. H. (2005). The teaching and learning of vocabulary: Perspectives and persistent issues. In E. H. Hiebert & M. Kamil (Eds.), *Teaching and learning vocabulary: Bringing scientific research to practice.* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Nagy, W. E., & Herman, P. A. (1987). Breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge: Implications for acquisition and instruction. In M. G. McKeown & M. E. Curtis (Eds.), *The nature of vocabulary acquisition* (pp. 19–35). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Stahl, S. A., & Stahl, K. A. (2004). Word wizards all! Teaching word meanings in preschool and primary education. In J. F. Baumann & E. J. Kame'enui (Eds.), *Vocabulary instruction: Research to practice* (pp. 59–78). New York: Guilford Press.

Stanovich, K. E. (1986). Matthew effects in reading: Some consequences of individual differences in the acquisition of literacy. *Reading Research Quarterly, 2*, 360–406.

Walberg, H. J., & Tsai, S. L. (1983). Matthew effects in education. *American Educational Research Journal, 20*(3), 359–373.

What Is Explicit and Systematic Phonics Instruction?

There is an important reason that Reading First schools are required to select core reading, supplemental, and intervention programs that incorporate explicit and systematic phonics instruction. The Report of the National Reading Panel (2000) indicates that early systematic phonics instruction produces gains in reading.

First graders who were taught phonics systematically were better able to decode and spell, and they showed significant improvement in their ability to comprehend text (National Reading Panel, 2000). Moreover, systematic synthetic phonics instruction was significantly more effective in improving the alphabetic knowledge and word identification skills of children of poverty, children with reading disabilities, and low-achieving children without disabilities than instructional approaches that were less focused on these initial reading skills. Synthetic phonics instruction teaches how to convert letters into sounds and how to blend sounds into words. The at-risk students that attend Reading First schools are in great need of this type of intensive, structured instruction.

But what exactly does explicit and systematic instruction mean?

Systematic instruction refers to the "what and when" or scope and sequence of phonics instruction. Systematic instruction is the presentation of a set of specific skills and concepts in a predetermined, logical order. Skills and concepts are introduced according to a continuum beginning with the most simple and moving toward more complex. In contrast, incidental instruction implies that teachers follow no predetermined sequence of skills and introduce concepts in random order as the need arises.

Explicit instruction refers to the "how" of phonics instruction, or the delivery technique. Explicit instruction means that the concept is taught clearly and directly through teacher modeling, that it is reviewed regularly through guided practice in which the teacher provides support, prompts, and feedback, and that its application is encouraged through independent practice. Alternatively, implicit phonics instruction involves a much less direct approach in which the teacher does not make direct connections for the learner but relies upon him or her to make connections independently.

For students who struggle, incidental and nondirect approaches to teaching phonics can be particularly problematic. Many first-grade students find sound-spelling relationships, blending, and word identification very challenging. Many second-grade students might still struggle with those same concepts and find applying advanced phonics skills and decoding multisyllabic words very challenging. These students need clear, modeled instruction and many opportunities to practice, review, and perfect a carefully sequenced set of skills in order to become accomplished readers. Reading First classrooms that effectively utilize core reading and supplemental programs that incorporate explicit and systematic phonics instruction will provide students the focused instruction they need.

References:

National Reading Panel. (2000). *Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction.* Washington, DC: National Institutes of Health.

National Reading Panel. (2000). *Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction* (Reports of the subgroups). Washington, DC: National Institutes of Health.
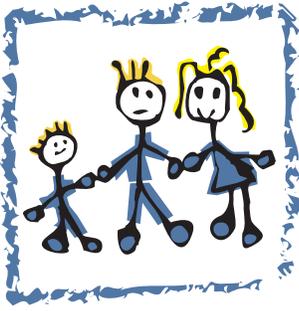
Student Reading Centers

The use of student reading centers in Reading First classrooms offers focused practice time for students and focused instructional time for teachers.

Mr. Madison, a first-grade teacher in a Reading First school, completed a thorough examination of his students' mid-year assessment results with help from his reading coach. He was surprised to find a wide range of student abilities concerning some of the key reading concepts on which he had been focusing. Four students, he discovered, were still struggling with segmenting phonemes. Six students, including three from the group of poor segmenters, were not able to decode cvc words. Another group of seven students was able to adequately read grade-level material, but their fluency level was insufficient. Mr. Madison's final four students were performing above grade level in reading.

Mr. Madison wondered how he was ever going to effectively address the wide range of needs of his students. He tried working with small groups of children for focused instruction while the other students were spending time reading independently, but that wasn't working. He worried that extended independent reading time was not an effective use of instructional time, particularly for the duration necessary to provide adequate instruction to his small groups. Mr. Madison expressed his concerns to the school reading coach, Mrs. Gunter, who had heard similar concerns from other primary-level teachers. She offered to provide professional development and follow-up assistance to help teachers set up and manage a system for reading centers in first- and second-grade classrooms.

During the time set aside for professional development, Mrs. Gunter began with an overall description of what reading centers are and why they are so important. She explained that a reading center is an area in the classroom that contains activities and resources that facilitate the development, practice, and reinforcement of particular reading skills that have previously been taught in the classroom. The existence of many different reading centers (anywhere from four to six or more) around the classroom allows small groups, pairs, or individual students to work without direct teacher supervision on a number of assigned reading skills. A reading center differs from a "learning" center, "interest" center, and "literacy" center in that it focuses directly on reading-specific content. If Reading First teachers implement reading centers within the 90-minute reading block, all center activities should be directly related to specific reading skills addressed during that block of time. Other centers such as science, math, and art centers can certainly be used at other times during the school day. Mrs. Gunter cautioned that activities such as reading a math problem or painting pictures of story characters are examples of activities that, although they may include reading, are not directly related to reading instruction.

Mrs. Gunter explained that centers offer an avenue for differentiation. Students learn best when there is a moderate amount of challenge associated with a task—not too easy, but not too difficult (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986). Students at varying levels of knowledge and ability need specialized learning experiences and varied amounts of practice in order to develop competence. Reading centers are a flexible way of offering a range of activities at differing complexity levels, making it possible to address the diverse, data-indicated learning needs of students. Additionally, centers offer structured time for students to work independently from the teacher on

purposeful activities, freeing the teacher and intervention specialists to pull small groups of students together for focused, teacher-led instruction.

Mr. Madison began to consider how he could set up centers appropriate for each of the identified groups of students in his classroom. The group of four could attend a center where they could practice segmenting words by sorting word cards by the number of phonemes they contain. This group may need some guided instruction from him or his instructional assistant. The students who were struggling with decoding could attend a center where they could work together or independently with letter tiles to create and decode cvc words. The fluency group could work together to practice reading a reader's theater text that they could perform to the class later. Finally, the group of students that are performing above grade level could work on enrichment activities such as comparing story elements of two different folk tales.

Mr. Madison began to understand how reading centers might be the answer to his dilemma, but he needed to know more.

Mrs. Gunter explained how centers work. Each reading center is carefully planned by the teacher with a particular reading objective in mind. Because the center activities have been carefully selected and designed to meet specific student needs, students must attend their assigned centers rather than selecting the centers they prefer. The center activity must clearly and directly address that objective. Besides being well-planned, the

centers must also be well-managed. Students must have a good understanding of what to do, how to do it, and what to do if they complete the assignment early or need help. Additionally, standard center procedures (material handling, cleaning up) should be modeled by the teacher and practiced by the students. There must be an established, efficient rotation system that outlines when and how students move from one center to another while protecting instructional time.

There should also be an accountability system, which establishes expectations for students. Accountability will promote student engagement. It also allows the teacher to assess student progress and provide feedback—to ensure they are not "practicing errors"—on a regular basis while working independently. Even though center procedures have been established and practiced, teachers cannot get so caught up in their own small group instruction that they lose sight of what is occurring at the centers.

Although Mr. Madison now has a better understanding of why he should be utilizing centers and how they work, he asks Mrs. Gunter to provide assistance selecting appropriate activities for the centers, setting up a rotation system, and teaching his students how to function in the center environment.

Reading centers that are thoughtfully designed and directly aligned with current reading instruction are an effective way to provide structured, appropriate practice for students while allowing teachers time to provide

focused instruction in a small group setting, as Reading First requires. Well-planned and effectively managed centers can provide an opportunity for students to master and extend the foundational skills they will need in order to become skilled readers.

References:

Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Vygotsky, L. (1986). *Thought and language.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

For more information on centers:

Tomlinson, C. A. (1999). *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Florida Center for Reading Research. (2005). *Student center activities: Teacher resource guide.* Tallahassee, FL: Florida Department of Education.

What Does the National Reading Panel Say About Text Comprehension Instruction?

The National Reading Panel was charged to assess the status of scientifically research-based knowledge on the effectiveness of a range of approaches to teaching students to read. When examining text comprehension instruction, the panel offered the following recommendations.

The National Reading Panel analyzed 203 studies on text comprehension instruction. That analysis led to the identification of 16 effective instructional procedures. Of those 16, six strategies and three instructional guidelines offered a firm scientific basis for comprehension improvement. The strategies include the following:

1. **Comprehension monitoring:** The reader learns how to be aware of his or her understanding during reading and learns procedures to deal with problems in understanding as they arise.

2. **Graphic and semantic organizers:** Readers represent graphically (by writing or drawing) the meanings and relationships of the ideas that underlie the words in the text.

3. **Story structure:** The reader learns to ask and answer who, what, where, when, and why questions about the plot and, in some cases, maps out the timeline, characters, and events in stories.

4. **Question answering:** Readers answer questions posed by the teacher and are given feedback on their answers.

5. **Question generation:** A reader develops and asks himself or herself who, what, when, where, why, how and what will happen questions.

6. **Summarization:** The reader attempts to identify and write the main or most important ideas that integrate or unite the other ideas or meanings of the text into a coherent whole.
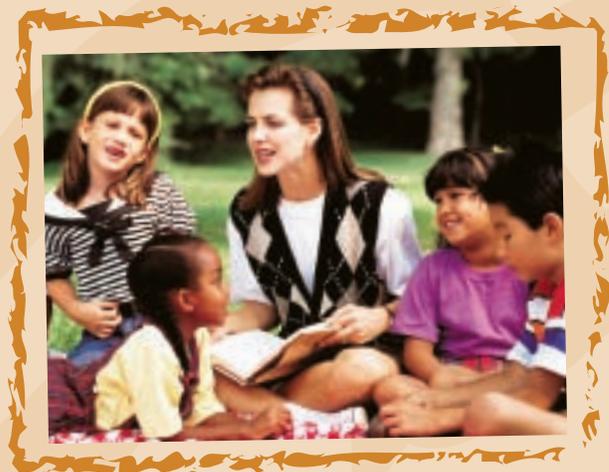
The instructional guidelines include the following:

1. **Explicit and direct instruction:** The teacher tells readers why and when strategies should be used, what strategies to use, and how to apply them. Steps for explicit and direct instruction consist of direct explanation, modeling, guided practice, and application.

2. **Cooperative learning:** Readers work together to learn strategies in the context of reading.

3. **Multiple-strategy teaching:** The reader uses several of the procedures in interaction with the teacher over the text. Multiple-strategy teaching is effective when the

procedures are used flexibly and appropriately by the reader or the teacher in naturalistic contexts.

All of the comprehension strategies listed in the National Reading Panel report can be modified for effective use with young learners. However, some strategies, such as summarization and question generation, might be more difficult for struggling students to apply independently.

The evidence indicates that teaching a variety of reading comprehension strategies leads to increased learning of the strategies, specific transfer of learning, increased retention and understanding of new passages, and general improvements in comprehension.

Reference:

National Reading Panel. (2000). *Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research on reading and its implications for reading instruction.* Washington, DC: National Institutes of Health.

At-Home Reading Practice

Reading at home is especially important for early readers as it provides an opportunity to reinforce and maintain foundational skills learned at school. Researchers generally agree that reading practice helps develop reading abilities, especially word recognition and fluency (National Reading Panel, 2000). The Nation's Report Card (U.S. Department of Education, 2000), which examined home and school contexts for learning, indicated a correlation between the reported number of pages read and reading scores of fourth-grade students as declared on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Data from subsequent years of NAEP administrations (2002, 2003, and 2005) confirm the findings.

Time spent at school is limited, however, and many different subject areas and skills are expected to be taught within the regular school day. It may be difficult for Reading First teachers to find adequate time in the 90-minute reading block to allow first- and second-grade students to practice their newly learned reading skills. Home reading practice offers a means to increase the time that students can spend reading a variety of texts of particular interest to them. In fact, parents reading to and with their children at home is listed in the top three "What to do at home" items for parents of first, second, and third graders in the National Institute for Literacy's *A Child Becomes a Reader* (2003). This particular document outlines proven ideas from research that are useful to parents.

What can we do to encourage home reading practice? Everyone—the superintendent, community members, teachers, principals, school support staff, and parents—should encourage students to read at every opportunity. Talk to students about when and where they can squeeze in a few minutes of reading time (on the bus, while waiting at the doctor's office, right before bedtime). School leaders and teachers should set clear expectations for out-of-school reading time. A reasonable goal for first and second graders may be 5–10 minutes per day. Keep in mind, however, that total homework for young children should not exceed 20 minutes per day (U.S. Department of Education, 2003). Reading time should be included within that 20 minutes.

Summer reading programs, which serve to maintain students' skills over the long summer break, should be offered. Grade-level reading lists offer students and parents appropriate book selection choices that can be purchased or borrowed for home reading. Parents should be encouraged to read with their children at home and talk to them about what they are reading. Parents need to be aware of the benefits of home reading practice. In some cases, a parent meeting where parents are informed about why and how to read at home with their children may be appropriate. Teachers can guide parents to resources such as *Get Ready to Read* (http://www.getreadytoread.org) for information on early literacy activities, a home literacy environment checklist, and additional literacy resources and *Reading Rockets* (http://www.readingrockets.org), which offers strategies, lessons, and activities to help young children learn to read. Finally, schools should work with community groups and local libraries that may be in a position to assist with and encourage home reading practice.

Poor readers are less likely to read for pleasure during their free time and therefore have fewer opportunities to build reading skills. Educators need to be creative in finding additional time for reading as well as engaging, high-interest, independent-level reading materials that struggling readers will be motivated to read. Take advantage of the time and resources available from parents and the community to provide students with valuable practice time to build and improve essential reading skills.

References:

Armbruster, B. B., Lehr, F., & Osborn, J. (2003). *A child becomes a reader.* Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation.

Donahue, P. L., Finnegan, R. J., Lutkus, A. D., Allen, N. L., & Campbell, J. R. (2001). T*he Nation's Report Card: Fourth-grade reading 2000.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

National Reading Panel. (2000). *Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research on reading and its implications for reading instruction.* Washington, DC: National Institutes of Health.

U.S. Department of Education. (2003). *Homework tips for parents.* Washington, DC: Author.

Fluency Instruction in First and Second Grade

When teaching children to read, teachers usually focus on accuracy—the correct identification of letters and words. This energy is not misplaced; accurate letter and word identification certainly is important. Accuracy is especially important when it comes to identifying words never seen before. Children must be taught effective strategies for attacking or sounding-out unfamiliar words. Children who guess at words and often make errors as they read have not learned effective and productive reading strategies (Stanovich, 1986).

Almost as important as accuracy, however, is fluency, which is often overlooked in reading instruction.

Many of our formal and informal reading assessments for young children explicitly test passage-reading and list-reading accuracy but not fluency (Wren, 2006). Students are scored and evaluated based on the number of words and letters they correctly identify, but very few assessments measure how quickly and easily those words or letters are identified. There is a big difference between correctly reading a short passage of text in 1 minute and correctly reading that same short passage of text in 5 minutes—a difference that teachers should heed.

In schools receiving Reading First funds, the regular assessment and monitoring of essential components of reading is required, and many of the assessments typically used in schools receiving Reading First funds do include explicit fluency assessments. However, fluency is still underrepresented in assessments of essential components of early reading.

The importance of fluency for developing proficient reading skills has been known for well over 100 years (Breznitz, 2006). It is only recently that models of reading acquisition have included fluency as a critical component of learning to read. The most influential and foundational model was proposed by LaBerge and Samuels (1974) and has been described as a "cognitive resource" model. Their model suggests that there are limited cognitive resources available for reading. If identifying individual words on the page requires conscious effort, that reduces the cognitive resources available for comprehension and evaluation. When words are recognized automatically and

effortlessly, more cognitive resources are available for the reader to devote to comprehension. More current models focus on timing and synchronization of cognitive processes, but the importance of fluency is still respected in current models of reading acquisition (Breznitz, 2006).

There is a lot that teachers can do to help students build fluency. Many researchers are now taking a developmental view of fluency, seeing it as evolving from tendencies and behaviors in the early grades (Kame'enui, Simmons, Good, & Harn, 2001). In kindergarten and first grade, teachers can help by reinforcing and practicing early literacy skills to the point of fluency. This can be accomplished throughout the day in the form of songs and games, along with whole group, small group, and individualized activities. Teachers of students at this age should be aware that the students who are slow and hesitant to identify letters of the alphabet and sounds in words tend to also be slow and hesitant to identify words in text in second and third grade. Fluency intervention, in other words, is effective even with very young, preliterate children, and teachers do not have to wait until second or third grade to begin addressing fluency in instruction.

Once students are in second or third grade, the most effective fluency intervention seems to be repeated oral reading with feedback (Chard, Vaughn, & Tyler, 2002; Therrien, 2004). In this activity, students read short but challenging passages of text out loud for an audience—the teacher or another student—at least four times. The first time the student reads the passage, he or she might be slow and make several errors. With feedback from the audience, however, and with repeated practice, the student will read that passage faster and faster with each attempt. When repeated oral reading with feedback is sewn into instruction every day, students very quickly develop rapid and automatic word-reading skills. As a consequence, students tend to show significant gains in reading comprehension (Chard, Vaughn, & Tyler, 2002). They also tend to perform better on subsequent assessments of reading skills in later grades (Good, Simmons, & Kame'enui, 2001).

References:

Breznitz, Z. (2006). *Fluency in reading: Synchronization of processes.* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Chard, D. J., Vaughn, S., & Tyler, B. J. (2002). A synthesis of research on effective interventions for building reading fluency with elementary students with learning disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 35*(5) 386–406.

Good, R. H., Simmons, D. C., & Kame'enui, E. J. (2001). The importance and decision-making utility of a continuum of fluency-based indicators of foundational reading skills for third-grade high-stakes outcomes. *Scientific Studies of Reading, 5*(3), 257–288.

Kame'enui E. J., Simmons, D. C., Good, R. H., & Harn, B. A. (2001). The use of fluency-based measures in early identification and evaluation of intervention efficacy in schools. In M. Wolf (Ed.), *Dyslexia, fluency and the brain* (pp. 307–331). Cambridge, MA: York Press.

LaBerge, D., & Samuels, S. J. (1974). Toward a theory of automatic information processing in reading. *Cognitive Psychology, 6*(2) 293–323.

Stanovich, K. E. (1986). Matthew effects in reading: Some consequences of individual differences in the acquisition of literacy. *Reading Research Quarterly, 21*(4) 360–406.

Therrien, W. J. (2004). Fluency and comprehension gains as a result of repeated reading: A meta-analysis. *Remedial and Special Education, 25*(4) 252–261.

Wren, S. (2006). *The reading assessment database for grades preK–3.* Available from Southwest Educational Development Laboratory Web site, http://www.sedl.org/reading/rad/

Resources

Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read

Bonnie B. Armbruster, Fran Lehr, Jean Osborn
C. Ralph Adler, Editor

This document summarizes the findings of the National Reading Panel Report and provides information about the five components of reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension. Each section provides a definition, reviews the evidence from research, suggests classroom implications for instruction, describes proven instructional strategies, and answers frequently asked questions.

Student Center Activities Guides

The Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR) has developed the following three guides to help teachers differentiate instruction via student reading centers:

1. Phonological Awareness and Phonics Student Center Activities
2. Fluency, Vocabulary, and Comprehension Student Center Activities
3. Student Center Activities: Teacher Resource Guide

The first two books contain activity plans and activity masters that are ready for immediate use in classrooms. The third book, *Student Center Activities: Teacher Resource Guide* is an informative guide offering important insight on differentiated instruction and how to use the student center materials.

Available at http://www.fcrr.org/activities/

U.S. Department of Education's Teacher-to-Teacher Initiative

The U.S. Department of Education has brought together some of the nation's most effective teachers and practitioners to share the research-based practices and ways of using data they have used in their own schools to make a difference in student achievement. For the past 2 years, they have shared their expertise through the U.S. Department of Education's Teacher-to-Teacher Workshops offered in various locations all over the United States. In order to more broadly share the information, these workshops have been taped and converted to online courses delivered using the video-streaming format.

Available at http://www.paec.org/teacher2teacher/abouttheinitiative.asp

No Child
LEFT BEHIND

U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202